



ELREC Newsletter

Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council

Promoting Equality • Fighting Discrimination • Fostering Good Relations

ISSUE 43: April 2015

From the Chair-Update on the unfair withdrawal of ELREC funding from Edinburgh Council

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Welcome one and all to the April 2015 edition of ELREC's newsletter where we have seen the start of a new financial year and a few changes around ELREC's offices. I would like to begin this newsletter with a letter updating you all on the situation with our funding from the City of Edinburgh Council.



2014-2015 will be remembered as an important period in the 44 year old history of ELREC. In July 2014, an Officer of Edinburgh Council, that used to work with ELREC, told ELREC that its funding from the Council for community work will be "withdrawn". This was done without any justification and without an Equality Impact Assessment. In contrast, ELREC has always acted within the rules of its constitution. Many other organisations in Edinburgh had cuts in funding but all of ELREC's funding from the Council was withdrawn. Despite this, ELREC has not complained about the right of the Council to withdraw its funding, its complaint relates to the unjust way its work was assessed and the unfair way its funding was withdrawn.

Thankfully, the prejudicial and discriminatory manner in which ELREC was treated is now being investigated by an Officer of the Council and therefore I do not wish to say much that may affect the outcome of this serious investigation. However, this report is to inform you that ELREC has provided evidence in its allegation that Officers of the Council "lied" and used "untruths" to facilitate the removal of ELREC's funding.

ELREC's funding was to be given to a new organisation called Lothian Equality Network (LEN). LEN partners promised funding to help promote the decline of ELREC but the actual funding was well below that which was promised. Unlike ELREC, which is a 44 year old multi-ethnic organisation, LEN was a mono-ethnic organisation which failed between June 2014 and February 2015.

Continued on page 2.

Update—The unfair withdrawal of ELREC's funding by Edinburgh Council

Another new organisation called EaRN (Edinburgh Equality Rights Network) was set up to replace LEN and to receive ELREC's funding, withdrawn by Edinburgh Council. The partners of the failed LEN and EaRN are similar. West Lothian Council, to its credit, withdrew as a partner from this anti-ELREC association of organisations. According to Edinburgh Council: LEN or EaRN partners at their formation variously comprised, "NHS Lothian, Police Scotland – Edinburgh Division and 'J' Division, Fire and Rescue Service Scotland – Edinburgh Division, the Edinburgh Partnership Board Member for Equality and Rights, Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh College and Edinburgh Garrison". Also, an officer from EVOC* has played an unreasonable part in this association. Edinburgh Council has stated that East and Midlothian Councils, who were partners in LEN, "require a further period to assess the extent of their engagement, but remain supportive". Midlothian has stated its separate support for ELREC but its position as a partner of EaRN is still unclear even though Midlothian has stated that no funding will be given to EaRN. East Lothian's position on EaRN is unknown to ELREC.

Regarding this case, ELREC is reassured by available evidence that it was not 'right' that the Council gave ELREC's contract funding to a so-called Equality and Rights organisation without an Equality and Rights Impact Assessment and Just Cause. ELREC awaits the outcome of the investigation being conducted by Edinburgh Council.

ELREC is functioning well, thanks to new project funds and to the positive efforts of its staff, volunteers, members, well wishers and Board members. Among other things, it is worth noting that despite its loss of funding from the Council, ELREC had continued to support LEN partners such as, the NHS, with its proposed health meetings with the community and Edinburgh College, with its anti-discrimination day event which was a great success.

ELREC will continue to carry out its project work and work for the community. However, since EaRN has been given ELREC's funding the community should ensure that EaRN delivers as an organisation. Contact persons for such information should be available from those associated with Edinburgh Council's Neighbourhood and Communities Committee (eg see internet document of 10th February 2015).

I am working daily with the staff, volunteers and the Board to ensure that ELREC will survive. All of us at ELREC are working hard to deliver the best possible service to the community and our funders. Our project work is progressing well on hate crime, climate change, human rights (eg race relations), honour abuse and community advice. As in the past, ELREC is active in promoting the Equality Act 2010 and recently gave significant support to a LGBT history event in Leith.

We have decorated various parts of our office building and a local company has given us some excellent office furniture for which we are grateful. In general, I would like to thank the two hundreds adults and children that attend our recent climate change event. The events was a success because the staff, volunteers and Board members worked together to meet the needs of the community. ELREC will continue to do its community work in all areas of Edinburgh and the Lothians by promoting Equality and Human rights and by challenging prejudice and discrimination in any quarter, as it has done, since 1971.

Foyso Choudhury MBE

Chair

*Correction 22/05/14: This previously stated CEMVO and has been corrected. ELREC would like to apologise for any inconvenience to CEMVO who have not been involved in this matter.

From the Office and Program Coordinator

Hi everyone,

Since our last newsletter in January ELREC has seen a busy transition period with the start of the new financial year in March. We have seen a few changes in personnel with a new project starting. I would like to congratulate Ekta Marwaha, who has given birth to baby girl. The staff, board and volunteers are all delighted for her and wish her all the best. I would also like to welcome Kristofer Watt who has joined our staff team as a Research Assistant, leading our new Barriers of Poverty and Inequality research project which is now well under way. I am sure you will be hearing from Kris in the near future as he organises a number of focus groups to aid in the research.



Our projects have all been busy with a number of workshops, and events taking place throughout Edinburgh and the Lothians and we have seen our volunteer numbers increase once again. We currently have 54 volunteers on our books with over 20 coming in at least once a week. These volunteers have all contributed hugely to the work that we do and are a fundamental part of our organisation.

A number of our projects are now being funded by different bodies and have been expanded, allowing them to continue their great work and reach a wider range of people. The Big Lottery is now funding both our Barriers of Poverty and Inequality research project as well as our Young People Against Hate project. With the new funding Nick Greener's position has been expanded to full time. The Scottish Government is continuing its funding of our Equalities Engagement project and is now also funding our TRUE Colours program, extending the reach and hours of our project lead officer, Una Dosen, to three days a week. Our Communities for Conservation project also continues to go from strength to strength with the number of home visits increasing exponentially and some great events being run. We would like to thank all of the funders who have supported these projects through the last financial year and allowed them to get to where they are today. More information on all of these projects can be found within this issue.

With the end of our City of Edinburgh Council funding, ELREC is moving in a slightly different direction with an increasing focus on project based work. We are currently in the process of hiring a Project Lead Officer/Fundraiser to join our team to focus on building this capacity. We are also looking to bring in a Volunteer Coordinator Intern to learn about volunteer management and provide assistance to Una Dosen, our Volunteer Coordinator. More information on both of these positions can be found on our website.

We would like to thank Aberdeen Asset Management who have very kindly donated high quality office furniture including a new conference table and a number of office chairs which have helped to make our office more welcoming for everyone using the building.

Finally, the news coming out of Nepal in the last few weeks has been devastating and a number of our staff, including myself, have personal connections to the country. We would like to encourage anyone who is able to help with the disaster relief to do so. Information from the Nepal Scotland Association can be found within this issue.

Neil Ogilvy, NOgilvy@elrec.org.uk

NEPAL SCOTLAND ASSOCIATION



A devastating earthquake in over 80 years ripped through Nepal on the 25th of this April, with a death



toll of over 9000 (and sharply rising). Around 18 people have been reportedly killed by the worst ever Mount Everest avalanche disaster with hundreds injured and being rescued, 2 people at a time using high altitude helicopters. Local media reports that dozens of building in addition to historical landmarks, in the Nepalese capital of Kathmandu have been all but levelled.

Nepal Scotland Association, a UK registered charity based in Edinburgh, in partnership with our Nepal based Volunteers and local NGOs has been involved in many charitable work in Nepal in the past.

In order to swiftly contribute to the current disaster, we have launched relief appeal to raise funds for communities in Nepal affected by this unfortunate tragedy. And although the situation is rapidly evolving, we do have a picture of what is required there at this very moment:

- Basic necessities like water, purifiers and purification tablets, high-energy biscuits, shelter kits and tarpaulins;
- Sanitary supplies, torches and even body bags;
- Hygiene kits, saline solution, anti-viral materials, antibiotics.

To accomplish this we need your generous gift to support our efforts. 100 percent of your contribution will go directly to Nepal and will be spent on supplies for affected people there. (NSA in-country activities is entirely funded through membership fees and volunteered time of our members and friends)

Please visit 'Make a Donation page' on our website: <http://www.nepalScotlandassociation.org/> to make a donation, however small.

Please visit our Facebook page through the link below for more update about how & where will your donations be spent.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Nepal-Scotland-Association/517647661604087?ref=nf>

Fund Raising for Nepal Earthquake Victims



NEPAL EARTHQUAKE OF 25 APRIL 2015 - MAGNITUDE 7.8

DONATE NOW

Help us reach our goal !!

Donate Online



NEPAL SCOTLAND ASSOCIATION
(नेपाल स्कटल्याण्ड एसोसियसन)
Charity SC035084

Website: www.nepalScotlandassociation.org
Contact Number: 07989366245



LGBT ACCREDITATION FOR ELREC

Although ELREC has of course a strong tradition of support for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered communities we really need to consolidate this by going for recognised accreditation in the form of the LGBT Charter of Rights Award.

What is the Charter?

Although LGBT people have their rights enshrined in legislation, these rights are often denied because of discrimination and prejudice. The Charter was created to increase understanding and awareness of the barriers LGBT people face. LGBT Youth Scotland then developed a programme to support and guide organisations like ELREC towards equality and inclusion. By raising awareness and increasing visibility of LGBT people, LGBT Youth Scotland is dedicated to ensuring that all LGBT people are valued, included and supported. It will help to demonstrate our commitment to LGBT people by supporting them and helping to identify their rights. By being able to display the charter we will be sending a positive message that LGBT people are included, valued, and supported when accessing ELREC's services.



What have we done so far?

We have got things off the ground by forming a Charter Champions Group formed of board and staff members and volunteers. This held its first quarterly meeting on 12 May 2015 and was chaired by Nick Greener. We discussed training, policy, practice, promotional materials and resources, monitoring and evaluation and the sign-up of Champions. We decided on the Award Standard to aim for, at least initially: Bronze.

What happens next?

All Champions must receive LGBT awareness training from LGBT Youth Scotland. It will also be open to anyone else, board, staff or volunteer and invitations will be sent out shortly. A date for the training of 3 June 2015 has been agreed. Meanwhile, we are in the process of drawing up an action plan. We can also make our commitment to LGBT issues more apparent by displaying related posters throughout Forth Street and having a Charter focal board. We also need to do (or redo) the Charter Mark Baseline survey among the Champions so that we can monitor and evaluate the level of our understanding as we go through the process.

David Panton for the LGBT Champion Group

NORTH EDINBURGH SUPPORTS NEPAL

Fundraising night for the victims of the earthquake in Nepal

Date: Saturday 23 May 2015, Time: 5pm – 9pm

Venue: Royston Wardieburn Community Centre, 11 Pilton Drive North, Edinburgh, EH5 1NF.

Tickets available from Royston Wardieburn Community Centre in advance, or a small number will be available on the door. Suggested ticket donation is £10 (£5 concessions)

Enjoy a Nepalese meal with music and dance performances, and help raise funds for the people of Nepal. All proceeds will go to the Nepal Scotland Association www.nepalscotlandassociation.org





This project is co-funded by the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme of the European Union

RADAR
Regulating Anti Discrimination and Anti Racism
JUST/2013/FRAC/AG/6271

Logos of partner organizations: ANCE, EST.edu.pl, HERIOT WATT, KEY&KEY COMMUNICATIONS, Learnmera, UAM, Vrouwen & Welzijn.

Have you been a victim of racial abuse?

Have you experienced racism in any form in the UK?

We are conducting interviews with victims of ‘racial’ hate crime and xenophobia for the purposes of an EU-funded project called **RADAR – Regulating Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Racism**. The aim of the project is to provide law enforcement officials and legal professionals with the necessary tools to facilitate the identification of ‘racial’ hate-motivated and hate-producing communication. In addition to the training concept on the fight against racism and xenophobia, the project will also provide a handbook, training events, comparative studies and analyses.

If you would like to be interviewed for the purposes of this project (your personal details will not be disclosed), please contact **Dr Katerina Strani** at **0131 451 8045** or email A.Strani@hw.ac.uk. RADAR website: <http://win.radar.communicationproject.eu/> Follow us on Twitter @RADARproject
Like us on Facebook: Project RADAR

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

Diverse Members of Communities Engaging in Democratic Processes & Public Life: Register your interest *online* to take part on this new project!

ELREC has launched a new initiative to increase engagement of diverse members of communities in democratic processes and public life across the Edinburgh and Lothians. This new initiative is an extension of ELREC's ongoing Equality Engagement Project which is supported by the Scottish Government Equality Fund. Over the year 2015-16, various activities will be undertaken to identify actions which can be taken to enhance engagement of the BME community and women. The project will also address issues identified that limit and foster participation of stakeholders into public life. There will be some road show events to encourage diverse community to become more involved by showcasing successful 'role-models' and expert advice. These events will give an opportunity for members of the community to interact directly with mentors to become motivated and become involved into democratic process. The project will identify individuals interested in participating into public life and provide them the support they need to reach their target.

Information:

In Scottish Parliament, only 1.5% of the parliament's 129 MSPs are from ethnic minorities, well below the 4% of Scotland's population which is non-white.

In 2012 Local Government Elections, 32 candidates were from non-white background across the 14 local authorities. Almost half (13) of them stood from Glasgow city council.

In 2012, total 17 BME councillors took up office out of a total 1223 seats. It represents 1.4% of the total Scottish BME (4%) population. Out of 32 local authorities 7 has BME representation.

The city of Edinburgh Council, home of 2nd largest (8% BME) non-white population, does not have any BME representation while Glasgow hosts 7 councillors out of 17. In total, there are only 4 BME women councillors in Scotland.

After 2015 general election, 43 BME MP were elected which equates to 6.6 % of the House of Commons, compared to around 14% in the overall UK population at large.

If you live in Edinburgh and Lothians and are from the diverse community and are interested in being involved into democratic process and public life then this initiative will be a great opportunity for you. To receive future update, information, invitation to events and involvement in activities please register your interest online via this link: <https://goo.gl/GR2ofE>

From the Youth Development Officer

Young People Against Hate (YPAH)

Greetings from the YPAH project. Spring is in the air and our calendar is starting to fill up fast. The last few months have been a great transitional period for the YPAH project, we're now funded by The Big Lottery Young Start program. We would like to thank everyone at Volunteer Action Fund (VAF) for all their support over the last three years, we couldn't have done the project without them.



The YPAH project is always looking to make new partnerships with community groups, we've been working closely with Project 2000, delivered workshops to two of their youth groups and potentially setting up a new peer education program at their centre. The YPAH now also has a larger remit to work in more in North Edinburgh; Living in Harmony invited ELREC back to do some equality workshops for their staff and volunteers. Our aspiring Equalities facilitator Archie helped take one of the equality sessions which were a great success. More workshops are planned for West Pilton and Granton.

We've also worked quite closely with Cyrenians, a charity that does great work for young people who have been displaced from their homes. The YPAH group facilitate a workshop for their young volunteers, they came in for a two hour session which we hope will allow them all to share their opinions and experiences more freely.



Research remains an important part of the work that the YPAH does, research into future Youth projects has been ongoing as has research into hate crimes in North Edinburgh. I'd like to thank all the research volunteers for all their hard work. We're also starting up a LGBT Champions group which we hope will lead to ELREC achieving the LGBT Charter. If anyone would like to join please feel free to get in touch.

Finally, the YPAH took part in two great events, LGBT History month which was great success and Event to mark The International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The YPAH were able to show their video and explain exactly what the project had been aiming to do. Both events were huge hits, with speeches from Sir Geoff Palmer, music from local and multicultural acts and awards for certain charities.

We have workshops planned for the next couple of months, if anyone is interested in getting involved or knows of a youth group or community centre that might benefit from workshops, please, get in touch.



Nick Greener, NGreener@elrec.org.uk



Young People Against Hate (YPAH) brings young people in Edinburgh together to raise awareness about the hate crime in their community and encourage others within the community to do more to tackle problems such as racism, homophobia and islamophobia. Our aim is provide the tools and develop the skills for young people to be able to challenge discrimination and become peer educators.



Free YPAH Workshops

The Young People Against Hate project delivers free interactive workshops for young people between the age of 16-24, on topics such as:

- Racism
- Homophobia
- Islamophobia
- Cultural awareness
- Immigration myth busting

Peer Educators

Peer education revolves around learning and sharing new information from people who share similar social backgrounds, age range and life experience. We know that young people learn more effectively from their peers.

We are always looking for new volunteers to help with research and take workshops.

Volunteering

This is an opportunity for young people, who are interested in equality. Our goals:

1. Peer Educators will gain new skills and confidence
2. Peer Educators are better informed about discrimination and hate crime
3. Peer Educators will be given the tools and materials to address issues of discrimination and hate crime

If you would like to be a Peer Educator or to book a free workshop, please get in touch:

Contact : Nick Greener

Email: Ngreener@elrec.org.uk

Or call: 0131 556 8577

Or pop into ELREC for a chat, address:

14 Forth Street

Edinburgh , EH1 3LH

From the Equalities Engagement Officer

LGBT History Month Celebration

ELREC hosted an event to celebrate LGBT History Month Celebration on 26 February 2015 at Leith Academy, Edinburgh in collaboration with LGBT Youth Scotland and Leith Academy in collaboration with Lothian LGBT Development



Group ([event flyer](#)). As a part of history month series of activities, this event provided an opportunity to celebrate Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) life and culture by exploring our own and others' histories in an LGBT context. It was also an opportunity for learning, discussion and debate around the continued fight for LGBT rights. The theme for LGBT History Month 2015 was Education, and this event brought an opportunity to hear how improved equalities can help pupils and students to achieve the goals.

This year's celebration brought together communities to increase awareness of the different identities and cultures. At the beginning ([program](#)) a welcome song performed by group of young pupils from the Leith Academy.



Michael Richardson (LGBT History Month Scotland) opened the event with a speech promoting the LGBT Charter and celebrating the fifteen years since the repeal of section 28. He then introduced LGBT Youth Scotland performers on the stage. Over 70 people took part to the event and enjoyed keynote speeches by Sir Prof Geoff Palmer, Grieg Stephen of Police Scotland, multicultural performances and Bollywood music by Pankaj Singh. ELREC Young People Against Hate Crime (YPAH) project presented their short film on reporting Hate Crime. LGBT Young people Flo Clarke spoke of



her thoughts as well as her experience of abuse committed by others in her environment such as schools. Need of education and awareness in academic institutions are highlighted. The event concluded with the presentations of LGBT Charter of Rights awards to four organisations.

Mizan Rahman
Equalities Engagement Officer
MRahman@elrec.org.uk

Celebration of International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

ELREC co-hosted Celebration of International Day of the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on Wednesday 25th March 2015. The event took place at the Sighthill Campus, Edinburgh in collaboration with the Edinburgh College and Edinburgh College Student Association. ([Event Flyer / Poster](#))



The event had multiple aims of enabling a dialogue by increasing the participation of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in college courses together with raising awareness on racial harmony and promoting race equality. There was a display of information stalls from 2pm onwards in the foyer area by many organisations: e.g. Police Scotland, The Confucius Society, Sikh Sanjog, Multi-Cultural Family Base (MCFB), Young People Against Hate Crime (YPAH), Community For Conservation (C4C) and Saheliya. Hundreds of students visited these stalls and collected ranges of information.

The main celebration event began at 4pm in the Music Box Auditorium of the college. Over 60 people attended to the event. Edinburgh college principal Dr Elaine McMahon open the celebration and introduced keynote speaker Prof Geoff Palmer. He stated that prejudice when put into practice leads to discrimination.

The event was facilitated by Sara Taylor, Equality Officer of Edinburgh College. Jeroen Van Herk, Student Association President, shared his students experience in the College and race equality work at the event.

ELREC- Young People Against Hate Crime (YPAH) project presented a film about Hate Crime – Third Party Reporting, produced by the YPAH young people. The talks were accompanied by various cultural performances by students of Edinburgh College. The performing arts, African drama and live musical concert by college band groups were outstanding. Local BME organisation, Thistle Shapla Cultural Group performed multi lingual music at the event. Majid Mokhberi, a college student, shared inspiring melodic Iranian music.

Susan Inglis, Edinburgh college, Equalities, Policy and Research Manager, thanked all for coming and ended with a quote from Nelson Mandela, "As we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same."



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION

ELREC took part on International Womens Day 2015 celebration event hosted by Edinburgh Inter-faith Association, Edinburgh Women's Interfaith Group and Faith in Women on Sunday 8th March 2015 at City of Edinburgh Methodist Church. ELREC took part on this event, a stall was set up.

The event was attended by peoples from different protected characteristics. Everyone enjoyed the talks, workshops, holistic therapy, awards ceremony and information stalls. ELREC stall was also visited by many audiences. Various information disseminated throughout the evening from the ELREC stall. The event provides excellent opportunity for networking among different groups, organisations and community members.

CAFÉ CULTURE: LGBT HISTORY MONTH CELEBTATION—EDINBURGH COLLEGE STUDENT UNION

ELREC has supported and participated to the LGBT history month event; Café Culture, hosted by Edinburgh College Students Association on Tuesday, 24 February 2015 from

18:00 to 20:00 at Apprentice restaurant, Edinburgh College, Granton Campus. It was a cabaret style entertainment by Edinburgh College music and acting students to celebrate LGBT History Month 2015. ELREC supported this event by promotion and publicity. As a result ELREC volunteers and members from BME community attended the event and enjoyed Music, poetry reading and the fabulous group music by Edinburgh Gay Men's Chorus. (event poster)

VAF HOSTED AN EVENT: 'THE STORY SO FAR'



ELREC has participated at the Voluntary Action Fund event 'The Story So Far' Final Event – the collective impact of our work on Monday 16th March 2015 at Hampden Park, Glasgow. The event provided an opportunity to share work among other equality funded project/organisations. Necessary inputs were been provided to the thematic workshops on behalf of ELREC's Equality Engagement Project. The event enabled a dialogue and distributed information about what organisations could collectively achieve and in the process support the building of 'social capital'.





scottish
health
council

making sure
your voice counts

BME community are welcome to join the Scottish Health Council Lothian's 'Involvement Network Database'

The Scottish Health Council is part of Healthcare Improvement Scotland and our main role is to encourage public engagement in healthcare services in Scotland.

One way we involve members of the public is by giving them the opportunity to provide feedback on projects and initiatives relating to healthcare; these can be about our own work or we may be helping our NHS colleagues, the Scottish Government Health

Department, a local council or voluntary organisations.

Involvement can be in various ways and this can include:

- taking part in a focus group,
- attending a one to one interview session,
- coming along to an event, or
- it may be completing an online or postal survey

Contact Details for Scottish Health Council Lothian, Ground Floor, Pentland House, 47 Robb's Loan, Edinburgh, EH14 1AB, Tel: 0131 537 8545. Email: lothian@scottishhealthcouncil.org
Registration form can be downloaded via this link: <https://goo.gl/0iuTgZ>. Alternatively, for further information you can contact the Equality Engagement Team at ELREC.

Tel: 0131 556 0441 email: mrahman@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

The Support and Advice Service is supported by the Scottish Government.

TRUE Colours

Hello everyone!

The TRUE Colours have had an exciting period. In March our members participated in the making of the Show Racism the Red Card documentary, an educational film dealing with discrimination against migrants which we know is rising rapidly, especially in the media. The documentary is looking to explore young peoples' personal stories and opinions regarding this burning issue.



In February we have been invited to join and contribute to Youth Peer Conference in Glasgow on Promoting Equality and Diversity through Peer Learning. TRUE Colours conducted a very well received Peer Education workshop, focused on the importance of peer education, campaigning and facilitating.

Moreover, the group have been working very hard on our peer education programme, continuing with our Islamophobia set workshops, raising awareness about the harmful consequences of generalisations and stereotyping. This has also helped the volunteers in researching and developing our newest topic – Minority representation in the media.

Una Dosen, TRUE Colours Coordinator—UDosen@elrec.org.uk

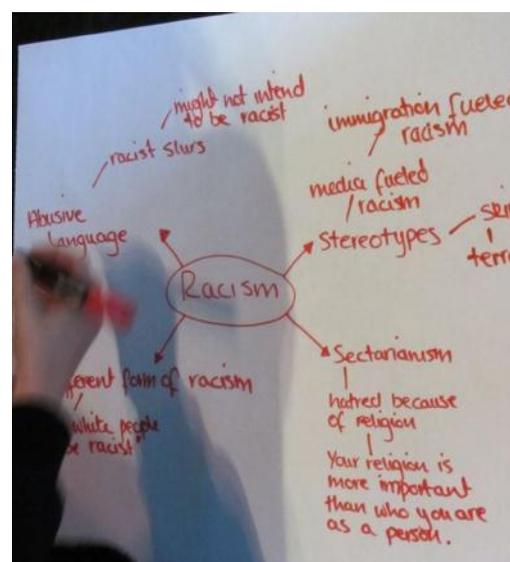
Volunteering to Achieve

In the last couple of months we have been focusing on different workshops and skill building trainings for our volunteers. ELREC's volunteers had a chance to learn about facts and attitudes towards disability and the disability rights movement, with the help of Capability Scotland; participate in an accredited first aid training course by TutorCare, and join the two day training on food growing by Scotland's Rural College. In April, Connect Three Solutions held a two day training on Communication and Confidence building, that focused on things like presentation skills, body language, first impressions etc. The goal was to improve everyday working life skills as well as help those currently on the job hunt.

In addition, the Scottish Refugee Council conducted a workshop entitled New Scots: Working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees. The training focused on the differences between refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, the language and the (media) perceptions, factors that cause people to leave their own countries and end up in Scotland.

In February we attended Edinburgh College freshers' fair to promote ELREC and volunteering opportunities available. The event was a success and a lot of people signed up to find out more information about ELREC and how to get involved in the projects.

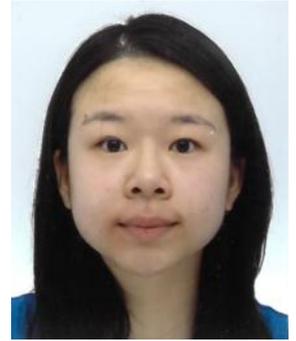
As always we have been getting a lot of volunteer applications and I would like to give a massive thanks to everyone who contributed to our work and donated their time.



Una Dosen, Volunteer Coordinator—UDosen@elrec.org.uk

Meet Our Volunteers

"My name is Shannon and I volunteer as an admin assistant to gain more experience. I have been volunteering since April one day per week. My role includes: answering phone calls, typing up documents, proof-reading, managing financial work, filing and photocopying. It is very enjoyable, people in the office is very friendly and willing to help. I am planning to volunteer up until college starts." - *Shannon Chan*



"I came to ELREC in search of focus and direction and had the chance to contribute to the Communities for Conservation (CFC) project as a volunteer. Looking for further impetus I had an idea for a project, taking some of the environmental ideas from CFC, and also social values from ELREC. This new project was SEED (Sustainable Energy for the Environmental and the Disadvantaged). SEED looks to help disadvantaged communities through the provision of solar power. This addresses fuel poverty and also aims to combat climate change. This project has helped me develop new skills and gain valuable work experience." - *Morgan Jones*

"I have a Biological Sciences background and came to ELREC to gain experience in grant writing. ELREC afforded the opportunity to gain this experience while contributing to the local community. Since I joined ELREC, I have been working on collecting and analysing statistical data to identify groups at greatest disadvantage in the labour market. I have developed a project to specifically help young people (re)enter employment and have recently submitted a £450,000 grant to implement it. Since then I have started working on the Routes to Roots project designed to support cultural exchange, and foster interest among the local BME community in Scottish culture and heritage." - *Neil McDerment*

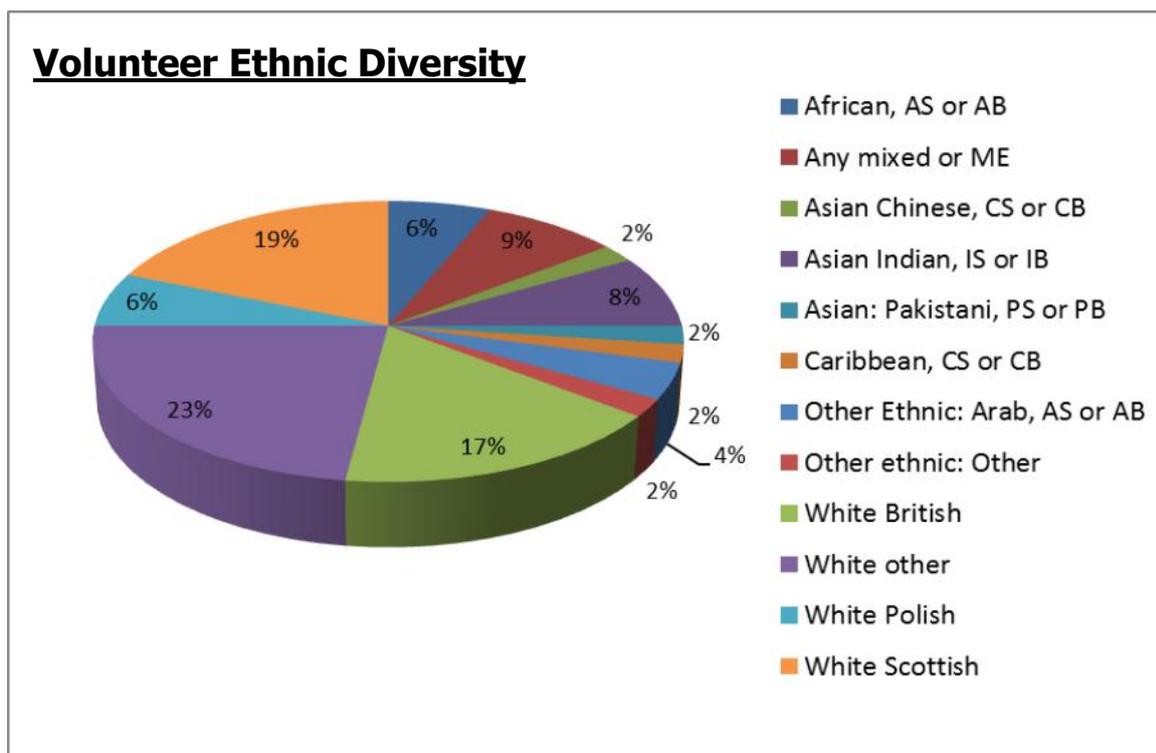


Volunteer With ELREC!

Volunteering with ELREC is a great way to develop your skills, meet new people and work as part of an enthusiastic team. We're always looking for helpful and reliable volunteers, so why not make good use of your skills, get involved and join our volunteering team? For more details visit our volunteering page: www.elrec.org.uk/volunteer.htm or contact the ELREC office on 0131 556 0441 or email us at: admin@elrec.org.uk

Volunteering at ELREC:

ELREC's volunteers come from a wide range of backgrounds that represent the various communities and groups that we work with. An example of this can be seen in the Volunteer Ethnic Diversity pie chart below. The benefits of this variety are critical in the work that we do and allows the organisation to draw upon a wide range of experiences, complementing a similar diversity in the staff and board team.



First meeting of the LGBT accreditation champions
(see page 5)

From the Barriers of Poverty and Inequality Research Assistant

Barriers of Poverty and Inequality Research Project

The project is a six month study funded by the Big Lottery's 'Investing in Ideas' programme and its aim is to shine a light on barriers that might be perpetuating the experience of poverty for ethnic minorities in Edinburgh. The research is based on work conducted by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation which tells us that some ethnic minorities are disproportionately and consistently experiencing economic poverty.



Ultimately this will benefit the people affected by poverty. It will provide insights into the personal experiences of stigma, and help bring about informed solutions and tailored services. This study is conducted with a view of addressing gaps in policy. The results will be forwarded to project partners as well as published by ELREC.

Previous research by Joseph Rowntree Foundation indicates that there are three ethnic minority groups whose experience of poverty is outstanding and disproportionate; Pakistani, Bangladeshi and African and we are looking for participants who have heritage from these areas. We recognise that poverty is complex, multi-faceted and dynamic, and that it has relative as well as absolute dimensions. If you or someone you know is experiencing these issues or has been affected by these issues then we would like to hear from you. We encourage participation from individuals of any age, gender or religion whose heritage is of the ethnic groups outline above.

We are looking for individuals to participate in focus groups, which will be held at a various locations in The City of Edinburgh. The focus group itself will last about an hour and it will be sound recorded. Travel expenses as well as sandwiches and light refreshments will be provided. Each focus group will consist of up of ten participants from similar ethnic background, age and gender. The discussion will be guided by a facilitator around the themes of values, identity and stigma, the flow of capital and survival strategies. Our aim is to provide an opportunity for discussion and for the sharing of experience within a confidential environment.

If you would like to participate, or you know someone who would want to participate, or simply want to ask more about the research, please get in touch with a member of the research group by sending an email to kristofer.watt@elrec.org.uk. Please include the following details in your response; - address, ethnicity, age and gender, information of any disability, and your contact email address or phone number.

We look forward to hearing from you

Kristofer Watt, Research Assistant —kristofer.watt@elrec.org.uk

Make a difference!

Tell us about your experiences

Have you ever thought that people in your ethnic group are continuously finding it hard to make the ends meet?

If the answer is yes then

Come and join our focus groups

We are investigating the relationship between ethnicity and poverty.

We would like to hear from people with ***Pakistani, Bangladeshi and African*** heritage.

If you would like to participate, or you know someone who would want to join, or simply would like to ask more about the study, please get in touch with us: email kristofer.watt@elrec.org.uk or telephone 0131 556 0441.

****Travel expenses and light refreshments will be provided****





Free English Sessions

Welcome to LET (Learn English Together)



The community-based English language sessions are organised as collaborative learning.

We are a small group of learners, who want to improve our English language skills at a beginner and intermediate level.

We meet once a week and have great fun learning English. We also do activities together: such as visiting museums, outdoor activities, cultural events and photography.

We are all different nationalities, background and ages - everyone willing to learn English is welcome to join us.

We are based in ELREC, a registered charity in 14 Forth Street, EH1 3LH

We are in walking distance from Princes Street.

For more information please call 0131 556 0441 or email admin@elrec.org.uk

Sessions take place every Thursday at 6.30pm

“The importance of being counted” - the role of diversity and additional needs data in addressing inequalities in healthcare services

Thursday, 18 June 2015, 6pm-8pm

Waverley Gate, 2-4 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3EG

Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC) & NHS Lothian Additional Needs and Diversity Information Task Force (ANDI TF) jointly invite you to a seminar on the “importance of being counted”.

In an increasingly diverse society, people’s health, healthcare needs, and experience of healthcare services can vary greatly; for example according to ethnic group. However, adequate collection of diversity and additional needs information has been lacking within healthcare services and this has prevented us from being able to assess inequalities between diverse groups, or design services to cater for people’s diverse needs.

Nonetheless, within Scotland both research and service developments have begun to provide us with an insight into the influence of diversity on health - initially in relation to ethnicity, but with other diversity and additional need categories anticipated to follow.

In this seminar we will outline these developments; examine the practical challenges posed for services; discuss findings arising from the collection of diversity information; and highlight future developments and the impact these may have for people with diverse needs.

To book a place at this seminar, please contact ELREC’s office by calling 0131 556 0441, emailing admin@elrec.org.uk or dropping into the office at 14 Forth Street, Edinburgh EH1 3LH.

Communities for Conservation Project



Over the past months, Communities for Conservation has partnered and established relationships with several associations and community groups including the Chinese Evangelical Church, Multicultural Family base, Polish Professionals, the Pakistan Society, and others.

ENERGY SAVING:

The ELREC building is becoming more energy efficient. We bled all the radiators, bought a new Eco-kettle, and replaced the old light bulbs of the office with new LED lights — saving us 2800 Watts. We have draught-proofed the main door, and we are taking regular meter readings to monitor our energy use. Our new volunteer Emilie has installed recycling boxes in the office and is working on changing the behaviour of people at the office.

Our Energy Advisors have helped many people from Polish, South Asian, African and Chinese backgrounds to reduce their energy bills and to better understand their heating systems.

Case-studies:

- We have helped one client to switch to a new electricity and gas supplier. The client will save £180 per year and receive a £140 discount through the *Warm Home Discount*.
- We have helped one of our clients to upgrade the glazing in their flat. After phoning our client's housing association, it was confirmed that secondary glazing will be installed.
- We have assisted one client to change their old light bulbs to LED light bulbs.
- After the technical survey, one of our Chinese clients will receive a combi-boiler, as well as window and door insulation free of charge through the *Energy Assistance Scheme*.
- One of our African clients has received a new boiler, radiators, pipes and thermostat.
- One of our Chinese clients was granted £4000 for energy improvement.
- One Polish client was granted £4,000 grant to cover boiler replacement through the *Energy Assistance Scheme*.

If you want to learn more about the different schemes, energy savings in your home or get an energy monitor, contact us to arrange a home visit.

Email: cfc@elrec.org.uk or call 0131 556 0441



FOOD GROWING

Four of our volunteers received an horticultural training accredited by the Scotland Rural College on "Organic Vegetable Gardening". The four volunteers thoroughly enjoyed the training. After the training, one of them bought a greenhouse for her garden. "The training at Bridgend was excellent" she said. Another volunteer is using the knowledge to lead the gardening sessions at our Milton Road Community Garden. Another volunteer reported that her daughter said to her on a Saturday morning: "Mum, we have to plant things!" They spent their Saturday afternoon planting broccoli, carrots, onions etc...



GARDENING GROUPS

All of our "grow your own" groups in Niddrie, Wester Hailes, Milton Road Edinburgh College, and the "Greenkeepers" at Royal Botanic Garden, have started again. They are open to all - adults and children, and no experience is necessary. They are ran by expert community gardeners that will lead the sessions over the growing season. During the sessions, participants are gaining a basic understanding of food growing enabling them to grow food for themselves. In the past months, the gardening enthusiasts learnt about the soil, general up keeping of the plants, watering, how to sow seeds, how to interpret seed packets, the importance of labelling, what are the general germination requirements for seeds, what are the different sowing techniques, how to use a poly tunnel, etc.

The sessions at Niddrie facilitated by Parveen, have started with a ladies' group from Shakti. The group is growing potatoes, peas, beetroot, beans, herbs and vegetables.

The "Grow your own" sessions in all our gardens are open to all. If you would like to join a gardening group or would like to get horticultural training, please get in touch with us.



GLOBAL WARMING - WHAT CAN I DO?

Throughout the months, we did many events, training and workshops to discuss climate change within the communities. In partnership with the Himalayan Centre and the Greatway Foundation, we screened the award winning documentary Chasing Ice to an audience of around 50 people.

We organized energy efficiency talks and discussion on healthy living. Ewelina, our Polish Community Link Officer, is delivering a series of successful Eco-Classes at the Polish School to raise awareness of climate change. The classes cover the themes of climate change, extinct animals, water, food waste, recycling, and energy. Pupils are enthused about how to be "greener", the importance of recycling, saving energy, and reducing food waste.

We are now setting a new carbon discussion group to host a series of six friendly meetings to discuss climate change. We already have 3 participants but spaces are very limited, so be in touch.

Spring Celebration Event



On the 21st of March, first day of Spring, the Communities for Conservation team organized a large community event at Out of the Blue to raise awareness of climate change and inspire people to make changes to their lives that would benefit the environment. The Spring Celebration Event was attended by about 200 people from all ages and backgrounds, particularly from the Chinese, Polish, South Asian, and African communities. As a result of the event the great majority of participants felt more aware of climate change issues. The feedback reveals that participants enjoyed the great variety of activities: Kids' activities, bouncy castle, "Make your own Pakoras" workshop, Zumba class, etc. Attendees appreciated the cultural diversity, the fact that the event brought people from a wide range of backgrounds together, and the sustainability aspect of the event.

"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"

Louise, Giulia and Emilie, 3 of our volunteers, ran a brilliant workshop that entertained and educated 15 adults and children on the theme of climate change. We held a raffle where the lucky ones won a basket of organic fruits and vegetables given by the Whitmuir farm, and a voucher for LED lights upgrade. It was an opportunity to promote energy efficiency and healthy, local, and organic food. We also gave away "BE THE CHANGE" T-shirts, potted plants, shower timers and eco-bags.





We had the honour of having John-Paul Flintoff, a renowned TED Talks speaker, writer and broadcaster. John-Paul gave a wonderful and inspiring speech about the importance of collaborative working to embrace the changes we encounter at global and local levels. Because of the participatory approach of the talk, John-Paul captivated the 150 listeners. Feedback reveals that the speech was the most enjoyed aspect of the event. In line with John-Paul Flintoff, Jean-Matthieu Gaunand talked about climate change and how it is a challenge that has to be collaboratively tackled. Heather Handerson, owner of the Whitmuir farm, a local organic farm, talked about the benefits and importance of organic farming. The Whitmuir farm supplied the food for the lunch.

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", etc.

We realize that the success of this event would not have been possible without the creativity, initiative and active participation of all volunteers, speakers and stakeholders. We want to thank everyone who made this day a success, and who made it possible to gather diverse communities around the theme of climate change and the environment.

The Communities for Conservation Team



PART OF THE
Keep Scotland Beautiful
CHARITY



Communities for Conservation Project

Diverse Communities Tackling Climate Change

Spring Celebration: Environment, Food Growing and Energy Efficiency.

An article by Hon. President Sir Prof Geoff Palmer OBE

On the 21st March 2015, ELREC's Communities Conservation Project held a community event at: Out of the Blue, Dalmeny Street, Leith, Edinburgh. About 200 people attended, many were children. The ethnic diversity of those who attended reflected, to a significant degree, the great diversity of the community. The exhibits embodied themes that related to the environment, food growing and energy efficiency. Germinating seeds and tubers were shown.

For germination to occur, starch and sugars are present in grains, seeds or tubers to supply the energy that is required for germination to take place. To secure the best germination, temperature should be optimal and soil condition should be moist. Germination is complete when the new roots and shoots have emerged.



Cooked foods of organically grown plants were served and were excellent. To start the event I was asked to give the keynote speech. In summary, I said that carbon dioxide (CO₂) was an important greenhouse gas. Although it is known that higher than normal levels of carbon dioxide in the air can lead to unfavourable changes in our climate, carbon dioxide is associated with important life activities of plants and animals. For example, carbon dioxide is absorbed by the leaves of plants in daylight. This carbon dioxide is used to make sugars and starch which together constitute an important part of our diet. During digestion we convert the starch we eat from food products into sugars, these sugars are the main source of the energy we require to live active lives.

Sugars produced in the leaves are transported to other parts of the plant such as cereal grains which include: wheat, barley, oats, rye, maize, sorghum and grasses. Sugars are also transported to seeds (eg peas) and tubers (eg potatoes) where such sugars are converted into starch and stored as food.

It is normal for plants to absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen into the air. Animals (eg human beings) breath in oxygen from plants and breathe carbon dioxide which plants can use to produce sugars and starch. Therefore, there is a natural but low level of carbon dioxide in the air which plants use to produce food products. Cellulose fibres of plants are also made from sugars produced in plants from carbon dioxide.

Cont. over

Carbon dioxide in large quantities is poisonous and it can prevent the repair of the ozone layer which protects us from the damaging UV effects of the sun. CFCs and HFCs (Fluorocarbons) damage the ozone layer; therefore the repair which carbon dioxide prevents is an important feature of 'climate change'. Large quantities of carbon dioxide can also cause 'global warming' over the Poles of the earth.

Our air normally contains about 79% nitrogen, about 20-21% oxygen and about 0.04% carbon dioxide. Despite the high nitrogen content of the air, the protein-nitrogen nutrients found in plants, fruits, cereal grains, seed and tubers are made from nitrogen compounds which are absorbed by the roots of plants from the soil.

The heating systems that we use in our homes release carbon dioxide which can add to the damaging effects which carbon dioxide has on our climate.

The importance of this project cannot be overstated because Earth is the only planet that we know of that can sustain normal human life. Among other aims, this project is endeavouring to inform the BME community of the importance of reducing the production of carbon dioxide in their home environments. Work is being carried out to show that the use of heating systems in the home can be managed to keep the house warm while limiting excessive production of carbon dioxide.

The combustion of plant wood materials (eg cellulose) and plant-derived materials such as fossil fuels release large quantities of carbon dioxide into the air. Managing the industrial and home use of these fuels can lead to significant reduction, in terms of tons, of carbon dioxide released into the air.

Wise management of the production of carbon dioxide is a responsibility which will maintain this planet as a natural environment in which all human beings will be able to live safely.

Professor Sir Geoff Palmer DSc FRSM, President of ELREC



Floramedica – Living medicine

– Wild Food and Body Care at the ELREC Spring Celebration 2015

Until the middle of the 20th century, knowledge about wild plants and how to use them as foods and medicines was still widespread in Britain - not only among chefs and foragers, doctors and pharmacists, but among ordinary people.

Few people in Britain today know their edible wild plants - with the exception of brambles and wild garlic maybe – let alone their amazing nutritional and medicinal properties. At the same time, foraged ingredients have become a fashionable addition to restaurant menus, and bookshops now offer a proliferation of foraging guides and recipe books for adventurous foodie folk. At the same time, the recession of the last decade continues to sting: many young people now in their mid-20s have never had a job; many workers are on “zero hours contracts”, and retail prices rise regardless. Food banks are booming – both the number of food banks and those dependent on them has increased enormously across the country in recent years. Obesity and diabetes are an epidemic, but those affected are in fact often malnourished. Wild plants offer a cheap and abundant means of supplementing our diet with highly nutritious local seasonal foods, while at the same time getting out and about in our wonderful local green spaces.

Making medicines from locally available wild plants as remedies is something even fewer people in Britain know how to do, whereas in the past this “folk medicine” was once the first recourse of ordinary people, especially in rural areas. Meanwhile, in other European countries this knowledge has continued to thrive alongside (and sometimes within) the modern health service. People throughout Europe, however, are increasingly persuaded by media and marketing that shop-bought vitamins and supplements are what they need to self-treat various ailments, “deficiencies” and even just to be healthy.

Floramedica is all about helping people to reclaim knowledge of plants, inspiring and re-skilling people of all ages to use plants from local green spaces safely and sustainably to provide cheap, nutritious foods and the basis for everyday remedies and body-care products. Easy on your pocket and the planet! At the ELREC spring celebration we showed how easy it is to do. Have a go at home with the recipes below that we made at the ELREC spring celebration in March! (And let me know if you have any more wild and wonderful ideas or recipes!)



Make some nettle pesto

The stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*) is not only a weed that can be found almost everywhere, and vital for our biodiversity. Nettles are fantastically nutritious, high in protein and containing more vitamin C, calcium, potassium, iron, magnesium, and phosphorus than any of the common kitchen green vegetables like kale, Brussels sprouts, spinach or broccoli. Medicinally they are used to help promote recovery after illness, to help combat iron-deficiency anaemia, to alleviate allergic conditions, and to improve joint health in arthritis and gout. The root is also used in herbal medicine as a supportive treatment for an enlarged prostate gland. Dyes were formerly extracted from nettle plants, and nettle fibre was widely used to make cloth in Europe and Asia before cotton became popular in 16th century. Nettle fibre makes a light yet warm fabric - and could make a comeback as a more environmentally friendly alternative to pesticide and water-intensive cotton cultivation. In central Europe nettle leaves and seeds were traditionally fed to poultry over the winter to maintain health and improve egg-laying. Nettles are safe for all ages, even in pregnancy and for very young children, and they can be enjoyed daily in a myriad of ways. You can take nettles as tea (see below), or better still, eat them! Add a handful of nettle leaves to soups, stews, or omelettes.

(Serves 4-6)

*1 large handful nettles (fresh or dried), finely chopped
1-2 cloves garlic (or a handful of chopped wild garlic in springtime!)*

50g nuts / seeds, raw or lightly toasted (e.g. pine nuts, cashews, hazels, or sunflower seeds)

75ml olive oil

Optional ; a squeeze of lemon juice

Combine all ingredients with a little of the olive oil using hand blender, then add the rest of the oil slowly. Toss through 500g of cooked pasta. Optional: finish with grated parmesan or other cheese of your choice. Goes well with a zingy tomato salad.



Make your own lip balm

Ingredients:

- 5 parts oil (try sunflower, almond or light olive oil)
- 1 part beeswax
- Essential oils – 2-3 drops per 15 ml pot

Example: (for 5 x 15 ml pots)

50 ml oil

10 g beeswax (approx 1 dessertspoonful)

10-15 drops essential oil

Using a bain-marie (i.e. a pyrex jug or bowl placed in pan of hot water on stove), gently melt ingredients together over simmering water. Once melted, you need to work quickly, or the balm will start to set. Remove from heat and quickly add any essential oil desired (see suggestions above). Stir once and pour immediately into clean glass jars and seal. The balm will keep for at least 18 months without refrigeration. You can use the balm on your lips, cheeks, or on dry, chapped skin on any part of the body.





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 January, April, July and October 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:

- The City of Edinburgh Council
- Scottish Government
- Keep Scotland Beautiful Fund
- Voluntary Action Fund
- Big Lottery Fund
- Ponton House Trust
- Santander Foundation

VOLUNTEERS

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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

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