Community Board Quarterly Meeting

Thursday 15 September, 2 - 4pm

Microsoft Teams

Chair: Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability
Attending:
Sarah Anderson, Community Engagement Programme Manager, Social Responsibility and Sustainability
Katrina Castle, Head of Strategic Partnerships and Transitions, Student Recruitment and Admissions
Patricia Erskine, Head of Stakeholder Relations & Policy Officer, College Office – CAHSS
Ian Fyfe, Senior Lecturer, Moray House School of Education and Sport, IECS
Gemma Gourlay, Head of Social Impact, Department of Social Responsibility & Sustainability
Christina Hinds, Development Worker: Organisational Development & Capacity Building, EVOC
Hazel Lambert, Interim Head of Communications, Engagement and Marketing, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine
Anne-Sofie Laegran, Head of Knowledge Exchange and Impact, Edinburgh Research Office
Jacky MacBeath, Head of Museums, Museums
Derek MacLeod, Head of Global Partnerships, Edinburgh Global
Lauren McLeron, Communications Manager (Finance and Community Engagement) – maternity cover
Lynn McMath, Interim Deputy Director Stakeholder Relations, Communications and Marketing
James Mooney, Director of Open Studies, Centre for Open Learning (cover for Kate McHugh)
Cameron Ritchie, Depute Director and Head of Operations, University Sport and Exercise
Sean Smith, Director of the Centre for Future Infrastructure, Institute for Infrastructure and Environment
Zoe Stephens, Head of Organisational Development and Change, Estates Management Group
Stuart Tooley, Community Relations Manager, Communications and Marketing
Isi Williams, EUSA VP Community

Apologies:
Eppy Harries-Pugh, Communications Manager (Finance and Community Engagement), Social Responsibility and Sustainability (on maternity leave)
Lesley McAra, Assistant Principal Community Relations and Director of Institute of Advanced Studies in the Humanities (IASH)
Kate McHugh, Director of Open Studies, Centre for Open Learning (on maternity leave)

In Attendance:
Anne Douglas, Community Engagement Administrator & Projects Coordinator

Agenda

	Time	Item	Paper (closed/ open)
1.	2.00pm	Approval of meeting minute of 12 May 2022 **(Dave Gorman)**	A
2.	2.05pm	Matters Arising, not otherwise covered in the agenda **(Dave Gorman)**	-

		• Update on community engagement and student courses (tracker commitment 15) • Update on SRS land purchase and future community engagement implications **(Dave Gorman)**	
3.	2.15pm	Introduction to EUSA Vice Principal Community **(Isi Williams)**	
4.	2.20pm	Our Edinburgh Neighbourhood – the project so far, and early findings (part of Community Consultation & Quality Of Life (CCQOL)) - **(John Brennan, Chair of Sustainable Architecture)**	*Presentation*
5.	2.45pm	Social Impact Pledge **(Sarah Anderson)**	B
6.	2.55pm	BREAK	
7.	3.05pm	(1) Poverty and Cost of Living Crisis: verbal update **(Dave Gorman)** (2) End Poverty Edinburgh Progress Report (for noting – from Poverty Commission Working Group)	C
8.	3.30pm	Standing item: Community Plan implementation – progress, risks and issue **(Sarah Anderson/Stuart Tooley)** *Please see Tracker*	
9.	3.45pm	Standing Item: Community Team update **(Sarah Anderson/Stuart Tooley)** *Paper for information*	D
10.	3.50pm	A.O.B.	
11.	4.00pm	Meeting close	

A

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
MINUTE OF A MEETING *of the Community Board held via MS Teams and in the Torridon Room, Charles Stewart House, on Thursday 12 May 2022*

Present:	Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability (DG) (Chair)
	Sarah Anderson, Community Engagement Programme Manager (SA)
	Patricia Erskine, Head of Stakeholder Relations & Policy Officer, College Office – CAHSS (PE)
	Ian Fyfe, Senior Lecturer, Moray House School of Education and Sport, IECS (IF)
	Christina Hinds, Development Worker: Organisational Development & Capacity Building, EVOC (CH)
	Anne-Sofie Laegran, Head of Knowledge Exchange and Impact, Edinburgh Research Office (ASL)
	Hazel Lambert, Public Engagement with Research Manager, College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine (in place of Jen Middleton, now on secondment) (HL)
	Lesley McAra, Assistant Principal Community Relations and Director, Edinburgh Futures Institute (LMcA)
	Jacky MacBeath, Head of Museums, Museums (JMacB)
	Derek MacLeod, Head of Global Partnerships, Edinburgh Global (DM), for part of meeting
	Lynn McMath, Interim Deputy Director, Stakeholder Relations, Communications and Marketing (LMcM)
	Cameron Ritchie, Depute Director and Head of Operations, University Sport and Exercise (CR)
	Beth Simpson, EUSA VP Community (BS)
	Sean Smith, Director of the Centre for Future Infrastructure, Institute for Infrastructure and Environment (SS)
	Stuart Tooley, Community Relations Manager, Communications and Marketing (ST)
In attendance:	Anne Douglas, Community Engagement Administrator & Project Coordinator (AD) (minute)
Apologies:	Katrina Castle, Head of Strategic Partnerships and Transitions, Student Recruitment and Admissions (KC)
	Sarah Hoey, Immigration Legal Adviser, Edinburgh Global
	James Mooney, Director of Open Studies, Centre for Open Learning (cover for Kate McHugh)
	Zoe Stephens, Head of Organisational Development and Change, Estates Management Group (ZS)

1   Ukraine response: Lessons learned and actions for members of Community Board   C

Derek MacLeod introduced the paper on Ukraine response: Lessons learned and actions for members of the Community Board.

He gave a comprehensive overview of the University's response to major world crises, including:

- The University's aspiration to be proactive rather than reactive when an emergency global situation arises, such as the Ukrainian war.
- The specific commitment in the Community Plan 2020-25 for the University to continue in its role as a University of Sanctuary. It is hoped that being part of a

network of UK [Sanctuary Universities](#) will enable a more coherent approach to assisting refugees in local communities who have fled their countries of origin.

- The University is a member of the Council for At Risk Academics to provide a place of safety for scholars and academics, and also the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, to ensure refugee access to higher education.
- There is now in place a twinning partnership with the Taras Shevchenko National University in Kyiv.
- A paper is being prepared which will form the basis for the University to have a strategic and coordinated response to emergency situations.
- Action: DMcL – to bring this paper to the Board, ideally in draft form so that the Community Board can input re. local aspect of global emergencies.
  Action: DMcL – to contact Nikola Brown, the University's Business Continuity Manager, re: business continuity and a coordinated process of who does what when.

Board members offered and discussed some of the following suggestions:

- The possible relevance for emergency response of a paper prepared on the University's response to Covid-19.
  Action: SA – to pass this paper onto DMcL.
- As Estates are currently reviewing their building use, the possibility of utilizing a University building that would always be available for sanctuary. This would need to be discussed with Estates at a strategic level.
- The importance of communications to assist the University infrastructure to be effectively mobilized when responding to global crises. These need to be coordinated, consistent and transparent, as well as mindful of political sensitivities.
- The need for relevant, systematic staff and student training where they may be assisting displaced people suffering from great distress and/or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.
- Ways of disseminating information and requests for help, for example, through the Mastercard Scholarship programme, Edinburgh Partnership Board (go through Lynn McMath) and Edinburgh Health Partnership. Lynn McMath to look into the city wide approach to war related mental health issues.
  Action: LMcM – find out about the city wide approach to war related mental health issues through the Edinburgh Health Partnership.
- The importance of involving and coordinating with community organisations, such as The Welcoming.
- Assisting local education projects and timing of English for Speakers of Other Languages certification.
  Action: SS – to contact DMcL about English classes.

2   Approval of meeting minute, 10 February 2022   A

The Community Board minute of 10 February 2022 was approved.

3   Matters Arising, not otherwise covered in the agenda

The following italicized items were noted in an Action Points tracker, but not raised in the meeting:

(1)   Minute item 2(1) – Matters Arising, Community Plan tracker – this remains partially completed.
Action: All – *continue to update the [Tracker](#)*
(2)   Minute item 2(4) – Matters Arising, Community Survey results – this may be added to the September 2022 Board agenda.
(3)   Minute item 3(1) – End Poverty Edinburgh (Community Fridges) – Sarah Anderson, new EUSA VP Community and others have yet to meet to discuss community fridges.
Action: SA – set up a Doodle Poll to arrange a meeting.

(4) Minute item 3(2) – End Poverty Edinburgh. A meeting has yet to be arranged with End Poverty Edinburgh, James Mooney, Laura Cattell and Katrina Castle.
Action: KC – to set up a meeting.

(5) Minute item 3(3) & (4) – To keep in touch with End Poverty Edinburgh and invite them to a future Board meeting. An internal working group has been set-up. It may be possible to invite to the September 2022 Board meeting.

(6) Minute item 4(2) – Poverty Commission Work. Lesley McAra and Sean Smith have yet to meet Jenni Craig, Scottish Borders Council re: Anchor Institutions Group
Action: LMcA - arrange meeting with Jenni Craig and Sean Smith.

(7) Minute item 5 – New reporting opportunity to CAHSS College Strategy and Management Committee. Hazel Lambert still to let Patricia Erskine know how the CMVM Strategy Committee reports on the Community Plan.
Action: HL

(8) Minute items 6(1) & (2) – Talloires Network Prize. Suggestions for projects were provided by Lesley McAra. Sarah Anderson and Matt Lawson proposed projects for the MacJanet Prize, for which All4Paws were shortlisted.

(9) Minute item 7(1) – Community Plan Implementation. Edinburgh School of Architecture & Landscape Architecture are to be invited to the September 2022 Board meeting to speak about their new project, Community Consultation & Quality of Life.

(10) Minute item 7(2) – Community Plan Implementation, Tracker commitment 28, physical front doors. Lesley McAra, Stuart Tooley and Sarah Anderson currently have input into the All4Paws premises.

(11) Minute item 7(4) – Community Plan Implementation. Sarah Anderson has created a sharepoint folder for evidence of tracker commitments.

(12) Minute item 7(5) – Community Plan Implementation. Stuart Tooley has yet to identify actions for individual Board members and email them. See item 8 below.

(13) Minute item 8(1) – Community Team Update. Gemma Gourlay and Lynn McMath have discussed Community Team capacity issues.

(14) Minute item 7 – Community Plan Implementation tracker, commitment 15, community engagement and student courses. Lesley McAra reported that an Authentic Learning sub-group of the Curriculum Transformation Board was inviting views of key partners in the wider community. There will be 5 or 6 meetings until the end of August 2022, after which recommendations will be compiled. The ambition is to enable 45,000 students to participate in experiential learning, beginning with undergraduate students. The first group of students will be in 2025, so the tracker needs to be amended accordingly.
Action: LMcA – to report back to the September Board meeting
Action: LMcA – to follow up with Sean Smith links to experiential learning around sustainability and place (and the connection with the 6 local authority Regional Prosperity Framework participants)
Action: SA/ST – to amend tracker for this commitment.

(15) Minute item 4 – Update on Poverty Commission work. Stuart Tooley gave an update on the work of the University's Poverty Commission Working group:
- The piloting of cost of living training that was being led by Zoe Stephens, Head of Organisational Development and Change for Estates staff on the lowest grades. If this is successful the training will be rolled out to those who supervise lower grade staff in other departments.
- The University staff discounts and benefits scheme are not well known amongst staff and tend to be for non-essential goods and services. The sub-group are looking to change this so that discounts and benefits are available for essential items from mainstream supermarkets and shops.
- Reporting back to End Poverty Edinburgh (who presented at the February 2022 Board meeting) remains outstanding.
Action: ST – to see if the Working Group can deal with items that need to be pursued with End Poverty Edinburgh.

There was discussion about worsening fuel poverty, student poverty and the impact on staff of child care costs, with the recognition that within the next year there could be cost of living crises for both staff and students. It was agreed that this would be revisited at the next Board meeting, perhaps with a view to a paper being presented to the University's Executive. Dave Gorman requested that all Board members submit ideas for what might be included in a paper. Depending on meeting timings it may be necessary to progress this ahead of the September Board meeting.

Action: All – Submit ideas on matters to be covered in a paper to the Executive to LMcA and DG by Monday 30 May.

4   Introduction to Gemma Gourlay, Head of Social Impact

Gemma Gourlay has been in this new post for two months and noted the complexities of the University as well as the different departmental and school priorities. The social impact dimension of Gemma's role was to be explored through a newly formed working group. Gemma also highlighted that the Edinburgh Local Community Grants Scheme would shortly reach £500,000 of grant awards, and she would be working with others on an evaluation of the Scheme.

5   Introduction to Lynn McMath, Interim Deputy Director (Stakeholder Relations)

Lynn McMath joined the University in January 2021 in a different role. She commented on the breadth and diversity of her new role in community and stakeholder relations. Lynn explained that she was also involved with developing a Gaelic language plan.

6   May 2022 local council election results – Edinburgh and Midlothian

Lynn McMath gave a presentation on the recent council election results for Edinburgh and Midlothian, highlighting the changes in specific wards where there were University campuses or buildings.

7   University response to Edinburgh Partnership Community Plan 2022-2028   B

Stuart Tooley introduced his paper on the Edinburgh Partnership Community Plan, and drew attention to areas where there was complementarity with the University's Community Plan.

The Board discussed whether it had the delegation authority to approve the Partnership Community Plan on behalf of the University, and also noted the complexities around income maximisation. It was suggested that the University's Executive could approve this Plan and also enable future approval to be delegated to the Community Board.

Action: DG – ask the next University Executive meeting to approve the Partnership Community Plan and seek future approval to be delegated to the Community Board.

8   Standing item: Community Plan implementation –progress, risks and issue   E

Stuart Tooley introduced the Community Plan implementation paper, specifically referring to paragraphs 6 and 7, which indicate the current Red, Amber, Green (RAG) status.

The following items were discussed:

- Commitment 10 – student volunteering. Matt Lawson, Senior SRS Learning, Teaching & Reporting Manager, is seeking an update from Sarah Purves, EUSA Director of Membership Engagement and People Development. Beth Simpson also offered to try to obtain an update, particularly in relation to the volunteer database. Christina Hinds suggested a conversation with Volunteer Edinburgh could be beneficial.
  Action: BS – obtain an update on EUSA volunteer database.
- Commitment 21 – Doors Open Day. In view of the cancellation of this year's Doors Open Day, there was discussion about a virtual University Doors Open Day. [No

decision has yet been made on this as, since the Board met, the possibility of the 2022 event running in person has re-emerged.]

Action: All – each Board member to check the *Tracker* and update relevant commitments.

Action: PE – to update commitment 12 on Exhibition Work & Living with Covid

Action: ST – to contact each Board member ahead of the September meeting where the Tracker remains incomplete.

9 **Standing Item: Community Team and Communications Update** **D**

Sarah Anderson introduced the Community Team and Communications Update paper. She highlighted the plans for an All4Paws outreach centre on Nicolson Street, and the possibility of other projects sharing these new premises. Hazel Lambert suggested connecting with Cathy Southworth, Community Science Engagement Manager.

Action: SA – contact Cathy Southworth re: All4Paws premises.

Lynn McMath updated the Board about a Modern Apprentice request that has been submitted for the Community Team, to cover digital marketing as well a Community Team activities. It's hoped that a suitable candidate would start by September.

Action: LMcL – to provide an update on communications at the next Board meeting.

10 Any Other Business

(1) British Sign Language Event. Patricia Erskine informed the meeting about this event to be held on 23 September 2022, in collaboration with the three other Edinburgh Universities.

(2) Lesley McAra referred to Economic and Social Research Council funding for 3-4 local policy observatories, including Granton, which will focus on knowledge exchange or outreach work. This might be relevant for the Board further down the line, when Board members' input may be sought to shape community engagement elements.

(3) As this was Beth Simpson's last meeting Dave Gorman, on behalf of the Board, thanked her for all her work, including her contribution to the Community Grants Panel, and wished her every success for the future.

COMMUNITY BOARD

15 September 2022

Social Impact Pledge

Description of paper

1. This paper gives an update on the University's progress in meeting the three Pledges made by the University in 2019 in response to the Scottish Government's Social Impact Pledge scheme, and sets out proposals for new pledges to be made for 2022.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. The Community Board is requested to approve the paper.

Background and context

3.   In 2016, the Scottish Government launched the Social Impact Pledge, an initiative aimed at enabling organisations to demonstrate leadership by challenging their policies and operations to ensure that they make a positive contribution to their *local* communities. Each participating organisation is asked to sign up to three commitments or pledges which makes better use of its assets (people, buildings, grounds). These should comprise new activities or significant development of current activity and bring positive benefits for communities in the *short-term*, as well as ideally being sustained longer-term. Universities are encouraged to involve all parts of their organisation in the discussion and development of the pledges, including students. The pledges now have to be implemented within six months and can be renewed annually (although at least one pledge each year must involve completely new activity, to ensure that organisations are continuously reviewing their operations and impact). In return for sign-up, organisations are provided with a logo acknowledging commitment to the Social Impact Pledge and their pledges are showcased on the Scottish Community Development Centre's website.

4. The University was one of the first higher education institutions to make a pledge and the only one to be cited as an Inspirational Case Study and to remake a pledge in 2018 and again in 2019.

5. The three pledges made by the University in 2019 were formally signed off by the Principal in July of that year. This followed a paper submitted to, and approved by, firstly the then-named Social Responsibility and Sustainability Committee, and secondly the University Executive, in March 2019.

6. The **first pledge** made in 2019 was: *"The Centre for Homelessness and Inclusion Health will extend its educational outreach and partnership-working in support of effective practice"*. Activities envisaged for delivering this pledge included the development of a new SQA level 7 stand-alone course in homelessness and inclusion health (aimed at practitioners without a degree), hosting a student-led conference on homelessness, expanding the number of student-led research projects on homelessness, and a University presence in the new NHS

Access Practice in the Panmure St Anne's building in Edinburgh's Cowgate (the practice provides holistic support for people experiencing homelessness).

7. The **second pledge** made in 2019 was: *"*We will launch phase 1 of the 'Understanding Place Project', a research programme aimed at tackling multiple deprivation and empowering and giving a voice to hard-to-reach and marginalised groups". Activities envisaged for delivering this pledge included a project that would systematically share the stories of Edinburgh's most marginalised and vulnerable citizens, and place-based partnership work to tackle the longstanding concentrations of inequality and deprivation that persist in some parts of the City of Edinburgh.

8. The **third pledge** made in 2019 was: "We will develop and pilot a scheme to allow local community organisations to make use of the University's rooms". The intention was that staff in the University's Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability, with crucial input from staff in Estates and other parts of the University, would pilot a scheme to offer University rooms for use by local community groups on a low-cost or free basis, at times when the rooms would otherwise be unused. This particular pledge was made in response to the number of inquiries received into local@ed.ac.uk from local community groups wishing to use space at the University.

9. In March 2020, around eight months after the Pledges were officially made, the Covid-19 pandemic required the UK to go into lockdown, with some form of restrictions in place until early 2022. This major disruption led to some Pledge activities being paused and others being delivered in different ways. Long-term staff absence also impacted the timeline for the pilot project implementing local community access to the University's rooms. This means the University is two years later than it would have otherwise been in reporting progress against its three Pledges, and making new pledges.

10. A challenge in making new Pledges has been to identify three Pledges which the University isn't already doing but which it can guarantee resource to implement, especially as Pledges are intended to have positive impact for local communities in the short-term.

Discussion

11. Progress on pledge 1: Since the summer of 2019, the Centre for Homelessness and Inclusion Health has undertaken some excellent work which fulfils ledge to "extend its educational outreach and partnership-working in support of effective practice". Starting in 2019, the Centre now offers a stand-alone Homeless and Inclusion Health CPD course annually, with fully-funded bursaries provided for practitioners (funded by School of Health in Social Science). In 2019-20, a therapeutic art project ran for people experiencing homelessness and, through the pandemic, the [Living Through Covid research project](#) documented how homelessness frontline workers and homeless people experienced the first wave of the virus. Other successes include the delivery of prescriptions and health support by student volunteers during the first Covid-19 lockdown. The only envisaged progress which has not manifested is a University presence in the new Access Place at Panmure St Anne's; it is feasible this could happen in future.

12. Progress on pledge 2: Since the summer of 2019, many of the *objectives* of the second commitment, the 'Understanding Place' project, have been met. However, the impact of Covid-19 and associated resourcing challenges, meant that the project as originally conceived could not be progressed. Instead, the Covid-19 lockdown became the source for storytelling projects that serendipitously gave voice to marginalised and place-specific groups and thus helped meet the detail of this commitment. These projects included the Living Through Covid research project mentioned in § 12, the [Lothian Lockdown project](#) and work with the Edinburgh International Festival's Communities team on the Heart & Home project. A programme of research (led by Lesley McAra and Liz McFall) is developing out of the Edinburgh Futures Institute, which focusses on Granton and involves working with partners that include local community groups and businesses (funded initially by the ESRC Local Acceleration Fund); this is aimed at addressing longstanding deprivation in the area over the longer-term. The research programme and its legacies will ensure longer term sustainability for pledge 2.

13. Progress on pledge 3: Since the summer of 2019, the third commitment – allowing local community groups to make use of the University's rooms – has been mostly on pause due to the impact of Covid-19 requirements on the University's Estates operations. Happily, as of January 2022, it has been possible to re-start this project, and the University will welcome its first official bookings under the Community Access to Rooms pilot from mid-September 2022.

14. The proposal is that the University reports back to the Scottish Government on the implementation of its latest three Social Impact Pledges. This is not mandatory but is good practice and one the University has followed in the past. A draft of the report we propose to submit is given in **appendix A**.

15. It is additionally proposed that the University makes three new Pledges that would cover most of the 2023 calendar year. The three proposed Pledges are:
1. We will build on our renewed University of Sanctuary status by extending additional support to New Scots
2. We will open Dick Vet in the Community, providing accessible veterinary support to the pets of homeless people, and situate additional community services alongside it
3. We will situate additional community services in the Dick Vet in the Community Venue

The activity required to deliver these Pledges is detailed in **appendix B**. We are confident that these three Pledges meet the Scottish Government's requirements (i.e. three things that the University will do in the next six months which it isn't doing already and which will have impact felt by communities in the short-term). We are also confident that there are adequate resources and planning to deliver these Pledges within the time-frame.

Communications
16. The Scottish Government would publish any new Pledges on the [Communities Channel Scotland](#) website; it may also publish the University's latest report on its past Pledges here. The intention would be that the University would also publish both its progress update and

new Pledges as a news story on the Edinburgh Local web pages, and communicate this through its social media.

Resource implications
17. Administering the University's Pledge process (deciding, reporting, communicating, and governance) is estimated to take a total 5 FTE/annum in staff time. Delivering individual Pledges will involve substantially more staff time and some operational costs, but these have already been secured through departmental budgets. No additional request for resources is being made here.

Risk Management
18. The main audience for the Social Impact Pledge's communications is community groups and community development practitioners in Scotland, not the population at large or the higher education sector. There is a small reputational risk of not reporting back on past Pledges or making new ones as reporting and re-pledging are not automatically expected. There is a small-to-moderate risk of lost opportunity for reputational benefit if the University does not make new Pledges. There is a small-to-moderate risk of reputational damage if the University fails to deliver new Pledges it makes.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
19. The work of the Pledges particularly contributes to the following Sustainable Development Goals:

Equality & Diversity
20. The Social Impact Pledge is a positive opportunity to promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Activities associated with specific Pledges will be subject to Equalities Impact Assessments as appropriate.

Next steps/implications
21. Take this paper to Social and Civic Responsibility Committee and then University Executive for approval. Obtain Principal's signature for the Pledges. Email new Pledges and report on old ones to Scottish Government. Internally and externally communicate the University's Pledges and progress.

Consultation
22. This paper was written in consultation with Gemma Gourlay (Head of Social Impact), Lynn McMath (Interim Deputy Director, Stakeholder Relations) and Stuart Tooley (Community Relations Manager). Further consultation is needed with students before final sign off by University Executive.

Further information

Authors   *Presenter*

Lesley McAra   **Lesley McAra**
Assistant Principal Community Relations,
Director of Institute of Advanced Studies in
the Humanities and Professor of Penology
School of Law

Dr Sarah Anderson
Community Engagement Programme
Manager
Department for Social Responsibility and
Sustainability

Freedom of Information
31. Open

Appendix A
The University of Edinburgh's Social Impact Pledges
Update on progress against the University's 2019 Pledges

1st commitment: *The Centre for Homelessness and Inclusion Health will extend its educational outreach and partnership-working in support of effective practice*
Geographical location of impact: Edinburgh City Centre
Contact details: Dr Fiona Cuthill, Academic Director of the Centre for Homeless and Inclusion Health, School of Health in Social Science

In the three years since the University made this Pledge, it has seen progress in many intended areas and also some not anticipated.
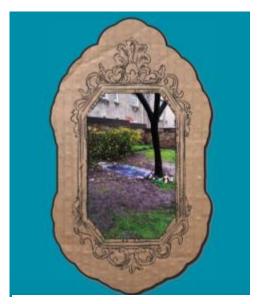
Accessible professional development for homelessness practitioners

The Centre now offers a stand-alone Homeless and Inclusion Health CPD course annually and has provided full bursaries for people working in the homelessness sector. This course is delivered online over 10 weeks and is SCQF level 11.

Using art to improve lives

From autumn 2019 until the first Covid-19 lockdown, the Centre ran an art project with people experiencing homelessness with colleagues from Edinburgh's Streetwork and Salvation Army. The project was funded by a generous donation from the Binks Trust and enabled the project to employ a professional artist, Karen Kirkwood – a graduate of Edinburgh College of Art – to work with people experiencing homelessness using art as a therapeutic process.

Through the pandemic, the Living Through Covid research project documented how homelessness frontline workers and homeless people experienced the first wave of the virus. Using participatory arts methods, the project explored how people in the homelessness sector, including those with lived experience of homelessness, experienced the initial phase of the Covid-19 crisis and how street-level action and understanding affected ongoing intervention and support. The project report and online exhibition were launched with Cyrenians in February 2022. The project was funded by the Lankelly Chase Foundation, which supports initiatives that are tackling hidden or neglected forms of disadvantage and harm

Visual from 'Living Through Covid'

Practical support for people experiencing homelessness

Working with its community partners, the Centre was able to launch the [Street Support app](#) in the winter of 20/21. The app connects people experiencing homelessness with local help available, with local organisations able to register the help they can offer that is then easily findable using the app.

The pandemic was obviously not foreseen when the University made its last Pledges in 2019 but we were pleased that some of our students were able to be part of the crisis response. Medical students volunteered at Edinburgh's GP Access Practice to deliver prescriptions and health interventions to people with experience of homelessness. Medical students who spent time in the Access Practice were also the authors of the award-winning and very popular ['Cooking Without a Cooker' kettle recipe book](#).

2ⁿᵈ commitment: *We will launch phase 1 of the 'Understanding Place Project', a research programme aimed at tackling multiple deprivation and empowering and giving a voice to hard-to-reach and marginalised groups.*
Geographical location of impact: Communities across the City of Edinburgh
Contact details: Professor Lesley McAra, Assistant Principle (Community Relations) and Director of the Edinburgh Futures Institute

Since the summer of 2019, many of the objectives of our second commitment have been met, albeit in a different way to how was originally conceived in part due to the impact of Covid-19. However, Covid-19 has also been the source of storytelling projects that serendipitously gave voice to marginalised and place-specific groups and thus helped meet the detail of this commitment. These projects include the [Living Through Covid](#) engaged research project that also contributed to progress against our first pledge, plus two other projects: [Lothian Lockdown](#) and Heart & Home.

Lothian Lockdown: The Lothian Diary Project investigated how Covid-19 affected the lives of individual people living in Edinburgh and the Lothians. Individual members of the public kept video and audio diaries which were analysed from the perspective of public

health, mental health, hardship, anxiety and stigma. Recordings were made between 1st May 2020 and 15th July 2021. Proactive outreach was done in a part of the city with higher levels of deprivation, Leith, via a recurring physical presence at Leith Walk Police Box. The project team also worked with a whole range of local charities (e.g. West Lothian Financial Inclusion Network) to reach more marginalised members of the public. The findings of this mass observation study have been presented to the Scottish Parliament, with recommendations for future public health emergencies that could mitigate the greater negative impact on marginalised groups seen during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Heart & Home was a community outreach project led by the Edinburgh International Festival, with additional community engagement support from the University's Community Team. It was a series of events inspired by composer Aidan O'Rourke's experience of lockdown living on the Cowgate, and the area's history as a centre of Irish migration: Little Ireland. Community events took place in different districts of Edinburgh and invited everyone living in those areas – both long-term residents, recently-arrived migrants and anyone in between – to share what 'home' meant to them. The events include music and food representative of the mix of cultures, e.g. East African food, Scottish traditional music and songs of Poland, Ukraine and Russia.* The community event in Edinburgh's Old Town also showcased the Living Through Covid exhibition, and thus the stories from the homelessness front line. Taking place over the winter of 2021 and early 2022, the events brought together individuals after 18 months of social isolation and celebrated the potential of their past, present and future very local communities of place.

Heart & Home

* Events took place before Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

3rd commitment: *We will develop and pilot a scheme to allow local community organisations to make use of the University's rooms*
Geographical location of impact: City of Edinburgh
Contact details: Michelle Brown, Head of Social Responsibility & Sustainability Programmes, Department of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

The pilot scheme to enable local community groups to make use of the University's rooms was almost ready to launch when the first Covid-19 lockdown began. The initial prohibition on social contact and later the wider impact of Covid-19 on the University's Estates colleagues and operations meant that this project was unavoidably on pause until the start of 2022. Happily, as of January 2022, it has been possible to re-start this project, and the University will welcome its first official bookings under the Community Access to Rooms pilot scheme from mid-September 2023. For the pilot, rooms are being offered to a limited but fairly large list of local

community organisations with which the University already has a positive relationship (either via its community grant scheme or another route). The rooms offered will initially be small and medium-sized meeting rooms that are available on weekday evenings during the University semester. Some scoping of community organisation needs has already been done and these will be further explored during the pilot.

Appendix B

<u>Social Impact Pledge Form</u>

    <u>The University of Edinburgh</u>_____ pledges to:

Challenge ourselves to increase the positive impact we make on our local community and make better use of our assets – our buildings/grounds and our people.

In the next six months we will do at least three things that we don't do at the moment to improve our social impact.

<p align="right">Signed by CEO or Chair:___<mark>XXX</mark>_____</p>

1st Commitment: We will build on our renewed University of Sanctuary status by extending additional support to New Scots

Geographical location of impact: Edinburgh, Lothians, Fife and Scottish Borders

Contact details: Sarah Hoey, Immigration Legal Adviser & Chair of Refugee, Asylum & At-Risk Advisory Group, Edinburgh Global

---

2nd Commitment: We will open Dick Vet in the Community, providing accessible veterinary support to the pets of homeless people

Geographical location of impact: City of Edinburgh

Contact details: Andrew Gardiner, Senior Lecturer, Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies

---

3rd Commitment: We will situate additional community services in the Dick Vet in the Community venue

Geographical location of impact: Edinburgh, Lothians, Fife and Scottish Borders

Contact details: Isla Parker, Gaelic and Community Relations Officer, Communications and Marketing

---

If you have any other relevant information you would like to provide please use box overleaf.

Additional Information:

1st Commitment: We will build on our renewed University of Sanctuary status by extending additional support to New Scots

In the next 6 months, the University will further grow its support for all local refugees and people in the asylum system by providing teaching space and volunteer tutors for teaching English as a Second Language to refugees of any country of origin. These classes will be open to adults of all ages and run in George Square, Edinburgh in partnership with The Welcoming. Learners are not expected to be people with a pre-existing link to the University. Volunteer tutors will be people affiliated to the University's Centre for Open Learning and will be operating under the guidance of the University's Widening Participation Coordinator for English Language Education.

We will also provide support to local refugee writers by assisting with visa sponsorship for a new local writer residency programme. Support will be provided by the University's Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities.

2nd Commitment: We will open Dick Vet in the Community, providing accessible veterinary support to the pets of homeless people

The University's Vet School will start to operate its projects giving back to local communities – Dick Vet in the Community – out of a local former veterinary practice on a main street in Edinburgh's Southside (127 Nicolson St). The premises will provide a permanent venue for All4Paws, a student-driven service that offers free basic veterinary care to the pets of homeless people. Giving this project a permanent base will make it easier for beneficiaries to engage with it as, to date, the service has been temporarily based at various homelessness services around the city, having to relocate sometimes at short notice. The Vet School will commit to paying the lease on the premises for a number of years and also to covering the cost of essential services and venue maintenance (e.g. cleaning) and security.

3rd Commitment: We will situate additional community services in the Dick Vet in the Community venue

The University will also commit to providing staff time to coordinate the movement of other projects that serve local communities into 127 Nicolson Street, and to managing their ongoing use of the building. Projects currently being assessed for suitability for the building include night-time assistance for people in a vulnerable state on the streets of Edinburgh, a community repair café, and sharing Gaelic language with local residents.

Company Logo:

THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

Please return completed pledges in Microsoft Word format to:

Andrew Paterson

Policy and Research Officer

Scottish Community Development Centre

0141 248 1924

Email: andrew@scdc.org.uk

COMMUNITY BOARD

15 September 2022

Edinburgh Poverty Commission: Report on progress
For noting from the Cost of Living Working Group

Description of paper
1.   This paper details the University of Edinburgh's progress to date on its response to the Edinburgh Poverty Commission's report and suggests recommendations on reporting this back

Action requested/Recommendation
2.   Note the report at point 10 will shortly be sent to the End Poverty Edinburgh group as a report on the University's progress over the past two years

Background and context
3.   The Edinburgh Poverty Commission was formed in 2018, under the chair of Dr Jim McCormick. They published a final report, _A Just Capital_: _Actions to End Poverty in Edinburgh_ in September 2020.

4.   _A Just Capital_ has a laudable commitment to End Poverty in Edinburgh, and sets out the challenge of achieving this, and seven interconnected areas of action needed.

5.   The University of Edinburgh, as part of the Edinburgh Partnership welcomed the report, and agreed to look at how, as a major employer and anchor institution within the city, it could contribute to this work. As part of doing this, the Poverty Commission Working Group was set up, and has since met several times.

6.   The City of Edinburgh Council have used _A Just Capital_ as part of their plans to end poverty in Edinburgh by 2030. Poverty, and cost of living remain high on the administration's priorities, as reiterated by Cammy Day, the new leader of the Council on his appointment, who also was vice-chair of the Commission.

7.   In 2020, a legacy group from the Commission was formed to help raise awareness and provide accountability to the city on poverty. This group, End Poverty Edinburgh, is made up of citizens, some of whom have lived experience of poverty. They are supported by the Poverty Alliance in this work.

Discussion

8. After two years of work by the University on our response to _A Just Capital_ it is useful to take stock of where we are and report back to End Poverty Edinburgh on progress.

9.   It is also worth noting that the general context has moved on significantly, with rapid inflation and low wage/benefit growth causing a cost-of-living crisis for many

people across the UK. This will have the effect of pushing more people into poverty and on the fringes of poverty, and increasing the severity of poverty.

10.   The following is an attempt to pull together a list of activities taken by the University in the framework of *A Just Capital's* calls to action. It is certainly not intended as an exhaustive list but provides an overview that can be easily shared externally.

The right support in the places we live and work

We have helped to co-locate services with other organisations and make it easier for service users to access the help they need.
- The Centre for Homeless and Inclusion Health has created a digital hub to support the homelessness community, named Street Support Edinburgh.
- The Centre is also working closely with the Access Place, which houses all homelessness services under one roof at Panmure St Ann's, on the Cowgate.
- The University has collaborated with IntoUniversity and the University of Glasgow to open a centre in Craigmillar - and in Maryhill and Govan in Glasgow - to help local school pupils with academic support and mentoring.
- The Dick Vet School have opened a new community-facing centre on Nicolson Street to deliver veterinary services for the pets of people facing homelessness, and to provide other outreach services.

We are supporting local communities through our expertise, sharing our resources and financially
- Our Community Grant Scheme has now given more than half a million pounds in small grants to local community groups and charities.
- We are working to improve digital connectivity in the city, including
  - Working with residents in the Dumbiedykes on a project to provide free wi-fi to residents
  - Signing up to the People Know How campaign 'Connectivity Now'
  - IT re-use – donating devices to community organisations and individual residents in need
- We are running a pilot programme where community groups can access University meeting rooms at no cost.

We have started doing poverty awareness training with our staff
- This will help University staff spot the signs of poverty among staff and students, and offer appropriate support
- We support our students when they get into financial challenges, by offering hardship funding

Fair work that provides dignity and security

The University of Edinburgh's has activities that help to provide fair work for its employees:
- The University is an accredited Scottish Living Wage employer for staff and contractors

- We retain many services in-house, including catering, cleaning, facilities management, and gardening and landscaping.
- We use no zero-hour contracts and have worked with unions to improve the working security of those on Guaranteed Hours contracts.
- We support apprenticeships at various levels and offer employment opportunities to our student when possible.
- We operate flexible working, family-friendly policies, and support for carers, and are a member of the Athena Swan Charter, which recognises our commitment to advancing and promoting and the careers of women

We are educating, training, and upskilling people
- On top of our undergraduate and postgraduate degrees, the University of Edinburgh also offers a wide range of short courses, language education, and data courses to provide people with new opportunities in their working lives.

A decent home we can afford to live in

Student accommodation
- We own and operate our own student accommodation, which helps to take pressure off the local private-rented, and purpose-built student accommodation markets.
- We have managed to keep increases in rent for students lower than in the private sector
- We carefully consider any new student accommodation based on its impact on local communities, the rents that students will pay, and its overall suitability, to make informed and responsible choices

Investment in housing for the city
- We have invested £1million into a social investment fund to tackle homelessness in Edinburgh

Income security that offers a real lifeline

Providing advice and support to our staff and students
- We provide staff with advice on matters such as pensions
- We give staff access to the First Scottish University Credit Union
- The Edinburgh University Students' Association offers benefits advice for students

Opportunities the drive justice and boost prospects

We have a Widening Participation strategy that focuses on addressing the inequalities and patterns of under-representation in higher education
- We provide outreach and inreach programmes with schools in disadvantaged areas of Edinburgh and the Lothians
- We founded an IntoUniversity centre in Craigmillar
- We provide the most generous bursaries for Scottish WP students in the sector

- Our PhD community shares expertise with primary schools through The Brilliant Club
- We host insights days, open days, and summer schools to get those from underrepresented backgrounds onto campus
- We provide outside courses and Community learning through the Centre for Open Learning, with our Access Programme providing a route into Higher Education
- We are developing more formal articulations from Fife and Edinburgh Colleges

Connections in a city that belongs to us

We are committed to being part of a well-connected city, and the University is playing its part
- We continue to support community engagement around Edinburgh's Festivals – and supporting the wider cultural sector to recover
- We have made digital inclusion a priority for our community engagement activities, including providing IT equipment and digital skills training
- We have supported the implementation of 20-minute neighbourhoods in Edinburgh, including running an innovative consultation, 'Our Edinburgh Neighbourhood,' in June 2022.

Equality in Our Health and Wellbeing

The University works on improving the city's health and wellbeing through its activities, research, and investments
- The University's researchers are working with the Council on policies to address food poverty
- We have made significant investments in a new Health and Wellbeing Centre for our student body
- We also offer staff several wellbeing policies, including support for mental and physical health

11.   The Cost of Living Working Group has agreed that this summary is passed to End Poverty Edinburgh as a way of reporting back on our progress to date

12.   The Community Board may also be interested to know that the Poverty Commission Working Group has now agreed to continue under a new name – the Cost of Living Working Group – and to meet more frequently given the current situation. The exact governance of this group, and how it fits in with efforts across the University, is still to be determined, however, given the interest there will still be a need to report into the Community Board.

Communications

13.   The progress report at point 10 will be communicated to the End Poverty Edinburgh group.

14.   There may also be sections of the above that we would want to highlight more publicly, but there are significant risks of the above appearing self-congratulatory in the context of the current crisis. It is therefore assumed that any internal and external communications on this would be about reinforcing what the University can do proactively to help alleviate the crisis for staff and students, rather than looking back on progress over the past two years. It should be noted that there is already preparations being made, including a communications plan, on this issue by CAM in consultation with many other areas of the University.

Resource implications
15.   There are no direct resource implications.

Risk Management
16.   The above communication plan is a risk-averse approach that protects the University's reputation. Most notably, failing to report back on the report may affect the reputation of the University with a key group who are keen to hold major organisations accountable on this issue.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals
17. The work of the Cost of Living Working Group specifically advances the following SDGs:

Equality & Diversity
18.   The work of the Cost of Living Working Group is connected to how the University looks at equality, specifically based on income/wealth - however it should be noted that poverty also disproportionately affects women, disabled people, carers, and BAME communities. Therefore, any work done by the University to reduce poverty is likely to have positive effects on equality and diversity.

Next steps/implications
19.   The next steps are as set out at point 2.

Consultation
20.   This paper was produced using the minutes and notes from previous Working Group minutes, but no formal consultation was undertaken. This is a failing of the report above, which is not designed to be a complete record. The report was agreed by the Working Group, which has representatives from across the University – and at this stage several suggestions were made.

Further information
Author   *Presenter*
Stuart Tooley   **Only for noting**
Community Relations Manager
Communications and Marketing

Freedom of Information
21. Open paper

COMMUNITY BOARD

15 September 2022

Community Team update

Description of paper
1.   This paper is a regular update on the activity of the Community Team since the last Board meeting in May 2022.

Action requested/Recommendation
2.   No action is requested as this paper is just for information.

Background and context
3.   The Community Team is currently a group of six staff who hold community-focused roles in the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability (SRS) and Communications and Marketing (CAM). Team members are line-managed and their roles and operational budgets financed by their respective departments. The Community Team help to deliver the Community Plan, including several commitments where they have full responsibility.

4.   Members of the Community Team share a place on the Community Board.

5.   The Community Team provide a short regular update to each Board meeting. Previously, this has included updates on the implementation plan and changes in RAG status. This information is now in a separate paper. This paper covers the Community Team's own activities.

Discussion

6.   **Membership of the Community Team** has changed, with Isla Parker now joining CAM in a new role of Gaelic and Community Relations Officer. She will spend approximately 40% of her full-time role on Community work, including leading on Dick Vet in the Community. There is also a new Modern Apprentice currently being recruited for the Community Team, and Iona Barrie has joined as Dumbiedykes Digital Inclusion Scotland Intern.

7.   Round 11 of the **University's Community Grants scheme** is currently being organised, with the intention of opening for applications on 26 September. There is currently some uncertainty around this due to the new processes around People and Money. A decision will be taken soon if we need to delay this round.

8. The **Edinburgh Community Engagement Forum's** membership has grown since the previous meeting by 17 to 379. The network meeting in June 2022 was a general show-and-tell session from Forum members, but included an updated on the Our Edinburgh Neighbourhood project and its 'urban room' at Waverley Mall.

9. With support from various parts of the University (including the Centre for Sport and Exercise, Student Wellbeing & Experience, Communications and Marketing,

Edinburgh University Sports Union, and Information Services Group staff member Jamie Thin), **parkrun** events have successfully launched at Holyrood Park. The first event was on Saturday 16th July and attended by over 500 runners, walkers and volunteers.

10. The Community Team took a stall to the **Meadows Festival** on the first weekend in June. They were joined by guests from Edinburgh Futures Institute, School of Biological Sciences and the Our Edinburgh Neighbourhood project. The interest in the Edinburgh Futures Institute building and the lack of knowledge (even among University staff and students) what would be happening in it was notable; feedback on the intended use for the building was positive. The stall was busy all weekend with a wide variety of publics. The Community Team has also been at the **Craigmillar Festival** in August and a special community-themed meeting of the **General Council** in June.

11. **Doors Open Days** are now back on for 2022, under new organisers, Under One Roof. Due to the relatively short lead-in times, only four University buildings are participating. We are hopeful that more buildings will participate in 2023 and beyond, with early discussions planned to maximise the potential for engagement at the events.

12. Now that Isla Parker is in post, the Community Team is able to provide **Dick Vet in the Community** (127 Nicolson St) with support to bring additional community outreach projects into the venue.

13. Iona Barrie's **Dumbiedykes Digital Inclusion project** is progressing well. A promising technical and financial for providing free Wi-Fi in Dumbiedykes has been identified and Iona and Sarah Anderson are supporting a self-formed group of Dumbiedykes residents to run their first Gala Day in several years on Saturday 24th September 2022. The Gala will provide a route to engaging a wider range of Dumbiedykes residents to find out their digital inclusion needs, as well as generally helping to build a shared sense of community among Dumbiedykes' very varied population. Sarah also ran a digital inclusion stall at The Crannie's recent wellbeing open-afternoon.

14. Sadly, All4Paws did not win the **Talloires Network MacJannet Prize** but we were still pleased it was 1 of just 10 projects shortlisted globally. The University's community grant scheme has been shortlisted for the **EAUC's Green Gown Awards**; winners will be announced on the 8th November 2022 in Loughborough.

15. **Procurement of the private sector partner** for stage 3 of Edinburgh BioQuarter is now halfway through. Sarah Anderson is one of the markers for the community theme and is also a member of the newly-formed Edinburgh Bioquarter Community Impact Sub-Board.

16. The video marking the University's **'Connectivity Now' pledge** is now live on the People Know How website here, and was publicised through Edinburgh Local channels.

17. A process for producing the University's second **annual report on the implementation of the Community Plan** is underway. Wider data collection is taking place this year to help make sure the report is truly an institution-wide update; colleagues around the University seem happy to engage with this. The aim is to publish the public report in February 2023, with a draft internal report being brough to the next meeting of the Community Board.

18. A process for a **five-year evaluation of the community grant scheme** is also underway. The evaluation will look at both the impact of grant projects beyond their funded period and ways the scheme could be improved, the latter not only for applicants but also to make the most impactful use of University staff time and resources. Benchmarking against best practice will also take place. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed in draft and its recommendations will form part of the evaluation's recommendations.

19. The University's **Community Access to Rooms** pilot scheme will launch in late September. The pilot has been promoted to all University community grantees, plus Community Councils and a handful of other key University community partners. Anne Douglas is now working with those who have expressed interest and bookings are already in place for The Causey and The Welcoming. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed in draft.

20. The [UKRI Community Research Networks](#) call in partnership with the Young Foundation launched earlier in the summer with an initial deadline of mid-September. Sarah Anderson and ERO Public Engagement have been working together to facilitate applications to the call.

21. We held a open day for neighbours of a new **student accommodation at Gilmore Place**. This provided neighbours and local community council members the opportunity to see the redevelopment of the former care home and convent, and to ask any questions about their new neighbours as they begin to move in this week.

22. The Community Team supported the **Our Edinburgh Neighbourhood** project, which is covered in full in an earlier point in this agenda.

23. In May, we held another well-attended **Community Grantees meet-up** at Level café, giving those groups who had previously received a grant from the Community Grant scheme the opportunity to network with us, and each other.

Communications
24. Engagement across the Edinburgh Local suite has moderately increased since the last Community Board meeting. Engagement trends on social media indicate that posts featuring current projects in the community resonate most with our audience. The most successful posts featured IntoUniversity, #ConnectivityNow, events work at The Crannie and the launch of new student accomodation at Gilmore Place. Click rates on the newsletter remain stable, with a slight increase in membership as the sign-up list has been streamlined with our new CRM, Salesforce. Engagement on ed.ac.uk/local is up, with the most visited sub-pages including 'University in the City' which features services open to the public, as well as the 'Community Grants' sub-page, in anticipation of the next round of funding.

Resource implications

25. There are no additional requests for resource.

Risk Management

26. N/A

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

27. The work of the Community Team particularly contributes to the following Sustainable Development Goals:

Equality & Diversity

28. N/A

Next steps/implications

29. N/A

Consultation

30. This paper was written in consultation with the Community Team.

Further information

Authors   *Presenters*
Stuart Tooley   **Stuart Tooley/Sarah Anderson**
Community Relations Manager
Communications and Marketing

Sarah Anderson
Community Engagement Programme Manager
Social Responsibility and Sustainability

Freedom of Information

31. Open paper