

Grow Your Own Fund

Grow Your Own Application

Part 1

Grow Your Own is a pilot grant scheme provided by the City of Edinburgh Council. Its purpose is to support the creation of new community food growing projects. Grants of up to £5,000 will be awarded to constituted voluntary and community groups across the city.

More [information](#) is available online.

Please upload this form to the Your Voice platform. This will be publicly viewable. Please submit Application Part 2 separately to thrivinggreenspaces@edinburgh.gov.uk.

Some of this information may overlap with what's requested on Your Voice. Feel free to use the same information.

Deadline for applications: 12 May 2025

1. About your organisation

Please complete this for the **lead applicant** (the group delivering the project):

Name of group/organisation	Gate 55 Community Food Growers Group
Organisation address	55 Sighthill Road, Edinburgh EH11 4PD
What does your organisation do? (300 words max)	Gate 55 Community Food Growers have recently begun growing organic vegetables in a new allotment built by local young people as part of their SVQ in Rural Skills, in the grounds of Gate 55 – the Sighthill Community Centre. We aim to expand as a group and to grow a range of high-quality, nutritious food for our communities of Sighthill, Broomhouse, Parkhead, Dumbryden, Murrayburn, The Calders, and Wester Hailes. We use no-dig methods. We are currently growing garlic, potatoes, carrots and onions and we will open a seed library soon.
What kind of group/organisation are you?	Not yet constituted: we have a parent organisation.

Grow Your Own Fund

(e.g., CIC, Charity)	
Is this project going to be delivered in partnership? Or as/with a parent organisation? If yes, please explain and list all partners.	<p>The project will be delivered in partnership with the Sighthill Community Centre: Gate 55 (registered charity name: Sighthill Community Education Centre Association) as the parent organisation, who fully support our aims. A member of the Sighthill Community Centre: Gate 55 management committee, who has been closely involved with the start-up of the group, will be funded by this project to act as a Project Worker with the Group. She will oversee the promotion and support the constitution and development of the community growing group.</p> <p>There will be partnership working with CEC Wider Achievement. This partnership will see the community growing group working in the same allotment area being used by other groups at the Centre, for example, the young people who recently built raised beds here as part of their Rural Skills training certificate will be involved in helping in larger jobs in the main allotment.</p> <p>The project is also partnering with Sighthill Library, which will be housing the project's new Seed Library here.</p>

If you are applying with a **parent organisation**, please complete the following for the parent organisation:

Name of group/organisation	The centre is the main and key organisation: 'Sighthill Community Education Centre Association'
Organisation address	Gate 55 Community Centre, 55 Sighthill Road, Edinburgh, EH11 4PB
What does your organisation do? (300 words max)	<p>We advance education, enhance community wellbeing, and provide, or assist in the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupations, where this is of benefit to the local community. We help manage and maintain the community centre and its grounds. In practical terms, we make sure the classes and activities that take place here have the facilities and equipment they need; we support the services and activities here with online promotion and word-of-mouth (for example, at Community Council meetings); and we identify further needs and wishes in the community and then look to meet these through new provision at the centre, whether through inviting a third-party service provider or (as</p>

Grow Your Own Fund

	in this instance) by setting up a new community group to meet a specific need.
What kind of group/organisation are you? (e.g., CIC, Charity)	Registered Scottish Charity No. SC004763

2. About your project

Project name	Gate 55 Community Food Growers
Start date (after May 2025)	15.06.25
End date (before June 2026)	31.05.26
Amount of funding requested (£5,000 maximum)	£4946.00

3.

Brief project summary (50 words max)
<p>A brand new community food growing group is growing high-quality nutritious vegetables using organic, no-dig methods. The project will provide practical materials and administrative support needed for the group to expand, and make sure the whole community is encouraged to be involved in our food growing.</p>

Grow Your Own Fund

Please describe your project (500 words max)

There is a huge unmet need for food growing space such as allotments, and ours is a low-income area where growing your own food is also often the only way to access high-quality, organic fruit and vegetables.

Local young people recently built several new raised beds to create an allotment area, as part of an SVQ in Rural Skills: the project will support them and the other residents who have begun growing food here (using organic, no-dig methods) in becoming a formally constituted and thriving community food growing group.

The project will enable the new group to repurpose a suitable space as a propagation area; plant fruit bushes; install a water butt; and purchase gloves and aprons.

The Project Worker, Sophie Cooke, who developed the community herb garden in Hailes Quarry Park, will support the new food growing project and its activity. A local resident, she will recruit new members from across the whole community (see details in section below). Besides attending the group's set weekly sessions as a volunteer herself, the Project Worker will attend its committee meetings (once it becomes constituted) in the capacity of a paid Project Worker to provide practical support and advice. She will link the group to potential partner organisations such as RBGE which can be invited to come and run workshops. A large part of her work will be capacity building, so the group will become self-supporting. The project will cover the costs of the group's first year of insurance and banking fees.

The group is using a large planter in the front courtyard of the building, and the allotment area behind the building which has seven large raised beds and a tattie ridge. As well as these, there is a sizeable south-facing garden area that the centre will be inviting this new group to develop and use for community food growing (it is currently short grass and paving, but has two mature apple trees in it), with support from the Project Worker and the Wider Achievement Officer at Gate 55 (who will work in partnership on this project).

The group will visit Lauriston Farm, and see what the activity there is like, to get more ideas for what they want to do in the spaces that are available.

Funding will cover the costs of two large community meals at the centre, using produce from the new growing spaces, and added ingredients for snacks at the weekly gardening sessions (which will include the garden produce too).

This autumn, the project will see the group look at composting and wormeries, with a view to additional composting or wormery facilities being built for the food growing.

Excess produce will be made available to the local community using a very low-cost, community veg box (pantry-style) scheme.

The project will see the community share its existing skills and gain new skills in horticulture, construction, and green gardening methods and technology. It will have benefits for the environment; have positive effects on mental health; increase social connectedness; and provide free or very low-cost nutritious, organic food for communities.

Grow Your Own Fund

What barriers to food growing/establishing this project do you currently have? How will this fund help your group/ organisation? (300 words max)

Grow Your Own Fund

Lack of Propagation Facility

- Will be able to fit out an existing structure for propagating; hardening off.

Potential Members Face Barriers to Joining the Group:

It's "not for them".

- Project Worker to use funded printed flyers (optional Bengali, Punjabi, Urdu versions) and distribute face-to-face in conversations around the area with parents at local Nursery, Primary Schools, and with patrons of local pubs, shops, cafes and food banks.

Stress caused by poverty causes higher anxiety, depression: more challenging for people to join a new group, interact.

- Funded communication materials to encourage people into growing spaces outside of group's timetabled sessions by entering the spaces to simply enjoy or carry out simple watering activity at any time in centre opening hours.
- Project Worker conversations with flyers will make joining sessions less daunting.
- Light food to share, such as a tray bake or pizza slices, will add to appeal and friendliness of sessions.

Lack of confidence – lack of gardening experience or knowledge

- Communications will emphasise that people with no experience welcomed, as well as the more experienced. Funding will cover a trip to Lauriston Farm for group members, and reference books. Project Worker will invite outside organisations to come and share knowledge as needed.

Language barriers (English as a second language)

- Flyers in translation; project updates in WordPress (has translation button - all languages).

Language barriers (native English speakers): struggle with reading due to interrupted education or vision problems

- Short videos made by Project Worker, in which growing methods, project news, and how to get involved in the growing project verbally explained.

Physical barriers: lower mobility

- Project Worker to support group in designing additional growing spaces with improved accessibility (wheelchair).

Lack of appropriate personal gardening kit.

- Funds to purchase gardening gloves / aprons.

Grow Your Own Fund

How will your project contribute positively to the climate? (the [Council's net-zero target](#) and [2030 Edinburgh Climate Strategy](#)) (200 words max)

The project will use organic methods (no chemical inputs) and offer locally grown food (zero food miles). It will increase the use of plants in food and thus encourage people to have more plants in their diets. As the project progresses, it will involve the community centre kitchen composting larger quantities of kitchen waste than at present, through the expansion of composting facilities by the Community Food Growers Group. It will encourage home composting by showing how to make and use compost.

By collecting rainwater rather than using more energy-intensive treated mains water to water the beds, it will have a reduced environmental impact. In the future, it's hoped that the group, with the support of the Management Committee, could look at ways to better process grey water from the building as well.

By introducing a much wider range of plants around the centre, including many flowering fruit bushes and vegetable or herb plants, the project will also improve local biodiversity (the fruit bushes and variety of plants will support new insect life).

How many people will benefit from your project? (50 words max)

Direct: 150 individuals participating in weekly sessions over the year.

Wider: c.50 people per community meal (x2); casual contact (self-organised individuals outside of group times): c.100 people; use of growing space by centre user groups: c.250 additional people over the year; use of free / very low-cost food: c.300 local residents.

Total: approximately 900 people

Who will benefit from your project? (150 words max)

Grow Your Own Fund

- Various partners and targeted centre user groups (young people; Sighthill Library users; parents / families; BAME groups; support services; older people).
- General centre users.
- The wider community within the broader Sighthill area: Sighthill, Broomhouse, Parkhead, Dumbryden, Murrayburn, and The Calders, and wider Wester Hailes.
- People who are socially isolated (e.g. single people, older people).
- People who don't have access to high quality, organic produce (a significant proportion of local residents).

3. About the project site(s)

Project location (e.g. address or list of the streets that border the site)

55 Sighthill Road, Edinburgh, EH11 4PB

4.

Amount of space the project will occupy (in m². This can be an estimate)

200

4. Funding

Has this project received funding previously? If so, please detail.

No, not for the Community Food Growers. (Multiply funding was used to pay for materials for the building of the raised beds in the separate, previous project where local young people came and gained new skills as part of a Rural Skills training programme (SVQ).)

5.

Do you have additional funding or income from charges which will contribute to this project?
If yes, please detail.

Grow Your Own Fund

Through partnering with Wider Achievement, the project has access to the time and expertise of Johnny Smith, the Wider Achievement Officer at Gate 55.

The centre's Management Committee has donated five bulk bags of Caledonian Horticulture Green Goodness compost and is providing use of its tools.

The project has the agreed use of space within Sighthill Library for the seed library; and donated shelving for the seed library.

Over the course of the project, the Wider Achievement Officer and the Project Worker can offer to apply for grants from outside funding sources to purchase materials for additional raised beds or stonework, compost, fruit trees, and access improvements. This will be part of a future phase that will hopefully see the full development of the south-facing garden as an additional food growing site, with the group leading its design.

The project will develop the group to a stage where it can then seek its own funding, with support available from staff on site.

Please provide a full itemised budget breakdown	
<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost</i>
Marketing & Publicity: Printing 2000 flyers = £88; 1 banner = £49.50.	£137.50
Banking (12 months @ £4.25) & Insurance (12 months @ £9.31) for 1 year:	£171 (Banking: Bank of Scotland; Insurance: Policy Bee)
Food for community gardening sessions @ £5 x 50 weeks	£250.00 (£5 per week for ingredients in addition to garden ingredients).
Propagation kit: trays, covers, cold-frame structures.	£260.00
Shelving for propagation space	£100.00
Tool store – plastic Keter chest	£36.00 (this will only store watering cans and gloves and a couple of simple hand tools and will be within the secured boundary: it will be secured by the fences.)

Grow Your Own Fund

EcoSure Water butt, tap & diverter kit	£581.40 (1000 litre water butt with tap and diverter kit). https://www.ecosure.co.uk/collections/1000-litre-water-butts/products/1000-litre-water-butt-v1-green-marble
Gardening gloves x 20 pairs (£53), aprons x 3 (£38.97); watering cans x 2, 10 litres @ £12.99 (£25.98):	£117.95
Group trip to Lauriston Farm: bus travel (15 x £5), subsistence (£25 packed lunch for group).	£100.00
Reference books	£50.00
Community Food Events (2 events) all associated costs	£400.00
Project Worker: project admin of 12 hours a month @ £18 per hour = £216 per month x 12 months = £2592	£2592.00
Fruit Bushes & Additional Compost	£150.00
Total requested:	£4945.85

5. Reporting on your project

How will you know if your project has been successful? How will you measure and communicate this? (300 words max)
<p>The main metrics we will be measuring will be numbers involved; breadth of community involvement (ie engagement of the full community rather than a niche section of the community); improvements to mental health and wellbeing; gaining new skills; sharing skills with others; and new produce being grown.</p> <p>The Project Worker will write a brief weekly evaluation report, which will include comments and feedback from participants as well as recording the numbers of people</p>

Grow Your Own Fund

engaged in different ways. It will include input from the Wider Achievement Officer as well as from the young people themselves in terms of the skills being gained and shared by the young people doing their training here. It will include input from the other project participants in terms of the skills being gained and shared within the group by them. It will also include a brief summary of the breadth of community involvement for example noting if any groups within the community appear to be under-represented. The Project Worker has an MA (Hons) in Social Sciences (Social Anthropology) and has previously worked as a Project Co-Ordinator.

Community feedback will be invited via the two community meals over the course of the year.

The 6-monthly report, and the annual completion report, will be compiled by the Project Worker to include photographs from the project as well as a full summary of the project's achievements so far (in the case of the 6-monthly report, it will also detail the plans for the project's next 6 months; in the case of the final report, it will also detail the group's plans for the future.)

6.

Please note that grant recipients are expected to provide updates on the project 6 months through and after the project ends. This update will be shared online on the Your Voice platform.

Submission Checklist

- ☐ Application Part 1 uploaded to the [Your Voice](#) platform
- ☐ Part 2 Application form with financial and contact details is sent to thrivinggreenspaces@edinburgh.gov.uk
- ☐ Your constitution or that of your supporting organisation is sent to thrivinggreenspaces@edinburgh.gov.uk
- ☒ Photographs, plans or any supporting documentation are pasted into the application form or sent separately

[climate-ready-edinburgh](#)