



# ELREC Newsletter

Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council

*Promoting Equality • Fighting Discrimination • Fostering Good Relations*

ISSUE 47: June 2016

## From the Chair

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E Spano

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##### Equalities Engagement Officer

M Rahman

##### Support and Advice

A Musamba

##### Youth Development

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N Greener

##### True Colours Worker

U Dosen

##### Youth Zone Coordinator

C Nicoletti

##### Research Assistant

H Lawrence

##### Bright Choices Officers

N Currie, M Rostami, A Arabzadeh

##### Work Space Maintenance

D Panton

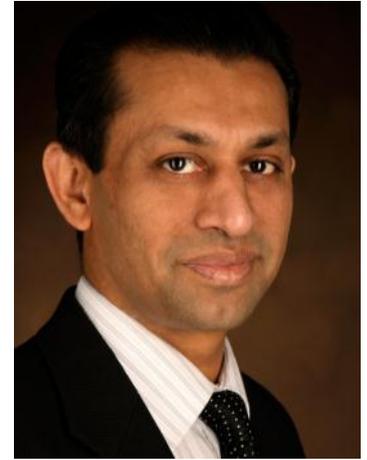
##### Communities for Conservation:

Coordinator — J M Gaunand

Link Officers — D Tai, E K Lukaszek,

P Ishaq, A Ibrahim, A Kassim, M Diaz

Hello and welcome to the June 2016 edition of our newsletter and Eid Mubarak to all those celebrating in the next few days. I would like to start with a small note regarding the EU referendum that took place on the 23rd of June. Following the results of this being announced there have been disturbing reports of instances of abuse being carried out by a minority of people towards minority communities and immigrants. This is deplorable and totally unacceptable. While there appear to be minimal instances of this occurring in the Edinburgh and Lothians region I would encourage anyone that has been a victim or witness of such actions to report to the Police or a Third Party Reporting centre. Information on how to do this can be found on page 4 of this newsletter.



I would also like to re-emphasise what we said regarding the terrible events in Orlando. Edinburgh and Lothian Regional Equality Council (ELREC) would like the community to know that it supports the LGBT people. The murder of innocent people at Orlando, Florida is totally unacceptable. If anyone in the community needs support, please contact ELREC.

Since April our projects have continued to work hard in their respective fields. Our Equalities Engagement project has been particularly busy with the Scottish Parliament elections as well as the referendum. We have also got a new cycling project starting up funded by Cycling Scotland which aims to get more people from a variety of backgrounds into cycling. The Big Lottery Young Start have funded our YPAH project for another year and our other projects are still going strong. You can find much more detailed information in the following pages. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our staff and volunteers for their hard work and dedication in not only ensuring that these projects are a success but also securing further funding for the upcoming year and beyond.

Finally, one of our volunteers, Elly Gladman, has been very generous in taking part in the Great Scottish Walk and Run Festival and running 10k to raise money for ELREC. At last count Elly had raised a fantastic £370 for the organisation. On behalf of everyone at the organisation I'd like to thank her for her efforts. If anyone would like to do something similar please get in touch. As an organisation we are always looking for ways to raise money for the work that we do.

**Foysoyl Choudhury MBE**

## From the Vice Chair

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Dear all,

Welcome to the June edition of the newsletter.

I would like to update you all of the staff changes that we have had over the last few months with projects completing and others beginning.

Una Dosen has been hired as our dedicated Volunteer Development Coordinator. She will now be doing this in conjunction with her work as TRUE Colours Coordinator.

Hannah Lawrence has completed her second short spell with us and has been working hard to develop a new project and obtain funding as a follow on from the excellent report produced on Poverty and Inequality.

Nick Greener has re-joined us in the same capacity as Youth Development Officer and Cristiana Nicoletti has taken over the Youth Zone and has been doing an excellent job.

Finally, Neil Ogilvy will be taking over our latest project Routes to Roots that is being funded by the Heritage Lottery fund. We are currently in the process of hiring two part time positions, an Administrator and a Finance Officer to take over his current position of Office and Program Coordinator.

### **Shami Khan**

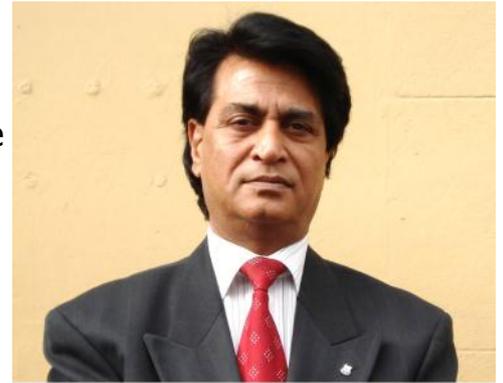
#### **Vice Chair and Convenor of the Personnel Subcommittee**

### **ELREC in West Lothian—From Carl John, Treasurer**

As our name indicates, we are the Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality council and as part of that ELREC have been active in West Lothian. ELREC have helped the West Lothian Community Race Forum revitalise after 18 Months of little activity caused by the loss of several committee members.

ELREC jointly with the race forum and the Lothian Interfaith Group planned and held a very successful event in West Lothian College, Livingston. Over 70 people from diverse faiths, ethnic origins and organisations attended and were addressed by various guest speakers. We all dined together enjoying an excellent meal with dishes from all over the world prepared by students of the college. We then had time for networking and getting to know each other, which I found most useful. We hope to make this an annual event.

The Race Forum, with ELREC support, hopes to hold a mini Mela in late September this year in Livingston with Music, Entertainment and food, along with commercial stalls and representation from Police Scotland, The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Scottish Ambulance and stalls from UK Border Agency, UK Emigration Etc. Any help in setting this up would be welcomed.



## From the Project Lead Officer and Fundraiser

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Dear all,

Welcome back to our newsletter!

Since our last issue in April I am happy to announce that a few more projects have obtained funding and they have started, or are about to start.

In April we received confirmation from Big Lottery – Young Start of their funding for another year of Young People Against Hate. We are very grateful to Big Lottery to allow us to continue our successful project that works with young people in some deprived areas in Edinburgh to fight hate crime and discrimination of any form. Our project coordinator Nick Greener is back in place since the end of April. You can read more details on the project in Nick's page of this newsletter. In addition, this funding will provide match funding to the Youth Zone, our project that focuses on supporting young people in their career choices. Thanks to Big Lottery we will be able to continue the Youth Zone until end of June 2017.

In May we have received confirmation for funding to run again our Volunteer to Achieve project, which had not received any funding in 2015-16. As coordinator we have recruited our own Una Dosen, who has been managing and coordinating our volunteers since last year. The activities of the project will include the preparation of a training programme to develop the skills of volunteers and their employability. You will find more details on the project in the following pages of the newsletter.

Finally, in May we have also got confirmation of funding for our heritage project Routes to Roots, a project that we are all very fond of in ELREC, as our staff has worked on it for quite some time. Thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund we will be able to run the project for two years starting from 1st July. The activities of the project aim to promote integration among diverse communities in Edinburgh by mainstreaming shared heritage, with the purpose of showing the benefits and positive aspects of migration in Scotland. We all look forward to reading more about it in our next issue, when the project will have taken off.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their contribution to ELREC: the Board, for their support, the staff, for their hard work, and our volunteers, for their dedication. Thank you all for your commitment to ELREC.

Project Lead Officer/Fundraiser

**Elisabetta Spano**

**[espano@elrec.org.uk](mailto:espano@elrec.org.uk)**



## From the Office and Program Coordinator

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Hi everyone,

The last few weeks and months have been busy in the admin finalising projects at the year end in March and working on getting the new financial year started. All of the volunteers have been working hard and their contribution is very appreciated.

I am also pleased to announce that, starting in July, I will be changing position in the organisation and running the new Routes to Roots project that is being funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The project aims to mainstream the heritage of minority communities in Edinburgh, the contributions they have made to society and in doing so help with integration. I am looking forward to the challenge and you will be hearing much more about the project in the coming weeks. The project will be looking for volunteers so please get in touch if you are interested.



I have enjoyed my time as Office and Program Coordinator at the organisation and am sure that whoever takes over the post will do a great job.

**Neil Ogilvy**

**NOgilvy@elrec.org.uk**

### **ELREC's Support and Advice Service**

If you've been discriminated against; need assistance or are looking for housing and benefits advice, we're here to help. We offer free and impartial advice for individuals who have suffered discrimination, need to report hate crimes or need assistance in working with public bodies. If we're unable to help, we'll help you take your case to an appropriate organisation who can.

If you would like to come and see us, please call and book an appointment first, and also write down details of the incident, paying particular attention to dates. We'll listen to your case and make an assessment, helping you to identify your options and decide on the best course of action.

To report an incident or get more information contact us at: ELREC, 14 Forth Street, Edinburgh EH1 3LH. (T) 0131 556 0441 (F) 0131 556 8577(E) admin@elrec.org.uk (W) www.elrec.org.uk

Information on how to report online can be found here:  
<https://www.scotland.police.uk/secureforms/hate-crime/>

## Elly Runs for ELREC

Everyone at ELREC would like to extend a warm thank you and congratulations to our volunteer Elly Gladman who ran 10 kilometres on the 26th of June to raise money for the organisation. At last count she had raised an amazing £370. Donations are still welcome through the link below as well as her reasons for running.

Below is her fundraising promotion:

'Earlier this month, I ran 10k at the Great Scottish Walk and Run Festival in aid of ELREC. It was a fantastic day, and I was heartened by the mixture of old and young people participating. Running is not an activity that I would normally do, but having trained for the event, I have come to enjoy this new level of fitness, and hope to be running longer distances over the next couple of months. I'd recommend to anyone looking for a challenge to try pushing themselves - whether it's through long distance races, or just trying something you wouldn't normally do, and while you're at it, raise money for ELREC in the process. Thank you to everyone who has given support, running advice, and donated to the fundraising webpage! We've already raised a magnificent £370, and there's still time to donate at [www.gofundme.com/elly4elrec](http://www.gofundme.com/elly4elrec)

The event picture shows the last time I ran competitively. I was last place, but may have won a good old 'effort' prize. I'm not sure the Scottish Run Festival does that kind of thing, so donations to ELREC would be much more appreciated.

**Elly Gladman**

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## From the TRUE Colours Coordinator

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Hello from TRUE Colours,

The project year is coming to an end and I would like to give a huge thanks to everyone who has worked and supported us in the last 15 months. It goes without saying, we couldn't have done so well without the dedication and contribution of our fabulous volunteers.

In the last few months we have been focusing to collect and analyse data regarding anti-bullying policies in Edinburgh schools. Our volunteers have been working very hard to design and create the two toolkits for teachers and students. The research reached just over 400 students and 20 teachers. They all shared their opinions on what bullying behaviour is, their personal experiences with prejudice-based bullying and what would be the best way to tackle it. The full results will be available in the TRUE Colours publication in August. The second publication, intended for future peer educators, is due to be published by the end of July. It aims to help new volunteers to create their own peer education programme and to promote the work we do with young people. The toolkits will include research findings regarding bullying in schools, examples of good practice, personal stories and a guide on how to build a successful workshop.

TRUE Colours has also continued working with schools to deliver our peer education programme. Since April the group has conducted workshops about issues such as Bullying, Prejudice and Discrimination and Cultural Awareness.

In the next period we are planning to reflect on the feedback and our previous work. In particular, we are hoping to improve our communication with young people and delivery of the workshops in order to get our message of equality and tolerance across even more efficiently. We will incorporate more activities into our workshops and make them more engaging in the process as this was one of the main messages when it comes to workshop delivery. This will also cover more creative activities and better time management during sessions.

Again, many dedicated volunteers worked on this project and my thanks and appreciation go to all those who contributed their time to be part of TRUE Colours. In particular, I would like to thank Ezgi Denli, Saaliha Hussain, Denise Jennings, I Lin Sin, Caroline Levack, Fiona S.J. Brown, Katerina Talias, Rhianna Mallia, Andrea Westcott-Lacoursiere and Marilyn de Santos.

**Una Dosen**  
**TRUE Colours Project Coordinator**  
**UDosen@elrec.org.uk**



## From the Youth Zone Coordinator

Hi everyone! Here is the latest news about the Youth Zone once again.

The first project year is over, so it is time to see how we have been doing so far and to plan the next one.

More than 30 young people have joined us since July 2015.

During the last three months we have had an intense programme of group sessions, trainings, individual support, relax and above all fun! We met some pupils from Gracemount High School and some friends from Community Renewal in Muirhouse, with whom we organised interesting workshops on CV-writing and interview skills.

We also had the pleasure to host a professional photographer who introduced us to the great world of digital and street photography. If you happen to see someone asking for permission to take a picture of you and willing to interview you, it might be someone from the Youth Zone, implementing what we have learnt from the workshop!

Last but not least, we loved our public speaking training with a wonderful expert. A participant wrote: *"Those who were initially apprehensive in doing public speaking were beginning to look and sound more confident. This was a useful learning experience in clarifying aspects of and gaining personal confidence in public speaking."*

Meanwhile, more and more people are joining our drop-in service on Wednesdays from 4 to 7 pm. Everyone is welcome there: from the ones who want to have a chat and some fun in a relaxed atmosphere, or who want to check if our couch is comfortable, to those who wish to get some help in looking for a job, higher education or volunteering opportunities.

There is a lot more coming up for the next months, so come and meet us, and do not forget to follow us on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/youthzoneedin>) or Facebook ([www.facebook.com/youthzoneedinburgh](http://www.facebook.com/youthzoneedinburgh))!

**Cristiana Nicoletti**

**Youth Zone Coordinator**



*Photography workshop*



*Public Speaking Training Session*

## Volunteering to Achieve

We are delighted to announce that ELREC has received funding for our Volunteering to Achieve project for the next 10 months. We would like to thank Voluntary Action Fund – Volunteering Support Fund for enabling this project to develop further.

Volunteers are an undeniably essential part of our organisation, bringing new insights and energy to our work. I would like to thank all of our volunteers for giving us their time; your effort and enthusiasm help to create a positive image of our organisation and build connections with the community.

### Una Dosen—Volunteer Development Officer

I volunteered with ELREC as part of my work experience week for school. When I first arrived I wasn't too sure about what ELREC did even though I attended the gala dinner in January - which was a great success. The staff were very welcoming and explained all the projects and talked about the support they give out to the ethnic minority community. I mainly focused on admin but I got a wider understanding of the whole organisation through my time here. Volunteering for ELREC gives you many job opportunities as you have a deeper insight to different work environments. The organisation also supplies you with life skills and confidence for the working world, for example, it helps 16-24 year olds prepare CVs, and it also aids people in improving their computer skills. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here and I will encourage other young people to volunteer!



### Annsia Nabi



I have volunteered at ELREC for just short of a year, initially helping to develop the new 'Routes to Roots' project. I helped develop ideas for the project as well as aid in the completion and submission of the project proposal. Throughout this process I conducted interviews with the diverse locals of Edinburgh, while also helping on the more technical planning side of the project. Following on from this I am currently working on an informative booklet about sustainability, which will be published and distributed throughout Edinburgh. Coming from a University background, studying Human Rights, volunteering at ELREC has allowed me to develop unique skills and knowledge which complement my studies. It is very important for me to develop experience outside academia, and volunteering at ELREC gives me the opportunity to learn and work on issues which I believe are very important.

### Zach Allan

I started volunteering for ELREC through a one week work shadowing programme from my University. This was a great opportunity and I was able to get to know all the different projects this organization is involved in. One aspect that I enjoyed the most in this first week and am still enjoying since, is how much influence and responsibility volunteers have and get in these projects. It is wonderful to feel valuable and put ones own ideas and knowledge into practice. After the first week I already felt like part of the team which is why I signed up to keep volunteering with ELREC and now I am heavily involved in the cycling project and also try to help out with workshops and other projects. Another amazing aspect of volunteering for ELREC is that even though you volunteer and put work into the projects you get even more out of it. Training opportunities, workshops, publications and networking with some amazing people are just some of the advantages. Due to the wide variety of projects this organization works on it is easy to find something interesting for everyone. I am gaining valuable experience for the future and help people along the way. Every member of staff and every volunteer is very polite and welcoming and always willing to help if you have questions or problems. Thank you ELREC for taking me on as a volunteer and giving me these opportunities.



### **Larissa Engelmann**



I joined ELREC almost 6 months ago because I wanted to give something back to the community. Since then, I have been part of all sorts of missions: researching and writing funding applications, volunteering at a multi-cultural eco celebration, organising and editing video podcast interviews, becoming a qualified Cycle Ride Leader, running 10k as a fundraiser, becoming a volunteer mentor, and of course meeting the amazing team who work at ELREC. I am particularly grateful for all the extra events ELREC organise for their volunteers, such as the Public Speaking workshop (thanks Cristiana), Energy Efficiency training (thanks Jean-Matthieu), Young Jobseekers' workshops (thanks Andrew), Restorative Justice training (thanks Nick), and the very enjoyable Cycle Ride Leader course (thanks again to Jean-Matthieu) - all of which were

free. I've even been employed to work for the Scottish Parliamentary elections as a Polling Assistant, which would never have happened if I hadn't been notified of the opportunity by Mizan.

Through volunteering, I have gained more confidence, made new friends, and expanded my employability, and have now taken the initiative to mentor some of the newer volunteers. Recently, I have been invited to interview for a job in the third sector, and I believe that this opportunity would not have been possible without my experience at ELREC.

Big thanks to Jean-Matthieu and the ELREC team for your support and guidance. I am very Glad(man).

### **Elly Gladman**

I have joined ELREC in the last few months as both a board member and as a volunteer. As a volunteer I have been involved in many of the projects and learnt a lot from the experience. With the Communities of Conservation project I have been helping with home visits with the South Asian community. I have also played an active part in the Equalities Engagement Diversity in Public Life project and attended many of their events. Through one of its initiatives I was able to sign up as a Polling Assistant for the last Scottish Parliament elections and the recent referendum which was a great experience.



### **Neena Agarwal**



Firstly I would like to thank ELREC for allowing me to work here for five days. I would also like to thank the staff for the warm welcome I received and for how well I was treated throughout my five day placement. I feel that in this week I have had a great learning experience for myself. This placement has allowed me to put what I have learnt in university into practice though from workshops. I also appreciate the freedom I was given in being able to create my own workshop on sectarianism. The feedback I received on workshops was also useful for when producing future

workshops or essays. Attending the networking event was also a fun and valuable experience. Although I did not contribute much to the networking discussions it was a great experience in seeing how a meeting is conducted and I also networked with many other contacts. Through being at the office I have also gained an understanding of what a professional workplace culture is like and I also feel as if my communication skills are gradually improving. I also feel as if I have benefitted greatly from the CV/interviews workshop. It has greatly changed my outlook on how to design my CVs and how to approach and deal with interviews in the future. I also learnt how to perform various actions such as performing 'minutes' during a meeting. Although minutes was not the most exciting event I am glad that I now have the knowledge to carry out this task. Although I would have liked to have seen a school workshop in action I understand that ELREC made an effort into making this possible and extraneous circumstances meant that this did not take place. A few more activities based out with the office would have been a nice change of pace. I was aware that a lot of the staff were working away from the office, doing workshops or meetings, it may have been interesting to get an understanding into what they were doing. Although I was given the opportunity to do so, retrospectively I feel I would have benefited from the redacting information from texts exercise. It is clear that this placement was a thoroughly enjoyable and valuable experience and I wish to continue volunteering at ELREC as I feel that I will learn more from further involvement with ELREC.

### **David Weir**

I have enjoyed volunteering with ELREC for the last few months and helping out with the Equality Engagement Project. Volunteering gives me a great satisfaction and feeling of accomplishment. I have always tried to be socially involved and to do my part in making the world a more tolerant place and I believe that ELREC is giving me this opportunity. Since I work full time I have also appreciated how understanding and flexible everyone has been.

### **Mina Omarchevska**

## Scottish Government Minister Visits ELREC

On Thursday the 30th of June, Annabelle Ewing MSP, Minister for Community Safety and Legal Affairs, visited ELREC's offices to discuss people's concerns following the EU referendum result. The Minister was keen to stress that all immigrants, especially EU citizens, are still welcome and valued in Scotland.

People representing a wide range of communities attended the event where discussions took place on the rise in hate crime incidents following the result around the UK and what can be done regarding these.

Questions and concerns were raised by participants regarding the response of the Police and public bodies to hate crime reports and breaches of the peace with some feeling that their complaints were not taken seriously enough. Annabelle Ewing MSP stated that while she could not comment directly on specific



cases she was sorry to hear that people had not been happy with services and would take these back to colleagues in the Police force, government departments and the Council.

We would like to thank the Minister for taking time out of her busy schedule to meet with us and the community.



If anyone was unable to attend the event and would like to pass on questions to the minister please contact us and we can send her a joint email.



## Young People Against Hate

Greetings from the YPAH group. We're delighted to announce that the project will continue for another year thanks to funding from the Big Lottery: Young Start. The project will be funded until April 2017 and we are very grateful to the volunteers who worked on the proposal, our Project Lead Officer Elisabetta Spano and of course the Big Lottery.

Developing new material on Hate crime, discrimination and bullying have been a cornerstone of the work we will be doing. Our hope is to produce material that can be circulated on social media and within youth groups and schools. We have just finished a report on Hate Crimes in North Edinburgh and that will be released on our website shortly, however we have also just collected all the national statistics on Hate crimes for the year April 2015 to March 2016 (the information can be found on the next page).

YPAH has facilitated 15 small interactive workshops in the last quarter, engaging with 100 young people throughout Edinburgh. The focus has been on young people's anxiety towards people they don't know and with a particular emphasis on Islamophobia. The YPAH group has just finished a 6 week program in partnership with Edinburgh Secure Services (ESS), who provides care and support to some of the most vulnerable young people in Edinburgh. We would like to thank the team at the ESS centres for allowing us to come in and the young people who engaged with the program.

ELREC has just implemented a new cascade training scheme which we believe will allow more volunteers, staff and members of the public to learn from any external trainings that we have at ELREC. The concept revolves around participants of trainings creating their own workshops and facilitating it for other individuals. We have just completed our first cascade training, the topic was Restorative justice. Over 10 volunteers attended the workshop and the feedback has been hugely positive. I would like to congratulate Katerina Taliatzi for creating and facilitating the workshop, we hope she will be the first of many volunteers who get involved in the cascade program.

I'd like to thank all of the volunteers for their hard work and support over the last three months, we really couldn't run the project without them. I'd also like to give a special thanks to Sabrina, Kinga and Anna who were asked by their school to choose a charity to present on and they kindly chose ELREC. They worked really hard and gave a fantastic presentation on the work of True Colours and the YPAH.

Over the next couple of months the YPAH will be doing research and developing reports on gender based violence, portrays of migrants in the UK media and the concept of Multiculturalism. We hope to produce material that can be used in a variety of different projects. We have several workshops planned for the month of July and a "Here comes the summer" event in Portobello, 2 July 2016.

Unfortunately, over the last few weeks homophobia, xenophobia and hate crime have made headlines across the world. The horrible homophobic hate crime in Orlando and the terrible post EU Referendum racist attacks on people across the UK demonstrate that more work needs to be done to support individuals and to challenge misconceptions.

**Nick Greener—Youth Development Officer**

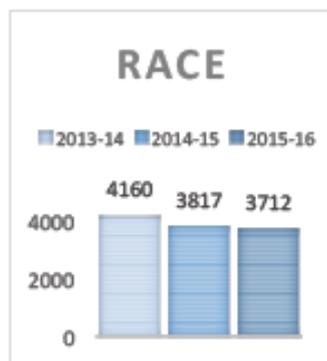


# Hate Crime Statistics – Scotland 2015-16

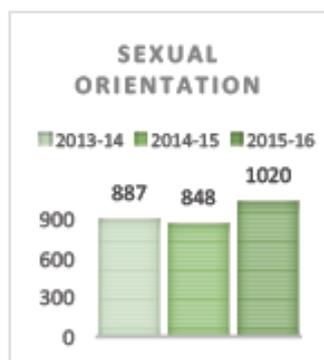
**Hate crime** is defined as a crime perceived as being motivated by malice or ill will towards a particular social group on the basis of their actual or presumed sexual orientation, transgender identity, disability, race or religion.



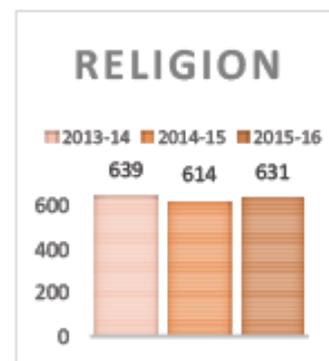
Aggravated crime numbers from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service:



Race-related hate crimes are being reported at the lowest rates since 2003-04. There has been a correspondent rise in racial aggravation attached to other offences like assault.



Since its classification as a hate crime in 2010, sexual orientation-based charges have risen every year except 2014-15. This year's increase was by 20%.



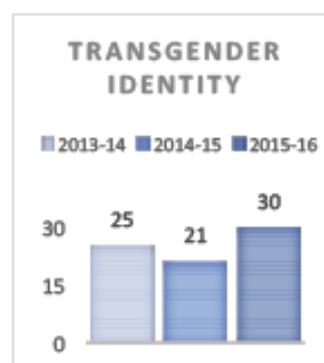
Charges increased by 3% including or excluding charges reported under the OBFTCA 2012 (estimates included above).

Aggravated charges related to Islam made up 23% of the total, and rose by 88.7%.



Disability-related charges increased by 14% since the previous year.

The consensus remains that such charges remain disproportionately under-reported.



Charges related to individuals' gender identity were reported at the highest levels since the category was established in 2010.

Additionally, figures related to the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act (OBFTCA) 2012 indicate 287 charges of offensive behaviour were reported under section 1 of the act this year, up by 49%.

## COMMUNITIES FOR CONSERVATION

In recent months, the Communities for Conservation team has put in a tremendous effort to kick-start the new project. We welcome Mariana Diaz as the Spanish Community Link Officer, who will be providing energy advice to Spanish speaking households.

### ELREC CYCLING CLUB

With funding from Cycling Scotland and the Climate Challenge Fund, the ELREC Cycling Club is getting into full swing. Thanks to Cliff Smith from the Bangholm Outdoor Centre, eight of our volunteers are now trained as cycle ride leaders and equipped to lead cycle rides. Our fleet of bicycles will soon be available for free hire, and trained cycle trainers will shortly be starting classes to teach bike skills to cyclists of all levels in the area of Victoria Park (EH6 4RH).



### GROW YOUR OWN — COMMUNITY GARDENS

We warmly invite you to visit our weekly grow your own sessions in one of our community gardens. If you would like to learn gardening skills and how to grow your own food, feel good and meet new people, please contact us and find your closest community garden. Everyone welcome!

#### DID YOU KNOW?

**Gardening reduces stress and increases self-esteem** ([Dutch study](#))

**Regular gardening cuts stroke and heart attack risk** by up to 30% ([Stockholm study](#)).

**Daily gardening reduces risk of dementia** by 36% ([research](#)).

Getting your hands dirty in the garden helps you to **regulate your immune system** ([research](#)). A combination of physical activity, awareness of natural surroundings, cognitive stimulation and the satisfaction of gardening work **reduces depression and increases mental health** ([research](#)).



David Tai's gardening group at Milton road Edinburgh College.



## ENVIRONMENTAL VIDEO PODCAST

After screening the controversial documentary [Cowspiracy](#), we had the honour of interviewing Prof. David Reay from the University of Edinburgh to contrast the views of the film with his own — particularly exploring topics related to animal agriculture and climate change. Here is the link to this captivating interview: <https://youtu.be/Y8mPCBj6qR4>. We also had the chance to interview Dr Tom Crompton on values and how they affect our behaviour.

## WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

The South Asian Community Link Officer, Asma Kassim delivered many climate change awareness workshops at the Central Mosque and at Milan Senior Welfare Organisation which were well received. Both groups have asked us to deliver further workshops on environment-related topics.

In addition, we organized a tour of the Patrick Geddes gardens in Edinburgh; we screened the documentary 'Regeneration: an Earth Saving Evolution'; and our volunteer Finn delivered a Permaculture course which was very successful. Our [Edinburgh Sustainable Meet up](#) now entertains over **470 members**: [www.meetup.com/Edinburgh-Sustainable-Meetup/](http://www.meetup.com/Edinburgh-Sustainable-Meetup/) Feel free to join!

## ENERGY ADVICE

Remember that we are helping members of minority communities to reduce their energy bills and become more energy efficient. Every month, our team helps people save hundreds of pounds by providing energy saving tips, switching to a **cheaper** supplier, providing financial help, thermal imaging, and by checking eligibility for a free new boiler, loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, draught proofing, and other energy efficiency measures.



A huge thanks to our volunteers David, Larissa, Hazel, Shailaja, Finn, Christina, Zach, Pawel, Madhavi, Jhonston, Linda, Connie, Asmae, Neena, Szymon, Tuntiak, Jenny, Elly, Viola, and Aileas.

To volunteer with us, obtain free energy advice or join our workshops, events or community gardens please call 0131 556 0441 or email: [cfc@elrec.org.uk](mailto:cfc@elrec.org.uk)

Please Like our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ELRECC4C>

& Follow us on twitter: [@ELREC\\_CFC](https://twitter.com/ELREC_CFC)

Communities for Conservation Team



## The First Anniversary of Bright Choices

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One year ago, Bright Choices emerged as ground breaking partnership with a mission to address honour-based violence (HBV) and provide support to those affected in Edinburgh.

The journey of Bright Choices started with a courageous move. The service was launched by an event attended by everyone who recognised and shared the values and objectives of Bright Choices'. The message was shared that we can be stronger in addressing honour-based violence together. Since that time, Bright Choices services have been growing and developing, guided by the team's passion for promoting human rights and protecting the integrity and rights of individuals, families and communities.

Now, we're happy to announce our 1st Anniversary and reflect on our accomplishments throughout the past year.

### Reflecting Back on June 2015 to June 2016

Over the last year, Bright Choices has evolved into an effective multi-agency platform for raising awareness on honour-based violence and harmful traditional practices and supporting those affected by such practices. Bright Choices is bridging a gap by offering support to both male and female victims of honour-based violence, while remaining inclusive and impartial in supporting both communities and service providers in Edinburgh. Bright Choices employs a deeply culturally sensitive approach and strives to bridge the gap between vulnerable, hard to reach communities and mainstream services.

Twelve months on, Bright Choices has:

- Advisory Board in place

- 13 Families directly supported

- 255 professionals trained in understanding, recognising and responding to HBV

- 67 individuals in the community who have attended outreach workshops

- First mediation intervention with positive results in an HBV context while second referral is under way

Bright Choices has received overwhelmingly positive feedback for the work carried out both with individuals accessing the service as well as professionals attending outreach and training workshops.

Looking to the future; Bright Choices strives to continue connecting communities in Edinburgh, and to have more vulnerable groups from all layers of the society including LGBT, Roma and faith-based communities under the umbrella of support.

In the words of one individual supported by Bright Choices...

*“I am very strong now, you gave me direction and choice in my life, [...] and one day I will be independent and free enough to look at this part of my life as something distant that cannot harm me anymore. [...]*

*I can trust you as I couldn't trust anyone in a long time.*

*Bright Choices are like family to me, like very dear sister that I never had.*

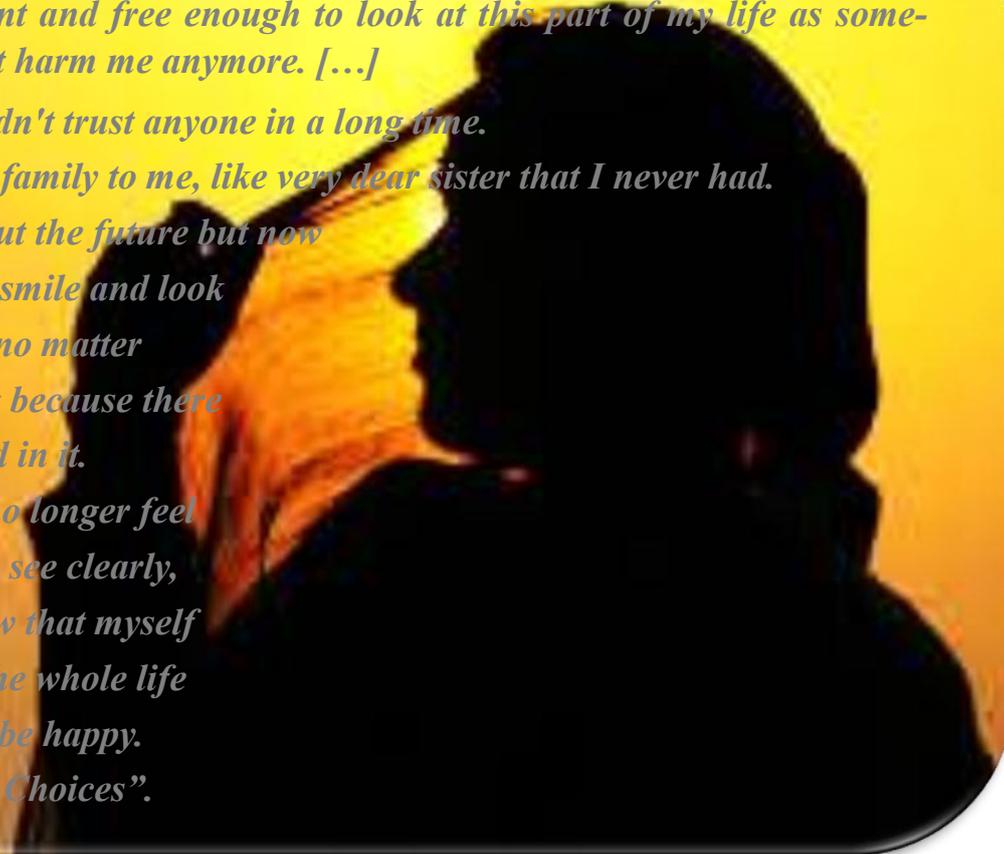
*I still cry and worry about the future but now*

*I believe it's possible to smile and look forward to the next day no matter what that day will bring because there must be something good in it.*

*I have hope now and I no longer feel that I live in a fog, I can see clearly,*

*I can breathe and I know that myself and my children have the whole life ahead of us and we can be happy.*

*That is thanks to Bright Choices”.*



## Calling for new members at ELREC!!

ELREC strives to embody the principles of transparency; integrity; equity; mutual co-operation; and participatory democracy.

ELREC welcomes all individuals and organisations who share our aims, visions, and values to join us as members. As a member you will have the opportunity to shape ELREC policy direction; participate in ELREC's annual Management Board election; and attend ELREC events and lectures. Our members also act as links to various communities. You will receive a copy of the ELREC Quarterly Community Newsletter and receive information on equality-related events.

We welcome membership from individuals from diverse groups as this results in the better representation of all protected characteristics. We would be much obliged if you would consider joining us, as well as helping us by encouraging individuals and organisations known to you to join ELREC.

More information regarding membership, application forms as well as full copies of ELREC's Memorandum and Articles of Association, can be viewed by visiting our membership webpage or contacting our office:

**[www.elrec.org.uk/member.htm](http://www.elrec.org.uk/member.htm)**

## Equalities Engagement—Mizan Rahman

The last quarter has been very busy time for the ELREC-Equality Engagement Project (ELREC-EE). Two major democratic events, the Scottish Parliament election on 5<sup>th</sup> May and the historic European Referendum on 23<sup>rd</sup> June were very significant. Ahead of these elections, ELREC-EE undertook various initiatives to raise awareness among the BME community to register to vote in collaboration with the Electoral Commission and the Lothian Valuation Joint Board – Electoral Registration Office. Voter registration information material and campaign information were disseminated via different events, workshops and social networks. Voter registration information and voting guide on the EU referendum in different languages were distributed among different BME communities over the course of these elections. The Public Life Champion (PLC) scheme will be launched this summer, new applications are welcome. Support and mentoring will be provided to those who are interested in joining the oncoming community council election in Sept/Oct.

### EU Referendum Discussion: Should we Leave or Remain

ELREC and CBS Scotland jointly hosted a discussion meeting to engage more BME communities in to the European Referendum. The discussion event took place on Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> June 2016 at Britannia Spice Restaurant. The event was chaired by Dr Wali Tasar Uddin MBE JP, President of the Council of Bangladeshis in Scotland and was facilitated by ELREC Chair Foysoyl Choudhury MBE. Guest speakers included Lothian MEP David Martin, Lothian MSP Miles Briggs and Professor Sir Geoff Palmer OBE. Individuals from the BME community expressed their opinion on what the EU referendum means to them. Many expressed their point of view for and against the UK remaining in the European Union. Information on ELREC-Diversity in Public Life project was distributed among the participants to have them become involved in Public life and the Democratic Process.



### Let's Eat Together Event in West Lothian

West Lothian Interfaith group hosted an Interfaith Engagement event in collaboration with West Lothian Community Race Forum and West Lothian Council. The event took place on Tuesday, 31 May 2016 at West Lothian College. The event was facilitated by Joanna Anderson, Community Planning Development Officer, West Lothian Council and was opened by a welcome speech by the Chairs of the West Lothian Interfaith Association and West Lothian Community Race Forum. The

keynote speaker, Ian Stewart from the Edinburgh Interfaith Association, spoke about the importance of cohesion and good relationship between different faiths communities. He highlighted many good examples and contributions of the faith communities elsewhere in the world and in Scotland. Moulana Abdur Rahman, Imam of the Deans Mosque and Islamic Centre spoke about the role of the local mosques and their services provided to the local community. This is the first time that such an initiative has happened in West Lothian and it brings a great opportunity to establish a network among faith groups across the region. Information about the ELREC Equality Engagement project was displayed at the event.

## Celebrating the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development

To mark the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, Edinburgh College in collaboration with ELREC hosted an event with the diverse community on Tuesday, 24th May 2016 at the Granton campus of the Edinburgh College. Keynote speakers were Professor Sir Geoff Palmer, DSc OBE, Honorary President of Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC) and Jan Irving, former Edinburgh College student and star of the award-winning BBC Scotland documentary 'Transsexual Stories'. The speakers highlighted the background and importance of cultural



diversity within the society. Both speakers mentioned that education institutions have a key role in promoting cultural diversity. Multicultural music was performed by Johnny Ahmed and Majid. Two thematic workshops were held to explore the education needs of the LGBT community and race community. The event was facilitated by Sarah Taylor, Equality Officer. Susan Inglis, Equalities, Policy and Research Manager of the Edinburgh College, thanks everyone for taking part.

### West Lothian Citizens Panel needs you!

West Lothian Citizens Panel is currently looking for new members. The panel helps the Council and its partner organisations find out what local people think of issues relating to living in West Lothian. The panel is open to anyone who lives in West Lothian, over the age of 16. There are currently around 3000 individuals on the panel but it is important that we make sure the panel reflects the West Lothian diverse population and that everyone has an opportunity to participate. Panel members will be asked to complete surveys a few times per year on a range of topics, or may be invited to focus groups to discuss issues in more detail. Members of the BME community who live around West Lothian are especially invited to join the panel online: [www.researchresource.co.uk/joinwlp.html](http://www.researchresource.co.uk/joinwlp.html)



For more detailed information on the panel, please go to the website: [www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/11325/West-Lothian-Citizens-Panel](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/11325/West-Lothian-Citizens-Panel)

### Recruitment to the Public Life Champion (PLC) Scheme

ELREC Diversity in Public Life project is recruiting members to the Public Life Champion (PLC) Scheme. This scheme intends to encourage BME individuals to explore their leadership potential within the various Public Life positions. This scheme provides personal learning and development provision to the participants. The participants will meet the necessary requirements, will be confident in relating to positions within the Public Life setting and will be encouraged to take positions in public life. The criteria to take part in the scheme are: being a member of the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community who live/work in Edinburgh and the Lothians and who have a strong personal interest and are focussed on certain activities and levels in public life. To enrol on this course and get detailed information, please send us an email requesting an application pack. Contact: [publiclife@elrec.org.uk](mailto:publiclife@elrec.org.uk).

## Community Council Election 2016

Community councils are voluntary organisations that act as a voice for your local area. They play an important role in local democracy. There are 41 community councils in Edinburgh. Community councils express the views and concerns of local people within their area on a wide range of issues, from new buildings and roads to community safety, local services and facilities. By law (Local Government -Scotland Acts 1973) local authorities have a statutory duty to consult community councils on planning, development, delivery of services and other issues directly affecting that local community.

Community Council elections take place every three years all over Scotland. The next election will be held in September – October 2016. Official electoral notice will be announced within the next couple of months.

You can stand as a community councillor if you live within the community council boundary and are on the Electoral Register for that area and aged 16 and over. Community councils welcome a wide range of people to represent the diversity of Lothians' communities. If you are member of the BME community and interested to become a community councillor, ELREC's Diversity in Public Life project can provide support and mentoring. For more information please contact: [publiclife@elrec.org.uk](mailto:publiclife@elrec.org.uk)

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FROM BANGLADESHI COMMUNITY

Hi, my name is Amie Hall and I am currently looking for participants for my research at the University of Edinburgh into physical activity among South Asian women (Bangladeshi, Pakistani & Indian)

Research suggests that the population group within the UK with the biggest proportion of people not meeting physical activity recommendations is South Asian women. This includes women from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan - who are also at much higher risk for diabetes and chronic heart disease than the white British population, other ethnic minority populations and South Asian men, and do not benefit from the same advantages for mental and physical health and wellbeing that are gained from being physically active.

My study will involve:

- a)** A very short questionnaire about physical activity
- b)** Participation in an audio-recorded group discussion with five other Bangladeshi women. Discussion will be about attitudes, experiences and barriers to leisure-time physical activity.

The results from this research hope to inform ways in which physical activity interventions can be most effective for South Asian women which would help to reduce gender and ethnic inequalities.

To be eligible for the study you need to be:

- 1) South Asian (Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian)
- 2) born in the UK
- 3) female aged 30-55.

Please note, the group discussion will take place at ELREC, 14 Forth Street Edinburgh, EH1 3LH

If you have any questions, would like more information or would like to help by taking part I would love to hear from you so please get in touch (mobile: [07933 190 042](tel:07933190042) or Email: [s1567489@sms.ed.ac.uk](mailto:s1567489@sms.ed.ac.uk)). Thanks to ELREC Equality Engagement Project for their kind support in my project.



THE UNIVERSITY  
of EDINBURGH



## Police Scotland

Police Scotland was formally established on 1 April 2013 and is responsible for policing across the length and breadth of Scotland, some 28168 square miles. Police Scotland is the second largest force in the UK after the Metropolitan Police.

The Service is led by a Chief Constable and is comprised of over 17,000 police officers and special constables who are working together along with police staff to deliver the best possible policing service for the people of Scotland.

Police Scotland's purpose is to improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Scotland. Our focus is on Keeping People Safe, which is at the heart of everything that we do.

Police Scotland is currently recruiting both police officers and special constables into the organisation. Police Scotland is particularly keen to encourage applications from under-represented members from our communities. In our current recruitment campaign, we are looking to engage with potential applicants from all ethnic minorities and a variety of different backgrounds in an effort to be more representative of the diverse communities that we police.

Police Scotland has a strong commitment to equality and in order to effectively tackle crime and bring offenders to justice, Police Scotland must reflect, understand and enjoy the trust and confidence of all the communities Police Scotland serves. Police Scotland want to recruit the best talent from the widest pool of people possible, that's why the recruitment department are actively encouraging people from all backgrounds to consider applying to become a police officer with Police Scotland.

To become a Police Officer, you can apply from the age of 17 and a half, if you meet the entrance criteria. You must also be physically fit. Police Scotland recruitment has made a number of changes to its processes. The essential criteria to have a full driving licence has been removed, allowing those who do not currently drive to apply to the organisation. We have also reviewed our tattoo policy.

If you are interested in the role of Constable or Special Constable, Police Scotland host recruitment information evenings, where persons attending are able to find out about the recruitment process in more detail. Helpful hints and tips are provided to assist those interested in the role in negotiating their way through the different stages of the selection process.

Events throughout Scotland are advertised at [www.scotland.police.uk/recruitment/events](http://www.scotland.police.uk/recruitment/events) along with booking instructions. Further events in the east of Scotland (Edinburgh, Glenrothes and Stirling) are currently being arranged and will be advertised shortly.

Alternatively you can contact members of our diversity recruiting team:

### East of Scotland

PC Darren Cavaroli (Edinburgh)

[Darren.cavaroli@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Darren.cavaroli@scotland.pnn.police.uk)

### West of Scotland

Inspector Amar Shakoor (East Kilbride)

[amar.shakoor@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:amar.shakoor@scotland.pnn.police.uk)

Sergeant Kurt Anderson (East Kilbride)

[kurt.anderson@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:kurt.anderson@scotland.pnn.police.uk)

PC Kevin Reynolds (East Kilbride)

[Kevin.reynolds-2@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Kevin.reynolds-2@scotland.pnn.police.uk)

PC Fiona Hunter (East Kilbride)

[Fiona.hunter@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Fiona.hunter@scotland.pnn.police.uk)

### North of Scotland

PC Sharon Meechan (Aberdeen)

[Sharon.meechan@scotland.pnn.police.uk](mailto:Sharon.meechan@scotland.pnn.police.uk)



## ELREC Trainings: July - September

**This is the training programme for the next three months. It encompasses transferable skills based training and equality awareness training. These trainings are available to ELREC volunteers, ELREC members, ELREC staff and members of the public. Priority will be given to volunteers and members, however demand will be high so please book early.**

**To book a place or for further training details please contact: Una Dosen (Volunteer Development Coordinator [udosen@elrec.org.uk](mailto:udosen@elrec.org.uk) or Nick Greener (Youth Development Officer) [ngreener@elrec.org.uk](mailto:ngreener@elrec.org.uk) . You may also book a place over the phone: **0131 556 0441****

### List of upcoming training workshops and events

#### Goal setting

When: Wednesday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, from 2 pm to 5 pm

Description: Goal setting brings structure and trackability into your day to day work. Instead of vague resolutions, strong goal setting can allow to set milestones to achieve your objectives. This training will be facilitated by Jean-Matthieu Gaunand (Project Coordinator: Communities for Conservation). This training workshop will cover issues such as: the importance of goal setting, why setting goals, how to set and achieve goals. The session will involve practical activities for everyone to find goals which are realistic and in line with the person's values

#### Listening skills

When: Wednesday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, from 12:30 pm to 4:30 pm

Description: Communication skills are very important in everyday life and within the working environment. Listening is part of the communication process and this training workshop will give us the chance to improve our communication skills. Further information and programme will be available closer to the date.



#### Learning disability awareness and inclusion

When Friday, August 5<sup>th</sup> from 9.30 am – 1pm

Description: The session will help participants develop further understanding of

- best practice in accessible communication and inclusion
- how to better support individuals with intellectual impairments in the workplace
- the history of the People First movement
- the current legislative framework in Scotland regarding human rights and people with learning disabilities
- the discrimination faced by people with learning disabilities and the importance of raising awareness about these issues through campaigning

## Social Media

When: Thursday, 8th September, from 9:30 am to 1 pm.

Description: This training will help you to:

- Understand the benefits of using social media
- Develop a social media strategy
- Develop a social media policy
- Get hands-on with Twitter & Facebook
- Understand the role of your website, blogging and video & audio content.
- Explore a range of channels like Snapchat, Instagram, LinkedIn, e-Newsletters and more.

Participants will need to bring a laptop, smartphone or other wi-fi enabled device to take part in the hands-on sessions and to sign up for Twitter in advance of the workshop.



## Meeting with a representative of Skills Development Scotland

When: Wednesday, September 14th, from 4 pm

Description: Skills Development Scotland (SDS) is the national skills body supporting the people and businesses of Scotland to develop and apply their skills. We invited a representative of SDS to one of our Youth-Zone drop-in session to talk about their career guidance services. During the session, we will have the chance to ask any question we have concerning any career path and further/higher education. Further information will be available closer to the date.



## Transgender Awareness and inclusion

When: Provisional dates Wednesday, September 28th 9.30 am – 1pm

Description: The Scottish Transgender Alliance will be facilitating the workshop. Further information will be available closer to the date.



## ADVERTISING

We welcome organisations to advertise in the ELREC Community Newsletter for:

- Promoting services
- Disseminating flyers
- Campaigns
- Vacancies
- Consultations
- General marketing

This service is available for a contribution of £100 to £250 depending on the size and placement of the advertisement. To find out more, please contact Neil Ogilvy on 0131 556 0441 or email:

admin@elrec.org.uk

Our newsletter is published every quarter in March, June, September and December of each year.

## CONFERENCE ROOM BOOKINGS

You can book our 20-seat meeting room on an hourly basis for £20 per hour (reduced rate for small charities and community groups)

Tea & Coffee £1 per head  
Please contact the ELREC office for additional information or to make a booking.



## FUNDERS

ELREC is funded by:

- Scottish Government
- Keep Scotland Beautiful Fund
- Voluntary Action Fund
- Big Lottery Fund

## VOLUNTEERS

Adrian Barbascumpa, Aileas Pringle, Alex Rainbow, Alexander Slowman, Archana Goyal, Bageshri Kulkarni, Balla Ceesay, Callum Scott, Chandrima Lala, Christina Hellevik, Claudia, Connie Yeung, Cristina Popa, David Panton, David Weir, Didem Kaner Ural, Diline Abushaban, Eleanor Gladman, Emma Buchan, Ezgi Denli, Fiona Sarah Jane Brown, Gaia Croston, Hannah Mokheri, Hazel Kapepala Makunku, Holly Smith, Indana Simonde, Jack Reid, Jenny Scholtysik, Katerina Apostolou, Katerina Taliatzi, Larissa Engelmann, Madhavi Latha, Makhosazana, Deborah Nombebe, Marilyn de Santos, Mina Omarchevska, Monja Prokscha, Nahla Awad, Natasa Serafimovska, Nina Altendorf, Paolo Cavaliere, Pawel Bladocha, Prudence Foster, Ratiba Kabli, Ryan Whyte, Sara Cassemero Karczewski, Shailaja Mahajan, Stephanie Smith, Sukumar, Thomas Sutcliffe, Tuntiak Murray, Wendy Tsang, Yueyue Fitzgerald. Yuklan wong, Zach Allan

## SERVICES

**Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC)**, founded in 1971, is a voluntary body and charitable company made up of individual members and representatives from a wide range of organisations. ELREC has a remit to work across the areas of City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian Councils.

### Our Objectives

- to work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination
- to reduce inequality and promote a culture of human rights
- to promote good relations between persons of different groups without distinction

### We pursue our aims through:

- Engagement with communities of protected characteristics
- Complainant aid for victims of discrimination and harassment.
- Support for communities in influencing change by facilitating interaction between communities and authorities
- Consultancy on equality policies, procedures and delivery of customised training on equality matters

### Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC)

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Company Number:  
SC183419



Larger print newsletter available on request