



TREES FOR CLIMATE ACTION

PROJECT COMPLETION AND EVALUATION REPORT

“When you're doing a project like this, everybody has to come together and work as a team... it brings people together” – young project participant



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project reference number: 20200058

Trees for Climate Action (TfCA) is a project by Trees for Cities (TfC) in partnership with the Field Studies Council (FSC) funded by the National Lottery Community Fund (September 2022 - December 2025).

TfCA was created to take bold new steps to bring people together through climate action in Bradford and Glasgow. The project aimed to create opportunities for young people (<30 years old) to engage with older people that they would not normally meet during their everyday lives through intergenerational, tree-related activities. The activities were co-designed by project partners to help local people gain new tree-related knowledge and skills from environmental professionals and experienced volunteers, mobilising participants to take positive action against climate change.

TfCA set out to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Engage 20,000 young people across Bradford and Glasgow, connecting different generations through shared climate ambitions, raising the profile of sustainable climate strategies in two core UK cities.
2. More people in Bradford and Glasgow have the knowledge, skills and experience to deliver local inter-generational tree-related activities independently within and beyond the project, boosting young people's awareness of, and access to, a career in the tree sector.
3. Boost local capacity of Council and community groups to create a sustainable, replicable model for TfC' regional work.

TfCA delivered immediate and sustained impact across all three planned outcomes, exceeding its engagement target by over 30%, improving perceptions between generations, enhancing practical skills and strengthening community ownership at project sites. We achieved this through community engagement activities aligned to existing tree planting programmes including White Rose Forest in Bradford and the Clyde Climate Forest in the Glasgow City Region.

This report shares details about our achievements as well as lessons learned, challenges we faced and how we overcame them, as well as recommendations for future projects. TfC sincerely thanks the National Lottery Community Fund for their support throughout the project, both the funding and the guidance and expertise. We also thank our match funding partner: All Aboard Charity Shops, CBRE, Linbury Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, Natural England, People's Postcode Lottery and South Lanarkshire Council.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

TfCA delivered with a wide range of intergenerational project activities including tree planting projects, tree ID walks, youth summits, poetry slams, collaborative design of projects, school assemblies, art workshops, youth panels and traineeships (delivered by TfC) complemented by tree training courses and distribution of bespoke tree guides (FSC). The activities brought different generations together, combining one-off engagements (e.g. school assemblies and career fairs) to raise awareness and publicise the project (breadth) with longer-term engagement e.g. training and tree maintenance to ensure sustained project impact and legacy (depth).

1. **Scale of Engagement:** TfCA engaged **33,567 people** (exceeding target of 20,000) comprising 26,405 young people (under 30 years old) and 7,162 adults (over 30 years old). Project participants **planted 32,287 trees** across Bradford and Glasgow, comprising 32,111 whips (saplings) and 176 standard (large clear stem) trees and fruit trees.
 2. **Knowledge, Skills and Experience:** 91% of participants in longer-term engagement activities and 67% of participants in short-term activities reported gaining new knowledge and skills with significant increase in their confidence to plant and maintain trees. Paid 12-month **traineeships** provided extensive opportunities for two trainees to develop transferable green skills, which significantly enhanced their prospects for future employment in the environment sector.
 3. **Community Capacity:** TfCA engaged three regional delivery partners and worked with a wide range of local community groups including schools, Rotary Club, youth group, gardening groups, faith groups and volunteer centres. This model has boosted local capacity and helped to ensure lasting project legacy, evidenced by sustained engagement at sites like Cliff Castle Orchard, with volunteers continuing activities two years post-project.
- See appendix 1 for table of planned versus actual **outcomes** and their alignment with our impact themes.
 - See appendix 2 for table to summarise the planned and actual project **outputs** delivered.
 - See appendix 3 for table of the **activities** delivered and **beneficiaries** reached.

DATA COLLECTION

At the start of the project, TfC created an evaluation framework to monitor and evaluate the impact of TfCA activities throughout the project. In line with this framework, we designed and collected before and after surveys at one-off events such as planting days or community maintenance activities, to measure change in knowledge and skills. In addition, we collected baseline and endline surveys to monitor these changes over the course of long-term engagements.

To assess the impact of bringing people together, we conducted in-depth qualitative interviews with intergenerational participants at key touchpoints throughout the programme. These interviews have formed the basis of this evaluation as they are directly mapped from the project's impact themes. To highlight the sheer extent of the learnings that have emerged from this project, the findings are embedded into each section to provide context rather than being drawn out separately.

Table 1: Data types and sample sizes by city

Data Source	Number Collected		Total
	Glasgow	Bradford	
ONE-OFF ENGAGEMENTS			
Adult Pre-event Surveys	88	26	114
Adult Post-event Surveys	76	12	88
Child Pre-event Surveys	112	74	186
Child Post-event Surveys	35	62	97
MULTI-SESSION ENGAGEMENTS			
Adult Baseline Surveys	15	18	33
Adult Endline Surveys	3	19	22
Child Baseline Surveys	16	20	36
Child Endline Surveys	9	8	17
Participant Interviews	1	7	8
Youth Panel Interviews	1	2	3
Trainee Interviews	1	1	2
INTERNAL PROCESS REVIEW			
Project Manager Interview	1		1
Project Coordinator Interviews	2 (1 person interviewed twice)	1	3
Intergenerational Reflection Forms	2	5	7

PARTNERSHIPS

FIELD STUDIES COUNCIL

As our primary delivery partner, the Field Studies Council (FSC) was integral to the success of TfCA. FSC was tasked with engaging 10,572 people including 8,450 (80%) young adults aged 18 to 30 to improve tree knowledge and skills as follows:

- 8,160 young adults engaged through the production and distribution of **tree guides**.
- 288 young adults through **tree training** courses.
- 2 new **tree tutors** trained to deliver workshops.



Tree Guides

FSC produced bespoke summer and winter tree ID guides to identify urban tree species prevalent in the local area to encourage local engagement in nature and project activities.

Each year in both cities, guides were sent to individuals, households and community groups, helping to spread knowledge locally. Accompanying emails throughout the year maintained contact and shared project updates.

FSC's Tree Guides reached >40% more young people than targeted and achieved significant outcomes. While household uptake was slightly lower than expected, community group engagement far exceeded targets, showing how grassroots networks played a crucial role in driving participation.

- 85% of recipients reported having little or no knowledge of trees when they first received them. The number of users who said they could only identify a few trees fell from 37% before using the guides to just 2% afterwards.

Tree Training Courses

FSC tree training courses were designed through consultation and covered tree biology, ecology, ecosystem services and community engagement, with online and in-person options to participate.

Attendance in Glasgow was high, while reaching younger participants in Bradford proved more difficult. Adjustments were made throughout the project, increasing social media promotion, simplifying sign-up, offering shorter courses and working directly with existing community groups. Partnering with the University of Bradford and linking the courses to wellbeing walks increased participation.

Tree courses saw 88–100% of attendees report major improvements in tree ID skills. 100% of participants in tree training said they would recommend the course and planned to use their new knowledge with other people.

Tree Tutors

FSC successfully recruited 12 Tree Tutors (6 in 2023, 4 in 2024 and 2 in 2025) including 4 young adults aged 18–30 (exceeding the target of two young adults). Each new tutor was paired with a mentor, attended courses with experienced FSC tutors, and received first aid and group management training.

- 2 volunteers became Tree Tutors, showing clear routes for progression through the learning pathways created through TfCA.
- Tree Tutors helped shape and adapt delivery, leading some of the most effective engagement in Bradford.

Key successes

Despite initial challenges in recruiting younger participants in Bradford, FSC consistently exceeded engagement targets building lasting educational infrastructure, developing local capacity to deliver courses, and supporting a diverse pipeline of new tree educators

and volunteers. Participants across all demographics reported greater confidence, skills and connection to nature, helping to inspire a generation ready to care for urban trees.

- See appendix 3 for final engagement numbers by the FSC.
- See FSC case studies

Impact Statements – Learners under 30 in Glasgow



Charlie

Charlie has just taken up a Woodland Conservation role on the Isle of Mull after completing a wildlife conservation degree and was attending this course for ideas on how to engage the community with local woodland spaces.



Aimee

Aimee is a Senior Project Officer for the TCV. Part of her remit is to arrange green health and wellbeing walks for groups and she attended the course to build ideas for how to communicate more ID in an engaging way as part of these walks.



Sara

Sara is currently studying a HNC in Countryside Management. She decided to make a career change from costume design after Covid when she built her awareness and passion for green mental health and this free course supports her studies.



Finn

Finn joined the course because he had an interest in becoming a biodiversity tutor for the Field Studies Council. He has a good baseline knowledge of natural history subjects and is interested in building his skills and teaching other adults. Finn has since gone on to teach online and in-person courses as part of the project in Glasgow.

REGIONAL DELIVERY PARTNERS

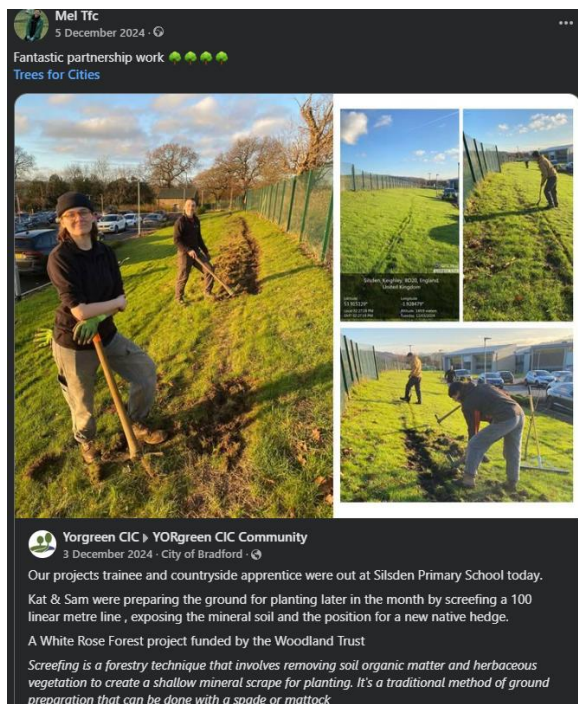
Our regional partners provided vital support to enhance TfC' local engagement and delivery capacity, allowing us to reach more people and tap into local networks and groups. Our partners also helped us to facilitate data collection at our events.

Eadha Enterprises

TfC has been working with Eadha Enterprises in Glasgow to deliver tree planting and community engagement, supporting local council commitments to the Clyde Climate Forest. Eadha Enterprises assisted with shaping the TfCA programme in Glasgow through planning, consulting on, and delivering engagement activities such as planting events, maintenance events, training and intergenerational activities. Their support on the project boosted the capacity of our Development Coordinator in Glasgow.

Fruit Works Co-operative

Fruit Works was instrumental to much of our engagement and delivery work in Bradford. They helped to plan and deliver tree planting and maintenance workshops and provided the tools and trees needed for our projects. Fruit Works also helped TfC to deliver schools projects, enhancing our delivery capacity.



YORGreen CiC

YORGreen CiC helped with our engagement and delivery in Bradford, increasing the capacity of our Senior Development Coordinator based in Bradford. Additionally, YORGreen provided storage space for TfC' tools, equipment and resources and helped connect us with other local organisations and groups.

INTERGENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT: KEY FINDINGS AND IMPACT

TfCA community engagement was highly successful, reaching over 33,000 people and exceeding the target of 20,000 people by over 30%. We brought together participants from different generations and local networks to take part in a wide variety of tree-related project activities such as planting days, tree ID walks, juicing workshops and co-design sessions to shape local woodlands.

TfCA facilitated seven intergenerational projects (5 in Bradford, 2 in Glasgow) including activities such as apple juicing, co-design sessions and planting days bringing together young people and older adults. This was a bold and experimental new approach for TfC, expanding our focus from being *multigenerational* by nature, to instead intentionally designing *intergenerational* activities.



The intergenerational approach faced significant challenges in engaging older young people (teenagers and young adults) which meant that engagement of this age group was not always consistent and we ended up engaging primary school children on some occasions and secondary age children on others.

As a result, the project succeeded in fostering *short-term* intergenerational interactions, with *some evidence* to support long-term meaningful social connection and changes in perceptions, but only in certain instances. For example, as the project progressed, it became apparent that **key individuals were needed to foster community links, such as youth liaison leads or community centre leads.**

Sustained engagement often depended on utilising established groups that were already engaged in community activities e.g. church members, rotary club members or youth groups. Bringing local children together with adults that weren't already connected as part of a community group often led to retention challenges. This was raised in interim and end of project process interviews with staff members as well as intergenerational reflection forms completed during the projects. For example, at a Bradford intergenerational project our Project Coordinator reflected on the engagement of the nearby residents (who were not part of any *formal* group):

“The residents were a little reluctant to engage with the young people and preferred to plant trees within their own group” – Project Coordinator

Contrastingly at the same project the “[redacted] action group interacted well with the young people”. It appeared that if the adults engaged were already acquainted and familiar with each other, they felt more comfortable engaging with the younger generations.

Similarly, in Glasgow this learning was replicated with our Project Coordinator also reflecting that simply having schools and adult groups present at the same planting event does not automatically create intergenerational exchange (interview). For real interaction to happen, prior engagement through workshops was necessary to reduce potential ‘us’ versus ‘them’ attitudes. Without this, young and older participants might attend the same event without connecting with each other. As a result, we have a clear understanding that **intergenerational programmes need to focus first on breaking down barriers between generations through facilitated workshops**, rather than simply bringing two generations together.

Additionally, whilst primary school children did participate in the intergenerational programme, **when we did manage to engage teenagers and young adults, we were able to obtain higher quality data that really showcased the project impact.** In these cases, the impact was significant and led to knock-on impacts such as creating the desire to start new community groups, improving sense of community and bridging divides between generations that had negative perceptions of one another (see below sections for further detail). It's likely, although not evidenced, that these changes would not occur with primary school-age children.

Recommendation: Future projects should continue focus on teenagers and young adults to have the greatest long-term impacts, bringing these groups together with *already-established* groups of adults.

Projects should also seek out groups of adults that have a key champion who can act as a youth liaison lead – this person should ideally be someone who has experience of working with young people. Furthermore, staff should be allocated additional time and capacity to effectively seek out and build connection with these participants.

See case study at Sue Belcher community centre.



BRIDGING GENERATIONS AND CULTURES

Beyond friendship, TfC' sessions helped challenge negative assumptions between age groups. Participants shared that different generations often hold negative views about each other, but that those views had begun to change through experiencing working together towards shared objectives to plant trees and the conversations that came out of it, through which a mutual respect was built.

*“They see us doing the hard work. Then, you know, they'll put more respect out there. But if they were inside while we were doing this, they wouldn't have a clue what's going into it.” –
Young participant at intergenerational project*

Some participants reflected on how the project had gone even further, helping to **bridge cultural differences as well as generational ones.**

“Tree doesn't have a nationality. Tree doesn't have a religion. A tree is there for everyone. That apple can be eaten by you, by me, by all. So why can't we live together? Why can't we break down... Look what you do with your apples. Look what we do. And let's put a menu together so we can show each other.”– Intergenerational participant

TfC' community projects like TfCA are about more than the trees. They create opportunities for people to feel a **sense of belonging to their local community and connect with others**. At a time where loneliness and social isolation is on the rise, particularly since the Covid-19 pandemic (Campaign to End Loneliness, 2022), events that bring people together are more important than ever before. **Every participant said they now felt a stronger sense of belonging to their local community and many credited TfCA for helping them meet people they might never otherwise have spoken to.**

Importantly, **every participant said they plan to return to care for the woodland they helped create**. This long-term commitment is a sign that sustained engagement can lead to the longevity of not only the trees planted, but the connections between those who planted them.

The immediate positive effects of bringing different generations together and building connections across communities were clear to see. In both cities, participants and project staff discussed the divides between the younger and older generations that existed at the start of the project, with one adult participant in Glasgow noting that the local press tended to demonise the local youth, leading to fear from older generations:

“Any kind of press on young people locally tends to be more negative. It tends to be ‘young people causing problem out the front of Asda’ or, you know, it wouldn't be ‘causing a problem’, it would be ‘running riot’” – adult participant in intergenerational project

By the end of the project, however, the same participant noted that the project had *‘worked wonders’* at bridging divides, and that he had overheard other adult participants, who previously held some negative perceptions of the youth involved, *‘spreading a positive message about young people’*. In an area where local coverage of young people tends to be negative, the fact that **adults involved in our project are spreading word to the contrary** is a key success of the project, indicating not only that divisive ‘us’ versus ‘them’ attitudes and perceptions have been broken down by those in the group, but that these perceptions are also beginning to be broken down elsewhere.

Our Project Coordinator in Glasgow mentioned that a key element to breaking down these barriers was through an initial session addressing the negative perceptions each generation had of the other, to develop a mutual understanding of the judgements and assumptions made on both sides. In Bradford, our Project Coordinator encouraged the younger participants to lead sessions and utilise the adults as a way of actualising their ideas. For example, when it came to co-designing woodlands, the young people had the final say on the design and the adults used their authority to get the plans signed off by the community.

“One of the nice outcomes is a bit where we're standing at the moment, we've just dug the holes for planting the trees. And as you see, they've been kind of dug in this star shaped pattern. And that was actually one of the ideas that came from one of the children; they proposed that idea. We then involve the wider community” – intergenerational participant

It is important to note that there were fewer divides across adults and primary school-age children, with the adult participants noting that they were used to being around young children and the children interviewed were likely not yet old enough to have negative perceptions of the adults or vice versa. Therefore, the analysis around bridging divides relates more to those between teenagers/ young adults and older adults than to primary age children.

“I used to work with primary school children quite a lot when my own son was at the very same primary school” – intergenerational participant

Recommendation: Projects that aim to bridge divides and reduce divisive ‘us versus them’ attitudes need to have an initial session that brings the two groups together to address and outline their negative perceptions of one another to begin breaking down barriers. In addition, projects should ensure they effectively engage groups where divides are well documented e.g. teenagers/young adults and older adults, to have the most significant impact.

SENSE OF BELONGING

As the success of the intergenerational projects often relied on tapping into existing community groups, the programme didn't necessarily always foster a *new* sense of belonging for *all* participants. However, it did *deepen* feelings of belonging, and for some people who hadn't engaged much in community activities we saw indicators of a positive change, particularly regarding the (secondary age) young people.

One prominent example of this occurred as part of one of our intergenerational projects at Sue Belcher Community Centre in Bradford. When interviewing participants, all five we spoke to said that they feel part of the local community. Whilst this was not necessarily solely due to TfCA, the participants appreciated being brought together with groups they may not have necessarily been paired with.

“There is definitely people who I wouldn't even know that I've talked to, and people high up there who I didn't know at all, to now that I know I definitely feel part of the community” – intergenerational participant

One young participant highlighted how TfC' practical approach had fostered a positive sense of community, with participants able to rely on others in the group to help them with physical tasks.

"I didn't at all [feel part of the community] ... I never thought I would. Now people are asking they'd come up to me and say, 'Oh, just help us with this will you' and before [TfCA] you try to stay away from each other you know? No one wants to have any contact. Well, here you're kind of forced to [work with others] and but it's a nice kind of force, like it's just 'oh, come, come, give us a hand'. It's just... nice" – intergenerational participant

Similarly, a participant in one of our Glasgow intergenerational groups highlighted that by the end of the project, the young people felt comfortable relying on the older adults to help show them how to do the task at hand. **This sense of being able to rely on those around you to achieve a shared purpose is an indicator of feeling a belonging to the community.**

Recommendation: To deepen a positive sense of belonging, continue to run intergenerational activities centred around a shared purpose such as a practical, hands-on activity. To add further depth to this impact, attempt to bring in individuals that are not part of any existing community group and therefore don't currently feel a strong sense of belonging. Though this adds extra challenges in outreach, the benefits would likely be significant.

SUSTAINED IMPACT AND LONG-TERM POTENTIAL

In the context of this project, the concept of sustained impact and long-term potential is twofold. This section assesses whether both the project impacts have the potential to be long-term and whether the project activities will be sustained after the project ends.

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

TfCA demonstrated indicators of sustained impact and long-term potential through continued community ownership of project maintenance and tree health. In Bradford, the orchard created through intergenerational tree planting at Cliffe Castle, initiated in 2023, remains actively maintained by volunteers. When TfC visited in March 2025, nearly two years later, volunteers shared how the space is used for *'regular health meet ups [happening] in the orchard as well as other activities from a number of organisations'* (intergenerational reflection form). Participants have also been applying the skills that they learned alongside the FSC tree ID guides that have been distributed to lead nature and wellbeing walks, which are now shared with wider community members.

At another site in Bradford, 'the neighbourhood group have self-organised a wassail, juicing day and monthly tea, chat and check sessions' on the site planted by TfC (intergenerational reflection form). This ongoing engagement highlights the sustained impact and future resilience of the project. The fact that individuals and groups are taking on the maintenance of these spaces by utilising the knowledge and skills gained throughout their TfCA sessions demonstrates enhanced local capacity. This may, in turn, have the added benefit of reducing the strain on local authorities to complete these tasks.

This sustained impact relies on key groups and individuals remaining engaged, however, which, if not stable, could cause engagement to decrease over time. For example, when engaging school children, projects were reliant on school staff capacity and ability of adults to take the children to the site.

"Unfortunately, the school pupils did not attend the first session which was a juicing session, as they were short staffed" – Project Coordinator

"Only 5 students (out of 40) could come and plant on that day, so we are doing another planting day. Due to not being able to tie down a school for the workshops we stopped approaching adult groups" – Project Coordinator

Recommendation: Future projects should embed legacy planning from the start by building up a base of engaged volunteers and work to engage more key champions from a diverse range of ages and backgrounds. Projects should continue to provide volunteers with the knowledge and skills to self-organise community engagement and aftercare activities in the space.

LONG-TERM CONNECTIONS

There is also evidence to suggest that TfCA has built long-term connections across communities for those involved. For example, at one of our intergenerational events in Bradford, all participants interviewed voiced that they planned to stay in touch with the people they've engaged with over the course of the project. **One young participant even was incentivised by TfCA to start their own youth group after seeing the project's success in mobilising young people at the site** as the project helped to demonstrate that young people in the area do want to get involved with community initiatives, if only they're made readily available

'I want to try and start a youth project, but I wouldn't have started if I hadn't been involved with these sorts of projects, because I wouldn't have been able to see how much the youth

actually wanted to get involved. Because in my experience, the youth don't want to do anything, don't want to get involved, and they're too busy to get involved was my belief. But now my mind has changed on it, and they really do just want to help where they can. And if it's something you intrigue them by, they'll get stuck in.' - intergenerational participant

Similarly, at our Barrhead site in Glasgow we ran an intergenerational programme that connected the local high school with a group from a nearby church to plan for and plant a woodland. One participant reflected on the connections that he, along with the other adults from the church group had been developed throughout the programme, noting that when he's in the local area and sees the secondary-age children in public, they regularly approach him for a chat.

"After the project finished and a couple of the young folks were walking down into Asda to get their lunch or whatever spotted me and said hi, you know, and waved. And we had a quick chat... I've seen them two or three times since then" - intergenerational participant

"The other adults who from our church, they had also said to me, I think one Sunday that they had seen a couple of these of the school kids who again had...come over and talk to them" - intergenerational participant

Overall, there are several indicators that the impact of the intergenerational projects will be sustained beyond the funding timeframe at certain sites. However, this long-term sustainability relies on key highly engaged individuals, often adults.

Recommendation: As above, future projects should embed legacy planning from the start by building up a base of engaged volunteers and work to engage more key stakeholders from a diverse range of ages and backgrounds to mitigate any changes in group membership and facilitate continued engagement.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE



In addition to FSC’s project activities, Tfc also led two key activities specifically designed to promote young people’s knowledge, skills and experience of tree planting and maintenance.

The **Youth Panel** engaged a group of 19 young people across Bradford and Glasgow in workshops and activities related to urban trees. In Bradford, the panel was involved with co-designing a woodland project, and in Glasgow, the panel helped to assist with a Youth Summit to engage secondary-age young people with urban forestry.

Interviews with three members of the Youth Panel and quotes from others showed that all participants gained new skills, particularly practical skills associated with planning and delivering tree-related activities.

*“I found it really interesting learning about how to plan a woodland from the practical side” –
Youth Panel member*

"I've particularly enjoyed some of the tree planting and tree care sessions as they're a great way to do some hands-on work as well as practice my tree ID skills" – Youth Panel member

Two 12-month **traineeships** (one each in Bradford and Glasgow) provided a launchpad for the careers of two young people looking to get involved in the green sector (see case studies for further information).

Through these project activities, participants developed their knowledge, skills and experience in tree planting and maintenance as evidenced through our survey data. We have split out the findings by participants who engaged in multiple sessions as long-term volunteers (through youth programme, traineeships, intergenerational work) evidenced through baseline and endline surveys, and short-term volunteers (one-off planting or maintenance days) evidenced through pre- and post-event surveys.

Previous Experience

- Long term volunteers: 61% of respondents had never planted or looked after urban trees before (sample of 33 respondents)
- Short term volunteers: 58% of respondents had never planted or looked after urban trees before (sample of 114 respondents)

Confidence

Confidence is assessed using a scale of 1-5 where 1= not confident at all and 5=completely confident.

- Long term volunteers: Only 6% of respondents reported that they felt completely confident in *planting urban trees* before one of our events. This rose to 55% at the end of our engagement (based on a sample of 22-33 respondents)
- Long term volunteers: Only 6% of respondents reported that they felt completely confident in *looking after urban trees* before one of our events. This rose to 45% at the end of our engagement (based on a sample of 22-31 respondents)
- Short term volunteers: 33% of respondents reported that they felt completely confident in *planting urban trees* before one of our events. This rose to 60% afterwards (based on a sample of 352-383 pre and post event respondents).
- Short term volunteers: 33% of respondents reported that they felt completely confident in *looking after urban trees* before one of our events. This rose to 44% afterwards (based on a sample of 318-369 pre and post event respondents).

Knowledge and Skills

- Long term volunteers: 91% of respondents reported that they gained new skills because of their engagement with TfCA

- Short term volunteers: 67% of respondents reported that they gained new skills because of their engagement with TfCA (based on a sample of 87 respondents).

It appears that our planting and maintenance engagement activities succeeded in fostering the development of practical skills relating to urban forestry. Long-term participants reported a range of new learning about tree planting and care. The most common theme (36%) **was gaining practical skills in planting techniques**, such as understanding the correct process and site selection: **“I learnt a lot more about how to plant the trees to grow them better.”** Around 29% highlighted aftercare knowledge, including **mulching, drainage, and root** protection: *“More about aftercare and mulching”* and *“The importance of drainage.”*

A smaller proportion (14%) learned **methods for securing trees**, for example: *“Using inner tyres to secure tree to stake – ingenious.”* **Species identification** was mentioned by 7%, with one participant noting: *“Didn’t realise that many of the trees I previously thought to be Sycamore were in fact Maple.”* **Environmental awareness** featured in 14% of responses, reinforcing the importance of trees for ecosystems and urban spaces: *“Learned how important trees are for our environment.”* Finally, 14% expressed a **deeper personal connection and behaviour change**, such as planting trees at home and involving others: *“I have now planted a fruit tree at home... got others involved.”* Overall, the feedback shows that practical knowledge and aftercare were the dominant areas of learning, complemented by increased awareness and engagement.

For short-term volunteers, approximately one-third of participants (33%) reported learning **specific planting techniques**, such as digging the correct-sized hole, placing roots properly, and ensuring trees are upright *“You must dig a hole that is big enough for all the roots to fit”* and *“How to put the tree in the hole carefully.”* Around a quarter (26%) gave **general** statements like *“I learned how to plant a tree”* without further detail. **Tree protection and aftercare** accounted for 13%, with responses mentioning guards, stakes, and mulching, such as *“Haven’t done wire mesh guards before”* and *“Pruning and mulching around tree.”* About 11% referred to **environmental benefits**, for example: *“I Learned Important trees are for climate change”* and *“We planted trees and learnt how trees help the climate.”* **Confidence-building and first-time experience** appeared in 9% of responses, including *“I have never planted a tree before this so everything was new to me.”* Smaller proportions mentioned **tree identification** and **ecology** (7% e.g. *“Mycorrhizal fungi, roots, mulch, filling in”*), **learning from experts** (4% e.g. *“Having experts explain and demonstrate... has been an invaluable experience”*), and **physical effort** (4% e.g. *“That you can get so muddy and dirty whilst you’re planting trees”*).

Plans to take action

- Long term volunteers: 75% of respondents reported they now have new plans to take action for urban trees in the next year (sample of 20 respondents). Most of these plans consisted of looking after the trees planted through TfCA or planting new trees independently; *'Carry on looking after the mosque garden and show others the trees and bushes', 'Planting trees with future students'*.

CASE STUDIES

INTERGENERATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AT SUE BELCHER COMMUNITY CENTRE

At Sue Belcher Community Centre in Keighley, TfC worked closely with local groups of different ages including Keighley Lions Rotary Club, One in a Million Youth Group, the Sue Belcher gardening group and dedicated volunteer centres to co-design and plant a fruiting woodland at the centre.

On 27 March 2025, volunteers from different age groups gathered to plant the trees and showcase their work to the local Mayor. During the event, five participants from the different generations involved in the project were interviewed to explore the impact TfCA had on them. There was a clear sense of **pride and enjoyment** in taking part. Some volunteers spoke about the **satisfaction of planting** itself whilst others focused on the **sense of togetherness** created by the experience.

"One thing I enjoy the most from the experience is the screefing. I've done it before, and I'll do it a million times over." – Intergenerational participant

"I think it's just everyone getting together and planting. It's not just one person doing it all and the rest showing up for photo shoots. It's all working together." – Intergenerational participant

The fruiting woodland has been created with **future sustainability** in mind. It will offer seasonal harvests for smoothies and snacks and will help reduce flood risk around the centre. Shaped by the needs of every generation that uses the centre, the project encourages long-term care and community ownership.

"Having an event like this brings people together around a common purpose, which is caring for the environment, planting trees and actually doing something that'll, you know will be there in the future." – Intergenerational participant

It was clear that the events served as a valuable opportunity to develop new connections, with 100% of the volunteers interviewed reporting that they had met new people and built friendships through TfCA.

TREES FOR CLIMATE ACTION TRAINEES

KAT (BRADFORD)

Before becoming a TfCA Trainee, Kat's background was rooted in the arts. She completed a degree in history followed by a Master's in poetry and worked in arts administration in London. Despite this creative and cultural foundation, Kat sought more meaningful, nature-connected work. Kat had moved back home to Bradford and when the traineeship opportunity arose, Kat decided to pursue this new direction.



"The job I was doing... wasn't very fulfilling, was quite stressful... I had a strong background in science... [nature] is always something I've been interested in."

Early in her traineeship, Kat contributed to the development of a community tree nursery at Woodville Activity Centre. She described this as a highlight: transforming "a random space at the top of Woodville" into a nursery housing over 7,000 trees. Over the year, she gained experience in tree planting, woodland condition surveys, community engagement, and leading creative workshops.

Kat found value in the diversity of groups she worked with, from schoolchildren to older NHS service users and corporate volunteers. This wide exposure to different groups helped develop her confidence, especially in leading sessions, which she had never done before.

"I've already worked in people-facing roles... but it was really nice to work with such a range of different people... that definitely improved my confidence."

Kat initiated charcoal drawing sessions for different groups, using willow and oak from the site, engaging participants in hands-on art. Her rationale for these sessions was to

bring people and nature together in a new way. These sessions not only drew from her creative background but also served as a powerful engagement tool with nature.

"I feel like unless people have a real interest in like nature, sometimes it can be difficult to get people to like engage with it. Whereas if you give them something else that they were already interested in, it's like a segue into it... building that compassion to like the natural world."

Knowledge Development and Sector Awareness

Through practical experience, Kat built foundational knowledge in urban forestry, learning about tree selection, site planning, maintenance, and the multiple benefits of urban trees. While she already valued urban greenery, the traineeship deepened her understanding:

"I already knew [trees] massively reduced temperatures in cities, but I wasn't aware of how much... you kind of get an appreciation for just how much they do."

She also gained a clearer sense of how green roles intersect with other sectors, particularly through concepts like green prescribing.



"It ties into so many other different areas of work... not just organisations that specifically work in the environmental sector." Whilst Kat's had some green experience gardening at home, the traineeship provided her with structured, professional experience that she intends to carry forward. *"It's definitely increased my experience... and diversified it."*

Plans for the Future

Looking ahead, Kat hopes to secure a role in the green sector, ideally within a city farm, where community and nature intersect. She also plans to continue volunteering and stay involved in upcoming planting events. *"Even if I don't get a job in the sector straight away... I know I definitely want to volunteer."*

By the end of the programme, Kat reported feeling equipped to pursue a green career. *"With a role like [working at a city farm], I'd feel prepared."* She noted that the transferable skills from previous roles, such as operations and administration, proved useful in her traineeship. She also appreciated how the programme allowed flexibility to shape her experience.

Kat has begun to explore opportunities combining her environmental and creative interests. A potential collaboration Kat's become aware of through her expanded network to deliver poetry workshops at planting sites reflects this ambition.

Reflections and Recommendations

Kat described the traineeship as well-managed and inclusive, and felt welcomed, supported and involved by TfC, attending staff celebration and strategy planning days as well as project planning and team meetings. The only improvement she suggested was clearer signposting of external training opportunities early in the programme, a learning that can be used for future traineeships.

To other young people considering a green traineeship, Kat said: *"It's a really positive way to gain skills and learn on the job... The scope to make it your own, [that's] the thing I've enjoyed the most."*

HEIDE (GLASGOW)

In January 2024, Heide was recruited as a TfCA trainee in Glasgow from a background in environmental volunteering and a recent environmentally focussed Master's degree. She entered the traineeship with a strong interest in outdoor learning, youth engagement, and community environmental action. Over the course of the year, she took part in a wide range of activities, from tree planting to youth engagement events, and developed skills and confidence that have directly shaped her next steps into the green sector.

Starting Out: Motivation and Background

Before joining the traineeship, Heide had been volunteering with Borders Forest Trust, working particularly with young, unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors in outdoor settings. That experience sharpened her interest in nature connection and youth engagement:

"It was through a bit of that volunteering that I was kind of like, this is what I want to do, the kind of thing that I want to get more into."

The traineeship appealed to her because it combined youth work with environmental action:

"What appealed to me was the fact that it was working predominantly or had a focus on engaging young people... and obviously just the kind of greening, like having the opportunity to green the city."

Heide's traineeship touched almost every part of the TfCA project. Early in the year she was actively involved in launching Glasgow's youth programme, undertaking community mapping, building partnerships with universities and youth groups, and attending careers fairs to support recruitment. She took part in, or helped to deliver, a wide range of activities, including:

- **Tree planting sessions** with partner organisations such as Clyde Climate Forest.
- **Youth Summits**, including facilitating outdoor nature-connection activities.
- **Youth woodland creation**, intergenerational sessions, and upcoming planting days.
- **Tree walks**, which she later confidently led herself.
- **Youth newsletter** production, often monthly.
- **Youth engagement sessions**, including green careers events.

Summarising her experience, she noted that among her most meaningful experiences were the planting sessions, youth summit and intergenerational work:

"That's definitely my highlight... getting out and doing all the planting and running that and also getting young folk from Glasgow involved."

Skills Developed

Over the course of the traineeship, Heide gained confidence and capability across facilitation, communication, and environmental education.

"At the start I would not have been confident enough to turn up to a planting session and give a safety talk... whereas now I feel confident to do that."

"The engagement side of things is something I've also developed... engaging with different types of people, different demographics."

Plans for the Future

By the end of the traineeship, Heide felt a clear sense of direction about continuing in green, youth-focused roles. The traineeship directly influenced her next steps; she has secured a job with a youth-focused outdoor learning organisation, where she will work with 14–18-year-olds delivering nature-based activities, including conservation and tree planting.

"I feel so much more confident... especially around trees. It's definitely been influenced by the traineeship... They work hand in hand. Compared to before the traineeship, I feel like I've got more to talk about."

Accessibility and Challenges

Heide found the application process straightforward, but geography created some barriers to participation - something important to consider for future programme design:

"Some of the sites... are all outside the Glasgow City area... that was maybe a bit harder for some young people to get to... for me as well, I'd quite often be getting the train and have to get like two trains."

Overall Reflections and Advice for Future Trainees

Heide describes the traineeship as flexible, autonomous, and full of opportunities:

"I really enjoyed that kind of autonomy... a chance for me to experiment... and the training opportunities were really well managed."

Her advice for young people wanting to enter the green sector emphasises volunteering, joining community groups, and taking advantage of training opportunities where possible:

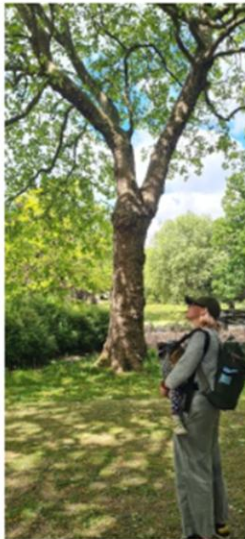
"Just try and join lots of relevant groups or organisations... that's how you meet people... take any training opportunity if you can."

Conclusion

Heide's journey through the TfCA traineeship demonstrates the transformative potential of high-quality, supported green skills programmes. Over the year, she gained practical experience, strengthened her confidence, expanded her professional network, and developed a clearer sense of purpose. The traineeship has not only equipped her with the tools to build a career in outdoor learning and conservation but has directly contributed to her securing her next role - a testament to how impactful these programmes can be for young people seeking to enter the environmental sector.

FSC: BUILDING LOCAL TREE KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

Bradford Course Attendee: Kelly Wiebe Case Study



A stay-at-home mum and freelance yoga teacher, Kelly Wiebe signed up to both in-person courses offered through the Trees for Climate Action project. As a child, Kelly lived in the USA alongside her family who owned and managed a woodland, so whilst her knowledge of trees was limited, she has generational roots in environmental awareness and a deep passion for nature.

Kelly entered the Discovering Trees course as a beginner, with her knowledge and understanding of trees and woodlands improving with each course. Labelling herself as an enthusiast, Kelly has used the knowledge and identification skills she has gained within the courses in the guided yoga sessions she leads outdoors, giving her a sense of confidence she did not previously have. This has allowed her to share her skills and knowledge with her peers, as well as young children when she has volunteered at a local school.

A key part of the courses that stood out for Kelly was the difference in tutor perspectives. After attending the Discovering Trees and Discovering Woodlands courses at the same venue, (Cliffe Castle in Keighley), Kelly found the variation in tutors refreshing, allowing her to gain a broader understanding of the species discussed by both.

Kelly chose to attend the TfCA courses to gain a deeper understanding of what is around her, to connect more with nature and others in her community, as well as provide professional career development. As a result of attending the tree training, she has gained more awareness and connectedness with trees in her community. Going back to her roots, Kelly one day wants to have her own woodland to manage and believes these courses have been invaluable to her understanding. In the interim, her aim is to share her knowledge amongst her yoga group, family and friends, hoping to inspire the same love of nature that she has. When time allows, due to having a young family, Kelly hopes to complete more training and courses, to help get her foot firmly on the career ladder within the sector, and she can do so with the confidence that the Trees for Climate Action project has given her.

Carolyn, Learner in Glasgow: Case Study



Carolyn has always been passionate about ecology and sharing her knowledge with others, despite not having a formal academic background in natural sciences. With a foundation in permaculture, she channels her enthusiasm into hands-on community work, nurturing young minds in a local community garden and tending to her own well-established allotment. Her journey has been far from conventional, at one point, she even lived in a woodland as a protester!

Today, Carolyn is spearheading a rewilding management approach to a community orchard. Her approach combines edible hedgerows, careful pruning, and the planting of native species. Carolyn's dedication to fostering ecological literacy in her community led her to the Trees for Climate Action project. She has significantly benefited from both the online and in-person courses. The online course strengthened her knowledge of tree species identification and ecology, while the in-person *Discovering Woodlands* course broadened her understanding of woodland management strategies. Carolyn highlights the value of the local ID guides, which she uses to enhance community engagement through tree planting sessions, and guided walks.

Spurred on through her experiences in the Trees for Climate Action project, Carolyn has been able to deepen her expertise, share it confidently with her community, and create spaces where people of all ages can connect with and learn from the natural world.

Case Study: Reena Uddin, Bradford Students' Wellbeing Walks Coordinator



Through Trees for Climate Action funding, the Field Studies Council supported student wellbeing walks at Bradford University with a local expert tree tutor takeover. Reena Uddin, Student Wellbeing Officer liaised with Field Studies Council on the integration of tree learning into these walks, enabling students to connect with nature while fostering friendships and supporting mental health. The sessions introduced tree biology, identification, and local ecology in an inclusive, engaging way. Students gained confidence and curiosity about their environment, one even volunteered to lead future walks, and another was inspired to take up nature photography. Reena observed lasting impacts on both students and herself, developing a deeper appreciation of trees and confidence in continuing nature-based learning as a regular part of wellbeing walks.

KEY CHALLENGES AND MITIGATING ACTIONS

The TfCA project was not without its challenges, all of which we notified the National Lottery Community Fund about in a timely manner and managed to overcome to reach a successful conclusion.

INTERNAL CHALLENGES

Regional Delivery Capacity

The TfCA project experienced several internal challenges over its delivery period. The project began with one staff member assigned to each city. While this structure enabled a consistent presence in each location, it also created constraints in delivery and monitoring capacity. To address this, TfCs worked closely with local delivery partners including Fruitworks and EADHA, which helped provide additional support. The recruitment of trainees in each city proved particularly effective, increasing capacity and enabling more reliable delivery and engagement as well as building a stronger team in each location. These learning points have directly informed the design of new regional programmes, for example, our Tree Equity for Hartlepool project now includes both a manager and a coordinator based locally, ensuring sufficient capacity from the outset.

Staff Turnover and Project Management

During the project, TfC has experienced high staff turnover including several staff members within the fundraising team. This resulted in some temporary inconsistencies in how the project and grant were managed.

Although challenging, this period enabled TfC to identify areas where internal processes needed strengthening. As a result, the charity has now embedded a clearer project management framework across teams. Project kick-off meetings are documented consistently with defined roles, responsibilities, and expected outputs. In addition, new project gateways and approval processes support teams to remain aligned with agreed objectives, timeframes, and budgets throughout delivery.

A further positive outcome was the introduction of monthly cross-team working group meetings during the project. These meetings ensured that staff at different levels had a shared understanding of the project and clarity around responsibilities. This approach has since become standard practice for all multi-year projects, reflecting the value it brought to coordination and internal communication.

Adaptation of Monitoring & Evaluation

TfCA used a range of monitoring tools, but several factors limited the quantity of survey data collected. In Bradford and Glasgow, Project Coordinators worked as single-person teams for the first two years, meaning they often delivered activities, liaised with partners, and managed administration on the day without additional support. As a result, they did not always have the capacity to administer surveys consistently. The number of survey types; child and adult pre- and post-surveys, baseline and endline tools, and additional monitoring linked to other projects also created confusion, particularly at events that required both pre- and post-surveys for one-off participants alongside baseline surveys for longer-term groups. In addition, the surveys had been designed for sessions lasting more than three hours or for longer-term engagement, whereas many activities were shorter practical workshops or promotional events where surveying would have detracted from the participant experience.

These challenges led to a smaller quantitative dataset than planned and prompted an adaptation of the monitoring approach. In years two and three, the project placed greater emphasis on qualitative interviews with key participants and stakeholders to generate deeper insight into delivery and outcomes. While this required additional staff time and could only be undertaken at selected events or with individuals willing to engage after the programme ended, the resulting dataset, though limited in size, provided valuable depth and helped fill gaps left by the reduced survey sample.

EXTERNAL CHALLENGES

Participant Recruitment

Engaging participants, particularly older young people and community groups, presented several challenges during the project. In response, the team adapted its approach to maintain participation levels while documenting important learning for future activity.

The project initially aimed to involve older young people (teenagers and young adults), however, sustained engagement proved difficult. To ensure activities could continue as planned, the team shifted its focus towards primary school children, where interest and participation were more consistent. While this adaptation supported delivery, it reduced opportunities to facilitate discussions around green careers. This highlighted the need for more tailored, age-specific engagement strategies in future programme design.

Though teenagers were the most difficult-to-reach group, when we did gain their participation, it was at these intergenerational sessions that we saw the most significant change at the end of the project. This is likely due to increased polarization between

teenagers/young adults and older adults, which tends not to exist between primary children and young adults. As a result, a key learning from this project surrounds the capacity and methods needed to access these hard-to-reach groups, such as working with youth centres and groups as well as increasing lead time for projects to seek out and build a connection with these groups.

Recruiting community groups also presented challenges, particularly in Glasgow. Despite outreach efforts, participation levels were lower than anticipated, indicating that engagement activities needed to begin earlier and be supported by stronger local networks. As one staff member reflected: *“Simply having schools and adult groups present at the same planting event does not automatically create intergenerational exchange.”* This insight helped clarify that achieving intergenerational outcomes requires more deliberate facilitation and relationship-building, rather than relying on co-located activities alone.

These experiences demonstrate the project’s responsiveness to real-time challenges while also identifying gaps in the original delivery model. The learning gained has informed subsequent programme planning, particularly around early engagement and targeted recruitment strategies.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

The project targeted socioeconomically deprived communities, using mapping to identify areas with low greenspace investment. Activities provided opportunities for local people to engage with nature and climate action.

“The youth [panel]... will give people some good steps into working in the green sector, which is also really positive.” - Project Manager

Despite these efforts, a clear learning that emerged from the project was that the time needed to recruit trainees and youth panel participants was more significant than initially estimated with limited interest and uptake. In the future extra capacity should be allocated to youth recruitment, particularly in socioeconomically deprived areas. The original aim to signpost older youth into green careers was only partially met due to the constraints in the number of eligible participants.

Recommendation: Future projects should adopt a targeted approach to EDI, including proactive recruitment strategies and accessibility planning. Embedding EDI metrics into monitoring frameworks and allocating staff resource will enable clearer assessment of progress and impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

Key learnings and recommendations for future projects have been developed throughout this project and drawn out through this evaluation. These recommendations will be embedded into our Multi-Year-Project Critical Success Factors to inform the development and delivery of our work in the future.

Recommendations to promote long-term sustainability of outcomes

- **Prioritise depth over breadth:** While numeric targets were exceeded, meaningful change occurred through repeated, structured interactions rather than one-off events. Reduce numeric targets to allow for sustained, meaningful engagement.
- **Plan for sustainability early:** develop succession strategies and diversify stakeholder involvement to reduce reliance on key individuals. This recommendation has been embedded into the Critical Success Factors for our Tree Equity for Hartlepool programme and is already being actioned through the creation of new resources.
- **Tap into existing community groups:** identify key champions within these groups i.e. passionate individuals who will spearhead the project and sustain the outcomes.
- **Work with a variety of partner organisations:** increase 'on the ground' capacity by partnering with local organisations that can provide additional skills and resources. For our new multi-year project in Hartlepool, we have increased 'on the ground' capacity by investing in extra internal staff resource and have deepened partnerships with the local council, with TfC staff working in the council offices 2x per week. Furthermore, the Tree Equity for Hartlepool project has built on partnership learnings from TfCA and has sought out local partners such as colleges, care homes and local networks.

Recommendations to promote Inclusivity

- **Strengthen EDI integration and allow more time for this:** implement targeted proactive recruitment strategies and embed EDI metrics into monitoring frameworks to ensure inclusivity and measure progress.
- **Embed intergenerational facilitation:** if running intergenerational programmes of work, incorporate structured workshops to break down stereotypes between different groups and foster genuine exchange between generations.

Recommendations to promote depth of Impact

- **Focus on older youth engagement:** if focussing on career outcomes, design activities that appeal to teenagers and young adults to maximise long-term impacts, including pathways into green careers. The greatest impact was seen when teenagers and older adults engaged consistently, supported by trusted community connectors.

- **Prioritise depth and longevity over scale:** reduce numeric engagement targets to allow more meaningful intergenerational interactions and sustained relationships. This is a key recommendation that we will use to scale up our regional work. For our Tree Equity in Hartlepool programme, we have set a lower engagement target of 1,500 local people over two years to prioritise multi-session engagement with the same individuals, directly building on this learning from TfCA.

TfCA demonstrated the power and complexity of intergenerational climate action. Its insights will inform TfC' future multi-year projects, ensuring that quality engagement, inclusivity, and long-term sustainability take priority over short-term metrics.

FINANCE

EXPENDITURE BUDGET

See appendix 4 for summary expenditure budget. Overall, the TfCA project was delivered on time and to the planned budget of £617,671. Actual expenditure in years 1-2 was lower than budgeted but the overall expenditure balanced out by end of project. The lag was due to time required to get the project started and make the connections necessary before activities really began to flow.

Notes on Variances

Overspend:

- Staff Costs – £46k (15%) overspend due to direct employment of paid trainee by TfC (originally planned to be hosted by local organisation), deployment of more senior staff to cover staffing gaps and to manage the FSC relationship, unforeseen cost of living increases, and extension of project by one quarter. Costs covered by underspend elsewhere and ensured strong delivery against planned outputs.
- Staff Travel & Expenses – £5k (174%) overspend due to accommodation and travel for the team being more expensive than budgeted, particularly in final year when activities ramped up. This includes travel and expenses for staff and paid trainees based in Bradford and Glasgow but also for their managers and supporting delivery staff travelling from London.
- Equipment and materials (activity) - £14k (55%) overspend by FSC on printing guides, covered by underspend elsewhere.
- Recruitment – £1k (60%) underspend; reallocated to other budget lines
- Publicity & Promotion – £2k (10%) overspend covered by underspend elsewhere.
- Evaluation - £5k (31%) overspend to cover staff costs required to evaluate and manage the grant, covered by underspend elsewhere.

- Full Cost Recovery - £2k (12%) overspend directly related to higher staffing costs at Tfc.
- Equipment and materials (capital) - £400 (68%) overspend to cover costs for shed to store equipment, covered by underspend elsewhere.

Underspend:

- Staff Training - £12k (32%) underspend - staff undertook valuable training but costs were lower than anticipated; budget reallocated elsewhere. This budget line included costs for two paid trainees who we'd planned to be hosted by community organisations in Bradford and Glasgow. We encountered difficulties finding an organisation willing to host in Glasgow and so the Glasgow trainee was employed directly by Tfc instead, accounting for £17k of the overspend on salaries. The Bradford trainee was hosted by a community organisation as planned.
- Volunteer Training - £22k (19%) underspend – this underspend was largely against FSC Training for community groups which did not take place.
- Volunteer Travel & Expenses - £1k (100%) underspend as volunteers chose not to claim any travel or expenses even when offered; reallocated to other budget lines
- Professional fees relating to any of the above (activity) - £8k (100%) underspend; budget reallocated to cover FSC printing costs.
- Event costs - £23k (41%) underspend; reallocated to help cover staff costs, which also helped retain quality of event delivery that achieved all milestones for engagement.
- Contingency - £5k (100%) used to cover areas of overspend.

INCOME BUDGET

Organisation	Planned income	Actual income	Variance
NLCF	£450,000	£450,000	£0
Tfc	£148,509	£146,708	-£1,801
FSC	£19,162	£21,476	£2,314
Total	£617,671	£618,634	£513

We also recorded 135 hours of volunteer time, which represents £1,816 of non-cash match funding contributions based on the national living wage at £13.45 per hour.

CONCLUSION

The TfCA project demonstrated that while large-scale engagement is achievable, the most meaningful and measurable impacts arose from programmes designed around repeated, structured participation. Although the project exceeded its overall engagement target, reaching more than 32,000 people including over 26,000 young people, the strongest outcomes were generated through long-term intergenerational projects, traineeships, and youth panels. These cohorts showed the greatest increases in skills, confidence, and plans for future action, with 91% of long-term participants reporting new skills and 75% indicating concrete intentions to continue taking action for urban trees.

Evidence from interviews highlights that bridging divides between generations required facilitated relationship-building rather than simply bringing together different age groups. Projects involving teenagers and young adults, supported by trusted community connectors, delivered the clearest shifts in perceptions, sense of belonging, and sustained contact beyond the funded period. Conversely, one-off events, although valuable for reach, offered more limited impact on deeper outcomes.

The project also generated credible indicators of long-term sustainability where existing community groups were engaged. Sites such as Cliffe Castle Orchard continue to be actively maintained nearly two years later, suggesting strengthened local capacity, though this remains vulnerable to the availability of key individuals. Recruitment challenges, particularly for older youth, and variable survey completion rates highlight areas where future monitoring and EDI strategies need earlier, more deliberate planning.

Overall, TfCA provides a robust foundation for future regional models: prioritising depth over scale, embedding succession planning from the outset, strengthening targeted youth pathways, and applying more systematic EDI frameworks to evidence long-term impact.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

The Trees for Climate Action Project set out to deliver against the following impact themes set out by TfC, based on the aims of the Bringing People Together programme:

1. Building connection between communities
2. Creating sustained engagement and long-term potential
3. Promoting learning and adapting
4. Foregrounding EDI

Planned Outcomes	Impact Theme	Outcomes Achieved
20,000 young people across Bradford and Glasgow are engaged in Trees for Climate Action, connecting different generations through shared climate ambitions, raising the profile of sustainable climate strategies in two core UK cities.	1, 4	TfCA has engaged 32,765 people in intergenerational and tree related activities across Bradford and Glasgow to build connection between communities comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26,298 young people (under 30) • 6,467 adults (over 30)
More people in Bradford and Glasgow have the knowledge, skills and experience to deliver local inter-generational tree-related activities independently within and beyond the project, boosting young people's awareness of, and access to, a career in the tree sector.	2, 3, 4	91% of long-term participants and 67% of short-term participants in TfCA reported gaining new skills. Their confidence in tree planting and maintenance increased significantly. Through targeting young people in socioeconomically deprived areas e.g Keighley and Whetley in Bradford and, Dunterlie and Bellshill in Glasgow, the programme prioritised equitable access to nature. This was particularly evident through our traineeships

		<p>which helped to provide a springboard into to the notoriously difficult to access green sector.</p> <p>Working with delivery partners and the FSC has helped to upskill volunteers and provide them with the knowledge, skills and experience needed to deliver local, tree related activities.</p>
<p>Boosting local capacity of Council and community groups to create a sustainable, replicable model for TfC regional work (outside of London Head Office vicinity).</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Partnerships with local organisations such as EADHA Enterprises, Yorgreen CiC and Fruitworks have helped to boost on-the-ground capacity in Bradford and Glasgow. These organisations have helped to reduce reliance on the council and have boosted the capacity of community groups through providing training and connecting communities.</p> <p>With TfC’s help, Bradford has achieved recognition through Tree Cities of The World and a number of Glasgow City Region councils have applied for recognition, awaiting results in 2026.</p> <p>TfC has been building on learnings from this project to develop a sustainable, replicable model of regional delivery. These lessons have informed our Tree Equity for Hartlepool project which builds on the expertise we’ve developed over the course of the Trees for Climate Action Project.</p>

APPENDIX 2: PROJECT OUTPUTS

TfC set SMART targets to monitor progress throughout the project. See table below for the objectives and achievement status.

Planned Output	Outputs Delivered	Status
Co-design and deliver a comprehensive programme of volunteering, training and activities to upskill and professionalise young people.	TfCA delivered a large number of volunteering and training activities to upskill volunteers. These were not all specifically co-designed for young people but did benefit young people.	Mostly Achieved
School Climate Action: Deliver 22 tree-related projects with and/or in primary and secondary schools with 10,320 young people in Bradford and Glasgow.	We delivered 52+ tree-related projects with and/or in primary and secondary schools with 12,000+ young people in Bradford and Glasgow.	Exceeded
Create and support 2 Youth Panels for 30 young people (~15 per city) to learn how to plan, develop and deliver urban tree planting projects. Supporting skills such as project management, fundraising and communication.	Two youth panels were created for each city, engaging 18 young people across the cities. The youth panels covered topics such as how to plan for and deliver and urban tree planting projects, how to deliver and plan for tree maintenance projects, information around green careers and tree identification training. These topics aimed to develop their project management and communication skills.	Partially Achieved
20 volunteering opportunities for 1,000 young people to plant and care for trees, with the aim to create of 2 Climate Woodlands (1 per city) by March 2025. Includes connect young people with professionals (e.g. Council, NGOs) and older volunteers (e.g. Lord/Deputy Lieutenants) through learning opportunities such as mentoring and work experience.	34 volunteering opportunities were created for 243 young people to plant and care for trees. We created several woodlands and orchards across both cities. Uptake by professionals and older volunteers was limited.	Mostly Achieved

<p>TfC will deliver 10 practical training courses for 200 young people to plant and care for trees in Bradford and Glasgow; and recruit 4 paid trainees on 2 x 6-month placements (2 per planting season)</p> <p>FSC will deliver 21 training courses (18 place-based + 3 online) to upskill and professionalise 360 people in Bradford and Glasgow (270 place-based + 90 online) including 288 young people (80%).</p>	<p>TfC delivered 9 forest garden training sessions in Bradford, but these tended to engage the same groups of people on multiple sessions, leading to sustained engagement with the courses, but a lower overall engagement total of 30 young people and 9 over 30's</p> <p>TfC recruited 2 x 12-month trainee placements equivalent to 4 x 6-month placements.</p> <p>FSC delivered 28 training courses (22 place-based + 6 online) these sessions engaged 344 people, of which 219 were under the age of 30.</p>	<p>Mostly Achieved</p>
<p>Tree Tutors (FSC): Train 12 new accredited Tree Tutors in Bradford and Glasgow including 2 young people, building the pedagogical skills and personal confidence to deliver training courses themselves, and helping to address the shortage of tree professionals.</p>	<p>FSC trained 13 new accredited Tree Tutors across Bradford and Glasgow, four of whom were aged 18-30.</p>	<p>Exceeded</p>
<p>Tree guides (FSC): Design 2 tree guides tailored to each city and disseminate to individuals/groups to engage 10,200 people in Glasgow and Bradford including 8,160 young people (80%).</p>	<p>FSC designed 2 tree guides tailored to each city and engaged 15, 017 people across Bradford and Glasgow, of which 11, 862 were young people (79%). FSC created summer guides and winter guides for each city, of which roughly 1500 was given to each TfC Project Coordinator</p>	<p>Achieved</p>
<p>Support <9 local authorities in Bradford and Glasgow City Region to achieve and maintain recognition through Tree Cities of the World including formation of a Tree Board (potential to link to Youth Panel)</p>	<p>Bradford achieved the status during the programme, and we are working with Glasgow councils to achieve this status as the programme winds down.</p>	<p>Not achieved</p>

Engage local 2 local NGOs (1 per city) to deliver local tree-related programmes for young people in Bradford and Glasgow	We engaged 4 local NGO's (Yorgreen CIC and Fruitworks in Bradford as well as EADHA and CCF in Glasgow) to deliver local tree-related programmes for young people in Bradford and Glasgow	Exceeded
Create a replicable model of regional delivery to scale up sustainable community urban forest programme with social and environmental impact	Whilst the project has facilitated valuable learnings and informed an upcoming regional delivery project, there are modifications that would need to be made to scale up this model. These are being applied to new projects in development.	Partially achieved

APPENDIX 3: PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND DIRECT BENEFICIARIES

Trees for Cities Engagement			Number of under 30's engaged			Number of over 30's engaged
Category	Activity type	Example activities	5- 11-year-olds	12- 17-year-olds	18- 30-year-olds	30+
School Climate Action Bradford	Primary Project	School planting days, school maintenance days, whole school assemblies, youth forums, poetry slams tree ID walks, engagement fairs, forest school sessions, apple juicing sessions, co-design sessions	6,852	39	74	765
	Secondary Projects		364	1,866	35	67
School Climate Action Glasgow	Primary Project		2,482	6	0	148
	Secondary Projects		0	294	8	49
Youth Panel Bradford	Youth Panel session	Co-design sessions, planning for woodlands, site prep, GenEarth green career workshops, tree ID walks, planting days.	0	1	10	8
Youth Panel Glasgow	Youth Panel session		0	0	10	0
Volunteering Opportunities Bradford	Community Planting Event etc.	Site visits, tree planting, tree maintenance, flyering, community juicing and co-design sessions	24	73	95	240

Volunteering Opportunities Glasgow	Community Planting Event etc.		14	13	76	117
Training Bradford	Practical training Courses	Forest Garden training, maintenance training, planting training, creating dead hedging, planning how to deliver planting activities, site surveying	0	0	12	19
Training Glasgow			0	0	7	0
Interns Bradford	Intern induction	Internship	0	0	1	0
Interns Glasgow	Intern induction	Internship	0	0	1	0
Other tree related activities Bradford	events/ festivals/ stalls	Tree ID walks, green career talks, pop-up fair stalls, green week, poetree, dragons den, creative workshops	592	553	671	1,662
Other tree related activities Glasgow			128	40	159	262
SUBTOTAL TREES FOR CITIES			14,500			3,337
			17,837			
FSC ENGAGEMENT			Number of under 30's engaged		Number of over 30's engaged	
Tree ID Guides Distributed	Summer tree guides Glasgow - registration		2,745		719	
	Summer tree guides Bradford - registration		1,441		496	
	Summer tree guides Glasgow - distributed		4,843		153	
	Summer tree guides Bradford - distributed		2,652		108	
	Winter guides posted Glasgow		0		1,390	
	Winter guides posted Bradford		0		206	
	Excess stock distributed Glasgow		0		600	

	Excess stock distributed Bradford	0	20
Tree Training Courses	Bradford - in person	19	45
	Bradford - online	39	5
	Bradford 1/2-day Tree Wellness Walk	6	4
	Bradford Discovering Woodlands	11	16
	Glasgow - in person	75	26
	Glasgow - online	40	-4
	Glasgow Discovering Woodlands	23	30
	Bradford additional activities	6	3
Tree Tutors	Tutors	4	8
SUBTOTAL FSC		11,905	3,825
			15,730
COMBINED BENEFICIARY NUMBERS		26,405	7,162
			33,567

APPENDIX 4: EXPENDITURE BUDGET

Cost Heading	Total Budget	Total Spend	Total Variance	% Variance
Staff costs	£302,991	£347,404	-£45,841	-15%
Training for staff	£38,444	£26,108	£12,336	32%
Training for volunteers	£119,120	£97,013	£22,107	19%
Travel & expenses for staff	£2,800	£7,679	-£4,879	-174%
Travel & expenses for volunteers	£1,350	£-	£1,350	100%
Equipment and materials (activity)	£26,000	£40,369	-£14,369	-55%
Recruitment	£2,300	£912	£1,388	60%
Publicity and promotion	£24,000	£26,285	-£2,285	-10%
Professional fees relating to any of the above (activity)	£7,980	£-	£7,980	100%
Other costs	£1,000	£1,000	£-	0%
Evaluation	£16,000	£20,880	-£4,880	-31%
Full cost recovery	£15,559	£17,488	-£1,929	-12%
Event Costs	£55,000	£32,446	£22,554	41%
Equipment and materials (capital)	£626	£1,049	-£423	-68%
Contingency	£4,501	£-	£4,501	
	£617,671	£618,634	-£963	