

Community Board Meeting
Tuesday 19th May, 10am-12noon
EFI Room 1.82

Chair:

Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

Attending:

Sarah Anderson, Senior Community Engagement Manager, Social Responsibility and Sustainability

Ruthanne Baxter, Civic Engagement Manager, Heritage Collections

Natasha Collinson, Head of Engagement and Communications, Humanities and Social Science

Gordon Coutts, Head of Communications and Engagement, School of Social and Political Science

Andrea English, Personal Chair of Philosophy of Education, Institute for Education, Teaching and Leadership

Sarah Ford-Hutchinson, Head of SRS Communications

Akrit Ghimire, Edinburgh University Students' Association Vice President Community

Natalia Gibczynska, Business Services Manager, Estates Business Services

Gemma Gourlay, Head of Social Impact, Department of Social Responsibility & Sustainability

Suzanne Hermiston, Director of Open Studies, Centre for Open Learning

Toby Kelly, Director of the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities

Hazel Lambert, Head of Communications, Marketing & Engagement, College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine

Derek MacLeod, Head of Global Partnerships, Edinburgh Global

Lynn McMath, Deputy Director, Stakeholder Relations, Communications and Marketing

Beth Munro, Volunteering and Engagement Manager, Development & Alumni

Cameron Ritchie, Deputy Director and Head of Operations, University Sport and Exercise

Stuart Tooley, Head of Public Affairs, Communications and Marketing

Sarah Ward, Lecturer - Learning in Communities

Apologies:

Rachel Bowen, Head of Engagement, College of Science and Engineering

Bruce Crawford, EVOC

Patricia Erskine, Head of Stakeholder Relations, College Office (College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences)

Kirstin Henry, Widening Participation Manager, SRA Directors Office

Anne-Sofie Laegran, Head of Research Impact, Edinburgh Research Office

In Attendance:

Omolabake Fakunle, Senior Lecturer, Chancellors Fellow

Sandra Mackenzie, Community Engagement Manager, Edinburgh Futures Institute

Sarah Matthews, Community Engagement Project Coordinator

Fiona McClement, University Lead, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Fiona Murray, Public Engagement with Research Manager, Edinburgh Research Office

Neil Speirs, Widening Participation Manager, SRA Directors Office

Agenda

	Time	Item	Paper/Presentation
1.	10am	Welcome (Dave Gorman) (5mins)	
2.	10.05am	Minutes from the last meeting (Dave Gorman) (5mins)	A
3.	10.10am	Community Cohesion Framework (Fiona McClement) (30mins)	Presentation
4.	10.40am	Race Review Implementation (Omolabake Fakunle) (30mins)	Presentation
5.	11.10am	Community Team Update (Gemma Gourlay, Sarah Anderson, Sarah Ford-Hutchinson, & Stuart Tooley) (20mins)	B
6.	11.30am	Edinburgh Poverty Commission 5 year report (Gemma Gourlay & Lynn McMath) (10mins)	Verbal
7.	11.40am	EFI Culture & Community Strategy update (Sandra Mackenzie) (10mins)	Verbal
8.	11.50am	AOB (Dave Gorman) (10mins)	
9.	12noon	Meeting close (Dave Gorman)	

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MINUTE OF A MEETING of the Community Board held in Estates Conference Room 2 and Microsoft Teams on Tuesday 24th February, 1.30pm-3.30pm

Chair: Dave Gorman (DG), Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

Present: Sarah Anderson (SA), Senior Community Engagement Manager, Social Responsibility and Sustainability
Ruthanne Baxter (RB), Civic Engagement Manager, Heritage Collections
Bruce Crawford (BC), CEO, EVOG
Patricia Erskine (PE), Head of Stakeholder Relations, College Office (College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences)
Sarah Ford-Hutchinson (SFH), Head of SRS Communications
Natalia Gibczynska (NG), Business Services Manager, Estates Business Services
Gemma Gourlay (GG), Head of Social Impact, Department of Social Responsibility & Sustainability
Suzanne Hermiston (SH), Director of Open Studies, Centre for Open Learning
Anne-Sofie Laegran (ASL), Head of Research Impact, Edinburgh Research Office
Hazel Lambert (HL), Head of Communications, Marketing & Engagement, College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine
Derek MacLeod (DM), Head of Global Partnerships, Edinburgh Global
Lesley McAra (LMcA), Assistant Principal Community Relations and Director of Institute of Advanced Studies in the Humanities
Lynn McMath (LMcM), Deputy Director, Stakeholder Relations, Communications and Marketing
Beth Munro (BM), Volunteering and Engagement Manager, Development & Alumni
Stuart Tooley (ST), Head of Public Affairs, Communications and Marketing
Sarah Ward (SW), Lecturer - Learning in Communities

Apologies: Rachel Bowen, Head of Engagement, College of Science and Engineering
Natasha Collinson, Head of Engagement and Communications, Humanities and Social Science
Gordon Coutts, Head of Communications and Engagement, School of Social and Political Science
Cameron Ritchie, Deputy Director and Head of Operations, University Sport and Exercise
Lesley Stokes, Widening Participation Manager

In attendance: Sarah Matthews (SM), Community Engagement Project Coordinator

1 Welcome

Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability (Chair), welcomed the Board.

2 Approval of December Meeting Minutes

The Community Board Minute of 11th December was approved.

A

Actions carried over –

Agenda Item 6	Bring Poverty Commission back as future agenda item, working with Stakeholder Relations as needed	Community Team
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Agenda Item 8	Bring possible SW and community education case study to Community Team comms meeting.	SA
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3 EMS 300 Community Launch – presented by RB

LMcM noted we currently have a Motion in the Scottish Parliament lodged by Martin Whitfield MSP supporting the EMS 300 programme. This will be followed up with a Members debate on Thursday 12th March. <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-20683>. Possibility parliamentary reception may be booked in after election.

SW can offer a link to community groups via placement students.

GG question about best place to find latest information. HL shared link - [What is Edinburgh Medical School 300? | 300 years of medicine | College of Medicine and Vet Medicine](#) and [Events | 300 years of medicine | College of Medicine and Vet Medicine](#)

SH flagged that Centre for Open Learning would have liked to have been involved but funds did not allow.

HL asked for volunteers to contact Kate Stewart on cmvm.events@ed.ac.uk.

Action: If anyone can help with hosting and otherwise supporting any of EMS 300 events, please email Kate Stewart on cmvm.events@ed.ac.uk. A few more helpers would be very useful.

Action: PE will follow up with HL about tour briefings and Filmhouse connections.

Action: RB will follow up with SW about links into community groups via placement students.

Action: HL to connect SH with Cathy Southworth about what budget allocations to schools were.

4 Community Team Update & Year 5 Report (GG, SA, SFH, LMcM & ST)

B

ASL noted that safeguarding guidance for staff and students is now published at [Safeguarding](#).

DM noted an untapped feelgood factor. Staff are interested in volunteering as part of Day to Make a Difference – it would be good to see what has been achieved throughout the year.

DG noted progress made on original objectives despite significant global events.

SH question about definition of ‘youth employment’. GG explained there is not one UoE definition; SA flagged a definition in Community Plan 2025-30. LMcA highlighted Social and Civic Responsibility Committee may be looking at this area in upcoming workshops. SH noted Centre for Open Learning keen to lend support to this area.

SH asked if images used for year 5 snapshots are available for use by other University colleagues.

Action: SA to update status of safeguarding from amber to green in Community Plan 2025-30 implementation tracker.

Action: SH to contact SA for images from year 5 report wishing to be used for Centre for Open Learning purposes.

Action: Community Team and SRS Comms to discuss how we can get a bit of success in the next few years capitalising on the feelgood factor.

5 Edinburgh Global Action Plan – presented by DM

LMcA asked if we are mapping partnerships and strategically leveraging them.

HL highlighted the International Narrative survey and asked if DM had been involved.

Action: Anyone with additional questions to follow up with DM directly.

6 Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council Update – presented by BC

SA asked about digital devices and inclusion more generally and mentioned conversations that had started about research data sharing. ASL flagged challenges in that research data can be very raw, but opportunities through student projects such as those run by SW.

ASL enquired how EVOC works with SCVO (the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations).

Action: SA to send over Dumbiedykes digital inclusion report to BC.

Action: BC and SA chat about research collaboration, potentially together with ASL.

7 AOB (DG)

PE asked where to find info about SCR Committee on the web.

Action: GG will send PE link to current SCR committee information.

DG thanked LMcA for her many contributions to this area of work at the University, from securing funding for a community grant scheme to championing social justice and the importance of rigorous evaluation.

8 Meeting Closed

Summary of Actions

Agenda Item	Action	Responsibility
Dec 2026 Agenda Item 6	Bring Poverty Commission back as future agenda item, working with Stakeholder Relations as needed	Community Team
Dec 2026 Agenda Item 6	Bring possible SW and community education case study to Community Team comms meeting.	SA

3	If anyone can help with hosting and otherwise supporting any of EMS300 events, please email Kate Stewart on cmvm.events@ed.ac.uk . A few more helpers would be very useful	All
3	Link community groups via placement students.	RB & SW
3	PE will follow up with HL about tour briefings and Filmhouse connections.	PE & HL
3	Connect and discuss what budget allocations to schools are.	HL & SH
4	Update status of safeguarding from amber to green in Community Plan 2025-30 implementation tracker.	SA
4	Contact for images from year 5 report wishing to use for Centre for Open Learning purposes.	SH & SA
4	Discuss how we can get a bit of success in the next few years capitalising on the feelgood factor.	Community Team
5	Anyone with additional questions regarding DM's presentation to follow up with DM directly.	All
6	Send over Dumbiedykes digital inclusion report to BC.	SA
6	Connect regarding research collaboration	BM, SA & ASL
7	GG will send PE link to current SCR committee information.	GG



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

COMMUNITY BOARD

19 May 2026

Community Team and Communications update

Description of paper

1. This paper is a regular update on the activity of the Community Team since the last Board meeting on 24 February 2026.

Action requested/Recommendation

2. This paper is for information and discussion.

Background and context

3. The Community Team is a small group of staff who hold community-related 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; most also work on areas other than community. The Community Team drive implementation of the Community Plan, including a few deliverables where they have full responsibility.
4. Members of the Community Team who are members of the Community Board are Gemma Gourlay, Lynn McMath, Stuart Tooley and Sarah Anderson. Sarah Matthews from the Team is the Board's secretary. SRS Head of Communications Sarah Ford-Hutchinson is also a member.
5. The Community Team provide a short regular update to each Board meeting. It was agreed in September 2025 that, for the Community Plan 2025-30's implementation plan, updates would be given every six months on the plan's RAG (Red, Amber, Green) status of deliverables. The next of these updates will be provided at the Board meeting on 10 September 2026.

Discussion

6. Màiri Britton joined the Community Team in mid-April as Gaelic and Community Relations Officer, successor to Isla Parker. Edinburgh-born Màiri has spent many years working in Unama'ki/Cape Breton, Canada, returning to her hometown to take

up this post. Màiri's experience includes teaching in communities, coordinating community projects, widening community access to digital archives and performing Gaelic song, stepdance and Scottish harp.

7. To date, for financial year 2025/2026, 22 microgrants have been awarded with £10,838.55 disbursed. Organisations recently funded include Dads Work, Heart of Fife Youth Club and Pregnancy & Parents Centre. A record number of 74 microgrant applications have been received already this financial year. In comparison, 55 applications were received in the whole of financial year 2024/2025. This is, in part, thanks to targeted promotion with Third Sector Interfaces in Fife, the Lothians and Scottish Borders, but also illustrates a clear need within communities.
8. Round 18 of the University's Community Grant scheme closed to applications on 26 April. Edinburgh Medical School has contributed £35,000 toward the grant pot as part of marking its 300th anniversary; applications with a health and wellbeing theme were, therefore, encouraged. A record breaking 149 applications were submitted, breaking the previous record in Round 17 of 119. There was a good geographic spread of applications, with 99 from Edinburgh, 14 from East Lothian, 13 from Fife, 10 from West Lothian, 7 from Midlothian and 6 from the Scottish Borders. The grant panel will meet on 26 May to award approximately 12 organisations funding. Online and in person grant information sessions were held in March, including a session at the Usher Institute where colleagues from Edinburgh Medical School attended to facilitate potential partnership opportunities with grantees and add/offer additional value to communities.
9. Sarah Matthews, Community Engagement Projects Coordinator, is joining the City of Edinburgh Council's community grant panel.
10. Launch communications and engagement activity for the University's Community Plan 2025-30 has concluded, with campaign objectives achieved. Individual engagements on the topic continue with departments, schools and community and civic partners. The intention is still to publish a case study on the University's new McLeod Street student accommodation in autumn 2026.
11. The University remains a key partner in [Gaelic Week Edinburgh](#), which this year ran from Monday 23 February to Sunday 1 March. Events covered music, storytelling, culture, community and conversation.
12. Planning for Doors Open Day 2026 is progressing. Conversations are underway to ensure coordination with the University's undergraduate open day taking place the

same weekend. Buildings currently intending to participate in Doors Open Day 2026 are:

- BioQuarter – Usher
- BioQuarter – Institute for Regeneration and Repair
- Western General
- Holyrood campus (to be confirmed)
- St Cecilia's Hall
- Abden House
- McEwan Hall
- Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities (IASH)

More buildings may be added to this list. While King's Buildings is not expected to have open buildings this year, colleagues from the campus are intending to bring stalls to other campuses. A total of 12 stalls are currently planned from across the University.

13. Community access to rooms continues to see sustained interest, with over 10,570 hours now provided through the scheme to over 200 local groups and organisations. This volume of room provision equates to an in-kind of value (based on University commercial hire rates) of over £0.7 million. The small-scale pilot in Edinburgh Futures Institute ('EFI') ends this month; a short impact report will be shared with EFI in June 2026 to allow consideration of next steps. Initial exploratory conversations with Easter Bush and BioQuarter are planned for this month and June to explore if there is any possibility of space provision on these campuses for the scheme in future. Work is planned over summer 2026 to explore streamlining of back-end administration as demand for the scheme continues to grow.
14. A renewed memorandum of understanding with the Greyfriars Charteris Centre is expected to be signed imminently by both parties. The communications approach is in development. Topics the University and Charteris are committing to exploring for the purposes of collaboration are:
 - i) Experiential learning
 - ii) Social enterprise, including but not limited to student enterprise and including collaboration regarding local and national strategy
 - iii) Social responsibility, including collaboration regarding local and national strategy
 - iv) Community building and spaces, again including strategic collaboration
 - v) Engaged research involving communities and community organisations
 - vi) Digital inclusion, which can include provision of equipment, access to affordable internet and/or assistance with digital skills, or strategy

No budget is attached to the agreement and there is no intention to provide a central University budget. A working group will be established which will include members of Charteris and the University. This group will be responsible for identifying specific projects and activities for collaboration and the resourcing of these. The group will work closely with stakeholders from their respective organisations and will also act as a relationship broker between the organisations for grass roots activity within the scope of the memorandum. The working group will meet quarterly to begin with. It will report on progress to the University's Community Board and to Charteris' Board on an annual basis, liaising with their respective stakeholders as needed to produce it.

The agreement also gives formal status to the wealth of collaboration already happening between Charteris and the University, allowing for more coordination of and storytelling. Sample of activity under the last version of this Memorandum is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Sample University of Edinburgh activities involving Greyfriars Charteris Centre since 2019

Activity/output	University department/school involved	Status
Counselling offered by Health in Social Science students using Charteris premises	Centre for Psychological Therapies, School of Health in Social Science	Ended
Exploration of how to improve digital connection in the Dumbiedykes estate Final report	Edinburgh Futures Institute, Community Team	Ended
Dumbiedykes Gala Day and community space	Community Team	Ended
Edinburgh College of Art Textiles collaboration – Cushions project	Edinburgh College of Art	Ongoing
Volunteering with Heart for Art charity based at Greyfriars Charteris Centre Natasha Collinson: Using your 'Day to Make a Difference'	College of Arts, Humanities and Social Science College Office	Ongoing
Various University team away days.	Development and Alumni	Ended

Such use supports relationship building and familiarisation with Charteris' work and facilities.	Centre for Research Collections	
Theology students: how can a church building serve the community? Course Catalogue - Lived Theology (DIV110011)	Theology, School of Divinity	Ended
Business School student projects on Dumbiedykes 15-minute neighbourhoods Course Catalogue - Organising for Social Change - Executive Education (BUST11235)	Business School	Ended
Edinburgh Seven Tapestry – tapestry finishing with University staff, students and members of the public	Edinburgh Medical School	Ended
Binks Hub event (Charteris as a venue)	Binks Hub, Edinburgh Futures Institute	Ended
Edinburgh Futures Institute hustings with local schools (Charteris as a venue)	Edinburgh Futures Institute	Ended

15. We are now seeing community benefits being widely embedded into our procurement processes across the University. Bimonthly reporting is now being shared by our partners at ESES (Edinburgh and South East Scotland) Communities to ensure a joined-up approach to reporting community benefits delivered by our suppliers through the ESES community benefits portal. Examples of delivery and impact can be found in our dedicated [case study page for University of Edinburgh suppliers](#). Introductions have been facilitated with suppliers to support University of Edinburgh Sport' pilot community engagement project and the Insights Programme run by the Careers Service.
16. Since the Board last met, the Scottish Community Wealth Building ('CWB') Bill has been made law through an Act of Scottish Parliament. Royal Assent to make it an Act was received on 25 March. In terms of implementation, guidance is expected in about 18 months. While universities are not named as statutory public organisations which need to comply with the bill, it is possible we may be asked by other organisations, such as Scottish Funding Council, to support their reporting. For this reason, we will be tracking guidance. We will be delivering a session on CWB to the University's Social Investment Fund colleagues on 4 June 2026.

17. Edinburgh University Students' Association staff, the Association's Vice President Community and the University's Senior Community Engagement Manager have provided support for Southside Community Council consultation events on the new Southside place plan. An event to elicit students' views was held at Teviot on 27 March; turnout was low, but this allowed for deeper conversations and a lot of data was collected. University Sport and Exercise also hosted a pop-up consultation at their Pleasance Gym on 21 March, which engaged 30 people.
18. Planning for the 2026 Meadows Festival, which takes place on the weekend of 6 and 7 of June, is well underway. The Edinburgh Futures Institute is providing financial sponsorship. The Community Team will have a stall, as will Edinburgh Futures Institute, Plant Science, and Edinburgh Medical School (the last via involvement in the co-located Every Woman Festival). The Community Team's stall's focus will be eliciting community feedback on progress against Community Plan 2025-30. The key engagement hook will be making friendship bracelets, with threads colour-coded to the Plan's 3 priorities, opening up conversation about these. The 'one to make, one to take' plan for the friendship bracelets supports community connection, in line with the Plan's Thriving Communities priority. The Team's stall is also hosting a University community-engaged research project, [Groundswell](#), and (to be confirmed) the Centre for Open Learning.
19. Sarah Anderson has supported teaching colleagues with submitting case studies to the European project [Service Learning for Democratic Cultures](#). Two have been pick up by the project for progression. If published, the intention is to promote this internally via a Teaching Matters blog (if accepted). This work supports the Community Plan's community-engaged learning actions.
20. Development of a project proposal for a skills-based volunteering pilot for University staff is progressing well. EVOC (Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council), Volunteer Edinburgh, Edinburgh Research Office, Development and Alumni and Human Resources are currently key stakeholders. The current focus of the pilot is a funding application surgery piggybacking on EVOC's successful funding training and Meet the Funders annual event. Learning has been shared with the University of Manchester, a local freelancer with experience of establishing skills-based volunteering programmes for large organisations, and the Royal Company of Merchants. Desk research has also taken place. The intention is that the pilot will run in the 26/27 academic year.
21. Development for a project proposal for a pilot evaluation of Community Plan 2025-

30's secondary outcomes is also underway. Sarah Anderson has developed an early proposal for community-based participatory life story research as a means of evaluating Community Plan 2025-30's outcomes of "welcome", "trusted relationships" and "accessible", and a consolidated overarching outcome of from "people like us" (local communities with no University connection) to "people like them" (the University community). The project will focus on communities who face higher barriers to joining the organisation and look at individuals' subjective experiences of joining the University.

Data will be collected once per individual for the pilot, likely through a multimedia workshop. The aim is to be able to show change over time – within the individual's journey and, subject to pilot success allowing repeat of the research in future years, in common experiences of people joining the University for the first time. Analysis will identify where the University is sitting on its secondary outcomes and recommendations to further progress. Conversations are underway about possible pilot participant communities and Board members Sarah Ward and Suzanne Hermiston have been very helpful in developing the concept.

The project concept is informed by theory from [life story research](#); [narrative inquiry](#); [biographical research](#); [social identity theory](#); [community psychology](#); [cultural capital](#) and [participatory action research](#).

22. The University's new Social Impact Pledge has been made and published [Communities Channel Scotland](#) and progress against the 2023 Pledge [reported on](#). Social media communication about the new Pledge is planned for later this month.
23. The Community Team has been busy with events, including:
 - Hosting EVOC's Meet the Funders at the University and connecting with 17 community organisations via stall.
 - Connecting with 39 people including many University staff and students, at the launch of the University's Regenerative Sustainability Strategy.
 - Sarah Matthews, Community Engagement Projects Coordinator, provided support to the Craigmillar Science Festival.

Sarah Anderson will be working with other members of the new University Ethics Advisory Group for Engaged Research (EAGER) to raise awareness of and consult on the Group at this month's University Impact Festival.

24. The Edinburgh Community Engagement Forum met on 11 March with 14 participants. This was a facilitated networking event in response to a Forum

member suggestion. The next meeting, in June 2026, features guest speaker Helen Featherstone from the University of Bath. The Forum's team currently has 544 members on Teams (447 in Feb 2024) and 322 email list members.

25. Sarah Anderson, Senior Community Engagement Manager, would like to propose minor changes to the Community Plan implementation and evaluation plan:

- Removing 'non-cash resources' as deliverables and evaluation indicators. This came from a Community Board workshop and has now been understood to mean the skills possessed by staff and students, which is already captured elsewhere.
- Adding Estates property management as stakeholder to deliverable 4.1: "Work with Estates to reduce time needed to arrange community partner use of 127 Nicolson St for partner purposes".
- Depending on progress, updating indicators for outcomes 3 and 25 (student volunteering) to reflect a new approach which, if adopted by the Students' Association, would involve surveying members of the Student Volunteering database using standardise health and wellbeing indicators.
- Removing community access to rooms photography (deliverable 33.4) as a year one deliverable – there is no longer felt to be a need for this right now.

A verbal update on [EPSRC Our Health](#), a flagship service/community-engaged learning initiative running since 2018, will be provided in the meeting.

Community Board Communications update February-May 2026

26. SRS Communications will be coordinating the University's presence at and sponsoring the Edinburgh Climate Festival, which takes place on 27 June on the Meadows, Edinburgh. As the headline sponsor, the University's logo will appear on all festival branding, and Scott Davidson will deliver a 5-minute keynote speech on the University's Regenerative Sustainability strategy. The University will have a presence as a large stallholder, staffed by various staff and students representing different projects of relevance to the local community.

27. The Community Plan launch campaign is now closed. Activities since 24 February have included:

- Sharing a video case study featuring community grantee Heavy Sound: Partner post with Edinburgh Medical School. 15 Instagram post likes, 2,104 views, 1,378 accounts reached. On Facebook, 3 likes, 228 views by 176 viewers. On Social Responsibility and Sustainability LinkedIn, 16 engagements. These figures are notably lower for Instagram than for the Goodies case study, likely due to the main University account being a partner on the latter.

- Community Plan-themed networking session for EFI staff, students, partners and affiliates. Around 12 participants.
- Meeting with the Gorgie Dalry Forum.
- Presentations to Information Services Group leaders and Student Recruitment and Admissions staff.

28. Community Plan year 5 and final report: Since the last meeting:

- A Spring 2026, Edinburgh Medical School 300 Community Grant-themed Edinburgh Local newsletter was issued on 23 March 2026. This hosted the Heavy Sound case study. 1,603 emails were sent; 594 were opened, giving an excellent open rate of 38%. 70 contacts clicked in links, with the Community Grants “How to apply” webpage being the most popular with 58 clicks. 3 contacts unsubscribed.
- Stories in Bulletin, Edinburgh Global, Corporate Services Group, College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine and Binks Hub newsletters.
- Publication of story on Edinburgh Global website.

This project is now closed.

29. Social media: Social Impact Unit colleagues continue to manage Edinburgh Local social media in light in 60% reduction in capacity of the SRS Communications team. An advantage of this is more interaction with other accounts rather than simply pushing content; this may explain further increase in followers.

- Instagram (February-April 2026 inclusive):
 - Total followers: 2,684 followers, an increase of 80 since early February.
 - Total views (previously ‘impressions’): 5,032, down from 39,000 last update and 15,400 before that. This reflects the year 5 report and new Plan launch falling during periods of previous 2 updates, both of which involved partnership with University corporate account.
 - Total accounts reached: 764, down from 8,727 last update. Explanation the same as preceding.
 - Total interactions: 146, down from last update.
 - Top performing posts: Gaelic week (partner post; 43,696 views, 417 accounts engaged); Edinburgh Global photography competition (partner post; 6,634 views, 77 accounts engaged); Heavy Sound case study (as above).
- Facebook (February to April inclusive):
 - Views up by 433% (2,218 in total)
 - Engagement up 100% (111 engagements)
 - Followers up 0.3% (934 total)
- LinkedIn (13 Feb to 30 April), Social Responsibility and Sustainability account:
 - Total followers: 5,057, up from 4,819 last update.

- Best performing community-driven posts: Heavy Sound (as above); Smart Data Foundry re-share (17 engagements); Southside place plan student event (5 engagement).

30. Edinburgh Local website stats for Q3 (1 Feb 2026-30 Apr 2026)

- Views: 11, 951
 - 68% increase from Q2 2025-26
 - 24% decrease from Q3 2024-25
 - Notable increase explained by an increase in cross-promotion of Edinburgh Local webpages in other UoE communications, such as EMS 300 and increased external awareness of Community Grants.

Best performing pages:

- Community Grants: how to apply (2,112 views)
- Edinburgh Local homepage (1,763)
- Community Access to Rooms (795)
- Community Grants (722)
- These correlate with the pages we've been encouraging our audiences to visit.

31. The Edinburgh Local inbox has seen continued growth in traffic (based on a snapshot of the same week year-on-year):

- Week 16-23 March 2026: 56 inquiries running.
- Week 17-24 March 2025: 47 inquiries running
- Week 16-23 March 2020: 21 inquiries running

The great majority, but not all, inquiries continue to be related to community access to rooms or community grants.

Resource implications

32. No additional resource is being requested through this paper.

Risk Management

33. Covered by twice-yearly RAG update, next due September 2026.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

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



Equality & Diversity

35. Managed through equalities impact assessments for individual projects and the equalities impact assessment for Community Plan 2025-30.

Next steps/implications

36. Any actions arising from paper discussion at 19 May Community Board.

Consultation

37. This paper was written collectively by members the Community Team and the SRS Communications Team. The paper has been reviewed by the Head of Social Impact.

Further information

Authors

Sarah Anderson

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Stuart Tooley

Head of Public Affairs, Communications and Marketing

Aidan Tracey

Social Impact Manager, Social Responsibility and Sustainability

Freedom of Information

37. Open.