

ELREC NEWSLETTER



PROMOTING EQUALITY - FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION - FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONS

Welcome to ELREC's Summer 2022 newsletter. ELREC continues to deliver its current projects, the Communities' Reduce Reuse & Recycle project run by Franciele Sobierai and a team of four community workshop facilitators aims to encourage and support BAME communities in Edinburgh to reduce waste, increase reusing and repairing and to shift to a more sustainable consumption. This project is in partnership with NKS and started in April 2022.



The BAME-RECAP project is due to end in August 2022, Mizan has done well and has been another successful piece of work. We thank CRER for the funding and giving us the opportunity to serve our communities.

Open Arms project is also doing very well each year aimed at supporting women to beat loneliness and isolation in the form of classes, workshops, and events.

Green Leith Art project started in April 2022 aims to fight loneliness, reduce social isolation, enhance wellbeing, and connect people with the environment by hosting free Art workshops and walks around the green areas of Leith. The project is doing well and well appreciated during the summer months, benefitting many.

ELREC also hosted two interns from Canada over the summer in partnership with Global Experiences.

We would also like to welcome new staff and upcoming projects this year.

Foyso! Choudhury MBE MSP

Co-Chair Azra Sharif-Qayyum

Honorary Members

Honorary Patron:

The Rt. Hon. Robert Aldridge, Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh

Honorary President:

Prof. Sir Geoff Palmer DSc OBE

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Co- Chair Azra Sharif-Qayyum

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Convenor, Finance and General Purposes

Subcommittee: Irina Lazarenko

Convenor, Education Subcommittee:

Magdalena Sajnaga

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Administrator: Andrea Gergely

Finance Officer: Adrian Barbascumpa

Open Arms and SOMRA Project Coordinator:
Mitra Rostami

Reduce, Reuse & Recycle Project Coordinator:
Fran Sobierai

Project Coordinator: Mizan Rahman

Green Leith Project Coordinator: Diline
Abushaban

Fuel Poverty Project Coordinator: Ewelina
Karolina Lukaszek

South Asian Workshop Facilitator: Swastika
Mishra

Chinese Workshop Facilitator: David Tai

African Workshop Facilitator: Mohammad Al
Zaim

Polish Workshop Facilitator: Alekszandra
Szczygielska

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)
14 Forth Street
Edinburgh EH1 3LH
(T) 0131 556 0441
(E) admin@elrec.org.uk
(W) www.elrec.org.uk
Charity Number: SC007896
Company Number: SC183419



Edinburgh Slavery and Colonialism Legacy Review group to present recommendations

- The Council publicly acknowledges the city's past role in sustaining slavery and colonialism, and issues an apology to those places and people who suffered.
- Statues, monuments, buildings and street names associated with slavery and colonialism in Edinburgh are retained and re-presented in accordance with a new, dedicated interpretation strategy which explains the nature and consequences of that involvement.
- City-wide observance of the annual, UNESCO-designated International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition every August 23 is introduced and resourced.
- Teaching and learning materials are developed and delivered to fill the gap in respect of Scotland's and Edinburgh's role in slavery and colonialism
- Friendship agreements are initiated with cities in countries most impacted by Edinburgh's historic involvement with slavery and colonialism.
- Universities and research bodies are encouraged to fund, develop and publish studies into the many under-researched aspects of Edinburgh's connections with slavery and colonialism, prioritising the objectives of the new interpretation strategy.
- A significant public artwork is commissioned acknowledging Edinburgh's links with slavery and colonialism. This initiates the development of a city-wide strategy for public art that fairly represents the diversity of the city and its histories, and capitalises on the creative potential of a multi-cultural city.
- A positive programme of cultural commissions is established, empowering and resourcing emerging Black and Minority Ethnic creatives in Edinburgh to participate in and shape existing festivals, arts and heritage programmes.
- The Council endorses the work of the Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums steering group (ESSM) established by the Scottish Government, and commits to exploring how the capital can contribute to the creation of a dedicated space addressing Scotland's role in this history.
- An independent legacy stakeholder group is established, supported by the Council, to ensure approved recommendations are actioned, resourced and monitored, and progress is reported annually

Professor Sir Geoff Palmer chaired the Groups that produced the Report and Recommendations. He is also the Honorary President of ELREC.

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



This year marked 75 years of summer festivals in the Capital and that familiar buzz well and truly returned to the city. As we come to the end of a busy summer, I too am reflecting on what feels like a whirlwind first few months in office as the Lord Provost of Edinburgh - the world's best capital city! Earlier this year it was a huge honour to be appointed the Lord Provost of the city where I was born and raised. I have been the local Councillor for the area I live in for 38 years and remain dedicated to this wonderful city and its



residents. My aim is to play my part in making the city even better for everyone, especially those who are marginalised for whatever reason. Everyone deserves our respect and the opportunity to be their best person. Already I've thoroughly enjoyed meeting and visiting many fantastic people and organisations who go above and beyond to support fellow citizens and this is just the beginning!

In the Council we have five political parties all with substantial numbers of Councillors and I hope we will focus on issues which unite us – tackling poverty and ensuring basic services are delivered well to our residents. However I am very conscious that there are groups who continue to be under represented, and I will be happy to work with ELREC to encourage political parties to improve the diversity of councillors in the city.

It is a privilege and honour to represent our diverse and vibrant city and to be patron of your fantastic organisation. I look forward to working with you in the months and years ahead.”

Lord Provost Robert Aldridge

During the last quarter i have had Covid for the third time. I caught it whilst back home in Wales for a well-earned holiday. Unfortunately, I was on the third day of a fortnights holiday, and I drove back to West Lothian taking seven and a half hours feeling very ill. this time the only after effect appears to be my voice which is rough and croaky. Some people say it sounds better when i am folk singing. West Lothian Council have decided to re list a Black History event in their diversity program . The Chair, Geoff and Shami will



remember the successful events we held here in the past. I am hoping ELREC will be able to advise and help organise this venture. Now i am well again I hope to visit Forth Street a bit more than just the board meetings but with rail strikes and the parking situation it is not that easy for me to plan my visits.

On the finance side our hard-working staff have secured more money to allow us to continue with worthwhile projects and to start some new ones. We must think smart and prepare for the financial whirlwind that is about to hit the UK in the next few months. I am sure we will be asked for help from all directions covering things we did not imagine.

Treasurer - Cllr Carl John

Trust all of us are enjoying the summer and the festivities around in the city of Edinburgh. The Fringe taking place after Covid restrictions is a big source of excitement for all involved in any form either as performers or audience or visiting the city. But there are some real issues that are tempering the businesses, service providers and wider public mood, the biggest amongst them is the cost of living dominated by the energy prices. The unprecedented rise in the energy prices at the start of this year and now in September and



expectation of further rise in January 2023 is nothing short of a major crises. This would have extremely adverse effect on most of the population considering the percentage rise is so huge. It would have more severe impact on those who are at lower income right now. The governments at all level , UK and Scotland, need to step in to handle the immediate pain with radical short term support and also work on the energy self-reliant strategy with much more vigour. We are all bracing for a very tough winter this year and sincerely hope that governments extend meaningful support. We at ELREC should do all that is possible to help the most vulnerable ones as much as possible. Would need all the best wishes from all corners

Company Secretary - Rajnish Singh

Police Scotland – Message to Communities



Police in Edinburgh have been engaging with Universities and Colleges in the lead up to this year's fresher's events. Student safety, hate crime awareness and crime prevention advice will be distributed to students prior to and after the event.

Discussions are being held with local authority in South West Edinburgh and elsewhere in the city to roll out Keep Safe and Third Party Reporting training in all libraries to enhance community support to people who become victims of hate crime.

Edinburgh Division's Prevention, Intervention & Partnerships department assisted the School Link Officer at Portobello High School with inputs on hate crime.

Following recent engagement in relation to hate crime and supporting our diverse communities at Edinburgh Hindu Mandir, officers were invited to attend there to celebrate Raksha Bandhan. This served to reinforce the relationship with Edinburgh's Hindu community and further built on the confidence and trust they have in Police Scotland. This event was attended by Leith Community policing Team and Equality & Diversity officers from the Prevention, Intervention & Partnerships department.

Edinburgh Division officers were delighted to travel to Airdrie where they met the LGBT Youth Scotland Charter Manager and handed over our extensive portfolio of evidence. This is now being assessed to determine whether or not the division has met the criteria to be awarded the LGBT Youth Scotland Charter.

An Equality & Diversity officers from the Prevention, Intervention & Partnerships department joined a School Link Officer to meet with school pupils involved in hate incidents within their schools. Along with their parents the officers met a group and emphasised the seriousness of hate crime, the significant victim impact and that Police Scotland take a zero tolerance approach to hate crime. This meeting appeared successful in that the perpetrators appreciated how their behaviour was unacceptable and significantly impacted the victim's quality of life. It further evidenced Police Scotland's approach to dealing with hate crime and reassured parents and schools of the response they can expect.



Manager's Update - Parveen Ishaq

Welcome to our Summer Newsletter, the projects are doing well so I want to Thank our staff and volunteers for their hard work as always.

During the summer period, ELREC hosted two interns from Canada who wanted to gain some experience working with diverse communities and the third sector.

The BAME-RECAP project is due to end in August 2022 and has been a great success assisting communities with issues around housing, benefits, form filling and much more.

We were also able to arrange a trip to the Scottish Parliament over the summer with 20 community members to learn more about the Parliament and community involvement.

Few of our staff were able to travel to Italy and Greece this year, thanks to the ERASMUS cultural programme, which has been a part of ELREC for many years.

As always, we Thank our funders, staff, volunteers, and communities for always supporting us through our projects.

ELREC welcomes Robert Aldridge the new Lord Provost of Edinburgh, we wish him all the best in his new post.



Support and Advice



Our support and advice centre helps individuals who have been discriminated against, need assistance, are looking for housing and benefit advice. 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.

Administrator's Introduction

Hi my name is Andrea and I started working for ELREC two months ago. My background is in optics and I feel very passionate about the environment. For the past two years I have been studying to complete my masters degree in environmental protection.



I am currently working on finalising my dissertation which focuses on the storage of nuclear waste in the United Kingdom.

When I volunteered for ELREC three years ago, I got to experience the passion with which all the staff completed their tasks. A passion that I am happy to notice still exists and keeps the organisation running very efficiently. In the future I hope to keep improving my skills and provide assistance to those that need it.



OPEN ARMS

Champions of Health

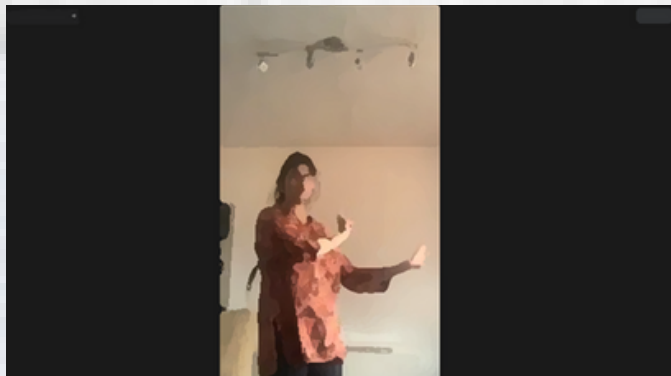
Warm greetings from Open Arms. The project has moved to the second and final year, and our group of women has been continuing to grow fast, mostly by word-of-mouth. We have welcomed many new ladies from Ukraine, Kurdistan and Iraq recently. Over the last few months, we have organised and delivered many exciting activities on weekly basis including:

- Body Maintenance Exercise- Online
- Face Yoga – Online
- Qigong Exercise – Online
- Upcycle workshops – face-to-face
- Family-friendly Craft making
- English Conversation (ESOL) – Online
- Reflexology one-to-one treatment sessions
- face-to-face
- Sewing club, joint activity with C3R project,
- face-to-face



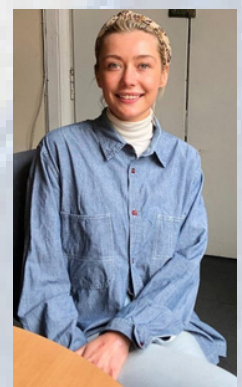
Reflexology

We have been so lucky to have Millie Hall, newly qualified Reflexologist, offering our women free reflexology treatment sessions. Open Arms service-users, who are interested in the treatment, are given individual appointments, available to book in advance once a week. They receive a complete treatment session, free of charge, after a full health assessment.



Dance Session

Currently, Qigong classes stopped in June, So we replaced them with a new physical fitness activity; aerobic dance. We had 2 Bollywood dance sessions, continued with free style and Latin American dance to follow.



AUGUST 2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
10:00 Dance class 11:00 Sewing club - 15.00 12:00 Art class - 15.00		10:00 Body Maintenance	10:00 Upcycle Craft - 15.00	11:00 Face Yoga - 10.00	
10:00 Dance class 11:00 Sewing club - 15.00 12:00 Art class - 15.00	"Frage Children Group"	10:00 Body Maintenance	10:00 Upcycle Craft - 15.00	11:00 Face Yoga - 10.00	11:00 Other parking and access at Glasgow, South.
10:00 Dance class 11:00 Sewing club - 15.00 12:00 Art class - 15.00	"Frage Children Group"	10:00 Body Maintenance	10:00 Upcycle Craft - 15.00	11:00 Face Yoga - 10.00	
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10:00 Dance class 11:00 Sewing club - 15.00 12:00 Art class - 15.00	10:00 Women's health Chat - 10.00	10:00 Body Maintenance			

**MIME: 14 Forth Street, G14 5JH
**McDonald Road Library: 2-6 McDonald Rd, Edinburgh EH7 4LJ
New activities can be added throughout the month
The timetable of the activities is subject to change, but there will be a prior notice

We update the timetable for the regular weekly activities at the beginning of each month. The image shows the timetable for the month of August.

Group Outings

Our women have been very happy to participate in various activities and outings, we started to organise since March. We have been meeting and having lunch at different venues in the town and, even more excitingly, we have organised a group activity in July, “Bowling and Burger Meal”, to which 20 of our ladies came along and had a lot of fun.



Free Edinburgh Fringe Show Tickets

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe is one of the greatest celebrations of arts and culture on the planet, and a unique platform for creative freedom. Every year in August, performers come from all over the world to showcase their work in Edinburgh.

Aiming to make everyone to feel part of the Fringe, particularly local audiences who might otherwise be unable to attend, the Children and Young People (CYP) ticketing scheme has been launched in 2014, with tickets generously donated by Fringe artists and companies as a thank you to the people of Edinburgh for hosting the festival.

We have been extra lucky this year to get access to CYP fringe tickets for the children of the women we support, to see shows at the Edinburgh Festival this August. We have allocated over 60 tickets so far. Children have had great time going to see the shows with their mums and very grateful for the opportunity.

Promotional activities

In order to reach out and recruit service users for our funded activities, the project and what is on offer has been promoted to the target group in the community using different platforms including social media, forums, and community events. In July, we run an interactive stall at the All of Us Edinburgh, which is a family fun event organised by the City of Edinburgh Council and the NSPCC at McDonald Road library.

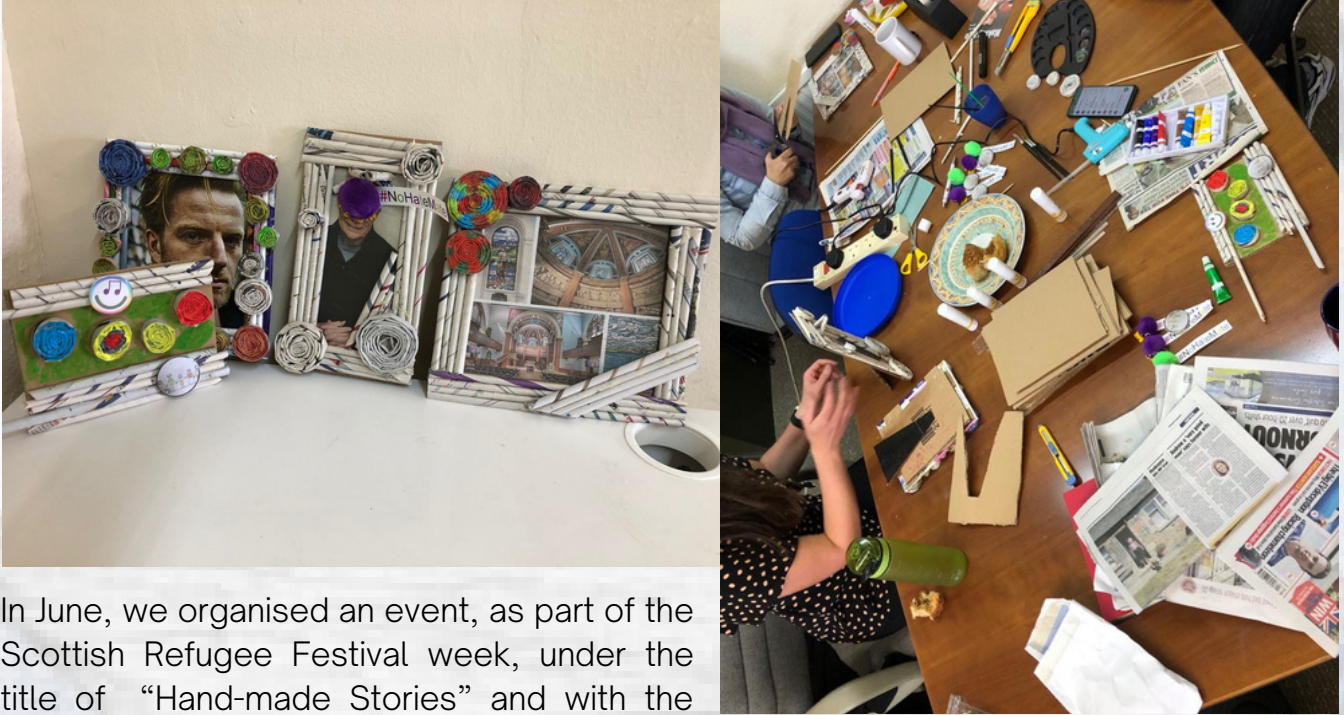


Open Arms actively accepts referrals. Criteria are only being a) female and b) from a migrant background. To refer or register with the service please email: mrostami@elrec.org.uk

SOMRA

Led by Mitra Rostami

SOMRA is ELREC's ERASMUS+ funded multinational project. We manage a team of project partners in 5 European countries (Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland, and Portugal). SOMRA's focus is the occupation of migrants and refugees in environmental activities at an entrepreneurial level.



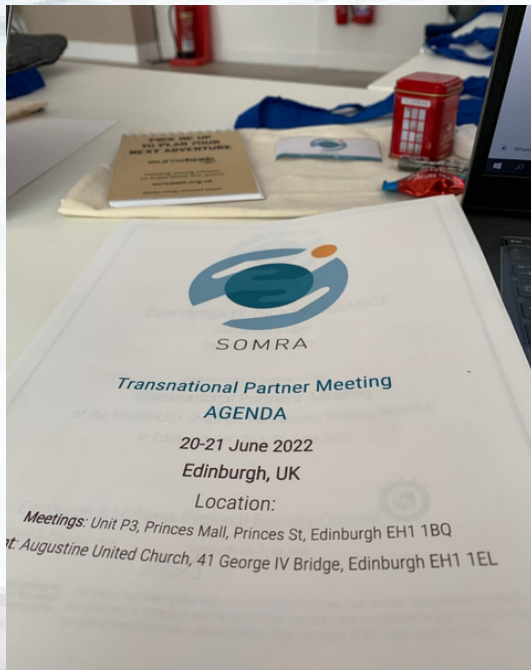
In June, we organised an event, as part of the Scottish Refugee Festival week, under the title of “Hand-made Stories” and with the theme of Migrants & Upcycling.

In run-up to the event, we organised a series of upcycling craft workshops, through which our service users explored upcycling options and gave recycled material a second life as a beautiful hand-made craft. The workshops were fun and creative.



Over 70 people visited our event which showcased art and craft work done by our service users from migrant and refugee backgrounds, using recycled materials. We also ran interactive stalls, run by our service users, including clothes repair, hand reflexology, and upcycle craft. All the visitors found the event informative and worthwhile.

We hosted SOMRA's Transnational Partner Meeting on the 20th of June with representatives from all partner organisations participating in Edinburgh. The meeting took place at the Urban Room provided to us by the Edinburgh Neighbourhood project, run by the University of Edinburgh in a fantastic location just on Prince's street.



You can check out SOMRA's project results via visiting the website
<https://somra.eu>
For more information please email mrostami@elrec.org.uk

BAME RECAP

ELREC RECAP Project has had an exciting time over the last quarter. A range of events, workshops and activities carried out over the summer.

Multicultural Eid Party:

We hosted a multicultural Eid party event on 22 May 2022 at the Leith Community and Education Centre. Over 50 people from BME families attended the event. Our chief guest Foysol Choudhury MBE MSP welcomed the participants and mentioned activities ELREC has undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic. He thanked the funder for the BAME-RECAP project. This event provided an opportunity to get together among the families who had been isolated due to Covid-19 restrictions. People enjoyed music, recitation, games and various fun activities at the party.



Support and Advice Service:

During our weekly surgeries, we have given essential support and advice to the BME individual and families who were affected by Covid-19. The day-long surgery at the ELREC office is conducted every Wednesday. About 10 people from different languages group such as Arabic, Chinese, Bengali, Urdu and Somalian, have taken the service with the help of an interpreter. The service has proven to be very popular and in high demand across the BME communities.



BME Women Walking Group:

We hosted a female walking group between May and June 2022. The 'Let's Walk Together' group was supported by a female support worker and run over four weeks. BME female from mix age group took part at the walking group. The group decided different walking paths in each week to walk.



Workshop with BME Elderly people:

We have hosted two workshops with local BME elderly people. These workshops took place on 24/07/2022 and 28/08/2022 in the ELREC meeting room. Most of the elderly people migrated to Scotland recently, thus we provided information about their rights at the workshop. ELREC-RECAP project has helped elderly people to signpost or access different services run by other organisations in Edinburgh and Lothian.

BAME - RECAP project ends in August 2022. We would like to thank 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.

On behalf of the RECAP staff/volunteers team, we would like to thank all our clients, beneficiaries and colleagues from external organisation for their support.

Bangladeshi COP 26 Delegates visit ELREC

A COP 26 delegates from the Centre for Natural Resource Studies (CNRS) based in Dhaka, Bangladesh, visited ELREC on 10 November 2021 at 11.30 am. The delegate team led by professor Akhter Hussain from the University of Dhaka, chair of CNRS board, Dr M Mokhlesur Rahman, Executive Director of CNRS and M. Anisul Islam, Director of CNRS.

ELREC Chair Foysol Choudhury MBE MSP welcomed the delegate at ELREC and gave a brief about ELREC's work in improving society and the environment. ELREC Communities for Conservation (CfC) Project Coordinator Jean Matthew highlighted his project's key activities and success to reduce carbon and save energy in an urban setting across Edinburgh.

CNRS executive director Mokhlesur Rahman appreciate the activities carried out by ELREC-CfC, such as swap shop, upcycling and sewing club. Mr Rahman hoped that these models could be replicated elsewhere in the world to save the planet.

CNRS is a Bangladeshi NGO that works to restore wetland natural resources across Bangladesh's inland and coastal regions. They are hoping to undertake initiatives within the urban areas to mitigate the impact of climate change in Bangladesh. CNRS is keen to collaborate in the future with a like-minded partner organisation in Scotland like ELREC CfC.

ELREC Manage Parveen Ishaq and BAME RECAP coordinator Mizan Rahman attended the meeting.



In absence of BAME RECAP support and advice service, If anyone requires support and advice service, please contact book an appointment for every Thursday afternoon. Please email admin@elrec.org.uk or call to book an appointment with the Thursday service. Please note, that this service will be limited and subject to the availability of staff members.

GREEN LEITH ART PROJECT



Welcome to Green Leith Art Project Corner!

Green Leith Art is a six month project that started in April this year. The project aims to make communities feel more connected and less isolated, connect them with nature and boost their creativity. This was achieved through providing weekly art workshops as well as weekly walks in the green areas around Leith.

Art Workshops

More than 20 art workshops were provided during the past few months with participants from different cultures and backgrounds. The participants enjoyed learning new artistic skills with our artist Majid. They created beautiful paintings and art work and enjoyed socialising, sharing and having a cuppa!

One participant shares her experience in the workshop: 'the workshp is the best part of my day, getting creative is a great way of letting out all the stress of work. I love connecting with everyone too'.

Sarah, who's been a committed volunteer in the workshop expressed her thoughts about her experience saying: 'I love coming and helping here, it feels great to be able to connect with people, help them feel welcome and encourage them to get creative. At the same time, it is a good way for me to have some time for myself and relax'.

Also, a refugee participant said that: 'the art workshop is the one and only opportunity that my family accessed since we came to Edinburgh in 2020, we are grateful to have found an activity to connect with other people and learn from them '.



The workshop takes place at our office @ 14 Forth Street, on Mondays at 3pm. If you are interested to join us and get creative please email: Greenleith@elrec.org.uk.

Wellbeing walks



So far, 20 different wellbeing walks took place in different green spaces in and around Leith, we enjoyed exploring the beauty of the Botanic Gardens, London road gardens, Calton Hill, Leith Links and Inverleith Park in the past few months.

To reach out to as many isolated families as possible, we collaborated with two different groups from Multi-Cultural Family Base and organised a few different walks with these groups. More than 15 mums and their children from African, Asian, South American and other communities took part in our walks; the majority of them are ‘stay at home’ mums who don’t have opportunities to get out due to many barriers. Walks to Leith Links, The Royal Botanic gardens and Calton Hill were organised with the mums, where they got the chance to learn about many plants, trees, historical places and community gardens in both Leith Links and the Botanics.



One mum said: ‘I don’t usually go out, I was encouraged to join the walk as thought it’s a great opportunity to connect with other mums who have the same issues that I do, also to explore Edinburgh more as I’ve been here for more than 3 years without getting the chance to see anything. Walking in Calton hill was great and I will definitely come back with my family’.

Another mum expressed her excitement about joining the walks saying: ‘as a full-time carer, I don’t get the chance to go out or spend time with people, the walk was a great opportunity for me to breathe, connect with people and explore the beautiful nature in Edinburgh’.

At the start of the summer break, we organised a big family walk in collaboration with Linknet, this was to give the chance to as many people from the most isolated communities to explore the beauty of the Royal Botanic Gardens. More than 40 people joined the walk; families enjoyed the sun, connecting with other families, exploring the green space of the Botanics and learning about the many different herbs that they can grow at home and sharing organic snacks.

One of the participants said: 'this is the best start of the school holiday, I can't believe I never been here before, I will come back very often now to recharge in this green gem'.

We also ended the school holidays with another walk at the Botanics, when we explored some plants and species in more depth through going to an exhibition there. Our participants enjoyed learning about Salmon breeding and building the intertidal commons in Scotland and how mussels are being used now to produce alternative building materials, which was a great example of using food waste in re-creating useful things. The exhibition also represented some plants which is grown in Palestine and showed case how environmentalism often manifests as a tool of political enclosure there. The exhibition *Recalling Recollection*, explored this and showed case a connection between this and the Scottish Highlands.

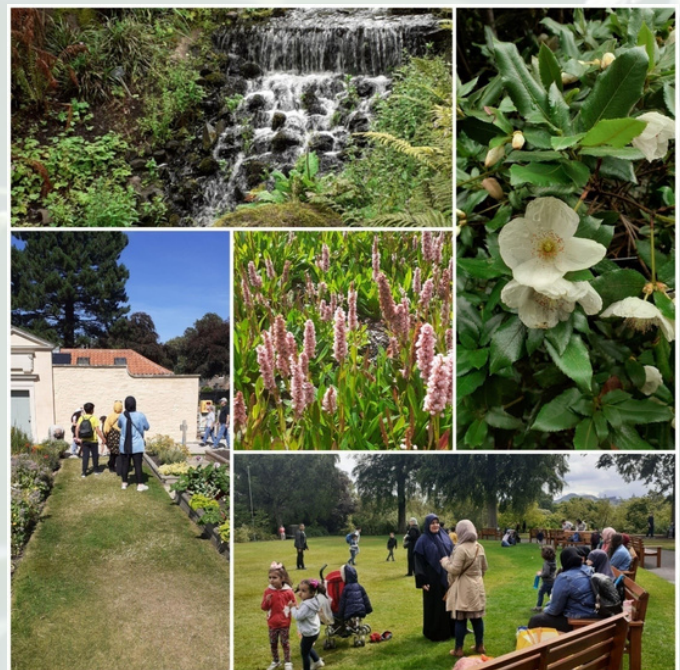
The participants were fascinated by what they learned and said that they felt they travelled to different green places around the world during the tour.

To join our weekly walks on Wednesdays, connect with other people, explore nature and maintain your wellbeing please don't hesitate to email us @ Greenleith@elrec.org.uk for more information.

Big thanks to our funder LeithChooses for supporting the project.

Peace to all,

Diline



REDUCE, REUSE & RECYCLE



In March 2022, the Communities' Reduce Reuse & Recycle project started. The aim of the project is to encourage and support BAME communities in Edinburgh to reduce waste, increase reusing and repairing and to shift to a more sustainable consumption. Overall, we will change attitude, behaviours and awareness towards waste and consumption through activities including:

- Clothing repairs and alterations sessions
- Sewing/stitching classes
- Swap Shop events
- Fashion shows
- Food parcel distribution to vulnerable families
- Cookery sessions
- DIY upcycling
- 'Composting' and 'wormery' workshops
- Visits to recycling centers
- Edinburgh Climate Festival

We work with the Polish, South Asian, Chinese and African communities based on ELREC's long established relationships with the communities and their higher demographic representation in Edinburgh.

If you would like to volunteer with us help deliver activities on sustainable consumption, send your volunteer application to cfc@elrec.org.uk.



The ELREC CAF Team:

Feel free to contact us if you would like to get involved in the activities:

Franciele Sobierai (Project Coordinator) – franciele@elrec.org.uk

Aleksandra Szczygielska (Polish Community Link Officer) – aleksandra@elrec.org.uk

Swastika Misrha (South Asian Polish Community Link Officer) – Swastika@elrec.org.uk

David Tai (Chinese Polish Community Link Officer) – dtai@elrec.org.uk

Mohammad Alzaim (African Polish Community Link Officer) – m.alzaim@elrec.org.uk



Food Growing

The gardening sessions have been happening every 2 weeks at the Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden, participants learned many things including composting techniques, seed sowing using recycled materials, after care – watering and planting out, how to grow in small spaces, and much more.

In addition to this, we have a brand-new plot on Lauriston Agroecology Farm and meet every Thursday at 2.30pm. We need help preparing the beds in time for planting organic vegetables in March 2023. We are using the 'no dig' method, which means smothering the weeds, especially couch grass, with thick cardboard and manure. There will be an opportunity to learn organic/permaculture techniques, help plan next year's crops and meet a friendly, diverse group of plot-holders. Cold drinks will be provided and there will be time to relax and enjoy the wonderful views. A special thank you to our volunteer Sam who is the volunteer lead of the plot.

Sewing Club

The sewing club has been very busy, the participants have been learning how to repair their clothes as well as how to create new items out of clothes scraps and different materials.



The team has been running numerous upcycling workshops such as macrame and upcycling techniques and we will be making candle jars to take home, Making pots out of the cans and containers, reducing reusing & recycling, food waste, brooch-making climate awareness and much more.





Food support

We have been supplying food for approximately 35 families and diverting 300kg of food from going to the landfill weekly. Thank you our partner Fare Share, to the National Lottery Fund Climate Action to our dedicated team of volunteers.



Events

Swap Shop Event

In July we had a successful Big Swap Shop event, thanks to our partners Granton Goes Greener & Nks Nks and to our funder The National Lottery Community Fund Scotland for supporting this initiative.

Over 200 people attended, and we diverted more than 340kg of waste from going to the landfill. Thank you to our fantastic volunteers who worked tirelessly to make this event happen and helped us to inspire climate action.



Litterpicking

We had a great litter picking session at Granton Beach on Saturday 15/08/2022.

Thanks to our partner Granton Goes Greener who helped us to organise it. And a massive well done and thanks to all the participants and our funder The National Lottery Community Fund for supporting this activity.



We managed to gather 13 bags of waste along the beach, preserve the local wildlife, and clean this public space for the use and enjoyment of everyone.



Cycling activities


Thanks to funding from Paths for All, our cycling classes & ebike library will continue for another year from April 2022!

In the last months, our beginners and intermediates' cycling class on Saturday have been very busy thanks to helpers Zee and Natalia.

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



03/09/2022 - Edinburgh Climate Festival:

Join us at this year's Edinburgh Climate Festival! The festival is a free, family friendly & community-led marketplace event taking place in Leith Links on Saturday 3rd of September from 12noon to 5pm. It aims at celebrating and inspiring climate action. Featuring performances, stalls, kids' and adults' activities and more, this is not to be missed! 

Join and share the Facebook event here: <https://fb.me/e/5I3VX0wkG>
Or register via eventbrite here: <https://ecf3sept.eventbrite.co.uk>

In addition to our stall, highlights of the 'marketplace' festival include:

- Family/Kids area
- Market and stalls
- Background music
- Upcycling workshops ♻️
- Arts and craft
- Free clothes repairs ♻️
- Free bike repairs
- Electric bike trials
- Swap shop / free shop with clothes, books, shoes and more !
- Yoga and dance classes

This is a public event. Please feel free to share the facebook event!
#EdinburghClimateFestival

Edinburgh Climate Festival – Volunteers needed:

The event is taking place at Leith Links on Saturday 3rd September. We'll likely have two 'shifts' on the day: 9:30am to 1:30pm, and 1:30pm to 5:30/6pm. The former will be to help set up for the event beginning at 12pm, and the latter to help pack everything up.

All that's required is to be an extra set of hands to help stallholders and other staff/volunteers put up and take down gazebos etc., ensure the safety of those in attendance and know the key points (e.g. First Aid, fire assembly etc.) which will be shared with you on the day. We'll also provide lunch to sweeten the deal! To register as a volunteer email cfc@elrec.org.uk. (Please specify which shift you would like.)

September/October - Forest Bound

'Forest Bound', it is a public engagement project funded by NERC (Natural Environment Research Council) and working in collaboration between UKCEH (UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology) and ELREC aiming to engage BAME groups in Edinburgh and the Lothians with the changes happening in forests landscapes. We aim to do this by discussing with participants the values placed on forests, their experiences of nature, and how people connect to the outdoors. Activities will consist in nature outings to sites reachable from Edinburgh. We will be doing guided walks with help from artists and researchers through these sites, exploring people's relationship to the landscape (specifically forests), how their experiences of nature are determined by different factors, and the extent of their knowledge about local forests.

We will do 2-3 activities (outings) between September and October, 2022. If you want to take part please fill the doodle poll for which dates would work best for you. Please note each activity is likely to take-up 5h (organising everything, getting there, etc.), so make sure you have availability on the dates selected.

ELECTRIC BIKE LIBRARY



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



Saturday Cycling classes

Beginners: 10 to 11am
Intermediate: 11:30 to 1pm

All welcome

Fun family time

Health and well being

Get new skills

Relaxed learning environment

Socialising

NKS, 7 Gillespie st, Edinburgh, EH3 9NH

Book your space now:

E-mail: cfc@elrec.org.uk

Phone: 0131 556 0441

Or register your interest with Al-Furqan

Bikes and helmet provided

Al-Furqan in partnership with ELREC



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 12am - 2pm

ELREC, 14 Forth Street, EH1 3LH

Spaces are limited

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

More info: 0131 556 0441





Have any clothes needing repaired?

We can fix it. Better than new!



Drop in **Monday, Tuesday 12-5.30pm**
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.



ELREC is looking for a dedicated social media volunteer

As a Social Media Volunteer, you will be involved in:

- maintaining active social media accounts
- Researching and creating creative content for different social media channels
- Identifying opportunities to establish relationships with local community groups

Do you have a keen interest in social media?

Do you have a love for sharing good news stories in your community?

We are looking for a volunteer to support our organisation across all our social platforms.

Skills

As a Social Media Volunteer, you will:

Help to maintain and develop social media accounts with regular posts, both planned and reactive

Support with developing, managing, updating, and writing content for website

Support with producing and posting content for our internal Intranet system

Support where required in generation of electronic newsletters

As a Social Media Volunteer, you need to be:

A great communicator, particularly written

Confident using online platforms

Able to create impactful and engaging content

Organised, demonstrating a high level of initiative

We can provide you with the tools to access digital training to polish your skills and develop further

We ask for a minimum 6-month commitment, we are very flexible. Will result in permanent employment if you are the right person

As a Social Media Volunteer, you will:

Get to work within a team of experienced and diverse individuals

Be a key player in growing our online platforms

Be able to work on a variety of different social media campaigns

If you want to apply or just have some questions, please email admin@elrec.org.uk or call 0131 556 0441

Coming soon....


- **Fuel Poverty Service.**

The BAME Fuel Poverty Service aims to tackle fuel poverty in Edinburgh and Lothians (East Lothian, West Lothian, and Midlothian). Our focus is low-income BAME households to ensure that the advice and support provided will improve energy efficiency of their households, creates changes in the energy consumption and will significantly contribute to reduction of fuel poverty. This service will be the first port of contact for BAME community members affected by fuel poverty and/or high energy bills, energy debt, billing issues, metering issues, lack of supply.

For more info contact Ewelina by email elukaszek@elrec.org.uk, or call 0131 556 0441.

- **Life is Good in Scotland (LiGiS) Project.**

It is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and supported by the Scottish Refugee Council. The project aims to support immigrant integration, assist migrants to adapt to the new society and provide education and training for everyday life. We want to use innovative and practical approaches to learning English as a second language, develop skills and knowledge for life in Scotland. The objectives include, integration, social inclusion of migrants and refugees, as marginalized groups, including English language competences, Cultural competences, and increased access to public services. This will be delivered in the form of events, learning groups, workshops and trips to heritage sites.



The Board and the staff would like to send their sincere condolences to Parveen Ishaq, Mizan Rahman and Ewelina Lukaszek who have lost loved ones recently.