

UK Shared Prosperity Fund Edinburgh Impact Report 2022 – 2025



Images (from top left, clockwise):

- Networking Key Services activities
- Cyrenians food dehydrator
- New solar panels at Spartans Community Foundation
- Fresh Start community gardening



Funded by
UK Government

Introduction

The first phase of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) was introduced by the UK Government in 2022 for a committed period of three years. It has since been extended for an additional financial year, between April 2025 and March 2026.

Between 2022 and 2025, UKSPF provided over £2.6 billion of funding for local investment across the country with the primary goal of building pride in place and increasing life chances across the UK. The City of Edinburgh was allocated £12.3 million over three years. This was divided across the thematic priorities of Community and Place, People and Skills, Supporting Local Business, and Multiply. Multiply is a specific initiative to improve adult numeracy. A small proportion of Edinburgh's allocation was directed to regional projects, exploring ways of working with other local authorities in southeast Scotland on a variety of projects including addressing climate risk and upskilling for net zero.

This report follows the Progress Review published in May 2024, which gave a robust overview of the UKSPF Edinburgh programme alongside a series of case studies. This report intends to share final statistics from the three-year phase alongside some short reflections. The broad spread of programme activities mean that it is very complex to properly assess the variety and depth of impact that has been achieved. However Edinburgh has been selected as one of the case studies for the UK-wide evaluation commissioned by UK Government and carried out by [Ipsos](#). This evaluation will offer more by way of contextualising the impact of the programme using local data to assess change. It will also complete several deep-

dive studies to consider the impact of specific individual projects.

To read more about the detail of the projects and services have been delivered over the course of 2022 – 2025, you can visit our web pages and blog at www.edinburghukspf.org or refer to the Progress Review that we produced in May 2024 which can be found [here](#) (PDF).

In 2025 – 2026, UKSPF funding will continue to support projects in the Edinburgh cohort where there was a natural continuation of delivery and where projects have performed well. UK Government are expected to make further announcements about the future of UKSPF during summer 2025.

If you would like to contact us about the work, you can email us via: ukspf@capitalcitypartnership.org.

*UKSPF Programme Management Team
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UKSPF Edinburgh: Spend 2022 – 2025

£3,797,481

People and Skills

People and Skills Funded Organisations

Action for Children, All in Edinburgh, Apex Scotland, Barnardo's, The King's Trust, Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre, Challenges Group, Macmillan Skills Hub, Networking Key Services (NKS), People Know How, Edinburgh Women's Aid

22
projects

£4,731,406

Communities and Place

Communities and Place Funded Organisations

CHAI, City of Edinburgh Council (Community Centres Team and South Queensferry Amenities), Cyrenians, Edible Estates, Empty Kitchens Full Hearts, Fresh Start, Forever Edinburgh, Poverty Alliance, Southside Community Centre, Space, Spartans Community Foundation, Turn 2 Us, Vintage Vibes, Volunteer Edinburgh

14
projects

£1,841,650

Supporting Local
Business

Supporting Local Business Funded Organisations

Business Gateway, Codebase, Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, Everyone's Edinburgh, Forever Edinburgh

6
projects

£195,609

Contribution to
Regional Projects

Regional Projects

Net Zero Accelerator Hub, Climate Risk Opportunity Assessment, Visitor Economy and Culture projects (Data, Culture, Cycle Tourism and Cruise Strategy studies), Forth Bridges Signage Project

7
projects

£699,996

Multiply

Multiply

A range of numeracy courses, and skills courses incorporating numeracy elements. Many delivered by Lifelong Learning in City of Edinburgh Council and some delivered in partnership or through external delivery partners.

UKSPF Edinburgh: Impact 2022 – 2025

3,363

*individuals receiving support across the programme**

1,424

people supported to volunteer

420

households receiving support with energy efficiency

2,030

people receiving employability support

284

people who have gained a qualification or completed a course

550

new jobs started

1,371

businesses receiving support

221

new businesses created

3,310

tonnes of carbon saved through food redistribution

52

neighbourhood improvements undertaken

136,956

square metres of green space improved

160

trees planted

* This includes those engaged in employability programmes as well as those learning life skills such as digital skills, ESOL, cooking and gardening.

UKSPF Edinburgh: Impact 2022 – 2025

As well as looking at the number of people reached across the programme, it is also important to consider who engaged with projects, and to see to what extent UKSPF-funded work has had a broad reach geographically and across demographic groups.

Many UKSPF-funded projects report using Helix, a management information system for employability and skills. Whilst this can be tailored to a range of projects, there are some UKSPF projects unsuitable for Helix who used their own systems to capture client information, sharing reporting data at intervals as required.

The Helix data finds that:

- There was a good spread of beneficiaries across the Edinburgh wards and with good representation amongst those wards which contain data zones within the most deprived 10% according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). For example, 14% of clients were from Leith ward and 13% were from Forth ward.
- Women are slightly over-represented at 57% of beneficiaries compared to 42% male. The remaining 1% either chose not

to say or described their gender in another way.

- 35% of clients are White Scottish. A broad range of other ethnicities are represented including Asian Pakistani (6%), African Scottish and British (4%), African Other (4%) and Polish (4%).
- There is also diversity in age groups as follows:
 - Age 16 – 18: 8%
 - Age 19 – 25: 13%
 - Age 26 – 35: 25%
 - Age 36 – 45: 25%
 - Age 46 – 55: 18%
 - Age 56 – 65: 8%
 - Age 65+: 3%

It is worth noting here that the Vintage Vibes project is reported separately and that many beneficiaries of this befriending and social connection project were in the over 65 category adding to the numbers of older people benefiting from the fund. In addition, children were often secondary beneficiaries of the activities, with obvious examples being through welfare advice activities offered through CHAI and the projects offering better access to food such as Fresh Start, Cyrenians and Empty Kitchens Full Hearts.



UKSPF Edinburgh: Reflections

The UKSPF programme has impacted thousands of individuals and households in the City of Edinburgh and beyond over the past three years. Some interventions have met people at a point of crisis – offering food through one of the pantries or access to benefits through welfare advice support. Other interventions have enabled people to make a long-term change in their lives – including those delivering ESOL courses and those supporting people with employability.

In addition to the revenue spend (which has supported service delivery), during the final months of this phase of UKSPF, there has been a particular emphasis on completing the capital works funded. These short reflections explain the impacts of the key areas of capital spend before giving some insights from the delivery of revenue spend over the last few years.

Capital Projects

At the beginning of 2025, the **new youth work and education building at Spartans Community Foundation** was completed based on a design that had been developed in partnership with young people who use the building. Beforehand the youth work was housed in an ageing and second hand portacabin; now the new space brings with it excellent flexibility, including a roomy well-resourced kitchen and an outside covered space and an outdoor sink. This ensures that young people can be out in the fresh air all year round and provides facilities for large scale artwork.

Going forward the building will host not only a range of various youth groups across the week, but also the alternative school, where the innovative and creative approaches to teaching are engaging children who otherwise would likely miss out on an education.



Kitchen space within the new Spartans youth building



New toilet block being installed at South Queensferry



New signage for the Forth Bridges Trail

Also in the early months of 2025, **new public toilets arrived at South Queensferry**, an area that attracts many visitors and receives passengers from cruise ships arriving from the Firth of Forth. The new amenities have been installed with careful thought

given to blending into the environment and ensuring safety and accessibility. This project complements work done in partnership with Fife Council to install **new signage along the Forth Bridges Trail**, a five-mile tourist route accessible by foot, bike and public transport. The new signage has been designed to reflect the famous red riveted steelwork of the Forth Bridge.

Also under capital spend, a **cargo bike has been purchased for Cammo Forest School**, enabling the nursery to use it for the transport of equipment into woodland locations. **Machinery purchased by the parks team** within the council is now contributing to reduced noise and emissions, as well as better health and safety for staff. Additionally, the team are already seeing impacts of **improved biodiversity** in grassy areas thanks to new equipment and improved maintenance methods.

Revenue Projects

The services supported by UKSPF revenue grants include employability services, welfare advice, and food and cooking projects. These projects served communities in Edinburgh throughout the funded period adapting to needs as required. The vast majority of funded services will continue into 2025 – 2026.

Over the course of the UKSPF delivery period, there have been some recurring themes. These include an **increased need for ESOL support** in the city; an increase in **clients with poor mental health** and **experience of trauma** presenting at services; and particularly amongst young people, an **increased number of clients with neurodiversity**. Especially in the past year, challenges in the wider funding landscape have also been a common theme and has been seen to impact on overall delivery in Edinburgh.

More positively, partnership work has flourished and there are many examples of



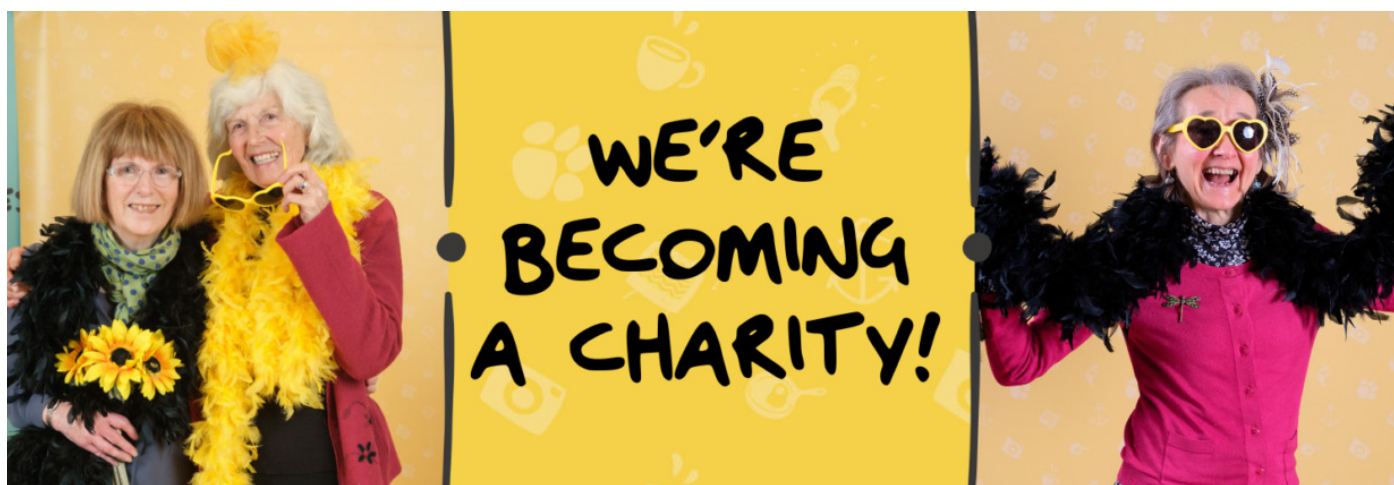
Co-production workshop for the Thriving Futures Fund

projects collaborating to enhance delivery and achieve better outcomes. For example, **Enable**, an organisation funded to support people with disabilities into work, built a partnership with **Turn 2 Us** through the UKSPF connection. Enable are now one of the partners distributing Turn 2 Us “Thriving Futures” grants to the clients they support.

Similarly **Cyrenians and Networking Key Services (NKS)** worked together to run a food hygiene course for a group of South Asian women brought together by NKS. Cyrenians provided the course and liaised on the language interpretation required. NKS work with lots of clients who have business ideas and since developing closer links with **Business Gateway**, have sent clients onto the “spark and scale courses” to advance their businesses.

Meanwhile **End Poverty Edinburgh** have developed a partnership with **Barnardo's**. End Poverty Edinburgh are a group of independent citizens aiming to raise awareness of poverty in Edinburgh, influence decision-making, and hold the city to account. By working with Barnardo's, a young person's charity, they are ensuring that more young people's voices are heard within the work that they do.

Another significant outcome of UKSPF funding is that there have been a number of completely new projects created or projects



Vintage Vibes registered as their own charity in 2025

established in new ways. Under Supporting Local Business, the **Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce** have been funded to support businesses with their journey to net zero. This work has since evolved into a twin track project with a **new BCorp 500 initiative** now in existence. BCorp 500 has the long-term aim of supporting 500 Edinburgh businesses to become BCorps. The work began with a marketing campaign to encourage engagement. This was then followed up with a blend of cohort events and one-to-one support for businesses enabling them to begin the BCorp journey. BCorps need to show that they are active on environmental issues, are responsible employers, and that they are having a positive impact on the community. So far 39 businesses have joined the BCorp programme and are working towards becoming accredited.

There have also been some exciting developments in the area of business innovation including that **Codebase's Medtech programme** helped to boost one entrepreneur who has been developing a solution for lung cancer biopsy and treatment. The business raised €12 million in a series A funding round (the stage following seed funding).

Under the Communities and Place priority, the organisation **Vintage Vibes** has been supported through UKSPF to tackle isolation and loneliness among over-60s. During the

course of UKSPF, Vintage Vibes has moved from being backed up by two parent charities to establishing itself as its own charity. It has worked with an average of 260 older people and 242 befrienders per year over the funded period. Older people engaging with Vintage Vibes report feeling happier and less isolated whilst volunteers also benefit from the friendships and increased engagement with the local community.

Under the People and Skills priority area, the **Macmillan Skills Hub** has been established through UKSPF funding. This recruitment and skills hub is based in North Edinburgh within a new community facility. The Hub was originally co-located in local community settings whilst the purpose-built facilities were finished. Staff were then able to move into the new space in October 2024, having already made positive connections in the area. The Skills Hub has worked with 391 individuals over the past two years.

During the course of the programme, **Turn 2 Us** have developed a brand new fund called the Thriving Futures Fund. Born from an ambition to support people in Edinburgh not only to survive but to thrive, the vision of the fund is for everyone in Edinburgh to have enough money to live well now and the resources—as individuals and collectively—to build confidence in the future. Working with five designated partner organisations, Turn 2 Us offer grants to individuals who

will develop a “thriving plan” with one of the partner organisations and receive funds to support the goals that they outline in the plan. Whilst the fund is in its early stages, it has been well received. Turn 2 Us have robust evaluation methods in place, and are intention about collating learning in order to adapt and grow the fund effectively over the coming years.

Under regional spend, a series of feasibility studies were carried out. The studies analysed key challenges for the region and began to scope out a shared workplan for the future. Under **Net Zero** work, plans were produced for expanded training facilities and steps taken toward the design of new qualifications. Complementing this, the **Climate Risk** work highlighted priorities for adaption in the region. The **Visitor Economy** studies revealed priorities such as enhancing cycling tourism infrastructure, developing the Forth coastline and planning for year-round creative and cultural content across the region. This work is feeding into the development of a ten-year plan and a detailed impact report is to be produced over the course of summer 2025.

In summing up, the initial three-year phase of UKSPF has not been without challenges, particularly given the broad context of political uncertainty and financial pressures on third sector organisations. We are very grateful to all of the funded providers for their continuous hard work, their contributions to the regular UKSPF reporting and the provision of additional material such as photographs and case studies.

As this report demonstrates, the work has had a significant impact on both the City of Edinburgh and the wider region. UKSPF-funded projects have completed new

buildings, started new initiatives and forged new partnerships. Projects have supported people going through hardship, meeting material needs and offering friendship and person-centred support. Many organisations have also delivered work that contributes to a better long-term future – for individuals, the local community, the region and beyond.

As UKSPF Edinburgh continues into 2025 – 2026, you can keep up to date by visiting our website and blog [here](#). The continuation of UKSPF funding ensures not only consistency in delivery over these months but also an opportunity to build on what has already been achieved. Many funded organisations are feeling the benefit of a smooth transition into this financial year with projects already established and staff settled into roles. We hope that the impact seen in 2025 – 2026 will reflect this, and that the work will continue to flourish, improving lives and promoting growth and opportunities across the city.



Space and People Know How canal boat trip for ESOL clients



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