

CCF-6709

Final Report

2020-2022

ECSA Go Green

Edinburgh College Students' Association

Authors: Claire Furniss and Izi Robe

Finalised 31st March 2022



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot



Table of Contents

Page 1	Starting Point
Page 4	Project Backdrop
Page 5	Headline Achievements
Page 6	Outcomes
Page 8	Activities & Climate Literacy
Page 8	Outcome 1: Climate Change Awareness
Page 12	Outcome 2: Low Carbon Travel
Page 16	Outcome 3: Community Fridges and Food Waste
Page 19	Outcome 4: Swap Shops and Textile Waste
Page 21	Learning & Reflection
Page 21	Best Practice
Page 24	Challenges
Page 26	Finance & Administration
Page 28	Sustainable Legacy
Page 30	Summation

Starting Point

How did the project come about?

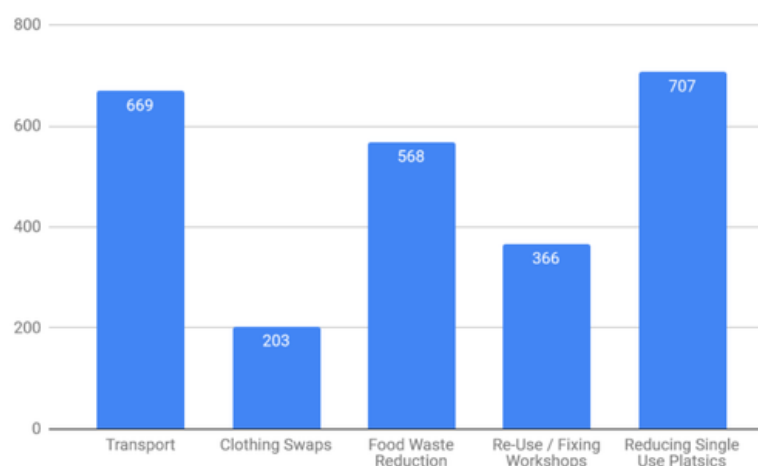
The basis of this project was born out of a partnership between Edinburgh College Students' Association, Edinburgh College's Sustainability Team, and the Edinburgh College Development Trust back in 2017. This came through a desire for an increased capacity for sustainability work at the College that would directly and tangibly benefit our students. As ECSA had identified the significant issue of travel and its associated costs as a barrier for students staying at College, our first CCF project that ran from 2018-2020 focussed specifically on sustainable travel.

Through the success of our first project, we were able to see the appetite for sustainability events and activities in our student population, both related to travel, and to other aspects of sustainability. Throughout the first project, students regularly flagged waste at the College as an area of concern, which increased our desire to expand our project focus to include supporting students to reduce waste on campus and beyond.

Two years since we first gathered data on it, at our October 2019 Class Rep conferences, student reps made it clear that travel remained a major issue for many students. The financial and time costs of transport are barriers to a positive student experience, and can even lead to students considering dropping out of education. Furthermore, when we surveyed students during the 2019 Registration Week, asking what ECSA's sustainability priorities should be, 52% cited travel.

This confirmed for us that future projects needed to continue to support sustainable travel and tackle the high levels of car use among students. The activities, resources, and infrastructure around sustainable travel that we developed in our first project has meant that we have been able to continue many elements throughout this second project as well as develop new activities and increase engagement over the past 2 years.

Our various data gathering from students also highlighted single-use plastic and waste more widely across the campuses as a major issue that students wanted us to prioritise. Part of the planning around the second project was to ramp up the promotion of our reusable coffee-cups and water bottles as well as regularly offering a range of other sustainable or plastic-free products as prizes throughout the project in order to engage students on the issues around single use plastics more widely.



Results of student responses to the question "What do you think ECSA's sustainability priorities should be?" in Welcome Week Survey 2019



After trialling some pop-up clothing swap shops towards the end of our first project (shown in image above), it was clear that establishing a physical sustainability space on each campus would help to deliver waste reduction initiatives, and engage more students in discussions and activities around the project. With food waste also featuring heavily in our data gathering on student priorities, the development of Community Fridges on campus alongside our Swap Shops would help us enhance the offering and engage more students in waste reduction in their daily lives.

All of our core objectives for this project have added benefits to students in relation to physical health, wellbeing, and helping them to reduce the burden of cost to accessing education. The project has therefore reduced carbon, whilst also reducing expenditure. This has been important to the project as SIMD data shows that many of our students come from relatively high areas of deprivation in and around the city.

About our organisation and community

Edinburgh College Students' Association exists to represent and advance the interests of our members: the c.22,000 students of Edinburgh College. We are a separate registered charity, independent to the college. However, we work closely together in order to ensure our members' needs are met.

The community context we are working in is quite unique for a CCF project. We are the first college Students' Association to receive CCF funding, and our student community is more diverse than most university student bodies and the general Edinburgh population:

- Our students are all ages, from school-leavers to adult-returners; 45% of our students are older than 24.
- 17% are Black/Minority Ethnicity, compared to 8% in Edinburgh.
- Almost 10% of our students are from the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in Scotland (SIMD10 areas), and more than half come from the 50% most deprived neighbourhoods.

76% of our students are studying at Further Education level, and 24% at Higher Education level. As the only College in Scotland's capital city, Edinburgh College attracts students from a wide range of backgrounds for a variety of reasons. Some come to qualify in order to work in a specific industry (e.g. vehicle maintenance or hairdressing), whilst others wish to continue their education outside the school environment. We also have lots of mature students who have returned to education to retrain in another profession, as well as part-time and evening students studying short courses.

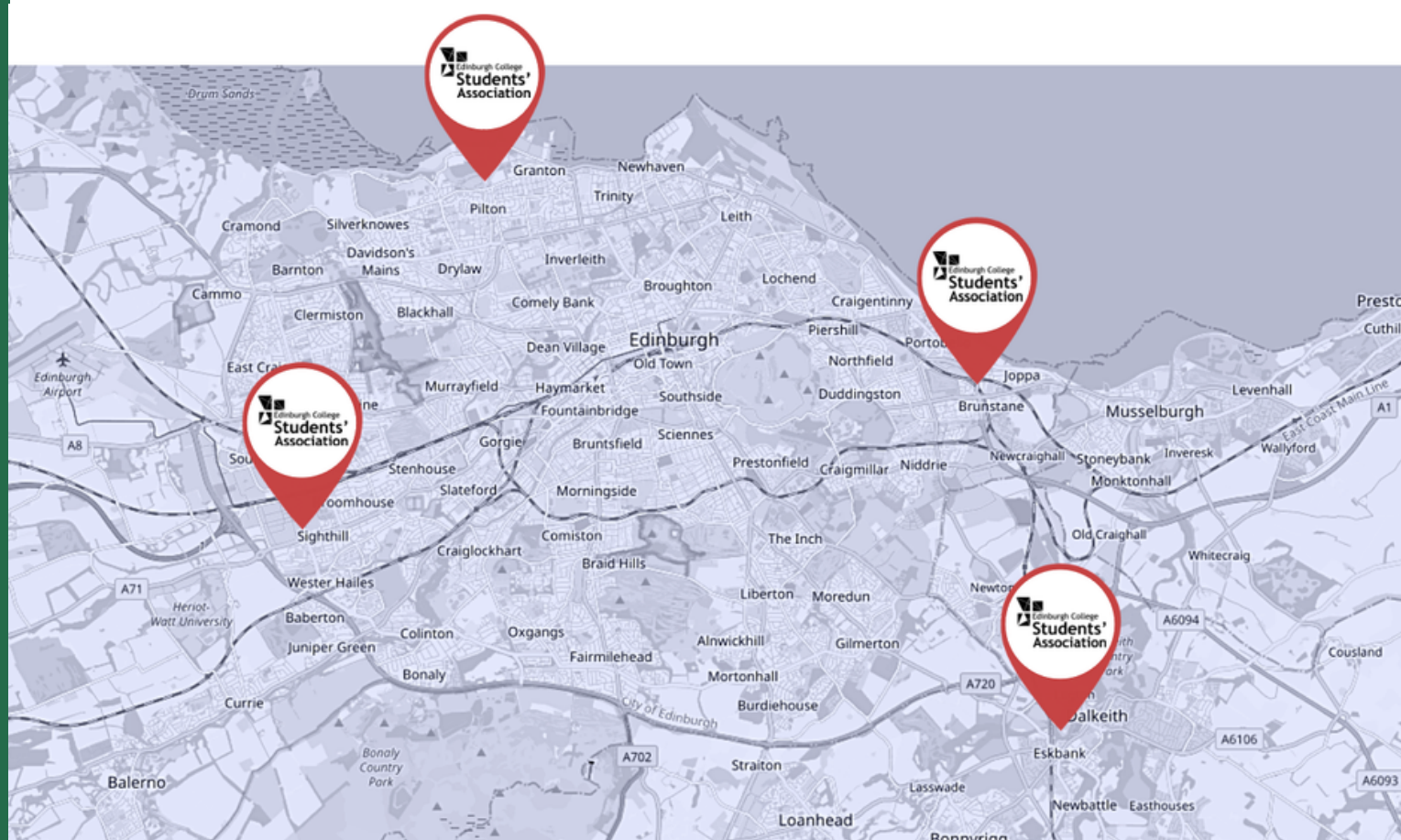
The diverse demographics of our community mean that our students have highly varying needs. Some have caring responsibilities and come to college after dropping off their children at school/childcare. The college serves a large geographic area, and students travel from as far as the southern Scottish Borders, Fife, and Dunbar to study here. Most of our students live in their family home (either with their parents, or as parents themselves), whereas at a university most students would usually live in a shared student flat within walking distance from their campus.

Edinburgh College is spread over four different campuses, which all vary in the size of the student body and the courses offered. The four campuses are:

- Sighthill Campus – West Edinburgh
- Granton Campus – North Edinburgh
- Milton Road Campus – East Edinburgh
- Midlothian Campus – Dalkeith

Due to the fact that not all campuses teach the same courses, students don't necessarily travel to the campus nearest their home postcode. On top of this, the level of deprivation in areas where our students live is higher than Edinburgh as a whole, and the Scottish average.

With all of these factors in mind, the project has had to engage with an extremely wide range of people from all walks of life, many with multiple barriers to education, finance, and time to engage with sustainability activities. We believe our project has managed to thread these issues and challenges together, providing engaging activities that help our community to improve their lives as well as reducing carbon.



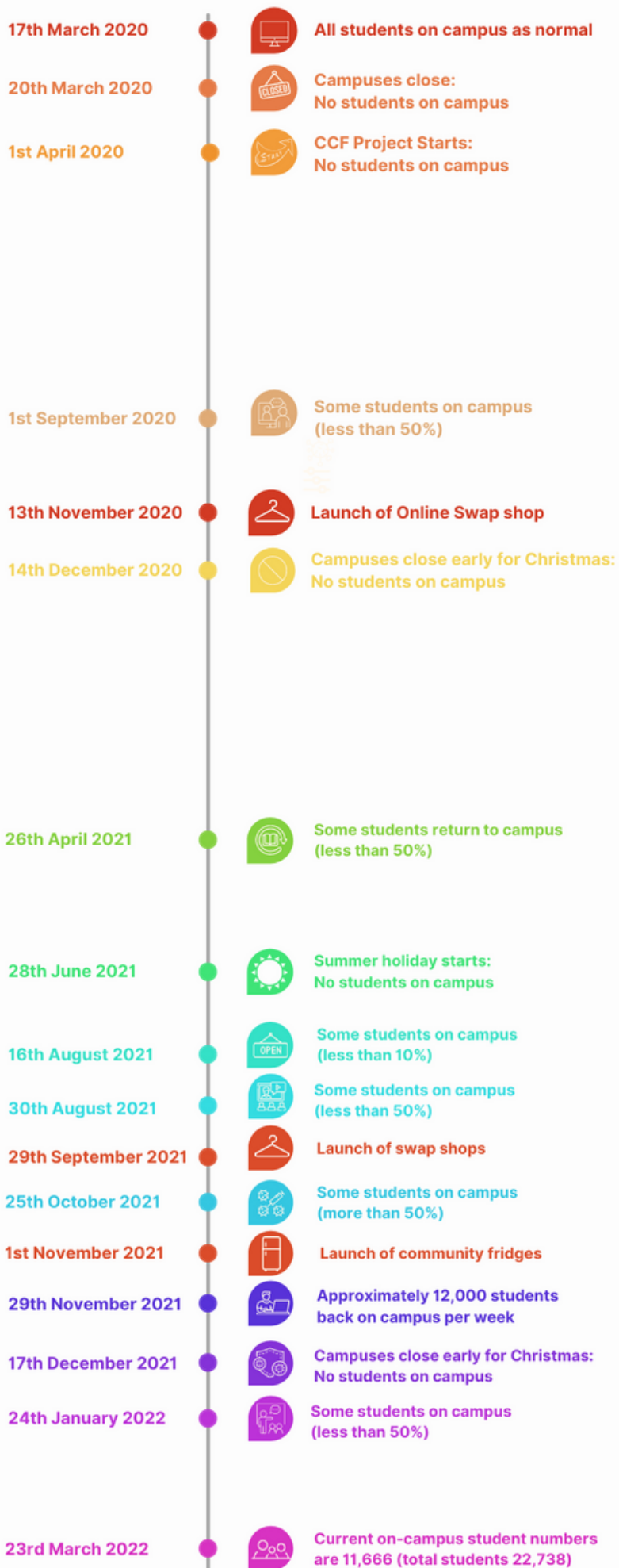
Project Backdrop

It's important to note that at no point during this project did we have all students on campus, due to Covid-19 restrictions. There were times when there were no staff or students allowed on campus during stages of lockdown, and even in times when Government restrictions have eased we have never exceeded more than around 50% of students coming onto campus at any given time. In total, 12 months out of the 24 project months saw no students on campus at all. A timeline of the levels of students on campuses over the duration of the project can be seen in the timeline on the right. This has obviously shaped the project significantly, as we had to adapt our approaches to engaging our students with project activities and outcomes that could be delivered remotely.

As we function within Edinburgh College buildings, decisions on numbers of students on campus outside lockdown periods were outwith our control. This meant that we had to continue to run both online and in-person events once there were some students on campuses, in order to target as many students. We were also required to book our access to campus buildings at least 48 hours in advance for a considerable amount of time, which reduced the amount of flexibility we had for changing things like, for example, students' collection times for online swap shop orders. Despite these external challenges, we have still engaged more students than we originally set out to, and achieved virtually all of our original targets.

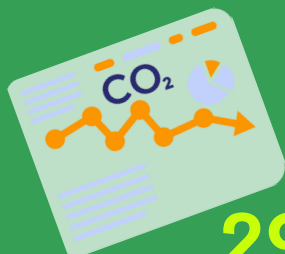
Covid-19 timeline.

MARCH 2020 - MARCH 2022



Headline Achievements

Here are some of our key project achievements:



105%
of project target
achieved
Lifetime saving of
298 tCO2e



217.2 tCO2e
lifetime saving
from travel outcome alone

16
subject specific class
workshops circulated to
Sustainable Education
Group

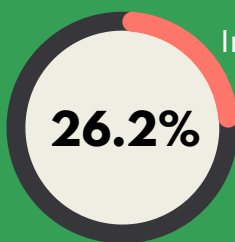


**720 students
across 50
classes**

took part in our Climate
Change 101 workshops



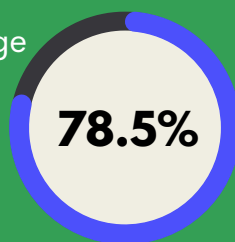
921
hours of paid work
for students through
our Sustainability



Increase in climate change
knowledge from

26.2%

**26.5% to
78.5%**



78.5%

4 Go Green Hubs

set up housing our
Swap Shops and
Community Fridges

£14,526

spent on physical
infrastructure for the
long-term running of the
Go Green Hubs



3152.48kg

saved from going to
waste through our
Community Fridges



978.85kg

of textiles and books
donated to our Swap
Shops



**Net Zero
Champions**

award received from the
Edinburgh Chamber of
Commerce



1601 views
of our Zero Waste
Cooking Series

£3500

fundraised for
ongoing project
costs



Outcomes

Our project had four key outcomes. This section summarises our achievements for each one:

Outcome 1 (Climate Awareness): Outcome exceeded

Target: Supporting 1500 people in our community to increase their awareness and understanding of Climate Change and enabling them to make informed choices on how to move to low-carbon lifestyles.

Result: 2810 project participants, 720 of which received direct Climate Literacy training

Outcome 2 (Low Carbon Travel): Outcome exceeded

Target: 260 people in our community will reduce their carbon emissions by a total of 48.9 tCO₂e over the project, by switching to public transport, active travel, and lift sharing.

Result: 303 participants, project carbon saving of 72.4 tCO₂e

Outcome 3 (Community Fridges): Outcome exceeded

Target: Reduce food waste from college canteens, teaching kitchens, and local supermarkets by creating community fridges. Each week, these will divert 50kg of food from landfill, saving 10.98 tCO₂e over the project. We will run complimentary activities to further raise awareness of food waste.

Result: 165.78kg of food saved from waste per week, project carbon saving of 15.1 tCO₂e

Outcome 4 (Swap Shops): Outcome partially met

Target: Reduce the consumption of new clothes, textiles and books by establishing regular swap shops and a textbook exchange. This will lead to 2020kg of new goods not being consumed, and a carbon saving of 34.66 tCO₂e. We will foster a culture of sharing, re-use, and buying second-hand amongst our community.

Result: 987.85kg of donations, project carbon saving of 11.2 tCO₂e

105%

**progress against our carbon saving target
in a global pandemic**

Achievements against these targets can be seen in the table below:

Key Indicator	Activities	Outcomes
Increasing Climate Change awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class workshops • News articles and social media content • Film screenings • Publicising national events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2810 overall participants • 50 class sessions delivered to 720 students in total • 34 news articles created • 187.3% progress to target
Encourage more sustainable travel methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike maintenance sessions • Liftshare platform • Travel planning tool • Free bike and walking equipment • Challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 303 participants • Lifetime carbon saving of 217.2tCO₂e • 147% progress to target
Reduce food waste through Community Fridges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Fridges • Zero Waste Cooking Video Series • Food waste diaries • Cook-along • Campaigns and news articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 165.78kg of food saved from waste per week • Lifetime carbon saving of 45.3 tCO₂e • 137.5% progress to project carbon saving target
Reduce textile and book waste through Swap Shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online and on-campus Swap Shops • Parents & Carers swap shop events • Sewing projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 978.85kg of donations • Lifetime carbon saving of 33.7 tCO₂e • 48.5% of target donations made across limited timeframe

187%

progress against our participant number target in a global pandemic

Activities & Climate Literacy

Outcome 1: Climate Change Awareness

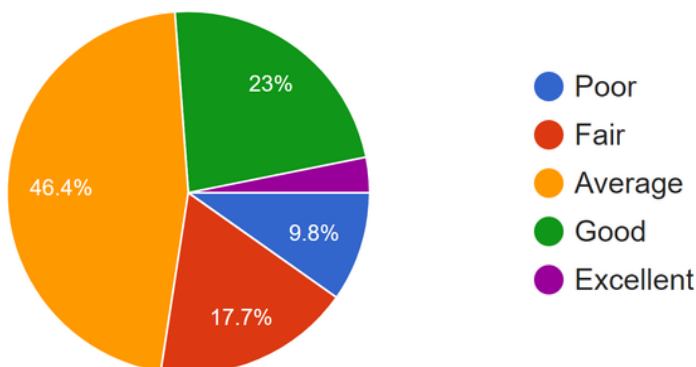
Climate Literacy Workshops

Our main method for achieving this outcome has been through delivering in-class climate literacy workshops about Climate Change and Sustainability. Of all of our activities, our class workshops have been the least affected by the pandemic as it has been relatively easy to adapt the content for online delivery, and it has been easier to access classes online compared to being tied to any one campus. Over the course of the project we have delivered Climate Change 101 sessions to 720 students across 50 classes. At the start of each session we asked participants to rate their current knowledge of climate change, and the relevance they thought it had to their subject area. They were then asked the same questions again at the end to see if there were any changes.

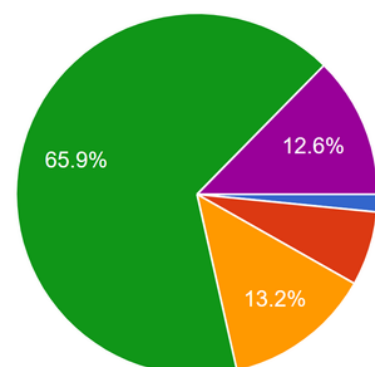
As seen below, this workshop boosted feelings of good and excellent knowledge of climate change and sustainability from 26.2% before the session to 78.5% after the session. Perceived relevance of these topics to their subject area also increased from 45.7% thinking it was directly relevant or that there were many relevant aspects before, to 80.7% after.

The majority of the sessions have been set up through Learning Development Tutors (LDTs) and lecturers, who were notified of the opportunity through colleagues, staff emails and a [video](#) we created for the Staff Development Day. The 45 minute session starts with unpacking some commonly heard buzzwords surrounding climate change, before discussing the concept of sustainability and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which leads into discussions

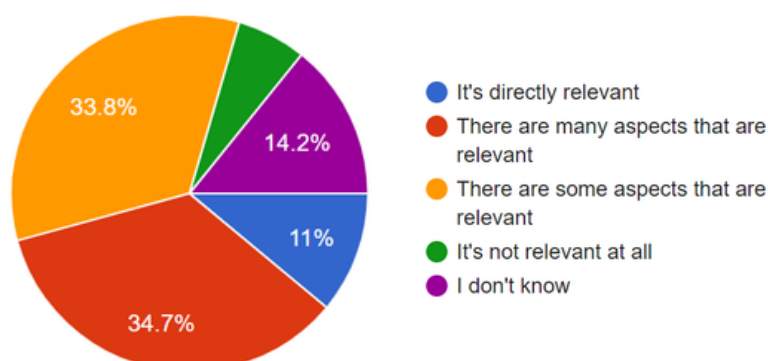
How would you rate your knowledge of climate change and sustainability before the session?



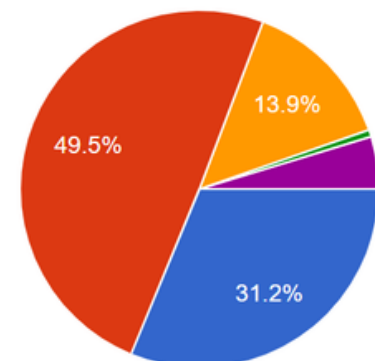
How would you rate your knowledge of climate change and sustainability after the session?



Before the session, how relevant did you think climate change and sustainability were to your subject area?



After the session, how relevant do you think climate change and sustainability were to your subject area?



around how these principles are relevant to any and all course areas.

Over the course of the project we have seen a steady increase in interest from a variety of subject areas, with staff reaching out for the basic 'Climate Change 101' sessions, as well as sessions that complement environmental units that are already being taught. We've also been asked to deliver additional follow up sessions with some classes to encourage continued learning about sustainable behaviour change.

We have also promoted our activities to all Class Reps through regular Class Rep Conferences, so they knew about the Go Green Project and what we were running. We offered the full Climate Change 101 workshops to Class Reps at the end of November 2021. We took this time to ask them questions about sustainability at the College, such as if they've been taught about sustainability before, where they'd like to learn more about sustainability (eg. lecture time, outside College), and what they wish they saw more of when it comes to sustainability in the College. These results have been taken to the Sustainability Steering Group and Sustainable Education Group to make sure student feedback is considered in our approach to building a net zero college.

Updating the ECSA Website

As campuses were closed for a significant chunk of the start of the project, we decided to create a [Go Green Hub on the ECSA website](#) where students could find out about our project and the work that would be starting once we could get back onto campuses. The Hub has a click-through button for relevant information for each of our outcome areas, as well as having a function to pull through all of our most recent news articles and upcoming events. We also included a section with links to useful local organisations (e.g. CycleStreets and Traveline for Transport, and Zero Waste Scotland and Love Food Hate Waste for Waste), as well as a link to our previous project's Final Report.

Over the course of the project, we continually added to this Hub as we had more resources available. This has led to the addition of multiple different sustainability 'guides' for students to refer to, including a '[Sustainability at Home Guide](#)' for while we were in lockdown stages, a '[Beginner's Guide to Ethical Consumerism](#)', a '[Walking Guide](#)' with different routes around the city, and a '[Guide to Make your own Reusable Bag](#)'. We also added a clickable link to our [Zero-Waste Cooking Series](#) once this was launched, as well as a link to a video that one of ECSA's assistants created to show students [how to get to our on-campus Go Green Hubs](#) once they were up and running.

Not only was this Hub a great way to continue to put the message out about our project to students while we were away from campus, but it has also offered us a centralised place to continue to provide updates on the project (e.g. adding Community Fridge restock times once these were launched on campuses). There have been 608 unique views of the website Hub since we launched it in Summer 2020.

Online Awareness Campaigns

As there were significant amounts of time during the project when physically engaging with students on campuses wasn't an option, we relied more heavily on producing online content to get students engaged with our project, and sustainability more widely. This led to us producing 34 website news articles throughout the project, with information on campaigns including:

- [Earth Day](#) (and staying connected to nature during lockdown) - 36 views
- Be kind to the environment section of [Mental Health Awareness Week](#) - 24 views
- [Go Green hub launch on World Environment Day](#) - 19 views
- [Sustainable Festive Season](#) - 89 views (across 2 years)
- [International Compost Awareness Week](#) - 16 views
- [Six sustainable things to do this summer](#) - 27 views
- [Plastic-free July](#) - 16 views
- [World Vegetarian Day](#) - 16 views

COP26

With the United Nations Climate Change Conference taking place just 48 miles away in Glasgow in November 2021, we organised and got involved with a range of activities. In the month leading up to COP26, we started to engage our students with the conference by posting weekly Instagram story quizzes with different questions and answers about what COP26 is and what it aimed to achieve. Over 4 weeks, 349 voters took part in the quiz.

We invited Students Organising for Sustainability UK to deliver an online Ethical Banking Workshop to students. The one hour workshop explained the ethical implications of how banks invest money, including their impact on climate change, and how students can learn more about their bank's investment policy when looking to switch or open an account. The 4 students that attended gave positive feedback that the session had significantly increased their knowledge of the topic.

We were also invited to be part of a panel event the College hosted as part of their COP26 activities. This event was filmed and edited by Broadcast Media students, acting as a teaching opportunity whilst also providing information to staff and students about the variety of work the College and ECSA do to promote sustainability – with a particular focus on our new Go Green Hubs. The video can be found [here](#) and has had 164 views to date. Information about both of these events was included in our [Engage with COP26 news article](#) (68 unique page views), which included a way to submit questions to the event panel before filming.



COP26 video panellists (from left): Claire (ECSA), Sam (lecturer), Victoria (ECSA VP), Skye (student), Jon (College VP)

Film Screenings

One of the ways we continued to engage with students during the first year of the project while less of them were back on campus was through film screening events. The first of these was run in October 2020 in collaboration with Arran Eco Savvy. We chose to screen 'Cooked: Survival by Zip Code' to tie into our Black History Month events, as it shows the racial and socioeconomic divides that influenced the Chicago heatwave of 1995. Between both organisations, we had 45 people register interest in watching this film, and those who filled out our feedback survey rated the film a 4/5 or 5/5.

We then attempted to run another by ourselves on 9th December. Our project assistant, Isabela, looked into different short films that were free to access online, and subsequently chose 3 to show that were linked to waste. This was predominantly run through a Facebook event we made, but we also sent emails out to our Environmental Society mailing list (so students who don't have Facebook could still email us to express their interest). 9 people said they were 'Going' to the event on Facebook, along with 12 saying they were 'interested'. We also received two direct emails from students asking for the film links. As we shared these links so students could watch at a time that suited them best, we are unsure of exact participant numbers for this event.

We then ran two more film screenings in the second semester of our first project – one in February 2021 and another in March 2021. The first was a screening of 'Resolution Race', an adventure film focussing on sustainable travel and climate action. We showed this at two different times of day to try and make this as accessible to students as possible. The second screening was in collaboration with Arran Eco Savvy again, as we watched 'The Troublemaker', a film focusing on civil protests born out of response to the climate crisis.

Global Youth Strike for Climate

We promoted the Global Youth Climate Strike on the 24th September 2021 outside the Scottish Parliament as an opportunity for students to take climate action and learn more about climate change. Working with teaching union representatives, we received a commitment from the College that students who attended would be marked in registers as "engaged in external learning". Importantly, this ensured that students were not penalised in either their academic record or bursary payments. We organised a meet-up point for Edinburgh College students who wanted to attend the Edinburgh protest together. All three Student Officers attended, along with one of our staff members and 3 students. We were also joined by several members of teaching staff from the College. For our VP Activities, it was the first time attending a protest of any kind and said that:

"All anxiety that I had previously held was quickly replaced by empowerment and excitement to foster change....by far my biggest take away from the experience was the energy and atmosphere created by so many students coming together for a cause they truly believe in."

Environmenstrual Week

During October 2021, it was Environmenstrual Week, where we engaged with students to raise awareness of the environmental impact caused by single use sanitary products. To achieve this we utilised our social media platforms, posting facts and figures throughout the week, as well as information on the different types of reusable period products available in a [news article](#) on our website (49 unique page views). As reusable period products can be expensive to buy, we heavily promoted the availability of a range of free 'Hey Girl' items to students through the College. They could collect them from one of our pop-up information events at each campus, from any of the ECSA offices, or through the College's online wellbeing hub. Over the course of the week, 19 orders were placed online for reusable period products on the College's Wellbeing Hub, as well as a further 8 students taking products from our stalls.



Outcome 2: Low Carbon Travel

Covid travel guidance for staff and students

As the first 3 months of the project took place during the first Covid lockdown, followed by the College's Summer holidays, we were unable to make any progress on getting students to travel in more sustainable ways. In order to start work on this outcome, we therefore started by working with the College to produce Covid-specific travel guidance documents for students and staff that included up to date guidance from Government and travel providers. These documents were circulated at the start of the academic year through the College's Communications department, as well as on [our website](#) and social media platforms. We made sure to start these guides with the recommendation to travel actively wherever possible, before working through other options in order of sustainability. The link to the Liftshare [travel planning widget on our website](#) was also included in these guides, so people were able to get bespoke travel plans for journeys to campus once they were coming back in.

The student travel guidance document was also included in all-student emails in January, ahead of new students starting courses at this time of the year. We updated the travel information in the news article to ensure it was up-to-date before we re-published it.

Liftshare and MyPTP

Through our CCF budget and partnership with the College's Estates department, we were able to keep our bespoke Liftshare site active throughout the duration of this project, as well as Liftshare.com's personalised travel planning tool (myPTP) on our website. As there was specific Government Covid guidance to not share cars for a significant amount of time throughout the project, it was difficult to promote this service to students. However, during times of restrictions being eased we

wasted no time in encouraging students to sign up to Liftshare, while promoting the ways of carsharing safely (e.g. wearing a face covering and keeping windows open for ventilation). Despite our promotion that unfortunately only translated into 20 new sign ups through the project timeframe.

We have had more success getting students to use the myPTP widget to create bespoke travel plans for their journeys - with 124 travel plans being created. This system prioritises active travel and public transport for shorter journeys, so this helps to support the project's aim of encouraging more sustainable travel methods.

Be Bright Be Seen

At the start of November 2020 we launched our own 'Be Bright Be Seen' campaign, as the Council weren't running these events as they had in previous years. This included information about walking and cycling safely in the dark during the Winter months, as well as offering free high visibility items and bike lights to students who needed them. The high visibility items were provided to us by the Council the previous year, and most of the lights were ones that were purchased through our previous CCF project that had not yet been distributed.



Unfortunately this came at a time when Government Covid restrictions were increasing again, meaning we weren't able to get students to come to campus to collect these items. Instead, we handed these out through pre-arranged outside collections on campus and beyond, or sent these out to students in the mail when in-person meetings were harder (e.g. to students who lived outside Edinburgh). Through the promotion of this throughout November, and again after the Christmas holidays during January and February 2021, we managed to distribute these items to 30 students so they could travel more safely, and got the following feedback from some of these students:

"Now I feel more confident to cycle around town. I'm visible and that helps me feel more confident on the bike."

"Exercise has become more important than ever for me. The lights and high vis jacket have meant I can use my bike much more during the winter months and there's no doubt this is helping me with my studies as well as keeping me positive during these difficult times."

We also ran the Be Bright Be Seen campaign in our second project year. We published our [news article](#) at the end of October 2021 and shared this through our social media channels. As campuses were open and were easier for students to come to at this point, we promoted that these items were available to collect from our offices. We also had these items out on pop-up stalls - so overall we were able to distribute these items to 25 students throughout this academic year.

Free Bike Giveaway

In June 2021, we distributed 5 refurbished bikes and cycling starter packs, including a helmet, lock, lights, pump and high vis (equivalent to £43.25) to students who would otherwise be unable to purchase their own bike. The bikes had been donated from the University of Edinburgh and the College paid to



fit them with new tyres and chains so they were safe to give out to students. We created an application form for students to fill in, and received 14 applications in total. These were scored on the basis of the amount of financial support they are receiving, how having a bike would benefit them financially, as well as benefit their health, wellbeing, and overall enthusiasm for cycling. It also asked if they would be a student next academic year and how many journeys they would use the bike for. We then selected the 5 highest scoring applicants to receive a bike and starter kit.

Kay, one of our bike recipients said:

"The bike has been an absolute lifesaver during these really difficult covid times. Many of our lessons have been online and as I live alone, I have found this to be very isolating. Being able to use the bike to cycle around the city as well as to get to know it better (I moved here from England) has really helped my mental and physical health. I'm really appreciative of it and can't begin to explain how much it has helped me."

Bike Maintenance Sessions

Over the course of the project we have run 10 bike maintenance sessions for free to students in partnership with the Bike Station, Edinburgh Bike Doctors and SHRUB's Wee Spoke Hub.

For the first year of the project we were unable to offer the 8 on-campus Dr Bike sessions we had scheduled due to the national lockdown and organisational changes within The Bike Station. Instead, we offered our students 26 free spaces for online bike maintenance sessions run by The Bike Station that took place in March 2021. 9 students attended, learning skills such as bike safety checks, puncture repair and getting your bike Spring ready.

As lockdown began to ease in 2021 we were able to begin scheduling outdoor on-campus sessions. Between June and October we ran 6 free bike maintenance sessions – the first two were run by the Edinburgh Bike Doctors and the other 4 by SHRUB's Wee Spoke Hub. In total these sessions saw 36 bikes being serviced, including 2 children's bikes. The reduced engagement with these sessions compared to previous years can most likely be attributed to the reduced number of students attending campuses.

In March 2022 we ran another three 2 hour bike maintenance sessions with SHRUB's Wee Spoke Hub. These have been much more popular and is more typical of the level of engagement we expect – with 26 bikes being serviced.



As a result of underspend in this budget heading due to the cancellation of sessions earlier in the project, we have also been able to book a further 4 bike maintenance sessions that will be delivered in April and May, taking us to the end of the academic year.



New Year Pledge

This is the third year that we have run our New Year Travel Pledge. At the start of Semester 2, students were encouraged to make a pledge to switch one of their regular journeys to a lower-carbon alternative. This campaign centred around "save money and get active". Students were encouraged to walk, cycle, take public transport or use the Edinburgh College Liftshare Platform. 12 students signed up to the pledge in 2022 and 8 successfully stuck to their respective pledge for 2 or more weeks and earned a gift voucher worth £10 for a local zero-waste shop. We collected travel data from the participants using a feedback survey. One participant, Anna, gave the following feedback:

"I decided to just change part of my way to work from a bus to walking....I could list all the amazing things that walking more for a month gave me, but the most important in my opinion was satisfaction. The satisfaction that I was able to do it, was doing something good for the planet and I realised that I was missing a lot of fresh air experiences while leaving my own flat only to go to the bus, work and then back to the bus and home again. It also encouraged me to sign up for another ECSA's challenge – this time particularly Walking Challenge and I started to look for a bike, so I could help the environment even more by resigning from bus travels at all."

Walking Challenge

For two weeks in March we ran 'The Go Green Walking Challenge 2022'. This event challenged students to travel more sustainably by walking more to record the highest step count they could, whilst saving money and exploring their local area.

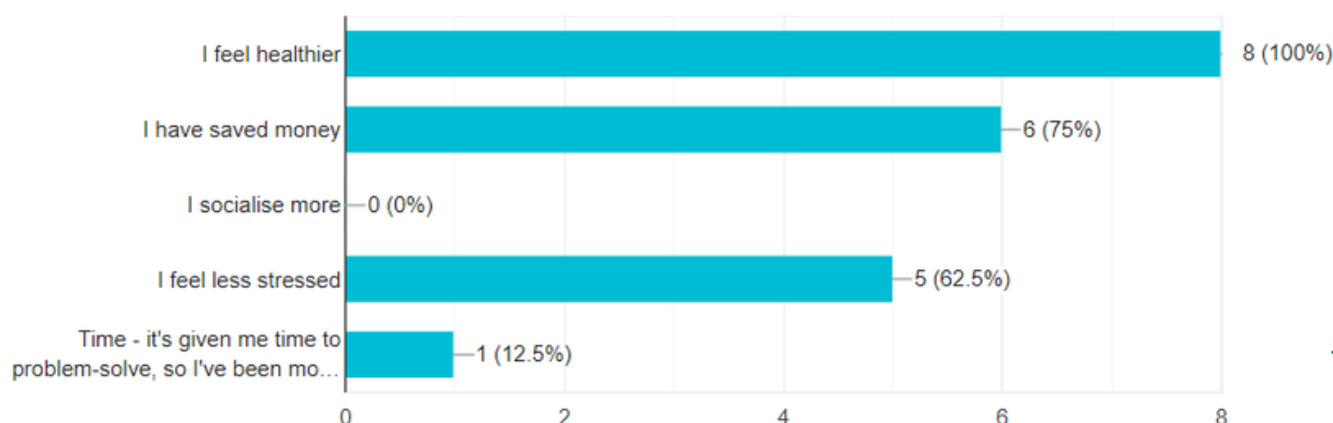
We promoted sign ups for two weeks prior to the challenge starting, and gave out activity trackers to those who didn't have their own. We created a Microsoft Teams page dedicated to the event, with a spreadsheet for the students to input their daily step counts to, as well as a space to share photos from their walks and motivational messages to one another.

28 students signed up to the challenge, and 13 went on to complete the whole two weeks. The four students at the end of the two weeks who had taken the most steps won a Fitbit Inspire 2 Fitness Tracker and overall the participants logged an incredible 3.7 million steps over the course of the challenge.

We sent out a feedback form to participants to collect feedback on the challenge itself and the benefits students experienced from taking part, as well as how walking more had influenced their travel habits. 6 of our respondents said that they had already switched a regular journey to walking from another mode of transport and another one said they planned to switch to walking. The further benefits of changing journeys to walking that students found can be seen in the graph below:

Have you noticed any benefits of changing your travel to walking?

8 responses



Student feedback on the Walking Challenge:

"I really loved getting the fresh air, and seeing all the birds in the sunshine. Had the chance to see a Heron flying which was amazing! The wildlife is the best part of walking, and I'm glad to have walked more because of this challenge. I only used my car for essential journeys and walked the rest of the time, which was great and saved me using up petrol!"

"I've enjoyed focussing on walking. It's been really motivating to get up, go outside and get some steps. I like the competitive element to it - being able to see everyone's steps, and have a leaderboard has been really motivating."

"I saw many things I had been missing when driving."

Outcome 3: Community Fridges and Food Waste

Community Fridge Launch

The Community Fridges were officially opened in our 'Go Green Hubs' on each campus alongside the Swap Shops at the start of November 2021. Due to the pandemic and college closures, we only had the Community Fridges operating for 20% of the total project time. In total, we saved 3149.78kg of food from going to waste, which averaged at 165.78kg per week of the fridges being open. This means that 94.4% of food donated has been redistributed to our community, and resulted in a lifetime carbon saving of 45.3 tCO₂e.

Students are able to take as many items as they feel they will realistically use from the Community Fridges for free. For our waste saving records and carbon reporter we weigh in the total donation and minus the weight we dispose of in food waste. However, we still encourage students to weigh the food they are taking using electronic weighing scales provided, and record it in a log book to track participants. As we want to make this service as accessible as possible for all of our students, the fridges are open at all times until the food runs out for the week. This has made it challenging to keep an accurate count of how many participants are engaging with the service, but through counting entries in our log books we estimate around 100 students use the fridges each week across all campuses.

We received food for the fridges in a number of ways. Initially we signed up to 'Neighbourly', a platform that is paired with some supermarkets so you can arrange collections of their surplus food. Through this site we were able to pair with three ALDI's that are local to our campuses – two near Sighthill and one near Milton Road. These stores, along with collecting food from the Greenhouse Pantry (near Milton Road) were the sources of food for our Sighthill and Milton Road fridges from November 2021 to January

2022. We also signed up to 'Fareshare Go', another platform for pairing supermarket surplus food to community groups, which allowed us to collect from Tesco Bonnyrigg to stock our Midlothian fridge from November 2021 to March 2022.

Our final food source for the fridges came from setting up 'Fareshare' memberships. Initially we trialled this approach at Granton campus, to check whether the service would suit our needs. The small level membership package ensures that we receive 75kg of food each week on average, which is delivered directly to the campus by volunteers at Cyrenians. The success of the Fareshare membership at Granton encouraged us to reprofile our budget to extend our annual membership across all four Edinburgh College campuses, to provide a resource that is most beneficial for students, saves the most waste, and guarantees a level of service far beyond the end of the project.



Zero Waste Cooking Series

Before we were able to set up our campus Community Fridges we created an online [Zero Waste Cooking Series](#), which are a series of videos that we published and circulated through our social media channels and website. These videos highlight the importance of reducing food waste, whilst providing practical tips and recipe examples for how to get the most out of your food. An example of this is our video showing students how to use every part of a butternut squash through several different recipes - making Butternut Squash Soup, Butternut Squash Cubes, and Butternut Squash Popcorn. These videos are presented by Grace, and were edited by one of our Sustainability Assistants, Paige. Students are able to follow these videos to create their own recipes, reducing food waste along the way.

We released a total of 10 videos, which have racked up 333 views on YouTube, and 1268 views on Facebook. We had hoped that these videos would spark conversations with students on our social media platforms about zero-waste cooking, however engagement was quite passive. As a result, we ran a live interactive cook-along event which you can find out about in the next section.

Live Cook-Along

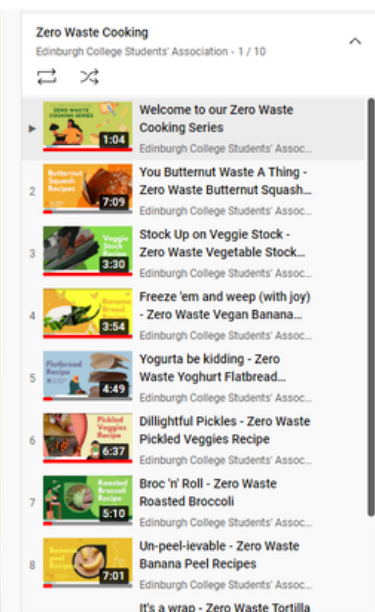
In March 2021 we collaborated with our Vice-President Welfare to run a live online zero-waste 'cook-along' as part of her Wellbeing Wednesday series. If students who signed up stated that accessing ingredients would be a barrier to them taking part, we provided a free food box from the Eco Larder - a sustainable, independent and local zero-waste business. In total 5 students requested food boxes and 6 students attended. Together we cooked a veggie pie and were able to discuss food reduction and energy saving tips in a fun and relaxed space.

When we asked for feedback following the event students told us:

"I liked the community aspect of cooking alongside other people it felt natural and fun"
"It was great, I would like to take part in more cook-a-long sessions"

They were also able to share what they learnt with us including increased knowledge of zero waste cooking – from fair or good to very good. They demonstrated this knowledge gain through examples such as:

"Freezing the vegetable skins to reuse"
"We don't need to peel the potato and ginger, because its skin has vitamins and other good stuff that benefits us"



Food Waste Diaries

Helping students reduce their food waste at home was a key strategy for us in the first year of the project while we couldn't open our Community Fridges. One of the activities we ran to deliver this was Food Waste Diaries, in which we encouraged students to record the amount of food waste they produced in a week. We then supported them to reduce their food waste, through identifying practical tips that would fit into their routines. Completing a Food Waste Diary was incentivised through £10 vouchers for local zero waste shops. This was a great tool for us to further engage students with food waste conversations, whilst also allowing us to collect data for our carbon reporter, as students reported on how much food waste they were producing before and after conversations with us.

Once advertised, one of our Sustainability Assistants led on conversations with students. We felt this peer-to-peer guidance would be a great way to develop connections and encourage behaviour change.

Below is the summary of these conversations from Chloe:

"A total of 5 students signed up to the Food Waste Diaries with 3 out of the 5 students completing the diaries. The students were offered an email of zero waste tips or a 1:1 consultation - two students requested an email of food waste tips and one student requested a 1:1 online consultation. The tips were organised into 3 categories 'Planning Tips', 'Food Storage Tips' and 'Food Scraps' with hyperlinks to our Zero Waste Cooking Series and our 'Sustainability at Home' guide. Each of the students gave feedback that they found the email to be useful. The student who received the 1:1 consultation said they enjoyed being able to talk "face to face" with one of the team and found the consultation to be useful. After the consultation, the student was sent an email of food waste reduction tips to summarise what had been discussed. All 3 students reduced

their food waste and on average food waste was reduced by one 5L bag per week. Feedback was requested from each student about which tips they used and what they would recommend. All students recommended making vegetable stock and others were able to reuse leftover coffee grounds."

Food Waste Action Week

For Food Waste Action Week in March 2022, we organised a range of online and in-person activities to raise awareness of the damaging impact that food waste has on the environment. We used Instagram stories to quiz students on their food waste knowledge which was viewed by 196 people and 25 voters took part. We also used a [news article](#) and existing website content to inform students of steps they could take to reduce their personal food waste, which was viewed by 9 students. Furthermore, we ran pop-up stalls at each campus, where students were able to take part in a food waste activity that involved matching up the definitions of key food waste terms and the actual length of time that different foods can be used after their best by date. In exchange for taking part, students could win a tupperware container or reusable coffee cup. Across the week we engaged with 37 students in conversations about food waste.



Outcome 4: Swap Shops and Textile Waste

Online Swap Shop

In November 2020, we launched an online Swap Shop on our website in order to progress on achieving this objective while campuses remained closed for the majority of students. Initial donations for the Swap Shop were arranged to take place on specific days outside the main entrance to the Granton campus, as at this point students were only allowed into college buildings if they had been told to come in for class. Any donations received during this time were placed in isolation for 72 hours until being sorted, photographed and uploaded to the online shop on our website. Over two designated donation sessions, and further donation drop-offs we collected around 100kg of items.

Unfortunately due to the continued closure of campuses in response to the pandemic, we had to close the online Swap Shop multiple times. We continued to organise donation drop offs with specific students outside of campus buildings during this time, but having to book campus access 48 hours in advance made this logistically challenging. Despite this, we did successfully distribute 9kg of items to 11 students between its launch in November 2020 and the close of campuses in mid-December 2021.

When we were able to access campuses more consistently and start running pop-up Swap Shop events, we made the decision to close the online Swap Shop as it was resulting in a lot of additional admin compared to the physical Swap Shops. Nevertheless, the systems and processes are still in place if we decide to reopen the online Swap Shop in the future.

On-campus Swap Shop opening

Much like the Community Fridges, due to covid and campus closures, we were only able to open our physical Swap Shops as a full-time service on all four campuses in our Go Green Hubs in late September and early October 2021. Due to already having purchased clothes rails and shelving units at the beginning of 2020, we were able to set up the Swap Shops relatively quickly once campuses were open. Initially we found that students were confused about how they could donate to the Swap Shop. To help make this clearer, we added 'donation boxes' to each of the Go Green Hubs with clear signage on what can be donated. This means that students can drop off donations anonymously to the Go Green Hub or into the Students' Association offices, whichever suits them better. As many students are still not very familiar with each of the campuses due to lack of on-campus study, one of the student Assistants put together some videos explaining [where the Go Green Hubs can be found](#) on each campus and [how to use the Swap Shops](#) (and Community Fridges).

Once a donation is received, a member of the Go Green team will weigh in the donated items, and record this on our donation tracker. After this, staff will sort through the donations, and use them to stock the Swap Shops. All students are able to go to the Go Green Hub, browse through the items, and take what they want for free. All we ask is that they use the electronic scales provided to weigh the items they take, and write it down in the log book. This has allowed us to keep a rough track on participant numbers for the Swap Shop. The maintenance of the Swap Shops has been one of the primary responsibilities of the Sustainability Assistants, and with the guidance of a regular Swap Shop task list they are able to manage the upkeep of the space unsupervised.





Reusable Food Bags

In order to further develop the circular economy within the Go Green project itself, we have used scrap fabric donated to the Swap Shop to create other useful items with the help of the Sustainability Assistants and volunteers. This has mainly included reusable food bags that can be used in supermarkets to transport loose food items instead of a single use bag. As well as making some bags to go directly out to students to be used for items in the Community Fridge, we have also created a step-by-step guide for students on [how to make reusable produce bags](#) at home.



As part of Food Waste Action Week we provided students with kits which contained all the materials needed to make their own bags (see above). The kits included 2 pieces of cotton fabric recycled from community Swap Shop donations, a sewing kit, cord and instructions needed to complete the bag. The kits were available at the Food Waste Action Week stalls and then in the Go Green Hubs. During the course of the week we gave away 30 kits.

Parents and Carers Swap Shop

In October 2021 and February 2022, we ran three pop-up 'Babies and Children's Clothes Swap Shop' events, designed for parents, carers and those with younger siblings. A high proportion of our students are parents or carers and as soon as we set up the Swap Shops we started to receive questions about whether children's clothes could be donated, so we knew there was an appetite for waste reduction initiatives specifically aimed at this demographic.

These took place at Granton and Sighthill campuses, and were run by two of our Sustainability Assistants. The clothes that were used in these events consisted entirely of donations made to the Swap Shops and were divided into age order from 0-3 months, up to 10+ years. Throughout these pop-ups, we used the opportunity to ensure that we told participants about our other Go Green activities, such as our permanent Swap Shop and Community Fridge, and where they could find these. The campuses were still not at full capacity at this stage, however through engaging with 45 participants over all the events we re-homed over 3.5kg worth of baby and children's clothes.

Learning & Reflection

Best Practice

Project delivered in restricted timescale

First and foremost, we are incredibly proud that we were able to exceed our projected carbon savings through a project that was significantly altered due to external forces. A key example of our success in restricted timescales was our Community Fridges. These were launched at the start of November 2021, so were therefore only open for 20% of the project's life-cycle. We were, however, able to provide a weekly supply of food in our fridges that was over three times the target we set out in our project application. This was made possible by a continuous review of our stock sources, and a move towards Fareshare Memberships that were made possible by underspend in areas such as event costs. These memberships will continue beyond the end of the project, and will see a tonne of food being distributed across our campuses each month, which wouldn't have been possible had the team not continuously reviewed and adapted our approach.

Climate Change & Sustainability Class time

We have worked hard to adapt our climate literacy sessions to online delivery so that this aspect of the project could move to remote learning. Initially we delivered our sessions using traditional powerpoints and collected participant feedback by verbally asking students to complete a Google Form at the end of the session, as well as asking lecturers to pass the link on in the class chat function. However, we found that this resulted in a low response rate and we consequently redesigned our sessions to run through Mentimeter – an interactive presentation tool

that allows students to vote on polls and answer questions within the presentation slides. Students' answers are displayed in real-time through graphs, word clouds and quizzes. This has been a really effective tool and has resulted in much better engagement during the sessions and a 46% increase in responses to our feedback survey. Our transition to Mentimeter has been really successful and is a tool we will continue to use through an annual membership we paid for through project funds.

To raise awareness of our climate literacy sessions, we have sought out opportunities to link our work with wider Edinburgh College initiatives and campaigns. For example, as members of the College's Sustainable Education Group we were involved in the planning of the Creative Bravery Festival which took place in October and focused on embedding sustainability into the curriculum for one week. In order to support lecturers who may not feel comfortable developing content on their own to engage with this campaign, we cleared our schedules to prioritise the delivery of classes. Additionally, we opened a booking system so lecturers could book slots directly into our calendars. Consequently, 12 of our Climate Change 101 sessions were delivered as a direct result of the Creative Bravery Festival.

What does sustainability mean to you?

renewable
environmental
caring for environment
buying local limit transp
recycling
not throwing away
limited waste
economy
cleaner waste
recycle

Class workshop word cloud

Adapting to online delivery

As a significant amount of our project was delivered while there were national restrictions limiting the number of students on campuses, we had to be creative and adapt to deliver more of our project online. As mentioned above, this didn't just mean moving our class workshop sessions online, we also launched an online Swap Shop, developed a Zero Waste Cooking video series, and encouraged students to keep home Food Waste Diaries so we could deliver food waste reductions without our own campus Community Fridges. We also ensured we had regular news articles and social media posts going out with project updates and information about sustainability campaigns and events, so that students could learn more whilst studying from home.

As it became clear that we weren't going to have all students back on campus in Semester 1 of the 2020/21 academic year, we decided to develop an online Swap Shop to host on our website. While our colleague Graham set about embedding a shopping system on our website to facilitate this function, we ran two donation events outside campus main entrances to generate some stock to put into this system. All the donated stock was then sorted and manually added to the online Swap Shop system - including a photo of the item, a brief description, and what size the item was. Students could then place an online order through the Swap Shop site on our website, and arrange a suitable time to collect this from outside Granton campus. In total we received 11 orders on the online Swap Shop, which allowed us to distribute 9kg of donated items to students between its launch in November 2020 and the close of campuses mid-December 2020.

As there were significant challenges to us being able to set up our Community Fridges during the first year of the project, we changed our approach towards encouraging students to reduce their food waste at home in order to deliver against this outcome in a different way.

One of our key successes in this area was the creation of our Zero Waste Cooking Series - a series of cooking videos which highlighted recipes that used parts of ingredients that many people aren't aware they can use (for example using scraps and peels from vegetables to make vegetable stock). These videos were published on the ECSA Youtube and Facebook channels regularly, and have had 1601 views to date. We also ran a sign-up campaign for keeping home Food Waste Diaries during Food Waste Action Week 2021. Three students signed up to take part, and were offered advice and support along the way on practical steps to reduce their food waste. Although these weren't initially intended activities for the project, we're extremely happy that we were able to adapt our approach for our food waste outcome so we could continue to deliver work in this area and engage our students with wasting less food.

To support our move to increased online content, our members of project staff continually upskilled themselves in areas such as online content writing and use of Canva, so that the news articles and social media posts about the project and sustainability were as engaging and professional as possible for our students. This included attending training sessions for 'Comms and marketing made easy in a crisis' and 'How to write right', as well as continuously reviewing our engagement numbers on social media platforms to check what type of content was resonating most with students (for example photos instead of graphics, where possible).



Community use of services

Being part of the Students' Association has led us to adopt many of its values, including being "powered by students". Consequently, we have prioritised continually listening and responding to student feedback throughout the project in order to make what we offer is the best it can be for the community we serve. This has involved collecting feedback from users of our Community Fridges and Swap Shops through direct conversations and in a feedback section of our log book when they are weighing items out. We reviewed this feedback weekly and implemented feasible changes. For example, we added brown paper bags to make it easier for people to take loose fruit and vegetables home with them so that less was being wasted, and introduced more clothing rails as people found it easier to browse hanging items than folded – again, resulting in more items being taken by students and reused.

Additionally, as noted at the beginning of this report, many of our students come from the most deprived areas of the city. It is well known that Community Fridges, Swap Shops and similar services provide the co-benefits of providing free food and resources to those who are facing poverty or homelessness. Having worked with our VP Welfare to understand this topic more, we realised how important the language we used around these services was, and should focus on waste saving before anything else. This helps to remove any barrier that users may feel in accessing free resources, such as shame or pride. As a result, we know through conversations with students that not only have these services successfully tackled their primary goal of reducing waste, but also support our students who are struggling financially.

Collaborative working across multiple sites

A unique aspect of our project compared to others is that we operate across 4 campus locations in very different parts of the city. This has meant that we have had to create systems and processes to allow effective and efficient collaborative remote working that will continue to be useful even when we return to more on-campus working after the pandemic. We have created a simple, yet detailed spreadsheet that allows any member of the Students' Association staff team to log items in and out of the Community Fridge and monitor key health and safety requirements, such as use by dates and fridge temperature. The log is accessible to everyone in the team via Google Drive and has allowed us to keep an accurate record of the stock at each campus at any one time without our project staff having to be there themselves.

Community Feedback on the Community Fridge and Swap Shops

"It's great stuff being given here, especially in these hard times, thank you very much!"

"Fantastic resource – especially if on a low budget as many students are."

"Love the community fridge – so helpful when I'm skint. Thank you."

"This shop is amazing, you can get anything here. I love it! 10/10"

"Thank you. It's such a great idea. I love to pick stuff up for dinner when on campus. Keep up the good work!"

"The shop's very convenient for students and environment. Thank you so much"

Challenges

Lack of campus access

It cannot be overstated how much of an impact our lack of campus access and reduced student numbers had on this project. As highlighted on page 4, for 12 months out of the 24 month project, there were no students on campus. For the remaining months, student numbers never surpassed approximately 50%, so we had to adapt our approach and work hard to stick to the targets we set when we imagined we would be delivering 'as usual' with all students on all campuses at all times. We were sure to use our campus access as effectively as possible while students were unable to come in, by providing online Swap Shop orders and Be Bright Be Seen safety kits through outside hand-offs and sending things through the mail. Although this didn't lead to engagement numbers expected from normal campus access, it did allow us to support our students through project activities at times when it could have been easy to rely solely on online content.

Government guidance against travelling

Despite our overall success achieving our travel objective, our planned activities to achieve this have been significantly limited due to the pandemic and associated health and safety measures. In particular, the number of students signing-up for our dedicated Liftshare platform and travel planning widget has been significantly lower than expected for a number of reasons. Firstly, government guidelines stated that people shouldn't be sharing vehicles, so for large periods of the project we could not advertise the tool. Additionally, as can be seen from the timeline at the beginning of the report, there were extended periods of the project when students were not travelling to campus at all, so it was irrelevant for us to promote these resources. Overall, this has led to a disappointing take-up of a service that we budgeted a considerable amount of funding towards. However, we are conscious that this

has been an exceptional period of time and hopefully is not representative of the value of the resources moving forward, so the College has agreed to continue to fund the Liftshare Platform once the CCF funding ends.

Community Fridge food supply

Organising a consistent supply of food into each of our Community Fridges has been an ongoing logistical challenge, mainly due to the number of Community Fridges we needed to stock and their location in relation to potential food donations. As mentioned previously, we have used a combination of supermarket collections through Neighbourly and Fareshare Go, as well as partnerships with local food organisations in addition to Fareshare memberships to create the regular supply that we now have.

At the beginning of the project we had hoped that we would secure a supply of food for each of the fridges through supermarket collections. However upon signing up to Neighbourly who work with ALDI, it wasn't until the second year of the project that we were actually notified of any stores near our campuses that had available collection slots. This led us to expand our pool of donations by registering with Fareshare Go who work with ASDA and Tesco. This partnership with Fareshare Go was more useful as we could see upon registering which supermarket locations and collections slots were available to help plan our time across the four campuses.

Upon starting supermarket food collections, we quickly realised that we would need at least 2 food donations per campus to generate the quantity of stock that was necessary for the number of students using them. Trying to secure multiple supermarket collections for the right days for each campus and then managing

the staff time to go to multiple stores to collect them on the day was difficult at the beginning until we got into a regular pattern.

Despite managing to secure multiple supermarket collections for each of the four campuses, we continued to struggle with an unreliable supply of food. Some weeks we would only get bakery items from one store or a very small amount of fresh produce that was already a few days past its best by date and just weren't popular with our students, which resulted in more food going into food waste at the end of the week.

Overall, these challenges put the long-term sustainability of the project into question as they required a lot of staff resource to manage the Community Fridge stock. So when the Fareshare membership trial was launched successfully at the Granton campus and we carried out a cost-benefit analysis, it was an easy decision to expand our annual membership to cover all four campuses.

Participant Tracking

In order to make the Swap Shops and Community Fridges as accessible as possible for students, we chose to keep them open for the full duration of campus opening hours, rather than set times. This made it difficult to keep an accurate record of participants using each service. Our reasonable alternative to monitor this was to record how many users had filled in an entry in the log book, however this is likely to not be very accurate as there are a proportion of users who don't weigh or list the items they are taking from the Swap Shop or Community Fridges.

Changes to Original Objectives

We had originally stated that we would establish a regular textbook exchange which hasn't happened as physical textbooks are not as prevalent in teaching now that the College has moved to online learning. Instead, if students have textbooks they no longer need, we encourage them to donate them to the book section of our Swap Shops.

Similarly, despite positive conversations with lecturers in Professional Cookery and Bakery in the last quarter of 2021 at Milton Road, we have not yet been able to utilise this opportunity to divert food from going to waste through the College's teaching kitchens. This has mainly been due to the students producing less practice meals during that pandemic as the on-site restaurants hasn't been open, so the usual quantity wasn't needed. However, we hope now that things are starting to return to normal we can start these conversations again. Our aim is to also take advantage of the Fareshare Memberships to specifically order more fresh vegetables which our Cookery students can use to make soups to distribute in the Community Fridges.



Finance & Administration

Staff & Training

The project benefited from the continuation of the full-time staff from our previous project, with one of the two (Claire) working on the entirety of both projects. We have been lucky to have the expertise and drive of Alex, Grace, and Izi throughout this project, alongside our 7 student-staff who have helped deliver the project over the last two years.

All members of project staff were able to receive Carbon Literacy training, through CCF and EAUC's Climate Literacy course and/or Edinburgh University's 'Learning for a Sustainable Future' course on FutureLearn. Claire and Izi were also both fortunate enough to attend Carbon Literacy Train the Trainer sessions that our Development Officer made us aware of, which has increased both of their confidence for continued delivery of Climate Change 101 sessions in classes.

Both Sustainability Officers have undergone certified Food Hygiene and Safety training in order for us to be able to run our Community Fridges - and they then offered informal training to all Sustainability Assistants so our fridges remained safe and hygienic as the Assistants began working independently on campus.

Through our training budget we were also able to send our Sustainability Officers to training sessions such as 'Comms and Marketing made easy in a crisis', 'Effective Support and Supervision', 'Effective Project Management' and 'How to Write Right'. Not only have these training sessions helped in the running of this project, but they will also offer transferable skills to be taken forward in future work.

Finance

Due to our restricted access to campus buildings, as well as less students being allowed on campus than expected whilst applying for this funding, we have been able to run less events than we intended to. We were also not required to travel to get to training sessions and conference events as these took place remotely instead of in person. This therefore resulted in an underspend for both financial years of the project, which led us to re-profile into budget headings we hadn't predicted before we started running the project.

The first of these re-profiles was made to enable us to purchase an electric cargo bike and associated trailer for project use. This has allowed us to collect our supermarket food collections in a more sustainable way, as well as helping us transport swap shop stock and other resources between the campuses. It will continue to be used for these activities going forward, as well as being offered out to the College staff community for similar purposes in times when it is being used less by ECSA.

The second major reprofile came near the end of the project, once we were able to see the benefits of a Fareshare Membership after we had a trial month of this service at our Granton campus. We therefore moved money from the aforementioned budget headings with underspend to a new Fareshare Membership heading. This has allowed us to pay for Fareshare Memberships at each campus until the end of March 2023.

Recruitment of Sustainability Assistants

Throughout the project we hired seven students to our part-time Sustainability Assistant roles – three in year one, and four in year two. Due to our reduced access to campuses in the first year of the project, we decided to alter the roles so they could be done remotely. We started by recruiting one assistant in October 2020 to help create online content and offer administrative support, before expanding to recruit two further assistants in January 2021. For this second round of recruitment we made the job roles more specific – one for 'Admin and Engagement' and another for 'Research and Communications'. In the second year of the project, we went back to the intended plan of recruiting one assistant per campus to help with on-site management of our Go Green Hubs and delivery of engagement events.

Across both years we had 116 applications for these positions, with 22 applicants being interviewed. We offered all applicants feedback on their applications if they wished for this, as well as offering feedback to all interviewees – both so that this could be a learning experience for future applications.

Having assistants in post increased our capacity significantly – both in administering the project and creating engaging online content during the first year, as well as allowing us to keep on top of organising our Go Green Hubs in year 2 to a level that wouldn't have been possible without them. We're extremely grateful to our seven assistants for their hard work throughout the project, and to CCF for enabling us to offer these roles through our funding.



Sustainability Assistant Feedback

Isabela (2020–21): "My period with the team helped me to land my dream job once my contract with ECSA was over. Also during the time I was there I learned a lot about the environment crisis and got to implement practical actions in my daily life."

Paige (2020–21): "As I worked on the Zero Waste videos I learned a lot about food waste and how to be more sustainable in my own cooking, and have kept a lot of the tips from the videos to incorporate into my weekly cooking routines. I only wish I was in the role for longer so I could've learnt some more. I really enjoyed learning as much as I could, and was such a positive job to see so many people passionate about sustainability and climate change."

Aleksandra (2021–22): "When campuses reopened for students I was responsible for running community hubs in Granton, Sighthill and Milton campuses. It was a great opportunity to get some professional experience while studying at college...I truly believe there should be more opportunities for students to get involved in delivering positive change across the College."

Ezra (2021–22): "I'm thrilled to have been a part of the Go Green project and I fully believe that it has educated myself, students and faculty alike about the climate crisis and the importance of sustainability."

Lauryn (2021–22): "I have spoken with students throughout the year, and have heard first-hand just how important these initiatives are to the college community, and to students' lives...This job has given me a unique experience that has already helped me in achieving the next steps of my career. I cannot recommend working with the Go Green Team enough."

Sustainable Legacy

College Sustainability Committees

Our Sustainability Officers will continue to be full members of the College's Sustainability Steering Group and Sustainable Education Group for the rest of the academic year, ensuring that student priorities help shape climate change and sustainability activities taking place across the college. Members of the ECSA team will also continue to be invited to these meetings going forward. Through these groups, and following on from the College's Climate Change Leadership Summit in December 2021, we are working to collect student feedback to guide the organisation's shorter-term actions, including on-campus catering and single use plastic.

Go Green Hubs on campus

The spaces that we have secured on each campus for use as our Go Green Hubs will continue to exist beyond the end of this project, so that our waste reduction activities can remain permanently open to support students. We have received glowing feedback from both students and college staff about having the Hubs as a visual presence of sustainability on campus, and we hope to expand on how we utilise these spaces in the future.

Fridge forecast for next year

Having secured a supply of food for the Community Fridges until March 2023 with our Fareshare membership, a conservative estimate would project that we will save at least 1 metric tonne of food per month over the coming year. This does not include any additional food donated through local supermarkets or on-site catering operations, or extending our Fareshare membership to more than 1 day per week from potential further funding sources, so the potential saving is significantly higher.

Expanding the climate literacy workshops

We have put a lot of work into improving and developing our climate literacy workshops throughout the project, particularly researching and creating more class specific sessions for a greater range of courses. This information will be shared with the Sustainable Education Group so that the resources are accessible to more lecturers and delivery is not limited to just our Sustainability Officers.

In addition, we have been working in partnership with a network of Scottish Colleges on a Data Innovation project to adapt our existing Climate Change 101 sessions. Once developed, they will include more climate data interpretation activities to increase the data literacy of the students who undertake the classes. We are also working with staff members in Edinburgh College's Academic Quality team to use our sessions as the foundation for an accredited sustainability module that will be on offer to all Edinburgh College students in coming academic years.



Recruiting volunteers

In February 2022 we opened sign ups to volunteer on the Go Green Project, as part of Student Volunteering Week. The intent of this was to develop a network of support once the Sustainability Assistant contracts ended in March. We advertised a selection of on-campus and online roles so that any student, regardless of whether they had returned to campus, could get involved. This included Community Fridge and Swap Shop Volunteers at each campus, as well as Social Media and Design Volunteers to help provide student-focussed climate change and sustainability content for the project. Additionally, we advertised the role of Sewing Volunteer to continue to make reusable food bags from waste fabric from the Swap Shops.

Since opening sign-ups, 11 students have registered their interest to volunteer with the project and we have carried out induction sessions with 7 of them. Our online roles have proved to be the most popular so far as many of our art, design and fashion students recognise it as a useful opportunity to develop their portfolio. We plan to continue to promote these volunteer opportunities for the rest of the academic year in order to establish a consistent group of students who can work with us to help manage the Go Green Hubs in the same way that the Sustainability Assistants were doing.

Electric Cargo Bike

We're incredibly pleased that underspend in our Year 1 budget allowed us to reprofile to purchase an electric cargo bike and trailer. It has allowed us to have a greater capacity for moving stock and event materials between campuses, as well as enabling us to collect food from local supermarkets in a more sustainable way. The bike and trailer will continue to be used by ECSA after the project, as well as being offered to other members of College staff when we don't need it.

Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce Net Zero Champion Award

We were named winners of the first ever Net Zero Champion Award with Edinburgh College at the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce Business Awards on the 24th February 2022. Alongside the College's renewed focus to become carbon neutral by 2030 and 57% reduction in its operational carbon footprint from 2013-14 to 2019-20 (7,271 to 3,126 tonnes CO₂e), our Community Fridges and Swap Shops were particularly cited in our winning submission due to their co-benefits of reducing waste and poverty in the city.



Claire, Izi, and Jack (College Comms Team) accepting the Net Zero Champion Award at the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce Awards event in February 2022



Summation

Audrey Cumberford MBE, Principal & Chief Executive of Edinburgh College:

"This end of project report fills with me great pride as its content shows just how hard the Students' Association have worked to deliver on this project's key objective of waste reduction – preventing tonnes of food, clothing, books and other accessories from going to landfill, during the length of the project.

It has been fantastic to see the development of the Go Green Hubs which house Community Fridges and Clothing and Accessory Swap Shops on each of our campuses. These spaces are big, bold and vibrant, and not only stop a range of materials from being wasted, but also constantly ensure that Sustainability is on the mind of staff and students when they're on campus.

Engaging students in sustainability has also been critical, and again ECSA's Go Green team has led the way, delivering Climate Change Workshops right across our curriculum, and supporting safe and accessible active travel for all.

This report also signifies the end of four years of funding, and brings about an end of an era in which we have enjoyed working with the full-time and student staff across those years from the ECSA Go Green Project – the College has benefited hugely from their passion and expertise, and my thanks goes to them for their hard work since 2018."



Al Wilson, Edinburgh College Students' Association Director

As Association Director, I am incredibly proud to have been part of this project for the last 2 years and help our project staff deliver and, in the vast majority of areas, exceed, both targets and expectations, despite working through the challenges of a global pandemic. We were writing our last end of project report when the UK went into lockdown in March 2020, with our campuses being deserted and our students learning remotely. We have, therefore, never had full levels of the student population back on campus to engage in our activities at any stage over the past 2 years – In fact, we still don't – so it is even more impressive that our incredible project staff have delivered on so much from this project.

Despite most of our target audience living in full lockdown, or, at least partly learning remotely for the entirety of the project, it is even more remarkable that we have exceeded our original carbon reduction target by 5% and our levels of student engagement have surpassed our target by a massive 87%.

These and all the other outcomes contained throughout this report, are testament to the drive of our incredible project staff who have adapted and changed approach in order to continue to deliver. The development of climate workshops delivered directly in classes in such a wide variety of curriculum areas, has given us the opportunity to really discuss what the climate emergency means for students and their chosen sectors for future employment. The physical space developed housing our Swap Shops and Community Fridges are a gateway for daily behaviour change and further sustainability discussions. The active travel campaigns and competitions, coupled with our on-campus bike maintenance sessions, have highlighted changing travel behaviours to lower carbon alternatives as a normal part of students' daily lives.


The c.50,000 people who have been students at Edinburgh College since 2020 have had at least passive exposure to our work. Sustainability has become a much more prominent and relevant part of their lives because of this project and the massive amount of work delivered by our project staff.

It has been incredible to be able to employ a wide variety of student-staff over the course of the last 2 years in Go Green and they have added so much to our offer. A special thanks from me to Alex Leutchford, Grace Fisher, and Izi Robe as full-time project staff at various points since 2020, and a specific thanks and recognition to Claire Furniss who has been working with us on CCF-funded projects since 2018. Be sure to know that you have all made a lasting positive impact on the culture and approach to sustainability activities across Edinburgh College.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Climate Challenge Fund, Keep Scotland Beautiful, and the Scottish Government for their support throughout – we simply would not have been able to deliver change on this scale without it. We hope that the legacy of this project has provided us with the infrastructure, knowledge, and networks to be able to continue to positively influence students and local decision-makers on sustainability and carbon-reduction activities for years to come.

The challenges we face going forward are many and varied, but I am confident that the culture we have built around our sustainability work thought this project will continue to succeed for students at Edinburgh College now, and how they impact their chosen sectors in the future.

Thanks for reading.



Al Wilson, ECSA Director

