

ELREC NEWSLETTER



PROMOTING EQUALITY - FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION - FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONS

From the Chair Foyso Choudhury MBE MSP

Welcome to ELREC's winter newsletter and I hope that everyone is getting back to some sense of normality despite continued COVID restrictions. Winter is always a difficult time with colds and bugs so do keep safe and continue to support yourself and others by following COVID guidelines.

This quarter, ELREC has continued its current projects, Climate Challenge project, Open Arms, as well as added a new project led by Mizan Rahman called BAME – RECAP, more details will be further in the newsletter. This project is



for a year, funded by CRER. Our True Colors project ended in October 2021 which focused on working in schools on issues of racism, hate and bullying. I want to congratulate the staff who helped deliver this work.

ELREC has also been successful in small funds to assist with Covid vaccine information rollout to BAME communities as well as a small grant for tree planting event at the back of COP26.

ELREC continues to work with statutory bodies on cases of racism in schools, providing input on how statutory bodies can be more diverse in their recruitment process and work towards creating a diverse workforce which reflects the communities served.

ELREC took on 10 kick starters in the summer as part of the governments young people job placement scheme. Everyone has been doing well in their roles, and some of them are due to finish their 6-month placements in January 2022. I would like to wish them well for their future career prospects.

Finally, ELREC will also be doing a small project with the Edinburgh City Council on Slavery and Colonialism and its impacts on the affected communities, specifically South Asian and African people living in Scotland.

I want to thank everyone for their hard work as always and I wish you all a much-deserved break over the festive period and a Happy New Year.

Honorary Members

Honorary Patron:

The Rt. Hon. Frank Ross, Lord Provost
of the City of Edinburgh

Honorary President:

Prof. Sir Geoff Palmer DSc OBE

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Vice Chair and Convenor of Personnel

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Company Secretary: Rajnish Singh

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Convenor, Finance and General Purposes

Subcommittee: Irina Lazarenko

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Staff

Office Manager: Parveen Ishaq

Administrator: Franciele Sobierai

Finance Officer: Adrian Barbascumpa

Equalities Engagement Project: Mizan Rahman

Support and Advice Service: Parveen Ishaq

True Colours Project: Didem Kaner Ural

Open Arms Project: Mitra Rostami

Communities for Conservation Project Lead:

Jean- Matthieu Gaunand

Community Link Officers (CLO):

David Tai- Chinese CLO

Ewelina Lukaszek- Polish CLO

Fahmida Huczewska- South Asian CLO

Verena Aedo- Spanish CLO

Admin Assistant: Basimah Nadeem

Mkt and Engagement Assistant: Iman Nadeem

Digital Champion: Hassan Alaiban

CFC Project Assistant: Medine Yasar

Open Arms Project Assistant: Maria Raza

Open Arms Project Assistant: Athanassia Malaj

Fundraising Assistant: Aidan Pinkerton

Volunteer Coordinator: Pryde Baxter

About us

Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC) founded in 1971, is a voluntary body and charitable company made up of individual members and representatives from 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

We pursue our aims through

Engagement with communities of protected characteristics
Complaint 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 customized training on equality matters.

Edinburgh & Lothians Regional
Equality Council (ELREC)
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Charity Number: SC007896
Company Number: SC183419



From the Honorary Patron - Lord Provost Frank Ross

On behalf of the City of Edinburgh, I extend my heartfelt and warm wishes this Christmas to everyone reading this in what continues to be an uncertain time for us all.

I would also like to send my deepest condolences to those who have lost loved ones this year and wish a speedy recovery to all who are currently battling coronavirus.

As we continue to find ourselves faced with uncertainty on what the upcoming months will be like we must remain proud of what we've achieved while we remain resilient,

continuing to support our family, friends, neighbours and communities as we face the challenges that still lie ahead.

As Lord Provost, I continue to be proud to represent our diverse and vibrant city. Over the past year, I've had the privilege to meet or visit with some of the fantastic people and organisations who have gone above and beyond to support fellow citizens. I've also been able to visit a number of community organisations which have been really inspiring and great examples of the marvellous community spirit and how people have pulled together to support those in need over the past year.

With the emergence of this latest variant, we must continue our efforts to limit its transmission, particularly through the cold winter months. Please get vaccinated - get both your jags and, if eligible, your third, booster dose. It's also crucial that we test ourselves regularly, especially if we're mixing with others, and, of course, carry on following the public health guidance on handwashing, face-coverings, ventilation and meeting outdoors wherever possible. It's vital that we all protect ourselves so that we can protect others too. We will come through this together.

The input of Edinburgh's interfaith groups will remain central to this and I want to take this opportunity to thank all ELREC staff, its board members and volunteers for all their continued hard work over and wish you all the very best for a more positive 2022



From the Co-Chair Azra Sharif-Qayyum

As the Covid Era seems to linger on with new variants being discovered. We all have to be vigilant and make sure that we still wear face masks and practice social distancing.

Vaccines have been proven to be most effective against the variants circulating in the population at this time so it is very important to make sure you are fully vaccinated and have also had the booster injection.

ELREC has been very busy in our Covid projects so that our communities are better informed and have all the necessary

help they need to survive in this period and will continue to carry on this work. I wish you all Happy Holidays and best wishes for 2022.



From the Honorary President Prof Sir. Geoff Palmer OBE

Slave Enlightenment

The different voices of the narrator are English, Ebo, Yoruba and Jamaican patois.

In a solemn and dignified voice, old West Indian Henry said to us: "Be still and listen..."

We were caught, bought, shipped and enslaved

Found hope in God's grace and were saved...

So, why were we not as good as you?

You forced your culture on us in short time

But destroying ours was the greater crime

This dishonoring was long and brutally done

And has made us all what we have become...

So, why were we not as good as you?

During our slavery we had many fears

That your legal codes would kill us

And damage our children for years...

So, why were we not as good as you?

Nyaa, o ginibo na anyi adironma ka unu? Kilode

ti awa ko se da to eyin?

Soe, wa mekunu tink unubetta dan we?

You destroyed our families and gave us one name:

Nigger, Quashi Sambo, Boy Horatio, Wallace Sarah, Jane...

Nyaa, o gini bo na anyi adiro nma ka unu?

You denied our music which was "noise" to your ear

But it gave us a voice that has lasted for years.

You sneered at our colour and laughed at our frame

But we had your children since our blood is the same...

Soc, wa metunu tink onebetta dan we?

You preached we were 'subhuman but pleasing'

Which Hume and Carlyle confirmed with "reasoning"

But they would not have been clever then

Had they been taught in plantation pens

Soe, wa mek unu tinkunu berta dan we?

No writer, preacher, politician of worth

Should have been silent for so long

When kith and kin inflicted such hurt...

Kilode ti awa ko se da to eyin?

Our beaten bodies were sore with pain

Yet you branded and bred us and sold us for gain...

Kilode ti awa ko se da to eyin?

We dug strange fields in New World's dew

And were oft-times sick un-noticed by you

We tried our obeah, but it failed

To protect us from the evil that prevailed

Nyaa, o gini bona anyi adironma ka unu?

What was our price, what was our worth?

To live in a hell you created on earth

You ate or sold the food we grew

And our children died instead of you...

Nyaa, o gini bpna anyi adiro nma ka unu?

Our dead children brought great sorrow

But our steely women were our tomorrow

They were the metal of our arm and eye

That drove us daily to defy...

So, why were we not as good as you?

When we fought and rebelled in our defense

You hanged or slow burned us for impudence

Often in dark silence we would cry

If this is life, then let us die

And fly from the self-interest of the lie...

Kilode ti awa ko se da to eyin?

We ate scraps and lived like rats to survive

But fought and "smiled" to remain alive

We are the "savages" that made you rich

But you buried us in a dirty ditch...

Nyaa, o gini bo na anyi adiro nmaka unu!

You whipped our faces, put filth in our mouths

Which you tied shut, to prevent spitting out.

We endured this "civilized" violence alone

Where your prosperity and prejudices were sown

Only hypocrites and cowards deny their past

Because, good or bad done is meant to last...

Soe, wa mekunu tink emubetta dan we?

Our slavery was a dream rape

From which there was no escape

It was a nightmare come true

A world away and chained by you

The enlightened and the brave

That, "never, never will be slaves" ...

So, why were we not as good as you?

Chained, we heard the 12th of April's cannons groan

The hundred year's dice of war was thrown

Again and again we were the prize

In a game of greed you had devised...

Kilode ti awa ko se da to eyin?

Unlike the progenies of animal and grass

Our children will remember the past

But no task on earth is harder

Than to redress the "sins of the Father".

Abolition was not an Act divine,

It was then politic to cover the crime...

Nyaa, o gini bona anyi adiro nma kaunu!

From masks of mock enlightenment,

devious people will say:

Others suffered in a similar way

But such denial and cultural play

Will not wash this cruel crime away...

Soe, wa mek unutink unu betta dan we?

We were not chattel to slave and kill

We have the same humanity:

Love, rage and will...

So, why were we not as good as you?"

For surviving the most profitable evil the world has known

Put up no stone...just repair the damage done, alone.

Our right to be black and live here is not for review...

We paid a bitter price to live like you.



Prof Sir. Geoff Palmer OBE
Chancellor of Heriot-Watt University
ELREC Honorary President

From the Treasurer - Cllr Carl John

We are nearly two years into this new way of working and living with Covid, I am still working from home most of the time but happy to be out and about a bit more again. I attend most of my meetings online but continue to look forward to face to face again.

I am delighted ELREC staff continue to deliver the work despite restrictions as well as engaging in more work. And the successful food project which helped hundreds of people during this difficult time. I want to wish you all the best for the future and have a lovely break over the festive period and a Happy New Year to all.



From the Company Secretary - Rajnish Singh

November 2021 was a very eventful month for me personally.

It started with COP26 in Glasgow which attracted a number of Heads of State visits to the Glasgow city. The Indian Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, also attended the mega-event. On the side-lines of COP26 he met a group of 40 persons of Indian origin now settled in Scotland as part of his engagement with Indian diaspora. I had the privilege to be one of them and it was one of the memorable events of my life, to interact with him on a one-on-one basis.



Thanks to the High Commission of India, UK and Indian Consulate Edinburgh for organising this and extending the invite.

Edinburgh Diwali, a Scottish charity, celebrates the only public Diwali in Edinburgh every year since its inception in 2015. This year we celebrated the Diwali 2021 on 21 November - starting with Parade comprising of Scottish Regiment and Pipe bands plus five sets of dancers, from St Andrew Square to Castle Street. This was followed by a two hours of high quality multicultural dance & music show at Ross Theatre in West Princes Street Garden, and finished off with a spectacular fireworks. This is a free and open event where thousands of people attend and enjoy the wide variety of show with food stalls selling Indian food. This year there were additional challenges - less time to plan and also follow applicable Covid guidelines. Therefore, it was a very emotional and joyous moment for me as the President of the organisation and for my whole committee to have a successful in person Diwali celebration after online only event in 2020. Thanks to all those who participated, supported and attended the event.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Very Happy New Year!!

Police Scotland – Message to Communities



The Equality & Diversity team have been carrying out a range of partnership activities over recent weeks in relation to hate crime, Third Party Reporting and promotion of the Keep Safe scheme. Some examples of these activities are listed below.

- To continue our focus on disability-related hate crime PC Claxton and PC Durant provided a Keep Safe awareness raising event at the Scottish Parliament, along with I Am Me. The officers engaged with many MSPs and members of staff and secured a date to provide official Keep Safe training to parliament security staff. They also provided several training sessions to Lothian Buses which has resulted in their locations at Shandwick Place and Waverley Bridge now being Keep Safe premises.
- PC Noble attended the Edinburgh Interfaith Association AGM, affording the opportunity to talk about hate crime, particularly in relation to religious belief. Discussions were held around Third Party Reporting and the Keep Safe scheme, both of which received significant interest with several places of worship requesting to become Keep Safe premises.
- The E&D team visited ROAM and LGBT Health and Wellbeing to discuss hate crime and how it impacts on Edinburgh's LGBT community. The importance of recognising hate crime and the various ways in which to report it were discussed.
- A hate crime input was delivered to staff at Royal Edinburgh Hospital.
- Third Party reporting training was delivered to Edinburgh's Multi Cultural Family Base and we have since seen a hate crime being reported to police via this platform.
- PC Durant attended a Gypsy Traveller Steering Group meeting and has visited all encampments in Edinburgh.
- PC Noble attended a multi-agency meeting to support a repeat victim of hate crime in the South West locality.
- During Hate Crime Awareness Week the team put together a calendar of events taking into account all protected groups. These events included hate crime inputs, Third Party Reporting training, Keep Safe training and meetings with partners to raise awareness of hate crime and the various ways in which it can be reported.



Manager's Update - Parveen Ishaq

This quarter ELREC continues to remain busy not just with its current projects but also other work such as working with partners and statutory bodies on improving diversity in recruitment and workforces as well as assisting on cases of racism in schools in a mediatory role. We have been managing 10 kick starters since June 2021 with their six-month placements with ELREC and providing them with training and further learning. We have also continued more work on helping communities with digital poverty by providing devices and digital training.

More recent work is in partnership with the Edinburgh Council on delivering various workshops to specific groups on effects of Slavery and Colonialism. This work needs to be delivered by the end of January 2022.

ELREC continues to provide support and advice with the help of volunteers.



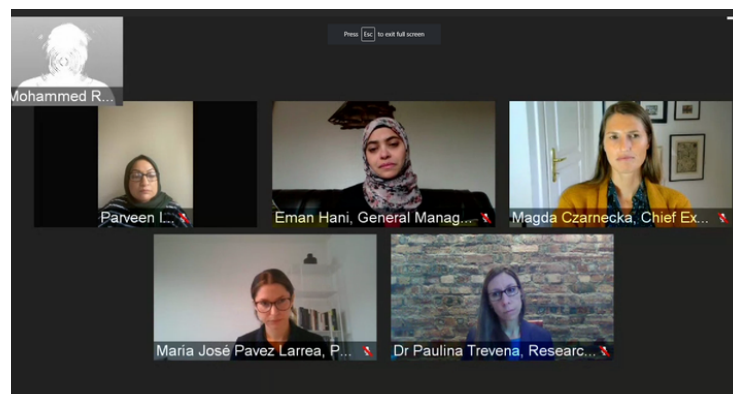
Support and Advice



These few months we have supported 12 people with issues from help claiming pension, council tax issues, unsocial behaviour, discrimination at work, fines, claiming universal credit, applying for social welfare fund, reporting hate to the police, and support liaising with legal team. This service continues to be busy as always and we continue to seek funding to create a long term funded post for this work.

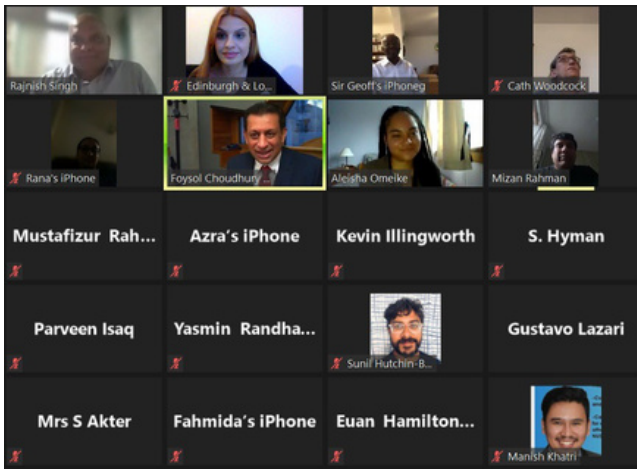
COVID-19 Recovery Committee

Parveen Ishaq, ELREC's manager, has attended the COVID-19 Recovery Committee in the Scottish Parliament to discuss international travel, the vaccination programme, health protection measures and what are the reasons why BAME communities have such a low uptake of vaccines. The meeting counted with many organisations such as Cope Scotland, Homeless Network Scotland and Feniks. Watch the full meeting by clicking [here](#).

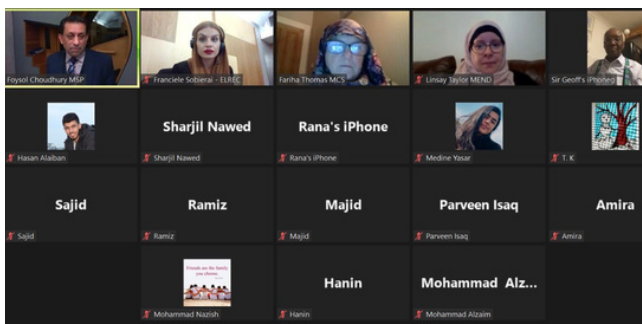


Administrator's Update - Franciele Sobierai

ELREC has been pretty busy in the past trimester full of exciting discussions and events. In October an event to celebrate the **Black History Month** was hosted, which counted with amazing speakers such as Sir Geoff Palmer OBE, Foysoyl Choudhury MSP and the university student Aleisha Omeike who brought a young perspective to the discussion.



To celebrate the **Islamophobia Awareness Month** in November, ELREC hosted an online event alongside Anas Sarwar, Leader of the Scottish Labour Party and MSP for Glasgow, Muslim Engagement and Development, Amina Muslim Women Resource Centre, Muslim Council of Scotland and our chair Foysoyl Choudhury MSP. The conversation was thought-provoking and the discussion included what tools can be used to tackle islamophobia in Scotland and what are the available resources.



Also in November, ELREC hosted a **tree planting event** in partnership with Communities for Conservation, Action Earth - Volunteering Matters, Nature Scot, Montgomery Street Park, Leith Community Growers and Scottish Forestry to celebrate the COP26 and climate action.

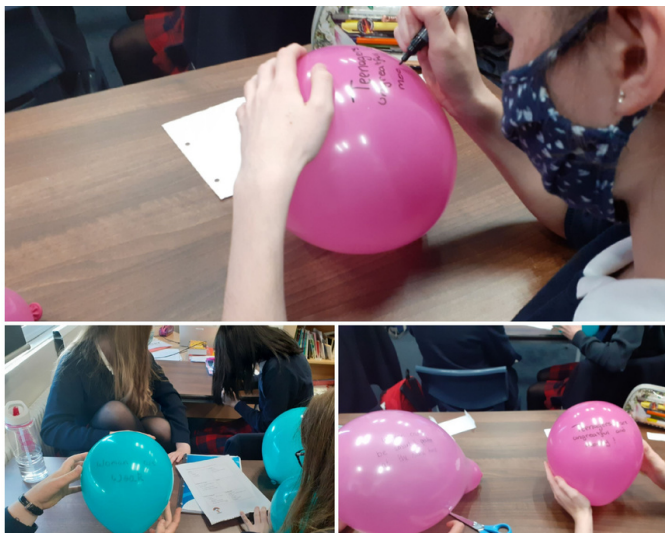
The 60 trees planted were a selection of dog rose, crab apple, hazel, blackthorn and more. They will complete the hedge on the north side of the park, against the street.



True Colours

Welcome to True Colours corner! We hope that you are enjoying the winter and keeping warm cosy!

During September and October we were busy doing sessions with young people from Erskine Stewart's Melville School. The classes that we worked with were S1 to S5. It was great to be able to meet the young people face-to-face and see how interested and engaged they were in these workshops. The main topics covered were: Cultural awareness, Islamophobia, Stereotypes and Immigration & Refugees.



It was great to have our two interns Catelyn and Kareem who contributed with research, workshop facilitating, creating and completing their own project which they successfully presented to us last week.

Here's a quote from Catelyn reflecting on her experience with us:

'I enjoyed my time at ELREC learning so much about immigration, stereotypes, and anti-bullying. ELREC allowed me to work with another intern to plan our own project which was an amazing experience and allowed me to get creative and learn so much about planning projects. I also had a wonderful time getting to work with and know some of the workers at ELREC who

were all welcoming and helpful. I loved my time at ELREC and will treasure the experience and all of the knowledge I gained.'



To mark the Anti-Bullying week, we organised and delivered an event in collaboration with Children in Scotland and Respectme. This was an online event on the 15th of November and was attended by a few young people and educators. We had a great presentation delivered by Respectme director Katie Ferguson, focusing on Scotland's unique approach to anti-bullying and respectme latest campaign, #OneKindWord. Also, a very informative talk by Billy Anderson from Children in Scotland who spoke about bullying & Additional Support for Learning. Sadly, the project has come to an end, but we hope that the great legacy of True Colours will be continued in the future.



Peace to all,
Diline Abushaban
DAbushaban@elrec.org.uk

ELREC - BAME RECAP



We are delighted to announce that we have launched a new project at ELREC to support people from

BAME communities affected by Covid-19. A brief launch event took place at the ELREC meeting room on 04 October 2021.

The BAME RECAP will work towards restoring the livelihoods of BAME communities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in Edinburgh and the Lothian.

The Global Majority Fund, financed by Comic Relief in partnership with the National Emergencies Trust (NET), supports this project. In Scotland, CRER is an Intermediary Partner for Comic Relief's Global Majority Fund.

MSP for Lothian Foysol Choudhury MBE attended the launch event as a chief guest. He said, *"I would like thanks to CRER and funders for providing the grants for the BME communities aftermath of the Covid-19. It will help create a positive impact and improve the livelihood of the affected communities."*

Yasmin Luqman from CRER said *'We are delighted to act as an Intermediary Partner of The Global Majority Fund and to make grants available to support BME community organisations like ELREC to continue delivering services to communities facing racial inequality which have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns.'*

'This fund is also focussed on creating a positive impact with and for communities facing racial inequality across Scotland.'

'The Global Majority Fund, financed by Comic Relief in partnership with the National Emergencies Trust (NET), supports this project.'

The BAME RECAP project coordinator Mizan Rahman hosted the launch event and mentioned that a wide range of support is available for the Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME). Tailored made support and advice services freely available at ELREC. Specialised advocacy support is also available for people with *'No recourse to public fund'*. The project will address the mental health and wellbeing issue by facilitating various activities over the year.

To access support and services, anyone living across Edinburgh and Lothian can contact the project team by WhatsApp **+447392663851** or email: **bamerecap@elrec.org.uk**. More information about the project can be found on social media **@bamerecap**.



OPEN ARMS Champions of Health



Warmest wishes on these last days of 2021 from Open Arms.

Our group has grown so fast over the last few months to a big 70-member family.

Over the last 3 months we have we have organised and delivered many exciting activities including:



Socialising Events

We divided our clients into two groups, so we could be sure about health and safety measures, and welcome them in two separate family-friendly socialising events during which we had nice hot food and distribution of presents. Also, more importantly, we had the honour to introduce the champions and recognise their achievements in different categories.

Read, Write, Integrate event

Included into the list of many exciting events organised to celebrate the Scottish Book Week Festival this year; there was a brand new and very different event organised by Open Arms; Read in English, Write in English, Integrate!. We have been lucky to secure a grant from the Scottish Book trust to organise this event. We had a pre-event involved submissions of pieces of writing by some of our members, inspired by 3 images. The pieces were assessed and edited by our collaborator writer and the top 3 selected. During an online event on the 16th of November, we introduced the winners, rewarded them and had some enjoyable readings.



Pain Relief Class

Since October, we have started a brand-new unique class called "Pain Relief". The class entails breathing exercises, stretching, acupressure and reflexology, relaxation, and meditation. It has become a popular class. The class runs on every other Wednesday morning.

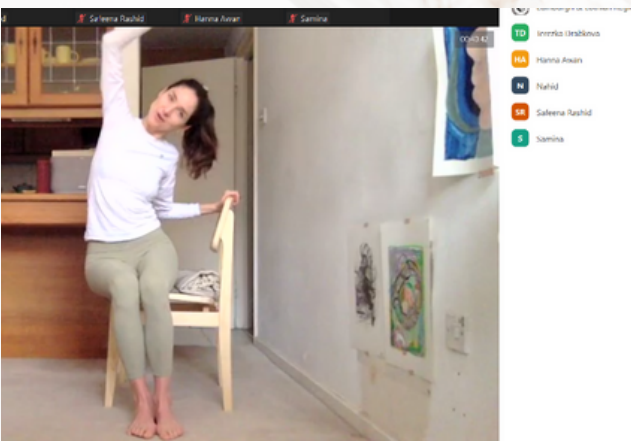


Family-Friendly Bread Making class and lunch

We have been so lucky to have such wonderful collaborators such as Colin Lindsay, the owner of Bread In Fife, to run a course in bread making for us, and not only that, but also donating the whole ingredients too, and also to have the Cyrenians very kindly offering us their amazing kitchen facilities in Leith at no charge. So, we had all the elements for a fantastic day with loads of bread and home-made hot soup and fantastic company on a cold Saturday to remember.

Chair Yoga

Our new and improved yoga classes are now called “Chair Yoga” thanks to our lovely yoga teacher, Terezka, who has listened to the feedback from the clients and has modified the sessions in order to be more beneficial and accessible to the participants.



English Conversation

Our ESOL volunteer teacher, Martin, has been very dedicatedly running English as second language classes for our keen learners every Wednesday lunch time.

Upcycle craft workshops

There is nothing left in our members' recycle boxes and everything have now turned into bags, boxes and ornaments, all thank to MAC tuition who runs creative upcycle craft workshops every Wednesday for our women.



Understanding Taxes

In November, Universal Truth ran a very helpful session for our members on understanding taxes. Participants got the chance to learn about the different types of tax and ask their questions from a female BME tax professional in a supportive environment.

And finally, we are super excited to have a delicious lunch with our group and hand them their Christmas presents on the 16th of December.

Wishing everyone a very joyful Christmas and a very happy new year and looking forward to resume all the activities on the 3rd of January 2022.



Kick-starters

The Kick-start members have been doing a variety of activities with different communities around Edinburgh.

Two of our Kick-starters, Hasan and Mohammad, have set up digital workshops which have been very successful. The digital workshops help Arabic speakers learn about the digital world, and how to adapt to it. Such as filling forms, e-mails, Zoom and social media. These workshops also incorporate learning about the theory section when it comes to learning how to drive. Every week we see several of the workshop members learning and building their confidence and adapting to the digital side of life.

If you would like to join or find more information regarding the digital workshops, feel free to email:

h.alabain@elrec.org.uk

m.alzaim@elrec.org.uk



KICKSTART SCHEME

CFC project assistant, Medine, has been doing a wonderful job participating in the CFC project event such as the climate festival to the swap shop, insuring everything is set up accordingly, while also providing help and information to those who ask.



At ELREC, we rely a lot on social media and getting our message across out there to the communities around Edinburgh and the Lothians regarding important issues, our current projects and events. The past few weeks have been eventful from celebrating Black History Month to raising awareness of Islamophobia in our very own city, plus online events regarding Anti-bullying awareness week and our Islamophobia awareness online event. Iman and Basimah have been designing posters and documenting these events and promoting them across our social media pages to raise awareness and educate the public on important matters that are rarely spoken about. At ELREC, we are about diversity, and we strive to promote diversity on all our platforms! Check the posts out [here](#).

Communities for Conservation



“There are no passengers on Spaceship Earth. We are all crew.” - Marshall McLuhan

Energy efficiency

In the last quarter the team has been working hard to serve our communities and encourage climate action. Community Link Officers have helped numerous BAME families to save energy at home, to switch to green suppliers, to access grants for new heating systems, wall and loft insulation and other energy efficiency measures. There are many ways to save energy at home and become more energy efficient.

Waste

In November, over 260 people attended our swap shop event at Eric Liddell Centre saving 719kg of textile, plastic and other waste from going to landfill! Thank you to all the volunteers who helped on the day and to our partners Granton Goes Greener and the Welcoming Association.



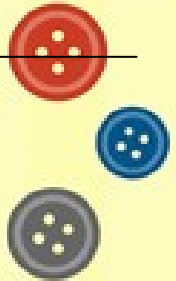
Our Monday sewing repair club has been growing. It has helped people to repair and alter their clothes and has been a very friendly space.





Have any clothes needing repaired?

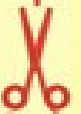
We can fix it. Better than new!



Drop in Mon-Friday 9am to 5pm
at ELREC, 14 Forth St, EH1 3LH



Clothing repair & alterations **Custom tailoring**



Personal remaking and tailoring clothes
to your individual requirements.

Special orders (dress making, pillows and cushions, chair cover).

Suggested Donation

Phone: 0131 556 0441

Email: cfc@elrec.org.uk



Quality service. Quality Finish.



MONDAY SEWING CLUB

JOIN OUR FREE SEWING CLUB



Come to repair and adjust your own clothes



Learn simple sewing techniques



Socialise

**MASK
REQUIRED**



*Relaxed
environment*

All welcome!



Equipment & refreshments provided

Every Monday 11am- 1pm

ELREC, 14 Forth Street, EH1 3LH

Spaces are limited

Booking **REQUIRED** by emailing cfc@elrec.org.uk

More info: 0131 556 0441



Climate awareness

In December, we screened and discussed the biographical film, 'I am Greta' telling the rise of Greta's movement, Friday for Future, and depicting her fight against climate change. The event was attended by over 40 people.



In November, we screened and discussed "Extinction: the facts", David Attenborough's new release at Augustine United Church with 45 participants.



Cycling activities

Thanks to funding from Paths for All, our cycling classes & ebike library will continue for another year from April 2022! We have also received a £2,000 grant from Cycling UK to take part in Scotland Cycle Repair Scheme that is aimed at helping people in need with bike repairs. The scheme is aimed to help those with less means. We can provide free cycle repairs and maintenance work, up to the value of £50 per person. Basic service and mechanical repairs are covered by the scheme i.e. repairs that are necessary to make the cycle roadworthy and fit for

purpose. The following repairs are covered by the scheme:

- repairing or replacing tyres, tubes, wheels and related components
- adjusting, repairing or replacing braking system components
- adjusting, repairing or replacing transmission system components
- repairing or replacing other essential components which prevent safe use of the cycle e.g. deteriorated grips or saddle.

If interested, please email cfc@elrec.org.uk

In the last quarter, our beginners and intermediates' cycling class on Saturday have been in full swing thanks to helpers Zee and Natalia. They help to increase people's cycling skills and confidence with the aim of commuting by bike. If interested in joining, please email cfc@elrec.org.uk. We also delivered 3 night riding cycling classes in November thanks to Cycling Scotland.



We have a few ebikes available for free three weeks loans. If interested in borrowing one, please email cfc@elrec.org.uk

Testimonial: “Hiring a bike has helped me to build up my confident and able to learn to cycle with more confident and I will continue to cycle in the future, and encouraging my grandkids and family and friends to cycle.”

We organised a led ride on 26th September from NKS and North Edinburgh Arts to Lauriston Farm joined by 35 participants. Thank you to the team at Lauriston Farm, Tone, Dave and Rachel who offered an inspiring guided visit of the community farm and presented this incredible project.



Hire our electric van

You can hireout our electric van at competitive prices. We offer a 30% discount to organisations or individuals who can evidence an environmental purpose.

If so, please email cfc@elrec.org.uk You can book it via the Hiya car website.



Food growing

Community link officers have continued to offer home growing visits to help families grow food at home. We have partnered with the Whale Arts centre to continue running the Wester Hailes Community garden. At the Iqra garden, the group had a good harvest of tomatoes, cucumber, peas and broadbeans back in September.



Diline, our African CLO, organised an eco-walk at the botanical garden with members of the morning climate cafe.



Edinburgh Climate Festival

[Here](#) are some highlights from the Edinburgh Climate Festival 2021 in Leith Links organised by Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC), The Welcoming Association, SHRUB Coop, Earth in Common, The Salisbury Centre and support from The National Lottery Community Fund's Award for All programme and Net Zero Scotland's Climate Challenge Fund.



It was an honour to speak about Edinburgh Climate Festival alongside Nicola Sturgeon at Keep Scotland Beautiful's Climate Festival event as part of the [Scottish Climate Week](#) & the [European Day of Sustainable Communities 2021](#).



purpose. The following repairs are covered by the scheme:

- repairing or replacing tyres, tubes, wheels and related components
- adjusting, repairing or replacing braking system components
- adjusting, repairing or replacing transmission system components
- repairing or replacing other essential components which prevent safe use of the cycle e.g. deteriorated grips or saddle.

If interested, please email cfc@elrec.org.uk

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SOMRA

We are happy to tell you about:

- The holistic study Report
- The SOMRA Green Entrepreneurship Model
- Our 2nd transnational project meeting
- Next steps

SOMRA Project

Supporting meaningful Occupations for low-qualified Migrants, Refugees, and Asylum seekers using the Green Entrepreneurship Model is an Erasmus+ project that offers an innovative approach to tackle two major challenges of the 21st century, namely climate change and refugee crises, by engaging refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in meaningful occupations that transform them into environment role models with a sustainable impact in their new and previous home.

The main idea of the SOMRA approach is to enable these main target groups to become true factors of change that influence positive environmental habits that are first established on a local and regional level and eventually beyond the borders of the EU.

Therefore, the SOMRA project will pursue the following objectives:

- Facilitating environmental change on a local and regional level through grassroots activities organised by green NGOs and the SOMRA participants.
- Fostering common values and civic engagement of migrant communities in their new environment.
- Offering learning opportunities related to environmental measures that increase employability by strengthening key competences for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

SOMRA Holistic Study Report

The SOMRA Holistic Study Report lays the fundament of the SOMRA project. The report includes in-depth data related to the labour market access, legal obligations and restrictions, and supporting structures that migrants, refugees and asylum seekers face

in the partner countries. In addition, it provides an insight on the necessary steps and frameworks for founding an NGO or applying and receiving funding for addressing and taking actions on environmental issues.

The SOMRA Holistic Study Report is a reliable reference document for migrant support workers, adult educators, policymakers, and persons interested in engaging in environmentally friendly NGO work. It includes a new approach and comprehensive information to take action.

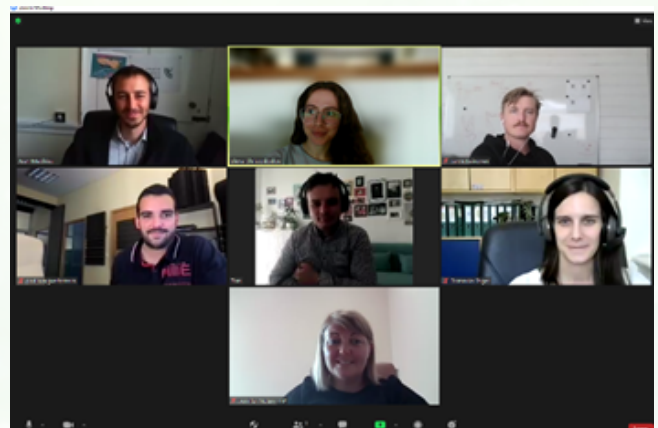
THE SOMRA Green Entrepreneurship Model

The Green Entrepreneurship Model is a visual handbook comprised of successful strategies and step-by-step guidelines to become a green entrepreneur and NGO founder or member.

This model is addressed primarily to migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, while it is a valuable resource for anyone who wishes to be engaged in green NGO entrepreneurship or to support the cooperation with migrant communities.

2ND TRANSLATIONAL PROJECT MEETING

The second transnational project meeting of the SOMRA project took place online on the 22nd of July 2021.



HOW TO FIND US

Visit our website: <https://somra.eu/>

Follow our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/SOMRAEU/>



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Try an electric bike
for up to 3 weeks
£20 hiring charge

Electric bikes help you:
Save money
Get to places faster
Be sustainable
Improve your fitness

If interested:
Email cfc@elrec.org.uk
Tel 0131 556 0441



Bike Buddies

Linking you with experienced cyclists



Do you want to learn to cycle but nervous about riding on Edinburgh's roads? We will pair you with one of our experienced **bike buddies!**

Whether you need to cycle to work, college, or to the local shops, your buddy will help you become a confident cyclist by tackling specific challenges together.

To get paired with a buddy

cfc@elrec.org.uk

0131 556 0441

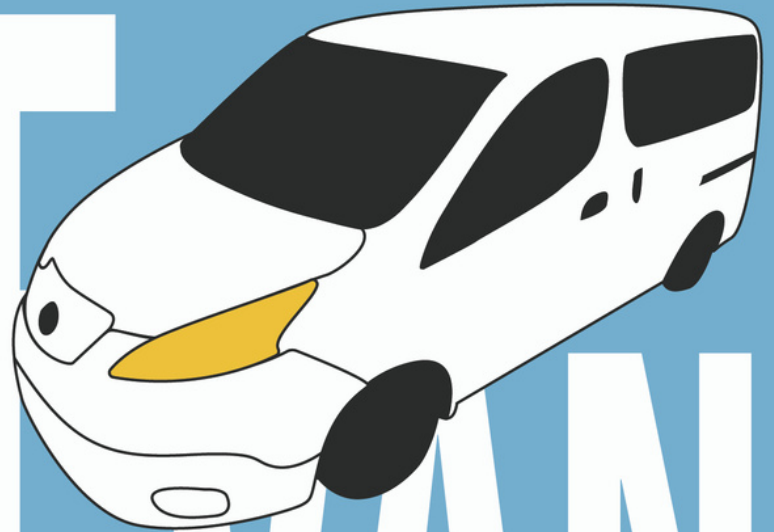


Funded by **Paths for All** and also supported by **CCF** and **Greener Scotland**



HIRE VAN

AN **ELECTRIC** COMBI



Hireout ELREC's
electric van on
Hiyacar website.

Insurance covered by HiyaCar
Nissan NV200
70 miles range
Easy use
Zero emissions
Flexible hire time/days
30% discount for
environmental uses.

If interested:
Email cfc@elrec.org.uk
Tel 0131 556 0441



Volunteer with ELREC

As a volunteer you can give your time and skills and get something back in return, whether it is learning new skills, helping to build confidence, having the chance to meet new people, or gaining the satisfaction of helping a cause you believe in.

Whatever your reason is, we would love to hear from you.
Contact us:
admin@elrec.org.uk

THANK YOU TO ALL VOLUNTEERS WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR WORK.

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 £50-£150 depending on the size and placement of the advertisement.

For more information, please E-mail: admin@elrec.org.uk

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

SUPPORT OUR WORK!



ROOM HIRE AT ELREC

You can book our 20-seat meeting room on an hourly basis.

For £20 per hour (reduced rate for small charities & community groups)

Tea & coffee £1 per head

Please contact ELREC office for additional information or to make a booking.

For more info, contact us: admin@elrec.org.uk

Calling for new members at ELREC!

ELREC strives to embody the principles of transparency; integrity; equity; mutual cooperation; 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. 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.

Please contact our office: admin@elrec.org.uk