



Well in tried and tested introduction thus far, we have opened by giving a seasonal weather update, this edition will be no different. Well, we are slowly creeping towards the spring and the snowdrops are currently in full bloom, I'm told by people in the green finger's fraternity, this signify that the worst of the winter is now behind us and warmer temperatures are coming our way. Someone must tell the weather that, because there have been some episodes of really cold spells, driven by high winds. Enough of this talk you can catch all this on the telly after the News each night.

Here at CAT, we have not been in hibernation, far from it we have been working hard on a number of fronts. The management team found time over the Christmas break to finally sit down and review CAT's next steps in terms of direction. We aim to focus more on our core strengths namely community consultation, engagement and empowerment. With this in mind and continued development of the East Synergy Group (ESG) moving into its second year the CAT Management Team felt that it was time to re-establish the Community Regeneration Forum to ensure community representation is front and centre to the statutory bodies we are working with.

Susan Carr provides an overview of what the CRF will be exploring and gathering information on. Which sits nicely with a piece of work the ESG will be developing to encourage more involvement of Community Council's (CC). Ah, I hear you cry, but Greater Craigmillar doesn't have a CC. True, but by re-establishing the CRF we will have a quasi-CC of sorts, functioning as a community representative body for this area.

The community growing team are going from strength to strength and we are now ready to develop the..

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.. community garden at the Niddrie Mill site.
Our thanks to the local Elected Members for their support in finding the resource required to match our successful lottery grant.

On another front working with Create, we are also developing more growing areas as well as creating a sensory garden/area for tenants of the Business Centre to use as outside meeting or training areas or simply to relax. Woody our Gardner is sending out an appeal to attract more volunteers for this unique project.

Meanwhile the Pantry team are busy procuring food stuffs from various sources as well as providing various events that continue to run into March.... *(continued)*

... Unfortunately, the CAT Board have had to take the sad decision to close the Pantry due to increasing core costs during this time of restricted funding. The Pantry will close on 11th April.

The East Synergy Group are looking at internal as well as external matters, specifically working to develop a networking lunch to set their direction of travel, in terms of allowing members to always play to their strengths particularly when in collaborative mode. While the city-wide Place Based Networks are looking to engage and work alongside statutory bodies. Currently a proposal is being developed to address the new relationship and how that will be resourced.

Under CAT territory we have several interesting articles and information and our thanks to two Council services teams who have provided their core service offers for Housing and Parks & Green Spaces. While there is a new residents' group in place with the catchy name Craigmillar & Niddrie Matters. Read more about this community led community initiative. Chris Cooney introduces the fab services the Starpics Project is offering out of the Bingham Community Centre. Alison Wright from U-Evolve is offering young people mental health support and opportunities.

Welcome to the Trade Unions in the Community, specifically Mhair McKean offering support to migrant workers in our community or simply a space to chat. Finally, Karin Chipulina from Carr Gomm gives a heads up on the activities they are offering in the area as well as giving an update on various piece of great work taking place locally.

CAT CHAT

it's turned out to be a busy few months since the turn of the year with some new initiatives that could possibly change the face of Craigmillar.

Firstly, we attended a meeting up in the City Chambers to discuss Estate Investment & **Community Led Improvement Programme (CLIP)**. This is basically identifying council housing land that isn't being used well or not at all, and getting the local community involved to come up with ways to improve it. It's not a big budget but there are possibilities that it could make a difference. This is not rocket science and CAT has already done a couple of projects e.g. the Bingham & Magdalene community gardens that were set up a few years ago, now being successfully run by the community. Out of a derelict bit of land we now have two beautiful gardens growing fruit and veg as well as flowers and a great opportunity for people to socialise. We have already got plans for a similar bit of land, currently a dogs' toilet in Niddrie Mill, which we will develop to grow fruit and veg to give away free in local pantries and food banks. We can't wait to get started and will need lots of volunteers so please give it some thought. Also, if you have some housing land near you ... (cont)



... that could become mini orchards or fruit bushes, or just a place to plant some shrubs & bulbs, don't be shy come and have a chat with us. The whole point is it is up to the community to decide! Secondly, I don't know if you have noticed but we have a new Craigmillar Champion in the shape of Donald Anderson, ex Council leader, who is taking an interest in Craigmillar and has offered to work with us to see how we can make improvements. He has been very active in his own area to develop the green space and general environment and is now turning his attention to us. The big advantage for us is that he knows his way around the Council, has good contacts and is very persuasive. In the last few weeks, we have had the Council out picking litter and removing weeds along Niddrie Mains Road as well as removing graffiti where possible and what a difference it has made. He is determined it won't stop there, and has secured funding from Create to employ Elly from ELGT one day a week to make environmental improvements e.g. like tidying up the overgrown trees and bulb planting and not just on Niddrie Mains Road. She is organising a Great Craigmillar Clean Up in early April and recruiting lots of volunteers to become **Friends Of Craigmillar** to help with the Craigmillar makeover.

Thirdly, we are currently making plans to resurrect the **Community Regeneration Forum (CRF)** which hasn't been operating properly since Covid, some of you may remember the meetings. The CRF is a recognised **consultative** body for Craigmillar and was very active during the early regeneration. We have held a couple of meetings in the last year but with so much happening in Craigmillar we feel we need to make sure the community is involved in these decisions. We must get as many people as possible to attend and hear first-hand what the Council's proposals are for the new housing development in the Town Centre and the proposal for the new primary school. If you are interested in being involved with the group or want to know more, please pop into the office for a chat. We hope to hold a meeting at the end of March and will get it publicised as soon as we have a date.

Finally, we have agreed to work in collaboration with the Edinburgh Food Social to deliver a FREE community meal on the first Thursday of the month in the White House Kitchen Café. See below



Community Gardening

Inch Nursery

Woody and the volunteer team are busy gearing up for the arrival of spring, preparing beds with the ambition to deliver produce all year round. That goal will involve revising our crops to be grown, ensuring the beds have the correct nutrients in them to deliver quality fruit and vegetables as well as developing a crop rotation plan.



White House Garden

The team are still discussing whether to retain the poly tunnel, which has been on the receiving end of vandalism over the last year. Reskinning the tunnel takes time with the possibility that the damage could ruin all the propagated seedlings and young crops. The raised beds have been set for the coming season, but we will remove a couple at the entrance to the rear parking area, and utilise the space provided to tidy up the bin storage area more secure. The outside class area will be repaired, to permit us to offer volunteers more opportunities to learn plant nursery skills, links into our wider plans, and to utilise all our garden spaces as community assets to deliver community events.

Niddrie Mill Community Garden

The Council is now ready to start the hard landscaping and building works, which they will undertake in the coming weeks. This work should take no more than one month. This will allow the new community gardening team to setup and layout the rest of the community garden, including beds, fruit cage, poly tunnel and community areas, for events and activities for all ages.

Green House Pantry Closure

This project has been running for many years however, it is with **great sadness** that CAT will close The Pantry on the 11th of April for the last time. This decision has been taken due to funding pressures facing all charities and third sector organisations in these trying times.

Our thanks to the Greater Craigmillar community, and further afield who have supported the Pantry since its change from a thrift shop into the service it became, identified at the time as a community need, for their unwavering support and encouragement.

Finally, the CAT Board want to thank our Pantry Co-ordinators, Jennifer Elliot, and Rachel Skelly for their outstanding contribution to the service provided to our loyal members. Particularly the links they made with complimentary service provider from out with our immediate area..

We will of course link in with partners in the area continuing to offer Pantry and Foodbank services. As our community gardening arm grows (pardon the pun) we will be supplying partners with fresh supplies encouraging wider service development under the banner of the East Synergy Group now established in the area, allowing partners to play to their strengths. Check out the update in this edition.

Seniors Computer Club

Anyone who's struggling with any form of computer, can come along to our club in Craigmillar library, every Thursday from 10am - noon, for a free cuppa & support.



East Synergy Group

This group goes from strength to strength and is now looking to take two big strides in its internal development and city-wide recognition. The internal development will focus on the networking lunch being set-up at Duddingston Golf Club. This event will allow ESG members to set short/medium- and long-term goals and have a clear direction of travel.

The event will be facilitated in the informal setting. The ESG Development Group are creating the brief to maximise this opportunity.

So, while ESG develops its internal identity it is also linking in with the city-wide Place Based Networks producing a proposal to clearly set out how we can support statutory bodies, including the Council to deliver services, and change in key areas of the city with the greatest need. The development of the proposal focuses on three critical areas.

1. **Recognition** – of the wonderful work the third and voluntary groups carry out, thereby acknowledging we design and deliver quality services.
2. **Relationship** – this must change to recognise PBN's are an essential partner at local level, noting our collective experience and knowledge we can bring to bear on any local issue. This also links into our close ties and relationship we have with the communities we service, this inherent built in trust.
3. **Resourcing** – How we support this exciting new collaborative model, specifically set up to allow all partners to play to their respective strengths. We believe that can be achieved by reallocating existing funding resources.
 - a. Use PBN's to carry out local level consultations instead of external consultants.
 - b. Review and consolidate small pots of funding into one large fund. Allow the PBN's to design the funding criteria based on the best value principles that also support collaborative working.
 - c. The new visitor levy due to be introduced and proportionally allocated via Participatory Budgeting (PB) method. In general, PB in the city requires to be evaluated as it is not accepted by smaller organisations as effective or fair method of funding distribution. Indeed, the current option allows popular groups and bodies to see it as an annual revenue stream. By changing the PB criteria to support major piece of collaborative work rather than named organisations would result in noticeable change, while providing the foundation to access national and other major funding avenues.

CAT-TERRITORY

Craigmillar & Niddrie Matters

- This group is organised by a group of residents living in the area who are interested in improving the standard of the area they live in. (Craigmillar & Niddrie) ...*(cont)*

CAT-TERRITORY (...cont)

- ... This group will advocate numerous causes and cases of concern on behalf of local communities (residents) based on the lived experience of the members and their families and friends.
- This group will be representing the community to discuss communities raised issues and concerns to the professional organisation.
- This group has been supported by Connecting Craigmillar and Places for People which is where they are hosting their weekly meetings. Next meeting of the group will be on 21 March 2025
- So far, the group has had two meetings and has had 10-15 people attend their meetings (with a couple of those being staff and not from Craigmillar).
- The group has decided their three starting priorities are:
 1. **Anti-social behaviour** – inviting community police, Councillor's, and others for a meeting.
 2. **Castlebrae Community Campus** - invite school / council and professional for meeting. Member of the group will go to parents and teacher meeting this week.
 3. **Greenspace** - tidy, clean and get Community together to tackle this to make our green area clean and pretty.

Just before Xmas we raised funds and participated in a collaborative project with Castlebrae High school art department, Liz Wilson from wider achievement and lifelong learning at Edinburgh Council, Craigmillar Now and Caring in Craigmillar to host an intergenerational photographic session around Craigmillar with the S3 year, following Craigmillar Nows art trail which culminated in a photographic show at the school and which is now on show at Castlebrae business center.



Tuesday's Walking and foraging group starting at 9.30am, collaborating with various organisations such as the RSPB, Historic Scotland etc.

Cook club at Sandys starts Thursdays at 11am £1 a joint venture between Sandys and Craigmillar Community grows.

Art in Gardens starting in April for 5 weeks, art in various gardens in Edinburgh with free lunch from Edinburgh food social and free taxis with artist Susie Wilson and myself.

Under the trees outdoor chat sessions for 3 weeks then Branching out in August, referrals from link workers in EH15/16/17 only.

Please contact **Karin** on **07824 838 364** for booking or any further info.

Craigmillar Community Grows (A Carr Gomm Project)

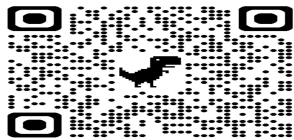


Young Voices

Have your voice heard with the young person's mental health charity, U-evolve!

18th March – 24th June 2025

Tuesdays 5.00–6.30pm
(fortnightly)



Apply
now!



Any questions? Contact us!

 hello@u-evolve.org

 07534 106 155

Starpic Project is a local (SCIO) project in the Niddrie & Bingham, delivering youth groups for all ages, in a safe, fun environment, building transferable skills for the future. Groups are delivered for various ages over different days by the fantastic, dedicated team at the project.



Starpic Project provides a pathway for student placements, volunteering and an opportunity to work with the experienced team delivering to the community. The team are members of the PVG scheme and increase knowledge and skills through training and development.

The project also delivers a sports club, in partnership with Connecting Craigmillar, on a Wednesday at the Jack Kane Sports Centre (4-6pm) which is open to all level 8yrs+ where youths learn, play and gain transferable skills, in basketball, badminton, table tennis and pickleball, with qualified sports coaches.

Having recently secured a lease for Bingham Community Centre, Starpic Project plan to offer more day activities for the community, develop a programme and secure income through letting space out for meetings, interviews and consultations along with operating a community cafe all to meet the cost involved in running the centre.

Information on session times can be found online at www.starpicproject.co.uk/youth-project/

Thanks, Chris & the team



The Housing Team has responsibility for all aspects of Housing Management, including day to day repairs.

- In terms of Housing Management, there are twenty-five geographical patches covering over 5,000 CEC homes with named Housing Officers for each patch.
- There are three Housing Team Leaders who manage 8 or 9 Housing Officers in each team.
- The Housing Team Leader who covers Magdalene, Portobello, Bingham, Niddrie, Greendykes, Harewood is Stuart Avinou.

Housing Management covers several roles.

- It's a challenging but rewarding job and basically, the team support tenants to sustain their Council Homes.
- Housing Officers have responsibility for allocating CEC homes in lines with our published letting policy.
 - Giving advice/support to residents to help paying their rent.
 - Manage estates of Housing land
 - Work closely with private owners where mutual responsibility lies with ownership and maintenance.

The service manage the **North Cairntow** Gypsy Travellers site and provide a city-wide service supporting other partners when engaging with travellers across the city, as well as the multi storey blocks in **Greendykes/Craigmillar/Lochend/ Restlarig/ Leith.**

We work closely with our colleagues in High Rise and Low-Rise Capital Investment teams.

- Who are involved in retrofit of existing CEC homes and energy efficiency work,
- Mark Connelly's team etc who you are aware of.
- We also have responsibility for ensuring our tenants meet their obligation of their tenancy agreement.
- Where appropriate offer support through the Family and Household Support Service.
- Involve Police Scotland where reports of anti-social behaviour or harassment is reported.

Following the Housing Service Review.

- The locality teams throughout the city will also have Housing Repairs Managers who will manage responsive repairs and Empty Homes repairs in each area.
- We are currently recruiting to this post in the Northeast Locality and have someone covering on an interim basis.

The team are additionally involved in identifying local estate improvements and this of course involves us engaging and working with residents in doing what we can to improve areas in need of some investment.

There is other ad-hoc issues the service get involved with and we are keen to support residents/groups and do our best to engage and of course welcome the views of local people.

In the Northeast, Parks & Greenspace (P&G) have 3 teams operating.

As a Parks and Greenspace service we maintain a set area in the North East of the city including;

- parks, schools, housing plots and grass areas along transport corridors coming into Edinburgh.

P&G have two distinct periods of maintenance over the year. 1 Spring & summer, 2 Autumn.

- it is generally grass cutting where we try to get a cutting frequency of between 12 and 16 cuts per year.
- This is made up of teams using a mixture of ride on machinery, pedestrian mowers and strimmer's.
- We also have large tractors operating cutting pitches/ parks and large school grounds with a frequency of around every 6 -7 days.
- The winter is hedge/ shrub maintenance, bulb planting and meadow/ wildflower preparation where we try to get around all of our shrubs/ hedges and bring them back to a good standard.

If time allows during the end of the summer (mid to end of August) we will cut back some of the hedges.

- In previous years we would also have undertaken a programme of weed spraying usually starting end of February but Edinburgh Council, like every council has made a commitment to reduce the amount of glyphosate used with a view to completely stop its use by 2027.
- Invasive weeds like Japanese knotweed and Giant Hogweed will still be treated with a glyphosate-based chemical as that is currently the best way to deal with it.
- Waste and Cleansing Services are bringing in a plan to increase cleansing both manually and mechanically to allow the removal of street weeds.



Helping young people feel better

U-evolve is an Edinburgh mental health charity for 11-21 year olds. We're here to listen to you and support you to feel better. Anyone can access free individual and group support from us, simply get in touch for more information and to find out if it's right for you.



Individual support



Our individual support gives you regular catch ups with your Coach, Art Therapist or Counsellor to chat through anything you are finding difficult, learn more about your emotions, and work towards your goals. We'll decide together which of our services is best suited to you; **Mental Health Coaching, Art Therapy, or Counselling.** Scan the QR code to find out more.

Drop-ins

We provide weekly drop-in sessions from our Hub in Leith. Our drop-in provides a safe space where you can take part in creative activities, get information about support, or simply have a chat and a cup of tea! Get in touch or check our social media for up to date times and what's on each week.



Young Voices



Young Voices allows you to have a say in the issues that matter to you around mental health and mental health support. Our Young Voices groups play an active role in shaping how we work at U-evolve and are an opportunity to gain volunteering hours, advocacy experience, and make a real difference.

Norton Park Business Centre, 57 Albion Road, Edinburgh, EH7 5QY

u-evolve.org
SC045864

Trade Unions in Communities – Support for Migrant Workers

Are you a Migrant Worker, living in and around Edinburgh, and interested in learning more about your employment rights, meeting other people in similar situations, or simply just having a space to socialise with other fellow workers? If so, we would love to hear from you!



My name is Mhairi, and I am a volunteer with Trade Union In Communities (TUIC), where we believe everyone has the right to have a say on issues that affect their lives. We want to create a space that reduces isolation and creates connections between people, as well as offering support from the wider TUIC through direct advice on work related issues, as well as signposting on other matters out-with our expertise.

If this is something that interests you, we would love to see you at our upcoming weekly café starting on Saturday 5th April 2025, from 12pm to 2pm at TUIC (121 Niddrie Mains Road, Edinburgh, EH16 4GN). If you would like more information, or a chat before coming along, then please don't hesitate to give me a call on 07471632812 or email us at administration@tuic.org.uk. Thanks.

Sandy's Community Cook Club

EVERYONE WELCOME

Learn New Cookery Skills

or just eat and blether

THURSDAY'S 11AM-1.30PM



£1.00 PER PERSON

CRECHE FACILITIES AVAILABLE. LIMITED SPACES



Contact Donna to book a space
sandyscommunitycentre@gmail.com

0131 661 4064

07504 627 853

Sandy's Community Centre

76 Craigmillar Castle Avenue

Edinburgh

EH16 4DW



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FREE ART WORKSHOPS IN GARDENS

Visiting various gardens on Tuesdays in April
and May 2025 to make art with Susie Wilson
For EH15/16

Starting 15th of April-13th of May 12.30-3pm

Visiting the Hermitage, The Botanics,
Duddingston, Sheperds House and the
Braidhills. Come to any event or all.

Please phone Craigmillar Community grows
to book on 07824838364

Free taxis there and back
Free Lunches



a Carr Gomm project



Art work by Laura McNamee

And Finally...CAT there for All

If you are an informal group or an individual dealing with an issue/ problem, we can help. At CAT, we offer advocacy, mediation and information services to any group or individual who comes to us seeking support. We have always operated a **no wrong door policy**. If we cannot help, we guarantee we will put you in touch with an independent agency or third sector partner who can give the right assistance. As a third sector anchor, operating a community hub, we will try to lead on all issues affecting the Greater Craigmillar area. So, if you need to chat through any issue with an independent, impartial organisation, CAT are here for you, always.

Our contact details are:

Telephone – **0131 652 6320** or www.communityalliancetrust.org.uk

Email either / susan@communityalliancetrust.org.uk or Scott.Neill@communityalliancetrust.org.uk

The Team at CAT would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers and partners for their support and contribution to the work we carry out at all times.



A development trust serving the Greater Craigmillar area of Edinburgh. Scottish

Charity No: SC043998