

## Final Project Report Form

### Name of project, organisation and CCF number

Communities for Conservation. CCF - 3419

<http://www.elrec.org.uk/>

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### Starting Point

#### Background information of the organisation:

The Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC) is a non-profit organisation working with communities in Edinburgh and the Lothians to eliminate discrimination in all its form, reduce inequality, promote a culture of human rights, and foster good relations between communities and individuals. Founded in 1971, ELREC has over four decades of experience working in the field of equality and engaging with the diverse communities of Edinburgh and the Lothians. As a result ELREC has strong links with educational institutions, EM associations, public bodies and charities. ELREC works with diverse public and third sector organisations to support communities and individuals. It is currently supported by: the Scottish Government, Voluntary Action Fund, Big Lottery, the Robertson Trust, and the Climate Challenge Fund. ELREC works in partnership with representatives of the statutory authorities and voluntary organisations in the City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian to promote good relations and provide equality of opportunity between persons of [protected characteristics](#) and of different equality groups without distinction on grounds of colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, reassignment, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, age and creed.

ELREC is governed by a voluntary Management Board which consists of 11 elected members. The board is diverse with participation from most of the protected characteristics. (A full list of our board members is available at: <http://www.elrec.org.uk/aboutus.htm#directors>.) ELREC's Board has members from diverse ethnic backgrounds and they bring with them a wide spectrum of experience. Their expertise includes: academics, business, engineering, IT, media, third sector, and elected officials.

As a community-led organization, ELREC is led by board members who are actively involved in communities. ELREC Honorary President Professor Sir Geoff Palmer is a Professor Emeritus at Herriot-Watt University, first black professor in Scotland. Prof Palmer is a Human Rights activist who is involved in a considerable amount of charity work in the community. Professor Palmer is the author of a book on race relations and a book on the history of slavery. ELREC's Chair - Foysol Choudhury MBE is also the Regional President of The Guild of Bangladeshi Restaurateurs. Mr Choudhury currently

serves as the Vice Chair for Edinburgh Mela and is widely known in the South Asian community. ELREC's Vice Chair - Shami Khan has served as Chair of the Scottish Alliance of Regional Equality Councils. Between 2003 and 2007 Mr Khan served as a councillor of The City of Edinburgh Council. During that time, he was a member of Lothian and Borders Police Board. We have other board members like Cllr. Carl John, Chris Wigglesworth, Amjad Choudhury, who is President of the Pakistani Society, Melanie Beaumont, Rajnish Sing, Neena Agarwal, Azra Sharif-Qayyum, Ijaz Nazir and Irina Lazarenko. The majority of our Board members are from an ethnic minority (EM) background, and are very active within their community. They have helped us reach out to our target communities during the project implementation, for instance by taking active part to our events and offering support, advice and network opportunities. Furthermore, the varying ethnic composition of the governing Board makes ELREC very well placed to undertake partnership work with various community groups. Given the Chair and the Vice Chair are also in the governing Board of the Edinburgh MELA, ELREC has been able to expand its network to newer communities which reflect Edinburgh's changing demography. The governing Board of Directors convenes different sub-committees which have further widened the participation in different issues.

### **Background information of the communities:**

ELREC has a history of working in Edinburgh and the Lothians for over four decades. 'Communities of Conservation' has given us a unique opportunity to strengthen our ongoing work with communities on this occasion, on issues of climate change, carbon emission and energy efficiency. We wanted to focus our engagements and interventions in Edinburgh where there is a lack of awareness and understanding of matters relating to energy supply and there is a great need for energy efficiency from ethnic minority households. The EM community is a varied category in itself. The four communities were therefore chosen based on their higher levels of representation in Edinburgh's demography and to streamline the target beneficiaries of the project. We intended to work with the African, Chinese, Polish and South Asian communities of Edinburgh.

Based on previous work and partnerships, we found that different ethnic minority communities are scattered in different areas of Edinburgh. The population census of 2011 approximates the ethnic breakdown of the following communities as: South Asians: 26264 (including only people of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin); Polish: 12820; Chinese: 8076; African: 4474<sup>1</sup>. Those minorities are not concentrated in specific areas. Comparatively, there are a large numbers of Indian people living in Dalry and Newhaven. The majority of the Chinese Community is spread across Gilmerton ward, Marchmont, Sighthill and Leith. The Pakistani community is also spread across Edinburgh but is most prevalent in Duddingston, Broughton and Kaimes. African and Polish communities are spread throughout the Edinburgh area.

Therefore, the project has aimed to cover the whole of Edinburgh with special emphasis in areas where BME communities were largely centred, i.e. City Centre, South, West and North of Edinburgh. We will also reach out to as many individuals from

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/>

the five groups mentioned as we can. Based on staffing and the high quality standard of energy advice that we intended to deliver, we aimed to offer energy advice home visits to a minimum of 240 households.

#### **Where the project idea came from:**

The idea of the project came from a meeting between the former ELREC Manager Monalisa Adhikari and Zarina Ahmad from CEMVO Scotland. The idea of the project resonated to the larger remit of ELREC's work around the gap of information and access to services faced by EM communities. On the legislative front, the [Climate Change \(Scotland\) Act](#) and the emission reduction targets of the Scottish government are progressive policies. However, like in other policy spheres where participation and awareness levels amongst EM communities are lower, there is a lack of awareness of these policies and a lack of involvement in environmental activities.

According to the Scottish House Condition Survey, 27% of Scottish homes were Fuel Poor in 2012. With rising fuel prices and the current financial climate, we realised that there needed to be efficient and tailored services of energy efficiency in the immediate term but also awareness raising initiatives to tackle climate change holistically. Due to unemployment, barriers to employment amongst BME women, occupational segregation with significant proportion of Asian people in the wholesale and retail, we understood that fuel poverty was generally likely to be a challenge to EM communities.

#### **Where we started:**

Through a CCF Development Grant, We engaged with communities in different ways including surveys, focus groups and gatherings. We assessed the need of the aforementioned communities and created an accurate CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions baseline. The survey helped us quantify the CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions, evaluate the level of awareness about climate change with EM communities, and understand the threats of fuel poverty faced by the communities. We realised that a great number of households were in a situation of fuel poverty. The survey helped us to devise any concrete intervention around climate change and to evidence how communities related to broader debates of climate change. We concluded that it was essential to help EM households to tackle fuel poverty and enable the communities to be more aware of climate change and participate in environmental activities. This is one of the reasons why we decided to focus our project on energy efficiency.

#### **We set out to achieve the following outcomes:**

**Outcome 1:** Achieving an overall 8-10% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions in 240 households over 23 months. Cut CO<sub>2</sub>e by 1,320.46 tonnes by bringing about positive behavioural changes to save energy by the target households.

**Outcome 2:** Cutting fuel poverty by 8-10% within the targeted households.

**Outcome 3:** Ensuring that EM communities are aware of financial benefits to reducing

energy costs, reducing carbon footprints and are empowered to respond positively to climate-triggered challenges.

**Outcome 4:** Increasing community cohesion among different EM groups.

**Why we wanted to achieve those outcomes:**

As an organization, we wanted to make our parts towards the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions. We also wanted make our communities more aware of climate change while assisting individuals in reducing their carbon footprint. We are in a position whereby we can engage with the 'hard to reach' EM communities on topics which are of priority to the Scottish Government such as climate change and energy efficiency. We wanted to participate in the Scottish Government's action to reduce carbon emissions and help reduce fuel poverty particularly with communities that the Scottish Government has more difficulties to engage with. Since we are working with communities in which fuel poverty is higher than average, we were in an ideal position to contribute to both outcomes while increasing social cohesion. Therefore, we deemed that our project would be beneficial to our communities as well as to the Scottish Government. Evidences from a survey that we conducted and research works showed that there is a low level of awareness in EM communities of energy saving measures, and the implications of carbon emission. Our survey work demonstrated that many EM households were unaware of what they can do to do their part for the environment (refer to 'Survey Results'). Due to lingual and confidence barriers as well as lack of knowledge about the Scottish system, EM communities in Edinburgh are less aware about schemes, grants and financial help available to alleviate fuel poverty. Our survey showed that 45% EM households surveyed spent more than 10% of their income on energy. In accordance to our primary mission, we wanted to use the project to work towards more inclusion. The Census figures of 2011 point out to a dramatic increase in the number of EM people in Edinburgh. Research has prioritised cohesion and integration with the premise that there could be possible instability of social cohesion caused by increased immigration and cultural diversity in Britain<sup>2</sup>.

### Headline achievements

Visited **250** households from BME communities to provide energy advice reducing CO<sub>2</sub>e by **1944.14 tonnes**.

Benefitted our clients **£101,161** through helping them to qualify for grants to fund energy efficiency measures (e.g. new heating systems, radiators, draught proofing, loft insulation, cavity wall insulation), and through finding cheaper tariffs, cheaper suppliers, and financial reductions. This figure excludes the financial saving resulting from behavior change and the long term saving resulting from financial reductions.

Organized **4** large community events gathering over **800** people from BME communities raising awareness of climate change, increasing community cohesion, and increasing

<sup>2</sup> Cheong, P., H., Edwards, R., Goulbourne H. and Solomos, J., (2007), Immigration, social cohesion and social capital: A critical review, Critical Social Policy, Vol. 27 No.1, pp 24-49  
Castles, S., Miller, M., (2003), The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World, Basingstoke: Palgrave

participation in local environmental initiatives.

Empowered **79** volunteers to deliver the project activities whilst developing transferable skills which have led volunteers to go onto further education and careers in climate change and the environment.

Engaged with over **2000** people from BME communities over the project.

Set up and ran **5** community gardens in different locations in Edinburgh and delivered **218** gardening sessions and workshops with community gardeners and the help of volunteers and local communities. Produced **568.72kg** of vegetable in our 5 community gardens reducing CO<sub>2</sub>e by **2.30 tonnes**.

Developed partnership with many BME organizations and established an excellent working relationship with Home Energy Scotland referring **90** clients onto them.

Delivered **53** workshops, training, and sessions related to climate change, upcycling, food waste reduction, healthy eating, and energy efficiency. Created the Edinburgh Sustainable Meet up with **400** members which is a platform enabling Edinburghers to meet and discuss sustainability in a variety of ways.

Put a smile on many faces.

## Activities

Communities for Conservation delivered a variety of activities in order to attract and engage a variety of individuals and groups with topics related to climate change and the environment.

1. **Recruitment and training:** We wanted to ensure that the team would deliver the best services possible. Therefore we recruited the best candidates and provided relevant training throughout the project duration. A Project Coordinator, four part-time Community Link Officers, and volunteers were recruited. The team undertook the City and Guilds energy awareness training, Changeworks energy advice good practice, and the training course for Carbon Conversations facilitators. The team also attended training opportunities offered by KSB and the EM networks which offered an excellent platform for sharing best practice and ideas.
2. **Partnership:** We developed a great number of partnerships with many EM groups, organizations and associations in order to deliver our project and outreach to a wide range of EM communities. The project has also given us an opportunity to strengthen our working relationship with existing partners. In addition, we have created connections with agencies working on energy efficiency, food growing and climate change and have instituted referral mechanisms with a variety of organizations including the Council, Housing associations, Home Energy Scotland, and Care and Repair. Our partnership with Home Energy Scotland has revealed to be particularly fruitful. They offered training and joint visits while we referred vulnerable clients to them to check their eligibility to grants for energy efficiency measures.

3. **Energy Advice:** We offered energy advice home visits to members of the South Asian, African, Chinese, and Polish communities. We helped households change their behaviours to reduce energy consumption through a comprehensive and professional energy advice service which included: energy saving tips and tailored energy advice to reduce energy consumption while keeping warm; help with dampness issues, help to find a cheaper energy supplier; help to review my energy contract and get a cheaper tariff; help and advice with bills (estimated bill, submitting meter reading); help to set up an online account; switching the client from prepayment meter to standard meter or smart meter; energy monitors to educate the family on how much each electrical appliance is costing them; financial help and energy debt alleviation (e.g. british gas trust); eligibility check for energy efficiency measures; eligibility check to the Warm home discount; sign posting to relevant agencies. Through home visits our aim has always been two folds: 1. To help the clients reduce their energy consumption, 2. To reduce fuel poverty. Overall, the way we delivered our energy advice meant that households were pro-active in reducing their energy usage. The home visit questionnaire that we have developed and used is attached to this report.
4. **Climate Change awareness:** We raised awareness of environmental initiatives and climate change particularly amongst group who tend to be less exposed to the message of climate change. We organized training, workshops, trips, discussions and a range of activities tailored to the different audiences that we engaged with. Some of the activities we have done are: trips to organic farms to raise awareness of alternatives to conventional agriculture and to show a local initiative; trips to local forests where we did climate change games for people to reconnect to nature and value it more; cycling activities to encourage people to cycle more; area clean up; film screenings; debates and discussions; quizzes; community meals; upcycling workshops; gardening workshops; permaculture workshops; energy efficiency workshops; healthy eating workshops, wildlife watching workshops; and eco-classes among others. We did those sessions, for different EM groups, youth groups, associations, as well as during events and through the Edinburgh Sustainable Meetup. Those sessions have always included an aspect of ways to reduce carbon footprint. They were occasionally conducted with guest speakers from other organizations (Home Energy Scotland, Carbon Conversations, Edinburgh Community Food, CEMVOScotland, the Fife diet, etc). Through those sessions whichever forms they took, we have work towards the Scottish Government's climate change targets.
5. **Food growing:** With the Edible Gardening Project, Wester Hailes Allotment Association, the Rannoch Community Centre, Hunters Hall Cooperative and the Edinburgh College we have set up food community growing groups and organized food growing sessions to enable community groups to learn food growing techniques and grow their own food. The skills gained have inspired many attendees to start growing their own food at home.

6. **Community events:** We have organized large community events. Each event has sensitized people to climate change and has promoted local environmental initiatives. Those events have included training workshops on energy efficiency and climate change. As the project is built on the foundation of community participation, community events has been a good way to increase the involvement of community groups in environmentally sustainable activities.
7. **Volunteering:** We have offered a wide range a volunteering opportunities as part of the project. We have involved volunteers in our events, workshops, home visits, promotions, gardening sessions, booklet creation, etc, and have learnt a lot about climate change, the environment and energy efficiency through their volunteering. They have gained numerous skills including facilitation skills, people skills, group management skills, research skills, presentation and public speaking skills, etc. 5 volunteers got jobs in environmental related fields after volunteering with us. Another volunteer went to University to pursue a Master degree in environmental science.

## Outcomes

### CO<sub>2</sub>e Outcomes

**Outcome 1:** Achieving an overall 8-10% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions in **240** households over 23 months. Cut CO<sub>2</sub>e by **1,320.46 tonnes** by bringing about positive behavioural changes to save energy by the target households.

#### 1. Outcome exceeded

The project has exceeded the reduction of CO<sub>2</sub>e by bringing about positive behavioural changes to save energy by the target households. We have conducted **250** home visits energy advice. We have achieved a reduction of CO<sub>2</sub>e of **1944.14 tonnes**.

#### Data collection:

Baseline: KWh from gas bills and electricity bills or by directly calling the energy supplier in cases where bills were not available. This gave us a KWh figure for the relevant period.

End-line: Gas and electricity meter readings at the first visit and another meter reading at the second visit. This gave us an accurate end-line period that we compared against the baseline.

#### Calculation:

We evaluated the beneficial impact of our energy advice (1<sup>st</sup> visit) by comparing the *baseline* against the *end-line*. When possible we ensured that the baseline corresponded to the same month(s) as the end-line.

#### Conversion factors:

We applied the conversion factors recommended by KSB for electricity and gas consumption:

0.58982 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e per KWH for main electricity

0.18445 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e per KWH for main gas.

#### Life Time Savings:

We expected that once the households have made the changes, those changes would last for **7 years**. The project has chosen a higher lifetime as the EM communities in Edinburgh which include many households in fuel poverty and financial difficulty, for whom energy efficiency would have a direct financial implication.

#### Bias:

In some cases, we could not obtain bills which were matching the month in which the home visit was done. This meant that gas and electricity consumption patterns may

have differed at another time of the year.

Our calculation spreadsheet is attached detailing our carbon emission calculations.

**Outcome 2:** Cutting fuel poverty by 8-10% within the targeted households.

1. Outcome exceeded

The project has exceeded the reduction of Fuel Poverty. We have conducted **250** home visits energy advice. By assisting people to reduce their energy consumption by over 10% we have reduced fuel poverty.

Through our service, **23** clients accessed the £140 Warm Home Discount amounting to **£3220**.

**15** clients received free new heating systems with radiators including installation amounting to **£90,000**

**4** clients received free cavity wall insulation amounting to **£2000**

**1** client received free loft insulation amounting to **£300**.

**1** client received free draught proofing amounting **£150**.

We have helped switched **11** clients to cheaper suppliers for an overall saving of **£5268** per year.

We have helped **5** clients to get cheaper tariffs for an overall saving of **£2263** per year.

We have helped **7** clients to switch from prepayment meter to standard meter.

We have helped **4** clients to obtain financial reductions amounting to **£1180**.

**11** clients were referred for a Benefit check.

After our visit **1** client installed gas central heating.

After our visit **2** clients have installed double glazing; **1** client had secondary installed for free after we called the council to report about the poor quality of the windows and the cold they caused (heat loss was major issue due to the old single glazed windows).

After our visit **1** client installed reflective panels behind their radiators.

After our visit **14** clients changed light bulbs in their houses.

In total, throughout the project we have benefitted our clients **£101,161** excluding the financial saving resulting from behavior change and the long term saving resulting from financial reductions.

4. Unexpected outcome:

After advertising our project on <http://www.emito.net/> which is one of the largest Polish advertisement website, we received an unexpected high number of enquiries from Polish people from outside of Edinburgh. The Polish Community Link Officer offered

energy advice over the phone and via email. Within a month, we had dealt with 10 clients, providing energy advice, checking eligibility to the Warm Home Discount, helping clients to switch meters, changing supplier, email advice about energy suppliers, and referring clients to Home Energy Scotland.

#### 4. Unexpected outcome:

**FOOD GROWING:** Due to the popularity of our food growing activities, our gardening groups have expanded a lot and half way through the project we have started to measure the food produce.

**Primary data:** Amount of food grown

**Indicator:** Kg

Over the course of the project we have produced approximately **568.72kg** of produce in our 5 community gardens.

**Data collection:** Weight of produce that the participants took home.

**Calculation and Conversion factors:**

Difference between the averages of embodied emissions for food and drink (4.06) and the food grown in an allotment (0.540).

**Estimated impact:**

Using this approximate data the baseline of CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions for one year is 568.72kg x 4.06 = 2309 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions

568.72kg x 0.54 = 307.1088 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions

**Annual emissions savings in tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e:**

2309– 307.1088 = 2,001.8912 kg = 2.001 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions

**Total Carbon Emissions savings**

2.001 (food growing) + 1944.14 (energy efficiency) = **1946.14** tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions

Overall, the project has saved **1946.14** tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e.

### Community Outcomes

**Outcome 3:** Ensuring that EM communities are aware of financial benefits to reducing energy costs, reducing carbon footprints and are empowered to respond positively to climate-triggered challenges.

#### 1. Outcome exceeded

Not only have we exceeded the number of events and workshops that we had planned

to do in order to raise awareness of climate change and energy efficiency but we have also covered topics that are broader than the ones we intended to cover. We have organized **17** community events which have directly or indirectly raised awareness of climate change and what one can do to reduce their carbon footprint. With our events we have engaged with approx. **1350** people.

1. Multicultural Eco-Celebration: We have initiated the idea and the first meetings of organizing a CCF joint event in March 2016. This idea was later called the Multicultural Eco-Celebration and was jointly delivered by ELREC, The Welcoming, Tweeddale Youth Action, MyAdventure, NKS, and Mecopp. The aim of the event was to celebrate the work of the CCF projects and raise awareness of climate change and environmental initiatives. The event was attended by a diverse audience of **330** people. Stalls and activities included: Home Energy Scotland stall and energy efficiency talk, Royal Botanic Garden stall, upcycling tyre demonstration, upcycling fan demo, upcycled fashion show, food demonstration & food tasting, upcycling jewellery workshop, gardening workshop, bike demos/maintenance, smoothie bike, kids corner, and the real junk food project. Guest speakers included Lord Provost Donald Wilson and Professor Sir Geoff Palmer DSc OBE.
2. In October 2015 we organized a Large Community Event attended by 180 adults and 60 children. Guest Speakers included Ted Talk speaker Mr Mike Stevenson, Professor Sir Geoff Palmer DSc OBE, Mr Foysol Choudhury Mbe, Stuart from Leith Food Assembly, Jean-Matthieu Gaunand, and Mara Menzies Storyteller. 14 Volunteers were involved during the event. Workshops and activities included Floramedica (how to use natural ingredients to make body care products), the Royal Botanic Garden of Edinburgh (food growing activities), the Welcoming (upcycled draught excluders), Peachy Keen (bike producing electricity), and kids activities. Whitmuir organic farm and the Cyrenians farm donated two baskets of organic fruits and vegetables. Feedback of the event is attached to the report.
3. In March 2015, we have organized a large community event named 'Spring Celebration'. It was attended by over **200** participants from all ages and diverse backgrounds: approximately 40 people from Chinese background; 35 people from Polish background; 30 people from South Asian background; 25 people from African background, and the rest being from mixed backgrounds. The main activities were:
  - Speech/workshop of John-Paul Flintoff. John-Paul talked about the importance of collaborative working to embrace the changes we encounter at a global and local level, may those changes be social, environmental or political. The talk was very inspirational and interactive. Because of the participatory approach of it, the speech captivated the audience and was the aspect of the event that was by far the most appreciated. Approximately 150 people attended the talk.
  - Game/Workshop on the theme of climate change was run by 3 of our volunteers. This was attended by 15 people including adults and children.

- The raffle was an opportunity to promote energy efficiency, as well as healthy, local, and organic food. We offered an organic basket given by the Whitmuir farm and a voucher for LED upgrade.
  - The “Make your own natural skin care product” workshop by Floramedica was encouraging people to see the products of nature in a different way. It encouraged many to make their own skin care products as well as taught how to make Nettle Pesto.
  - Learn how to make your own Pakoras with the Punjabi Junction.
  - Guest speakers spoke about Climate Change: Sir Prof. Geoff Palmer talked about CO<sub>2</sub>. The project Coordinator talked about climate change and how it is a challenge that has to be collaboratively tackled. Heather Anderson from the Whitmuir farm talked about organic farming.
  - The feedback of the event reveals that 70% of participants feel more aware of climate change issues as a result of the event. Feedback of the event is attached.
4. In September 2014 we organized the project Launch event which gathered 150 – 200 people from diverse communities. Guest speakers included Mr Foyso Choudhury MBE, Ms Zarina Ahmad (CEMVO Scotland), local MP Mark Lazarowicz, and Project Coordinator Jean-Matthieu Gaunand. Activities included a stall from the Royal Botanic Garden; a film screening and discussion by Zarina Ahmad (CEMVO) and Julian Holbrook (approx. 40 attendees); “Everyone can save energy at home” workshop by Home Energy Scotland (attended by approx. 40 people), and a healthy juice stall. A basket of organic produce was offered by Edinburgh Community Food to the winner of the quiz and a £20 Tesco voucher offered by Tesco was offered to the second winner. 30 people attended to the Tai Chi class. A £150 adult bike voucher purchased from Cycle Leith was offered to the winner of the raffle. A £100 kids’ bike voucher purchased from Cycle Leith was offered to the second winner of the raffle.
  5. We have conducted two events with Plan Bee. It helped us to raise awareness about bees and pollination and how climate change is affecting bees. The first event (BEE FOR XMAS) was organized in partnership with RC St Mary’s school in December 2015. The event was attended by approx. **80** children and **40** adults.
  6. Our second event was organized in partnership with Al-furqan in February 2016. It was attended by **90** participants mostly from Muslim background. **90** bees were ‘adopted’ by children and adults. Feedback of the event is attached.
  7. In June 2015, we organized a trip to Whitmuir organic farm with **37** people mostly from Polish background. As the link between our project and Polish Scouts in Edinburgh was already established, the Polish Community Officer and Project Coordinator organised a trip for the scouts and their parents to a local Organic Farm to educate people about the need to eat more local and organic. The trip was very popular and the visit was greatly appreciated. The scouts and their

parents had the opportunity to interact with nature, harvest, plant and learn about organic produce. All activities had an educational aspect but were also conducted in an informal and fun way. In that way children learnt about nature and organic farming. Feedback is attached.

8. In February 2015, in partnership with the Himalyan Centre for Arts and Culture and Greatway Foundation, we organized a large movie screening for Chasing Ice. Feedback is attached.
9. In August 2015 we organized a cycling event 'ELREC Cycles for Nepal' which enabled us to raise funds for the Nepal Earthquake. This was a way to promote cycling as a mode of transport and to encourage people to cycle more. There were around **30** participants. We raised **£1500** for Nepal Scotland Association project.
10. In June 2015, we organized a climate change discussion in Cantonese with **30** people from Chinese background. A short clip on climate change was screened, followed by a game on ranking electrical appliances. Feedback is attached.

Other events that we organized include:

11. "Save the bees" eco-event in May 2015 with the Polish Scouts at the Ukrainian Club. This was attended by **15** adults and **8** children.
12. Community Meal at the Rannoch community centre with the Drumbrae Community Garden organized in November 2015.
13. Cook out Harvesting and Cooking Festival at the Royal Botanic Garden in August 2015 attended by **28** participants including children.
14. An environmental half-day at the Costorphine hill attended by **15** participants in April 2015.
15. Family friendly food growing event at the Rannoch community centre with the Drumbrae community garden attended by **17** people in February 2015.
16. A harvest and food festival at the RBGE in August 2014 attended by **20** people: "Wonderful day out at RBGE at the ELREC Communities for Conservation Festival. Fresh food, sun and friends. Thanks."
17. We hosted the CCF EM network at the Royal Botanic Garden in May 2015.

We have organized **53** workshops, training, practical and theoretical sessions to address topics related climate change and the environment, and tackle the question of climate change through different angles. Sessions have taken varied forms and were completed in varied contexts in order to suit the audience. We have engaged with over **300** people from different backgrounds particularly the Chinese, South Asian, African and Polish communities. We conducted many sessions wherein the information passed on was about the project, energy efficiency in the home i.e. how to use the appliances and heating properly and save energy and money, how much energy appliances use,

how to reduce food miles, how to get the best deals on energy and understanding bills, how to read meters, how to grow your own food, etc.

We have conducted the following workshops:

1. March 2016: workshop on building a solar powered LED lamp: 11 participants.
2. February 2016: Trash fashion upcycling workshop: 4 participants.
3. February 2016: Lichens workshop at the RBGE with Frances Stoakley: Lichens as Air Quality Indicators ~ Making the invisible visible: 14 participants.
4. February 2016: What's permaculture workshop delivered with volunteer Finn Weddle: 20 participants.
5. February 2016: Forest Garden tree and herb planting at Liberton High: 7 participants.
6. February 2016: Permaculture Allotment: 6 participants.
7. January 2016: 'More than Honey' Movie Screening: 14 participants.
8. January 2016: 'Permaculture community classroom' session: 25 participants.
9. January 2016: 'Are we ready? Adaptation to climate change in Scotland' Workshop delivered by Pam Candea, Sniffer: 11 participants.
10. January 2016: Ecology Walks - Observing Winter. 15 attendees.
11. January 2016: Project presentation to Social workers at Royal Victoria Building Western General Hospital to establish referral.
12. December 2015: ELREC Climate Change Training Session for the staff: 8 participants.
13. November 2015: Climate Change and Environmental Awareness Training at SACRO: 6 participants.
14. November 2015: Climate Change and energy awareness session with Parveen at Sikh Sanjog: 9 participants.
15. November 2015: Climate Change and energy awareness session with Parveen at RNIB: 10 participants.
16. November 2015: This Changes Everything Movie screening and banner making for the Climate March: 16 participants.
17. November 2015: 1<sup>st</sup> Permaculture community classroom session: 16 participants.
18. November 2015: Climate March 20 participants from our group.
19. November 2015: Make your own notebook upcycling workshop: 9 participants.
20. October 2015: Cycle event for families at the Glentres Forest Park followed by a visit of the Forestry Commission visitor centre: 20 attendees. Feedback attached.
21. October 2015 Energy efficiency and climate change presentation at Fife church: 25 participants.
22. September 2015: Visit to Graham Bells' forest garden: the oldest forest garden of Britain: 15 participants.
23. September 2015: Make Your Own Coasters with magazines and newspapers at the Welcoming association: 11 participants.
24. September 2015: Upcycled and painted milk bottles to create flower pots: 5 participants.
25. September 2015: Gardening workshop at the Welcoming association: 17 participants

26. August 2015: 3 Energy efficiency game at the Edinburgh MELA with 6 participants at each session.
27. August 2015: Upcycling Cutlery workshop with the shrub: 9 participants.
28. August 2015: Movie screening 'Inhabit': 14 participants.
29. August 2015: Trip to the Forestry Commission woods of Queen Elizabeth Forest Park with climate change game. 14 participants.
30. July 2015: Trip to the Forestry Commission woods in Dalkeith to learn about forests and their benefits: 14 participants.
31. July 2015: Screening of 'Food, Inc': 25 participants.
32. June 2015: Screening of "Just Eat it": 10 people. "This movie has changed my life: it showed how much waste there is out there. I'm even less fussy about use by date. I will urge people not to waste food." David, a participant, talking about the Just Eat It movie.
33. March 2015: Diabetes Scotland from Glasgow: workshop at Pakistan Society: 25 over 50 year old South Asian participants.
34. January 2015: Energy efficiency session at Sikh Sanjog with Home Energy Scotland. 7 participants.
35. January – June 2015: Series of 6 eco-classes at the No Boundaries Polish Saturday School in Edinburgh attended by 2 groups of 15 children aged from 5 to 17 years old conducted by the Polish Community Link Officer. Topics covered included climate change, extinct animals, food waste, water, recycling, green energy
36. August 2014 – December 2014: 6 weeks carbon conversation course attended by 4-7 participants.
37. August 2014: Conservation activities at the Loch Lomond National Park with 17 staff and volunteers.
38. September 2014: Climate change session at the Pakistan Society.
39. November 2014: 2 energy efficiency sessions at the Pakistan Society.
40. September 2014: Energy efficiency session at Sikh Sanjog: 8 participants.
41. October 2014: Trip to Whitmuir organic farm: 14 people.
42. November 2014: Screening of the movie 'Home': 12 participants.
43. November 2014: Screening of the movie 'Home' in Cantonese with a Cantonese speaker's group: 23 participants.
44. November 2014: Food & Mood Workshop: 10 participants.
45. December 2014: 'Chasing Ice' movie screening at ACE Cinema: 10 participants.

The Edinburgh Sustainable Meet up has **400** members, three volunteers are helping to organize events, and the membership is still growing.

In addition to the climate change and environmental sessions, we have developed community gardens in different parts of the city for people to gather, learn how to grow their own food and produce food as a group. Due to the popularity of the activity, our gardening groups have expanded significantly. In total, we have run **218** gardening sessions in our **5** community gardens located in Wester Hailes, Niddrie, Drumbrae, the Royal Botanics, and in Milton Road Edinburgh College. Most sessions were run by an

expert community gardener who imparted knowledge on how to grow certain type of food. Those sessions have been useful to some members so much so that they dropped out of the group to grow their own food at home in their garden. The food grown and harvested was weighted. The community gardens were a good way to take direct community action to reduce carbon footprint.

### **Perspective from the South Asian Link Officer:**

“As a result of the project parts of the communities now have the knowledge and skills to monitor and save energy in the home, to use appliances efficiently, to always shop around for better energy deals and also to call their suppliers and be confident to ask questions about their energy use. They now understand and can read bills and they can understand how the bills are calculated, why and how to submit meter readings. They understand what climate change is both in the UK and abroad and how energy consumption is linked to climate change. They understand how to prevent draughts i.e. how to make or where to buy drought excluders for doors or use the drought proof tape around windows, seal the letterbox, and how to use timers and thermostats to control the heating as well as use the TRVs properly. Also thanks to the home visits, households now have the skills and information they need to ensure their bills reduce from now on as they understand what appliances and what behavior causes their bill to be high. With the energy monitors, they also know how much energy a kettle, electric shower and other electrical appliances consume so they can keep an eye on these and ultimately reduce the usage. They know about LED light bulbs and the benefits of them compared to the incandescent light bulbs. As a result from the home visits and community events, attitudes and actions of the individuals have changed.

### **Outcome 4: Increasing community cohesion among different EM groups.**

#### **1. Outcome exceeded**

The project has exceeded the amount of engagement with different EM groups. We have established excellent working relationships with different local EM groups and associations including the Pakistan Society, Sikh Sanjog, Polish Scouts, The Sudanese Community Association, Chinese Elderly Association, Shakti women's aid, Nepal Scotland Association, Polish Professionals, Chinese Evangelical Church, MEHIP, Muslim women association of Edinburgh, and others. We have organized 17 community events, **54** workshops and **218** gardening sessions.

We feel that the 'Communities for Conservation' project has been very successful in bringing diverse people together around the one message of climate change. In fact, the feedback collected from our four main events showed that participants were amazed by the diverse ethnic background of the attendees. We feel this to be a success in itself.

The four large community events that we have organized have gathered our target communities. In addition, we have benefited from attending major community events including Black History Month celebration, Celebrating Africa day, Eid dinner, Multicultural day, Holocaust Memorial Day and many more. Thanks to our effective way

of promoting ourselves and spread the word, many members of the target communities have attended our 4 large events which provided vast information and knowledge on climate change, energy efficiency, food growing, recycling, energy efficient appliances, light bulbs, organic growing and various natural products, healthy juices, cycling and local environmental initiatives. These events were held in an informal and fun environment where people can be influenced and inspired to make changes for the better, and brought cohesion within communities. Moreover, the 'grow your own' sessions have been particularly successful at bringing people together. Our 5 community gardens, and the 53 climate change discussions that we have conducted have brought a diversity of people together.

In terms of outdoors activities, we have organised 3 trips to forestry commission woodlands, 1 cycling trip to Balerno, 2 trips to the Whitmuir organic farm, and other outdoor activities. Those activities were attended by a diverse audience.

### **Volunteering:**

Volunteers have been at the heart of this project. They have been involved in all activities, from event organizing, to home visits, to garden workshop facilitation. They have helped with promotion, spreading the word, workshop design and facilitation, and all of which have been extremely valuable. The work of our volunteers has highly widened the scope of our project. Due to the attractive nature of the project, we have supported and received the help of **79** volunteers over the course of the project. Some volunteers have stayed longer than others but all of them have received and contributed to the project. In addition, the ELREC Board, as well as ELREC staff members, has been of immense help due to their extensive network within the communities. By providing constant training to volunteers, we have built capacity and volunteers have gained many skills. We have helped 6 volunteers to get employment in climate change or environment related field. We have trained volunteers in accredited class by the SRUC 'Organic Vegetable Gardening'.

4. Unexpected outcome – changes that happened which you did not anticipate when you submitted your application.

### **Partnership:**

Partnership and effective referral have been key to the success of Communities for Conservation. Our strategic partnership with Home Energy Scotland stands out of all the other partnerships. The excellent working relationship that we have developed with Home Energy Scotland has translated into trainings, events, joint visits, workshops, referrals, invitations to speak at conferences, etc. This close partnership working has bear fruits to the clients that we work with. In addition to Home Energy Scotland, we have partnered with the following organizations:

- Home Energy Scotland: for training, joint visits, referrals, speaking at conferences, workshops, and events.
- Dunedin Canmore for referral purposes.

- Al-furqan for the Plan Bee event in February 2016
- RNIB for a workshop
- St Mary RC primary School for a Plan Bee event.
- Hanover Trust Housing Association for referral purposes
- Nepal Scotland Association to organize the ELREC Cycles for Nepal Challenge.
- Shelter Scotland for referral purposes
- Shakti ladies group for workshops, referrals and for our community garden in Niddrie.
- The Whitmuir Organic Farm for trips and talks.
- Gorgie City Farm for the Seeds Swap Event
- Polish Professionals for referral purposes
- Polish scouts for workshops and climate change activities.
- Care and repair for referral purposes.
- Diabetes Scotland for a workshop
- Pakistan Society for regular workshop sessions on climate change.
- Hunters Hall cooperative part of the committee meeting
- Himalayan Centre and Greatway Foundation for a movie screening 'Chacing Ice'
- IWomen for workshops
- Edinburgh Community food for a Food and Mood workshop
- Polmigration event project presentation
- Fife diet for a workshop session on the Fife diet
- SCCan network
- Greatway Foundation for a Radio Show
- NKS for a joint workshop
- The Welcoming Association for a gardening workshop
- Multi-Cultural Family Base for referral purposes
- Chinese Evangelical Church for a project presentation.
- RBGE for the Greenkeepers group at the Edible garden.
- Interfaith Association for a project presentation
- Scour Scotland for joint visits
- Mehip for referral purposes
- Chinese Elderly Care for a project presentation to over 50s group
- Polish Family support centre for referral purposes
- Muslim women association of Edinburgh for workshops
- Bethany Charity Church for referral purposes
- Sikh Sanjog for workshops on energy efficiency, food growing, climate change and for referral purposes
- Other informal groups.
- In addition, we have initiated the Joint event at St Thomas of Aquins school. We have led the meeting with several local CCF groups to organize the joint event celebration in March.

It was unexpected that our activities would attract so many groups, associations and

organizations and we are very grateful that it did.

### Referrals:

- We have referred **90** cases to Home Energy Scotland mainly to check eligibility to schemes for energy efficiency measures. We had 60% conversion from referrals to Home Energy Scotland to HEEPS referrals (i.e. Warmer Homes Scotland, Energy Assistance scheme, Affordable Warmth team, HHCRO, Benefit Check, Tariff Support, HEEPS Loan). Nearly a quarter of the clients qualified for energy efficiency measures.
- **4** clients have successfully been referred to the British Gas Trust for clearing energy debts.
- **2** clients have been referred to Shelter Scotland for housing related issues.
- **1** client has been referred to Cyrenians.
- **4** clients have been referred to Care and Repair team for minor repair work (i.e. fixing a sharp edge on the sink and sealing a window).
- **5** council tenants have been helped. One of the cases related to windows. The second case regarded the need to get a full heating system upgrade. The south Asian Link Officer called the council and the client was eligible. The third case related to discrimination issues. 2 clients had windows that needed attention. The Council repaired those.
- **11** clients have been referred for a benefit check.

### Learning & Reflection

The delivery of the activities has been constantly improved and refined over the course of the project. For example, the home visit questionnaire pack and our own way of delivering home visits was inspired by various questionnaires from different organizations including Home Energy Scotland's Home Energy Check, ScoreScotland's questionnaire, CARCAP project's questionnaire, and other questionnaires. The information was then compiled in our own questionnaire which we have improved along the project.

From the Chinese Community Link Officer:

"In the beginning of the project, I was using my successful 'free' boiler cases as a tool for promoting the home visits. This backfired a few times since some people got disappointed when they were not eligible for a free boiler upgrade. Therefore, I stopped emphasizing this aspect of the work. Instead, I would say that I was going to help the household to save money and energy during the home visit".

From the Sessional South Asian Community Link Officer:

"One of the problems I faced has been to get the key to open meter cabinets as most

women never knew where their key was. By getting the triangular gas key to open the meter cabinet, it made the work much easier”.

From the South Asian Community Link Officer:

“It was sometimes difficult to engage with all the family members. For example either the elderly parents are very much set in their own ways and they are less likely to change, or the young daughter in-laws are not interested in making changes as the bills are usually paid by the man of the house so they don’t feel the need to change their habits and reduce energy use. In other cases the elders of the family seem to be quite careful with their energy use but find it difficult to get the rest of the family on board. The main barrier I feel has to be language and literacy in many of the households especially amongst first generation South Asians who came to the UK in the 60’s and have been working in manual jobs, businesses and factories. This was overcome by our project by employing link officers from these diverse communities. This group was not at all comfortable or skilled on IT and the internet so it was difficult to convince them to register online as many don’t know how to use the internet or have computers at home or the confidence to try. I tried to overcome this by getting one member of the family (usually the youngest one) to use comparison websites and get the best deal for the family and home. As I spoke the same language as much of the community I worked with, it was easier for me to explain how important it is to keep an eye on their energy consumption and bills and why they should reduce them and use the appliances efficiently. I had to adapt my approach and style depending on the household. For example some households required a more detailed session where I had to explain everything in more detail as well as show them how to read meters and navigate online. For other households who were more educated and more energy literate, it was easier and quicker to explain our aims and get them interested. Doing the home visits in the clients own homes was the best way to influence people and get them to understand energy efficiency and personalize the home visit to suit their needs and their homes. The main lessons I learnt during the length of the project were that most people do want to lower their bills and make their homes as energy efficient as possible, however many are restricted to do this due to low incomes or lack of knowledge and information or language issues which prevent them from seeking the help they need or access to services. I was also pleasantly surprised to learn how keen and serious some women were to learn and gain new information. This was very refreshing as empowering the women does and will lead to action and putting the knowledge to practice. It was also nice to see young children in some homes encouraging their parents to switch off appliances and be more aware of energy use in the home. My advice to other groups who want to help people save energy and cut bills is to always use the ‘show’ rather than ‘tell’ approach. The project has had a positive reaction from everyone and will continue to do so as it really does help people make changes and benefits them by giving them the knowledge they need to control their energy use within their own homes and save some money in the process, so it’s a win- win situation for the people and the environment.”

## Finance & Administration

The financial procedure used by Keep Scotland Beautiful and the Climate Challenge Fund is different from many of the projects run by ELREC over the last few years and has, therefore, provided a learning curve for the project and administrative staff and volunteers involved. These differences include the need to submit receipts along with each claim, being reimbursed for expenses rather than receiving funding periodically, and having a number of specific budget headings rather than fewer, more general, budgets.

The requirement to provide receipts for all expenditure at the time of submitting claims required a great deal more time and personnel input than we are used to. It also meant that the organisation had to front the money for project expenditure before being reimbursed by KSB for this expenditure. This proved somewhat challenging as it meant that, in some instances, resources from other projects had to be used to pay for project expenses before being reimbursed. However, being able to claim salaries and rent in advance and increasing the frequency of claims helped to alleviate this issue. Providing copies of all receipts throughout the project, although this changed from hard copies sent by post to email submission, created a lot of paperwork. All receipts had to be photocopied and scanned before being emailed along with the claim form. While providing these receipts is understandable perhaps a better system can be developed that does not use as much paper.

This process required a significant amount of forward planning and, although initially very time consuming, provided a sound footing to the project. Once procedures had been put in place within the organisation to keep track of all expenditure in more detail and continuously compile claims as expenses were incurred it allowed us to keep a very close eye on budgets and what was being spent. The claim tracker that was sent to us following every claim and on request was very useful in this. Perhaps a small improvement would be to have this available online through password protection so that the latest tracker is always available to both parties at all times. Having seen the effectiveness of this the administrative team altered our systems to implement similar tracking methods for our other projects which helped us to better keep on top of the budgets of all of our projects.

With the system allowing us to effectively track specific budgets within the project we were better able to identify where underspends and overspends were likely to occur ahead of time and move money between budgets accordingly. This did occur on a number of occasions throughout the project as circumstances changed. The process of moving finances from one budget to another was very easy and KSB were very helpful and understanding when working with us regarding this.

An example of this is when we moved funds into the Speaker and Consultants budget to hire garden consultants to help run the various community gardens around the city. This helped the gardens run more effectively and the project coordinator could focus more time on other aspects of the project.

## Legacy

The purpose of the project was to increase awareness and encourage behaviour changes around energy efficiency, climate change and community food growing. Through trainings of link officers and volunteers, publication of a booklet on energy efficiency and community-based activities, we sought to create resources, employment opportunities and awareness that would be sustained beyond the project. Through food growing activities people have directly participated in the project activities, while training and workshops have helped in raising awareness. People have learnt gardening skills and got motivated to continue growing their own food beyond the project. Also, this made them more conscious and aware about food quality and the importance of buying organic food.

The training provided to community link officers and volunteering opportunities have helped empower members of our diverse communities to gain employment after the project life and incite them to continue climate change related work beyond the span of the project. Volunteers and link officers have been encouraged to knowledge share. Moreover, the skills acquired by the different community members through the activities of the project have increased community cohesion and breached the gap of inequalities of access to services and information. ELREC has developed ways to help communities to develop a sustainable lifestyle and increase well-being, cohesion and equality.

From the South Asian Community Link Officer:

“I aim to pass on the knowledge and information that I have learnt during the project to continue to help members of the community who ask for it or need it, especially older members of the community who are not able to access services or those members who have language barriers.”

## Supporting information

**Attached:**

Home visit pack

Booklet

Feedback documents from different events and activities.

**Home visit energy efficiency advice:**

Videos of case-studies:

Mr Massoud <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZMiSe9VN2cQ>

Mrs Wong <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnjyvdUPek8>

Mr D'Meza; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcmz2wgl154>

Mr Bladocha: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEvFLUSSl6s>

Ms Dyrak: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LyBoDkKklgs>

**Videos of events:****Video of the Spring Celebration Event:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNm6VXeaj\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNm6VXeaj_s)

Bee event with RC St Mary's school: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AmygtTz1vpo>

Bee event with Al-Furqan: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ozl1albMqig>

**CASE STUDIES****From the Polish Community Link Officer:**

"A client came to me to seek help after receiving an energy bill of £264 based on estimated meter readings. I advised the client to submit actual meter readings and monitor her energy consumption. I helped the client to set up internet account. I also called the energy supplier on her behalf and helped them to set up a direct debit. Her bill was lowered to £88."

**From the South Asian Community Link Officer:**

After home visits, 4 clients have installed draught proofing.

After a home visit, one client has installed panels behind their external walls radiators.

"One household was assisted in registering online so they could check and monitor their usage. Many households are now submitting regular meter readings, either by text or online. 10 households now understand their bills and the unit pricing. 15 households have been taught how to use comparison websites to shop for better energy deals and switch to other suppliers online".

"One of the clients had a boiler which was over 20 years old and very inefficient. The controls were located under the fireplace in the lounge area so it was almost impossible to

switch the heating on and off. The client was saying: “you have to lie on the floor and go under the fireplace”. It meant that the client couldn’t control her heating properly. Either she had the heating on all the time or she had no heating at all. The client was referred to Home Energy Scotland and she was eligible to the Warm Home Scotland scheme. We organized a survey and the client was eligible for a free heating system upgrade under the scheme. The work was completed within weeks and the client was very happy with the timescale and the process involved. It took 6 weeks from referral to installation.”

“Another client had moved to the UK about a year ago. The family who had a low income lived in a private rented flat. There was no gas supply to the property thus there was no central heating. The rooms were very cold. The client mentioned the coldness of the flat and the inability to turn the expensive electric heaters on to a community figure who then referred the client onto us. I conducted the home visit. The client said “I don’t know anything about homes in the UK as we are new but I have 2 young kids and the home just isn’t warm enough so we spend most of our time in the living room [it had an electric fire and an oil filled radiator] so kids can play, do their homework and sleep at night as it’s kept warm with the heaters”. Also they had an electric cooker and an electricity prepayment meter which they didn’t like as they felt it was too expensive to run due to them being on benefits. Thanks to our effective work with Home Energy Scotland to arrange for surveys and paperwork, the client now has a new boiler, 5 new radiators and a gas meter in the property and the home is much better – “my husband has a health condition so now he can be comfortable in his own home” says the client. The prepayment has been changed to a standard meter so the client can pay for both gas and electric through Direct Debit thus saving some money. The client is very happy and satisfied with the process. They felt it was done very quickly and feel very grateful for all the individuals both professionally and personally who got involved to make this happen. The landlord is very happy with the quality of the work. The property now has gas central heating, with no cost to him. We are now helping the tenant to negotiate for a gas cooker from the landlord as it’s cheaper and quicker to cook on than an electric oven.”

Quote of a client upon saving £525 by year by switching to cheaper energy supplier “I didn’t know how to shop for better energy deals. Now I will use comparison website regularly to make sure I always get the best deal for gas and electricity. I saved £525 and got plenty of tips on how to reduce energy use thanks to the home visit and the project!”.

Quote from a client: “I wish every household knew how much energy they waste by over using or unknowingly using appliances incorrectly”

Quote from a client: “Thanks for showing me how to read meters, now I don’t need to rely on my husband to do it, I can do it myself”

Quote from a client: “Thanks for bringing the energy monitor as I know now how much energy my electric shower and cooker uses”.

“After establishing how much heat was lost through the old draughty single glazed

windows, a client who always had the curtains closed to prevent heat loss decided to invest into double glazing windows. “

One client was amazed that they received a free boiler upgrade as they assumed the scheme would not apply to their circumstances. They said: “I’m truly amazed and grateful as the heating system was very old and constantly breaking down. Thanks to the home visit and referral to Home Energy Scotland I now have a new and modern heating system”.

On empowerment: “Many female attendees from the Sikh Sanjog and Pakistan Society ladies groups had no idea how to read meters and how to read bills. After one of the sessions some of the ladies expressed their gratitude as they now felt empowered and equipped on the matter. They felt that they knew how much energy appliances consumed so now they could go home and put this to practice with the rest of the family members, who were also given this information. This was unexpected reaction for me as I took for granted that many people knew this sort of information but the fact is that many members of the communities are not literate IT savvy so they only get their source of information from other people and TV programmes.”

#### **From the Chinese Community Link Officer:**

“The client is a retired Chinese family living in Edinburgh. Mr Z. lives with his wife and daughter. Mr and Mrs Z complained that their electricity bill was very high. It was about £800 per month on average. They thought somebody stole the electricity from their flat. After investigation, I found that Mr Z had the hot water cylinder turned on cylinder 24 hours a day. This cylinder had been used like this for over 20 years. I told them that the reason for their high bill was that they kept on using electricity to keep hot water in the cylinder throughout the year. I advised that they should switch on the cylinder for 30 minutes before they needed the hot water and that the cylinder should be turned off when there is no need for hot water. They took my advice on board. 3 months later, when Mr and Mrs Z met David on an occasion, they hugged me and said ‘you saved us, David! Our electricity bills have been halved since we have stopped to boil water all the time!’ They changed their behaviour with other aspect of the house energy use.”

“The client is an elderly Chinese man living alone in his flat. His only income is his Pension Credit. Due to his financial difficulties for years, the client seldom turned on the heaters even when it snowed in winter. To minimise his bill, during winter the client went to the library or the shopping mall during the day to find a warmer environment. After the library and the shopping mall closed, he was forced to go to McDonald or KFC as a shelter. When both restaurants were closed, the client was home unwillingly. Due to the severe weather, the client was always in uncomfortable condition and sometimes ill in the winter. I conducted a home visit, and I immediately referred the client to Home Energy Scotland to find out whether the client would be eligible for any grant to improve his home. In October, I along with a staff from Home Energy Scotland went for a second home visit. The client successfully qualified for the Energy Assistance Scheme and received a free combiboiler,

radiators and loft insulation a few weeks later. After the improvement, the client always stays at home and enjoys his warm home. The client really appreciated the help as he can now invite people home again”.

#### **From the Sessional South Asian Link Officer:**

“The house was not very energy efficient as it was a detached bungalow. The client mentioned how she was having difficulties of draughts coming from the windows and the door. There had been some dampness in the house in the past. She explained that she uses electric heaters to heat her bedroom at night. She had been advised in past that turning on one gas radiator in the house was going to be almost as expensive as heating up the whole house. I explained to her that she should use gas central heating and turn off the TRVS in those rooms which were not in use. She took the advice on board and was much grateful that she was feeling warmer and didn’t have to top up the electricity so often”.

#### **Quotes from the Communities:**

Feedback from an attendee of the Launch Event: “Today event was a great achievement, wonderful experience and learning new things meeting passionate people about our life and planet. Thank you for making it happened!”.

Feedback from the Spring Celebration: “It was entertaining for the kids as well as educational” “I really liked the fact that it is a family event open to all” “Great event” “I really enjoyed the stalls, the talks and performances, and the community involvement. Fantastic!” “Good fun for whole family anyone could think of something interesting”. Inspired by the different aspects of the events, people said: “I will install LED lighting in my house” “I will connect with people here in Edinburgh interested in recycling clothes” “I will recycle more than I do and watch how much water I use” “I am more aware of issues and I will promote climate change” “I will get more efficient with my home and buying energy efficient products” “It’s good that we all know about conservation.” “I will do more community action” “I will be more environmentally conscious. Grow more.” “I will take no longer than 4 minutes to shower” “I will plant vegetables in my garden” “I will improve the environment – be more energy conscious” “I feel more inclined to speak to people close to me and my neighbourhood”

Feedback from a participant to the Whitmuir Organic Farm: “Thanks for another great day. I was reliving childhood stories around farm animals; hens and pigs. Wonderful to experience the cacophony of the turkeys! And to come face to face with bulls and to be told they are peaceful. The farm is well appreciated looking at the busy cafe atmosphere...It was interesting to learn that so much planning and organisation goes into ensuring that every aspect, action and interaction in the farm is thought so thoroughly to meet organic standards. Heather, Pete and the staff were welcoming, friendly and willing to share their knowledge throughout our visit. The lunch was terrific, kids ate soup. Rishi said it was the best lunch he had eaten. Transport was well thought off and planned. Thanks for taking us to the farm and for developing an appreciation of organic farming

concepts.”

What people liked most about the Autumn Celebration: “Mike’s talk, all the workshops, Food, drumming. Thank you!” “The information provided about climate change, how to protect the environment and reduce energy” “Friendly volunteers” “I think it was perfect and we can save the earth!” “The workshops, speakers, stalls, music, food, kid’s activities, salsa: it was great!” “The interaction with people” “The friendliness of the group” “Kids had great fun” “Sense of community and the interaction of various cultures” “Getting all the communities together” “Lovely atmosphere, great food, friendly people and informative stalls” “DIY cosmetics and energy-saving cycling stall” “Be the Change’ talk and storytelling”. Some of the actions you said you will take as a result of the event: “ I will order food from Leith Food Assembly and make my own natural products“. “Plant more seeds and buy more organic food” “More vigilant in monitoring energy use” “Using public transport or walking to reduce pollution” “Save water and gas, reduce carbon footprint” “Tell more inspiring stories, not just focus on the bad” “Continue to be conscious of the choices I make every day” “Buy local products”

Feedback from the Multicultural Eco-Celebration: “We enjoyed the cooking demonstration - very delicious from leftovers. Lovely people.” What you enjoyed most: “The diversity of people.” “Home Energy Talk.” “Really enjoyed the upcycling jewellery workshop.” “I enjoyed all the things that were on. Thanks.” “I loved the fashion show.” “Thanks for a lovely day – lots of good food and loads for kids to do – we are leaving with seeds, a dream catcher and a bird feeder.” “Great day, great food, great show”. “Wonderful kids activities and storyteller.” “Everything I think has been done with love and dedication. Very good atmosphere and vibrations. “ “Lots and lots to do, wish I’d come earlier. I will next year“ “I liked today because I got to meet loads of new people and learn about their culture.”

We screened the documentary ‘Just Eat It’ and debated on the question “how to tackle the problem of food waste. A participant said: “this movie has changed my life: it showed how much waste there is out there. I’m even less fussy about use by date. I will urge people not to waste food.”

### **Volunteers testimonials:**

Volunteer testimonial: “I have thoroughly enjoyed my 3 months working at ELREC on Communities for Conservation and must now move on to a full-time employment at WarmWorks. I am confident my volunteering was crucial in the success of this job offer as I gained great insight into WarmWorks at ELREC. For this reason alone I would highly recommend volunteering in general as well as for gaining a broad range of skills and knowledge of different work environments. Further to this I would especially recommend working with ELREC as the staff are very friendly, supportive and have a great enthusiasm for the work they do. From the start I was given plenty of freedom and choice for what I wanted to do which made me feel comfortable and confident in my tasks. The environment allowed me to make the most of my expertise and feel valued as someone who can contribute to helping the communities that the charity supports. I would like to sincerely

thank ELREC and wish it a very successful future.”—David Jones

Volunteer testimonial: “I am Bageshri. I got involved with ELREC since last year through its community gardening project. And started volunteering for the same project from April this year. I love gardening and enjoy volunteering as a gardener coordinator. This volunteering has helped to build my self-confidence and develop new skills. Bageshri “

Volunteer testimonial: “I am soon to start a new job as part of a team which will set up the upcoming Scottish Independent Living Fund, and I look back at the past few months with gratitude and a smile on my face. ELREC was my introduction to work in the UK – I learnt a lot, and I met many talented and dedicated people. I moved to Scotland just before the summer of 2014 to rejoin with my partner and our daughter. I was living and working in Paris, whereas they were over here in Edinburgh and I was missing my daughter growing up. When I arrived, I found a cloistered job market with many barriers for those who had no work experience locally. [...] Actually I would like to thank them [the staff] and everyone else at ELREC, as I think the organisation has brought me far more than I would ever be able to give back.” – Alex Bunch.

Volunteer testimonial: “My participation in the CCF project enabled me to work more proficiently within a group setting which has invaluable enhanced my confidence, knowledge and interpersonal skills. Similarly my involvement has improved my understanding of environmentally focused activities that could be implemented into an individual day to day routine. I’m forever indebted to ELREC for giving me the opportunity to work for them” Tuntiak.

Piece written by volunteer Andrea Westcott-Lacoursiere for the ELREC Newsletter:

“On 25 April 2015, a massive earthquake with a magnitude of 7.8 hit Nepal, killing more than 9,000 people and injuring over 23,000. The April 2015 Nepal earthquake, or ‘Gorkha earthquake’ has devastated the mountainous Asian state- destroying crucial infrastructure, such as key transport lines, hospitals, health centres, schools and countless homes. In the worst natural disaster to strike Nepal since the 1934 Nepal- Bihar earthquake, 2.8 million have been displaced leaving hundreds of thousands of families homeless, without access to basic supplies, such as safe drinking water, food or shelter. Compelled to do something to help various members of the Nepalese community in Edinburgh, the Nepal Scotland Association and the Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC) decided to take a stand, or more accurately, a pedal, to raise money for the already poor nation of Nepal, and its people in these very difficult times. The result? The ELREC Cycles for Nepal Challenge: a 20-mile charity cycle ride from central Edinburgh to Balerno and back to raise much-needed funds for the Nepal Scotland Association to assist in the reconstruction of schools and homes destroyed by the earthquake. On 9 August, thirty people of varying ages and backgrounds accepted the challenge and took to their bikes to support Nepali victims, while a handful of supporters followed on foot. On the beautiful summer’s day, the path along the Water of Leith through Dean Village rang to the excitement and dedication felt by participants. One of the dedicated cyclists I had the opportunity to speak with was twenty-two year old Manish Khatri, a fourth year Computing

student and Campus Officer at Napier university who, upon discovering the news of the terrible earthquake decided to travel to Nepal for two months to help. Manish explains that “I knew that my family and friends back in Nepal were OK but I couldn’t stop thinking about the ones that weren’t, and the ways I could help them if I was in the field”. He decided to use his university, work, friends and family connections to raise as much money as possible under the Nepal Scotland Association (NSA) and send a work team to Nepal. Manish and his friend Ashis Pun travelled to Nepal on their own pocket so they could use their NSA funding to assist those in the most affected areas, including the village where Manish grew up: “When we were going around the affected areas for the first time, my hands and legs were shaking, my eyes started watering as the streets that I used to walk were not same, the monuments, the temple and the school were all destroyed.” Issue 44: July 2015. While in the field Manish and his team slept outside in tents, “and had to keep running every night when there was a little shake”. Despite this, they were involved in fifteen different projects. Manish decided however to use his own savings to help his village of Dhading as opposed to using the NSA funding, because the way he saw it, his village might have been destroyed but it still had many capable people that could help. In that spirit Manish bought mosquito nets for 206 homes, construction tools for schools and houses, and provided money and staple food ingredients for the elderly in Dhading. Additionally, the team took on a project in Manbu, neighboring Barpak, which is near the epicentre of the earthquake, in one of the most remote areas of Gurkha. The project was to help rebuild the school and hostel, which served to accommodate students from more than 15 villages, as well as the poor and disabled. Manish described the hardship of these people who weren’t receiving any assistance from the government, but pointed out that the school had over 600 locals over the past two months come to try and help even if their son or daughter didn’t go to school. He said that “the unity was beautiful”, but even with their help and solidarity “those kids that had lost their family or who were in an extremely poor situation were sleeping on the floor, and skipping meals because the hostel couldn’t afford to provide them lunch.” Manish explained that “the students in the hostel reminded me of myself, and my friends in Scotland,” this tore at Manish’s heartstrings, and he decided to go for broke and give nearly everything he had, 50,000 Nepalese rupees (£420) to assist the students. On the way back from Gurkha, however, Manish had an accident, and was injured and had to spend the rest of his savings on X-rays and medical treatment. Although he spent all of his savings, became ill, and was injured he does not regret anything he did, and is grateful for the opportunity to help his native country, and frankly just to be back alive. When Manish conveyed to me how much he appreciates, and wants to thank ELREC for organizing “such an amazing charity work” I could feel so much warmth and gratitude in his voice. He also said that he felt very blessed to have participated in the Cycle for Nepal challenge, where the team had a strong sense of togetherness and “everyone made him feel like part of his or her family.” Moreover, the Cycle for Nepal Challenge helped to raise around £1500 in online and cash donations for the Nepal Scotland Association. Indeed, everyone who organized the event, participated or donated should feel proud to have been a part of it, and to have contributed to such a worthy cause. Although the Cycle for Nepal Challenge was a great success, and the funds raised will go to assisting some of the most affected people in Nepal, the destruction from the earthquake has still left many populations and rural areas to fend for themselves.

Manish insists that “even a little help means so much for [the people of Nepal].” The funds will help to re-build homes for the victims in villages such of Nuwakot and Gorkha where there is acute poverty.

## PICTURES:

The Communities for Conservation Team



## COMMUNITY EVENTS

Autumn Celebration Community Event.









## Multicultural Eco-Celebration Partnership Event







Communities for Conservation Launch Event.



Julian Holbrook (KSB) and Zarina Ahmad (CEMVO) speaking at the Launch event.



Stall of the Royal Botanic Garden at the Launch event.





Film screening and discussion with Julian and Zarina.





Spring Celebration in March 2015.



January 2014







'Bee For Christmas' Event on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December at the RC St Mary's school in Leith.







Cycling Trip to Glentress Forest Park.



Trip to Whitmuir Organic Farm



**COMMUNITY GARDENS:**



Wester Hailes Community Garden Before



Wester Hailes Community Garden After









The Greenkeepers group at the Royal Botanic Garden

















Community Garden at Milton Road Edinburgh College





The Niddrie Community Garden:





Drumrae Community Garden









Community event at the Rannoch Community Centre with the Drumbrae Community Allotment.







## Climate Change Discussions and Workshops



Climate Change discussion with the Chinese Community:



Climate Change discussion at the ELREC office.



Conservation Day with staff and volunteers: Nestbox building at Loch Lomond National Park



Climate change discussion in the Fife church:





4 volunteers who received the accredited class by the SRUC 'Organic Vegetable Gardening'





ELREC's CCF Project Coordinator with the CCF Director David Gunn and the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform (Aileen McLeod) holding ELREC's Climate Change Pledge.



Communities for Conservation team with two volunteers.

## Trip to Whitmuir Farm







Power of Food Festival on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June with from left to right: Project coordinator Jean-Matthieu Gaunand at the Edinburgh College community gardener Severine Monvoisin, Chair of Edible Edinburgh Councillor Lesley Hinds, and Part of the Power of Food Festival Committee Marie-Amélie Viatte.



ELREC Cycles for Nepal Challenge:



Trip to the Queen Elizabeth Forest Park discovering the forest and its wildlife.



## Edinburgh Sustainable Meet up visit to Forest Garden



## Radioshow with Radio Kilimanjaro



### Name of report authors and date it was finalised:

Authors: Jean-Matthieu Gaunand, Parveen Ishaq, Ewelina Lukaszek, David Tai, Adil Ibrahim, Asma Kassim, Neil Ogilvy, Elisabetta Spano, David Panton.

Date: 05/05/2016	
<b>Activities Grid</b> – Please fill in only those activities which relate to your project. More information about all of these activities can be provided in other sections of the report – these figures will enable us to collate some overall impacts of the CCF.	
How many <b>advice/information centres</b> – regular drop-in centre, advice surgery etc. - is your project running?	1 advice/information centres
How many <b>training sessions where skills and/or information were passed on</b> – e.g. composting training, cooking workshops, etc. – has your project has held.	53 training sessions & 218 gardening sessions
How many <b>events</b> did your project hold, e.g. information fairs, open days, etc.? Do not include events held by other organisations which you have attended.	17 events
How many staff, volunteers or community members have achieved <b>qualifications</b> through the project – e.g. City & Guilds Energy Awareness, Trail Cycle Leader, etc.	9 staff or community members
How many people were <b>directly employed</b> by your project. Tell us the full-time equivalent (FTE) number of employees (e.g. 3 days per week = 0.6 FTE).	3.5 FTE
Is the project is supporting the development of any <b>long-term jobs</b> which are not dependent of CCF Funding? How many?	2 long term jobs
How many <b>people are actively involved</b> in your project – attending groups & workshops, using the project facilities etc.?	67 people
How many <b>people volunteer</b> their time and energy to keeping the project going – don't forget the members of your management committee or board.	79 volunteers
How many <b>schools</b> are involved in your project?	2 schools
How many <b>community-owned buildings</b> have been	N/A

refurbished?	
How many <b>Home Energy Checks or similar energy efficiency reports</b> have been carried out by your project?	250 home visits
How many households have been <b>referred on to other agencies or providers</b> (e.g. HES, Green Deal assessor) for further action?	117 households referred
How many households <b>installed energy efficiency measures</b> – loft, wall or floor insulation, draft-proofing, double glazing etc. – as a result of your project?	26 energy efficiency measures
How many households <b>installed green energy generation measures</b> – photovoltaic panels, solar thermal panels, air or ground source heat pumps, wood fuelled heating systems etc – as a result of your project?	0
How many <b>miles of car journeys have been reduced</b> through the activities of your project?	N/A
How many <b>square metres (m<sup>2</sup>) of community growing space</b> (allotments, poly-tunnels, raised beds, community gardens) has your project brought into use?	19m <sup>2</sup>
How many <b>tonnes of waste</b> have been diverted from landfill because of the activities of your project?	N/A
How many <b>kWh of energy</b> has been reduced because of the activities of your project?	1,569,647.42 KWh