

## Glasgow Eco Trust

### *Community-led climate action - making a difference for people, place and planet!*

From its onset over 20 years ago Glasgow Eco trust has held sustainability and climate action as its foundational principles. The trust started through the now defunct SG programme 'Social Inclusion Partnerships', a precursor to the current idea of community planning partnerships, as Dumbarton Road Corridor Environment Trust (DRCET). The DRCET arose out of an 18-month long community consultation. The consultation resulted in the publishing of a 20-year Environmental Vision for the area. DRCET, re-branded as Glasgow Eco trust in 2018, was the organisation best placed to deliver this environmental vision.

The trust has experienced administrative and bureaucratic barriers within the public sector as a continuous issue. Originally, the environmental vision was to lead to the creation of two community institutions, a development trust, and a specific environmental trust. However, a second organisation was never set up and Glasgow Eco trusts became the de-facto development trust and environmental trust for the area. Changes within the council, such as changes to electoral wards and most impactfully the change of Social Inclusion Partnership to the Community Planning Partnership, inhibited the inclusion of the environmental vision into the Glasgow City Plan as a Local Area Plan. Relationship building with public sector employees has due to high staff turnover.

Despite these barriers Glasgow Eco trust has successfully delivered environmental and social projects to residents around its 5 core themes: transport, food, resource use, energy, and spaces. They aim to offer climate-friendly solutions and behavioural changes in these areas while reframing the idea of climate change as a core part of health and wellbeing. Examples of these programmes include: [De'ails On Wheels](#) community bike workshop, [cost of living and food insecurity advice](#), [community garden and community clean-up projects](#) and the [Food and Climate Action project](#). The community bike workshop alone has encouraged the re-use of 1,939 bikes since 2014, avoiding the emission of an estimated 32.284 kgs of CO2. The trust also works to lobby for wider systems change as they recognise individuals are limited in their response to the climate crisis. For example, their [active travel and sustainable transport](#) plan advocates for improved public transport, open spaces and policies that encourage active travel.

However, as with many trusts they point to capacity and funding as a key issue. Given their over 20 years of service to the local community their services are heavily relied upon benefiting over 70 community members a week. Such a broad level of service necessitates funding, specifically core-funding for staffing, to match. With a lack of funding for core staff the group relies on volunteers, with a dedicated volunteer and training programme: '[Community Green Team](#)'.

In response to tightening budgets the trust has innovated "out of necessity" in their pursuit of income. Their pioneering [community flight donation scheme](#) offers a community-led alternative to official carbon offset schemes and provides a untapped source of unrestricted funding. Glasgow eco trust is based in a community with high deprivation and high inequality, often people interacting and using the

trust are low-income individuals but statistically they will have a lower carbon footprint than high-income households. The flight scheme is one way of targeting those higher income households and redistributing those funds into community climate-action.

## Broadford & Strath Community Company (BSCC)

### *Creating a strong, self-sufficient, and eco-friendly community*

The Broadford & Strath Community Company was set up 2003, to continue and develop the work of Broadford Environment Group. From its onset sustainability has always been at the core of its mission and general community development work has developed as its remit has widened.

Since 2014 a major focus for the group has been the [Growers Hub](#), a multi-use space in and around the community woodland. The main activities of the hub are creating community allotments to enable more people to grow their own produce, involving young people through partnerships with local schools and further education college, and developing a horticultural therapy programme. The hub was created on former forestry site which BSCC purchased on behalf of the community in 2011. It has been funded by the Big Lottery for 5 years, prior to that various environmental funds helped the group set it up. The group has secured short term funding from 2021 to employ a [community gardener](#) to help deliver their array of community growing projects and are currently fundraising for the continuation of this important post.

Going forward BSCC will focus more on the development of its [Community Woodland](#). They are currently developing a 10-year action plan with some support from the [Highland Council Community Regeneration fund](#) and will be looking at environmental, social, and economic benefits the asset can provide. The woodland is relatively small but a great asset for the local community, and an invaluable space to hold a variety of the trust's projects such as the Growers Hub.

Tourism is an important income generator for the area, and therefore a key priority for BSCC is encouraging sustainable tourism that benefits the local community. Active and low carbon travel is a key strand of the group's sustainable tourism strategy and environmental activity. They have a long track record of developing [paths networks](#) and are involved in overseeing a major [cycle path project](#). They have recently received funding to support a community paths feasibility project. The group's longstanding campsite is a highly successful tourist facility and bring in valuable income as well as providing a much-needed resource for the local community.

Waste reduction further feeds into the groups environmental aims and they are part of the [Highland Community Waste Partnership](#), a 3-year project supported by Keep Scotland Beautiful that employs 1 project officer. The partnership has several partners working independently and the group has delivered projects such as: supporting businesses to reduce cardboard waste through reuse and recycling, repair and composting workshops, climate cafes, and clothes swap events.

Like many development trusts in our network who deliver such a broad and varied level of service one of the key challenges for the group going forward is funding. BSCC has received funding from several sources to set up its varied programme of projects however long-term and continued funding remains an issue. Funding for the group's successful Growers Hub project is set to run out at the end of this financial year and is proving challenging to replace as few funders want to support follow-on funding for successful projects, and core roles.

Alongside funding constraints for projects, as an anchor organisation for an area of multiple need the group finds themselves stretched in many directions, with which little core funding for staffing can be a huge challenge. Some projects, such as the development of [public conveniences](#) and the establishment of the [south Skye community campus](#), have taken up most of the project officers time, leaving little left for the several other services and projects they deliver. With a very small staff team these constraints become very apparent and place an onus on volunteers. With such staffing limitations publicising projects, engaging, and training new volunteers, running existing projects and filling in grant applications becomes increasingly challenging.

## Kyle & Lochalsh Community Trust (KLCT)

### *Sustainable community regeneration, creating a better future together!*

From the initial phases of its development the Kyle & Lochalsh Community Trust (KLCT) aimed to take forward the sustainable regeneration of its community, identified as one of the most economically fragile communities in the Highlands. In 2021 KLCT conducted a comprehensive community survey with over 600 replies, almost all households that make up the community submitted at least one reply. From this consultation a Community Action Plan for the area was created, integrating climate action and sustainability into community regeneration. On issues of sustainability the community identified sustainable transport, local food systems and access to land as key issues.

With COVID tackling food insecurity became a priority and the trust began its food distribution initiatives, culminating in a community fridge set up to provide non-judgmental access to fresh produce and other goods as well as tackle food waste from local shops. Despite widespread demand for the community fridge service the introduction of stricter supermarket policies around sell-by dates has created a legal barrier to distributing surplus supermarket food to the local community. However, the service continues with funding from the postcode lottery and a focus on encouraging community growing.

The community fridge is now located in the [re-use hub](#), which also houses a second-hand shop. This space and was set up to provide a judgement-free communal space that people could socialise while also using the services available. The second-hand shop has been widely successful and saved a range of items from landfill. In many ways the trust has been a victim of its own success and has had to temporarily pause donations to the second-hand shop as there simply aren't enough staff to deal with the organisation and running of such large donations.

A critical issue in the community, like in many rural communities across the country, is the lack of a functioning and reliable public transport system. The trust offers its own [community transport van](#) and plans to expand this service in the future due to high demand. The service has also had the positive effect of minimising social isolation, particularly for elderly residents of the community. Additionally, the trust runs an electric [vehicle charging point](#), identified by the local community as a priority for the area to facilitate EV use and facilitate sustainable tourism.

As with many organisations tackling climate change a key part of the work is to reframe the idea of the climate crisis and integrate climate action into daily activities. One way the trust has done this has been through climate education and integrating heritage into climate activities, this has been particularly successful in involving younger generations with climate action. The trust has been working with local school pupils and providing outdoor education classes through their [forest school](#) and has plans to expand this work with their proposed "college of the environment". Projects engaging with the area's Viking heritage, such as shield making workshops and have also proved a successful way for young people to engage with the outdoors and develop an interest in preserving local forests.

The trust also provides a [‘tremendous tree trail’](#) for children, adults and visitors to appreciate the community woodland and expand their knowledge of local flora. Similarly guided group [‘health walks’](#) are available for inactive individuals who are looking to get more active and enjoy the outdoors. A [digital skills-sharing project](#) conducted in 2020 has also proved extremely popular, specifically around community food growing.