

Climate Change Small Grants Fund

Summary of projects and key learning



May 2021

Glasgow Centre for Population Health



1. About the project

In March 2020, GCPH launched a small grants programme and invited organisations to bid for funding to develop a climate change project with young people (aged 26 and under). The aim of the award was to amplify their voices on the impact of climate change on health and wellbeing, in anticipation of the [COP26 UN Climate Change Conference](#) in November 2020 (subsequently deferred to November 2021). Schools, non-profit organisations and community groups working with children or young people were encouraged to put forward ideas which explored these impacts through any form of artistic or creative expression. Applicants were asked to demonstrate a commitment to six key priorities: the climate emergency, health and wellbeing, co-production, sustainability, diversity and innovation. With lockdown restrictions being imposed shortly after the programme was launched, we had to evaluate how best to take the programme forward. While we were aware of the many challenges facing organisations and communities across the city, we felt it was important to provide an opportunity for young people to engage in creative activities during this period. Due to the changing nature of the pandemic and the restrictions in place, organisations were encouraged to be flexible in their approach. Eight organisations met our selection criteria and were awarded funds to develop a climate-related project with young people. A variety of methods and outputs were developed, including virtual workshops and interviews, films, a digital magazine, crafting and using bikes to collect air quality data. Each project is described briefly below:

The Brunswick Centre



The Brunswick Centre provide support and activities to residents of Balornock and Barmulloch. The organisation aims to empower young people, tackle isolation and support the health and wellbeing of people in this part of the city.

Recently they have assisted hundreds of families during the pandemic. The Brunswick Centre Youth Committee designed and produced a project using online video discussions with local politicians (Councillors, MSPs, MPs) to openly discuss the climate emergency. Local politicians were asked to explain what they are doing to tackle this issue and how everyone could contribute to this collective effort. [Watch the film on Facebook.](#)

Eco Drama



Eco Drama is a collaborative theatre company that works with children and young people to nurture a sense of curiosity, wonder and care for the natural world. Eco Drama engaged young people through a project called [Future Calling](#) to explore their thoughts and feelings on the climate emergency and to imagine what the future might look like. Future Calling addressed climate change by telling the story of a future world in 2050, where humans had not made the necessary changes to avert climate destruction. Eco Drama, led by artist Ben Mali McFadyen, gathered young people's responses through online discussion, visioning exercises, games, nature activities, arts and media, and by inspiring them to re-imagine a future full of hope, possibility and environmental harmony. A compilation of these responses is recorded in a film: Future Calling – A Message From 2050. [Watch the film on YouTube.](#)

Govan HELP



Govan HELP provide support and help to children and families across Greater Govan in a range of ways. Here, they delivered a recycling craft project and launched a competition asking young people in Govan to create climate change themed artwork and send in a picture of it, alongside their response to the question "how do you feel about climate change?". The project team distributed free art packs designed to give children the tools needed to facilitate free and creative exploration. A partnership was developed with the local children's community interest company 'Make do and Grow CIC', who exhibited the children's entries in their shop window, and hosted a prize giving ceremony for the winners. The booklet 'Crafting Change' showcases the children's artwork and their thoughts about climate change. [Download the booklet \(PDF\).](#)

Maryhill Parish Church



Maryhill Parish Church employed young people as sessional workers to design virtual workshops to gather young people's views on climate change. The intention of the project has been to encourage the community to LIVE SIMPLY, to make small changes and to develop community artwork through schools and with community groups. Artwork has been developed and presented in a way that aligned with the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. The project was put on hold whilst schools remained closed at the beginning of 2021. The aim now is to complete the project by summer 2021.

Miltonbank Primary School



Primary 7 pupils of Miltonbank Primary School worked with a documentary filmmaker, Ruth Carslaw, to make a short film on the impact of climate change on their health and wellbeing. The film takes viewers on a journey with young people as they explore and make sense of their world in this present state of emergency. The short documentary is intended to be thought provoking and inspire others to see the world through the eyes of the creators. [Watch the film.](#)

Rumpus Room Ltd



Rumpus Room is an artist-led organisation that works with young people to explore a range of societal issues. Here, they supported two young people from their Youth Activist Group to develop and deliver a series of six online workshops. This involved developing activity sheets to creatively engage young people around the issue of climate change. The workshops captured their ideas, actions and artwork relating to art and ecology with a focus on climate activism and creative protest in the run up to COP26. A digital magazine called [Adapt and Act Issue 1 – Climate Action](#) was produced to illustrate these ideas. [Download the magazine.](#)

South Seeds



South Seeds is a community organisation in the south of the city which supports local people to lead more sustainable lives. Five young people were recruited to collect air quality data by cycling around this part of the city at specific times of the day. The data was analysed by staff at University of Strathclyde and a colour-coded map was created to highlight air pollution “hotspots”. The map is included in [Glasgow Evening Fumes](#), a newspaper that tells the story of the young people involved, their hopes and dreams for a more sustainable future and the link between air pollution, climate change and health and wellbeing. [Download the newspaper.](#)

Village Storytelling Centre



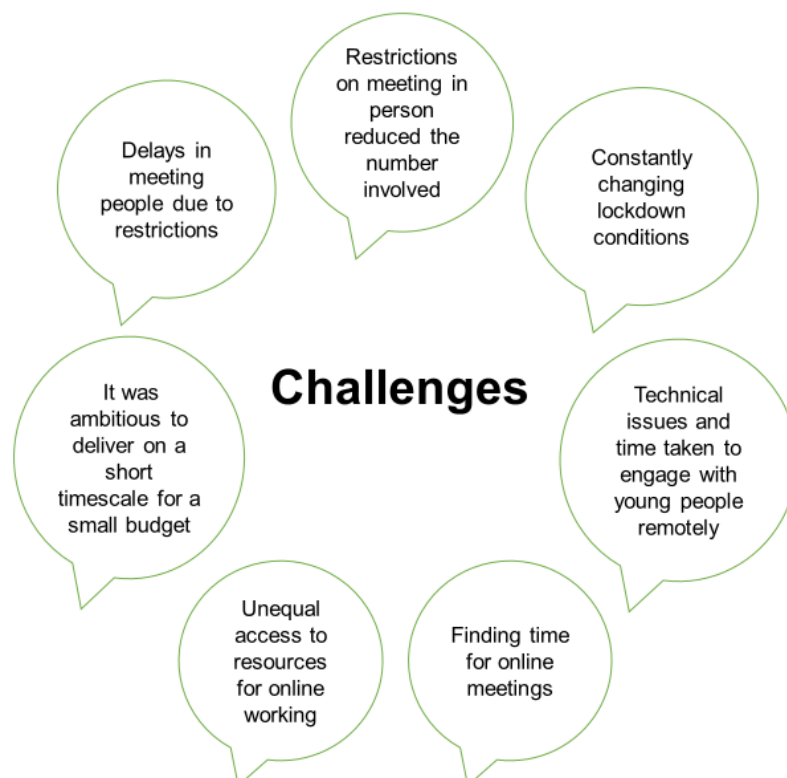
The Village Storytelling Centre is an award-winning community arts organisation and registered charity based in Pollok, Glasgow. The team engaged with young people by creating a space for them to reflect on and voice their opinions and feelings about climate change. Working remotely, they used a variety of art forms including drama, storytelling, poetry, creative writing and mask and prop making. The young people involved created and performed in a short film called ‘The Council of the Earth’. [Watch the film on YouTube.](#)

2. Project learning

Project learning has been captured throughout. This has been important for understanding the impact on young people involved, how organisations adapted to lockdown restrictions, and how GCPH can work with community organisations more effectively in the future.

Adapting to COVID-19 restrictions

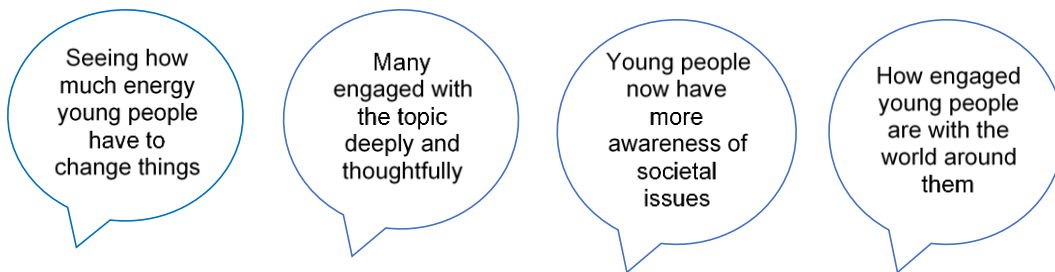
The arrival of COVID-19 and the subsequent movement restrictions meant that each project had to adapt to an uncertain and evolving set of circumstances. GCPH also had to think carefully about how best to deliver the project and engage effectively with the groups involved. Workshops and events were delivered virtually, and groups were afforded more flexibility and time to deliver their project. Group leads commented on the challenges that this brought, such as adapting to ever changing lockdown restrictions and the availability of digital infrastructure and WIFI. For some groups this meant re-allocating money that would usually be used for travel expenses towards digital inclusion. Overall, engagement with young people was helped by the widescale use of social media and messaging applications. Having something to focus on during an uncertain period was said to be helpful for many groups, and the experience has shown them that it is possible to undertake projects online in the future. This was reported to be important to the long-term viability of some organisations, should restrictions be in place in the future. Some of the key challenges are shown below:



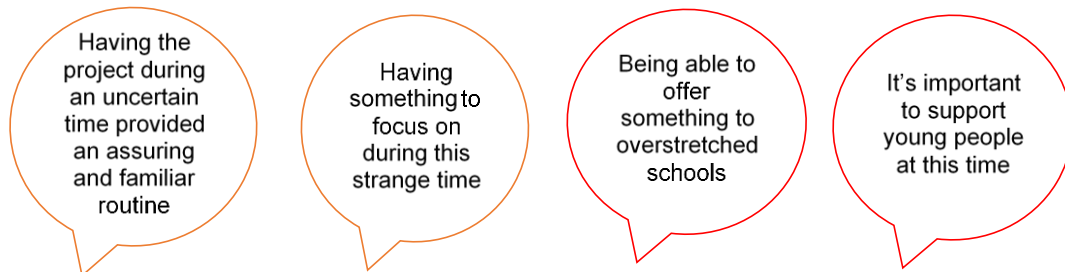
Impact of participation

Group leads described the benefits of being able to undertake their project during what was a very unsettling and frustrating period for young people. The most common feedback on the impact of participation (summarised below) was how young people engaged positively with the project and were enthusiastic to make changes to address climate change. Being able to provide a distraction and sense of purpose during a difficult time was also said to be important. Meanwhile, feedback was offered on the benefits of sharing learning and being able to offer something in challenging times, as well as how involvement has led to a desire to get involved in similar projects.

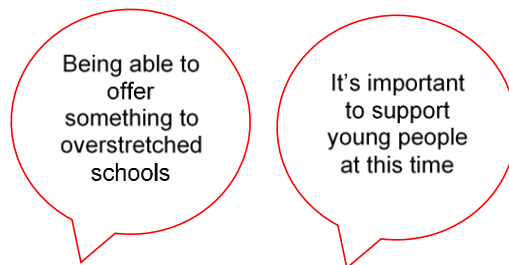
Engagement & learning



Distraction & purpose



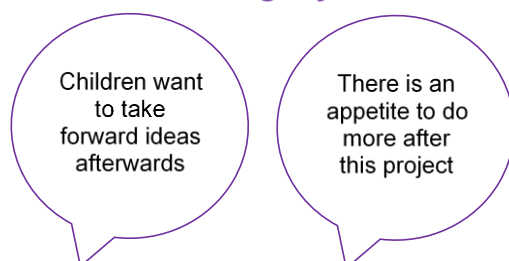
Giving back



Sharing learning



Legacy





What have groups learned through the project?

- Children are more worried about climate change than first expected.
- Young people understand the individual and collective responsibility to make changes and really want to be involved.
- Young people have a deep connection with their local area and are concerned about the environmental issues within it.
- Young people aged 11 to 13 engaged well with digital learning and the opportunity to be creative.
- Young adults were easy to engage with through social media as it was part of their everyday life.
- There are big inequalities in access to the internet for young people – many don't have it.
- Schools could be more up to date with their curriculum around climate change.
- Delivering the project digitally has opened the door to doing so again in the future.



What did group leads feel strongly about during the project?

- Encouraging young people to take responsibility and have belief in their ability to make a difference.
- Keeping it simple and do-able.
- Seeing issues through the eyes of young people.
- Giving young people the opportunity to express their feelings about the climate emergency.
- How empowering it was for young people to be able to be creative and imaginative at this time.
- Some young people developed an interest in climate change having previously not known much about it.



What will group leads remember or take forward

- The kid's faces when they received their art packs.
- Using technology to make it work remotely.
- Seeing young people taking control and leading the process.
- How young people came together in really difficult circumstances.
- How involvement in one thing can lead to interest in another.
- How young people took to the wide-ranging topic during a global pandemic.
- The logistics of running arts and crafts activities with families during restrictions.
- The group have gone on to work with other local organisations and groups.

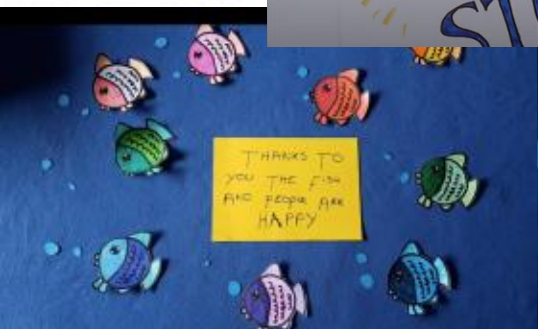
3. Showcasing event

At an event on the 9th of March 2021, each of the eight funded groups were invited to present their work to an audience of people working in a climate-related role. The event was chaired by Dr Duncan Booker, the COP26 Stakeholder Manager for Glasgow City Council, while Councillor Anna Richardson, the City Convener for Sustainability and Carbon Reduction at Glasgow City Council, provided an overview of the main issues facing Glasgow following the declaration of a climate and ecological emergency. A film of this event will be made available on the GCPH website soon.

4. Next steps

We are continuing to look for opportunities to further showcase the work in the run-up to COP26. We are also now inviting applications for another small grant programme ahead of the conference. For this round of funding, we are inviting applications from organisations who work with equalities groups that are seldom heard or are most likely to be negatively impacted by climate change. This includes groups led by those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and groups who are not included in this legislation but who also face additional societal barriers. Details of how to apply for this are [available on the GCPH website](#). If you have any questions about this work, then please email info@gcph.co.uk.

GCPH would like to thank each of the eight organisations and the young people involved for their participation, patience and persistence in delivering their projects. We will continue to share their creative outputs and learning where possible and we wish them all the best in their future work to help raise awareness of the climate emergency.



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