

Information on the Croft Carbon College

Our Vision for the Croft Carbon College

The CCC will be an enduring local centre of excellence for raising environmental awareness and for integrating the work and expertise of individuals and organisations concerned with what we see as the related issues of climate change, mass extinction and socio-economic inequality, with consequences which include mental and physical ill health (loneliness, depression, self-harm, eating disorders, obesity, type II diabetes...), stigmatisation, racism, etc.



The CCC will be an accessible venue for bringing together many of the entities currently tackling such issues in a more or less isolated way. Accordingly, we envisage some courses/workshops being run by Leith Community Crops in Pots employees and some by sessional workers, of whom several may come from other local organisations (and possibly national ones).

The courses* and facilities the venue offers will draw in a wide cross-section of the local community, thus 'normalising' and 'mainstreaming' environmental concerns and activities. Inevitably, participants who have signed up for a course in one particular topic, as well as people simply using the facilities as a café or meeting space, will be exposed to information on various social and environmental issues, and to people actively engaged in working on them. This will be helped by the fact that the CCC will, in the long run, be situated in the refurbished building on Leith Community Croft, with its community growing project, composting facilities, social enterprise café, farmers' market, farm shop, nature-play and biodiversity areas, etc.

***Initially courses and workshops will be aimed at adults only (18+), and we are only asking adults to complete this survey.**

Background



The northern end of Leith Community Croft during our Harvest Festival. The pavilion building, where the Croft Carbon College will ultimately be based, can be seen in the background.

Leith Community Crops in Pots (a [registered Scottish charity](#)) is hoping that it will be given 25-year-leases for the land at the northwestern corner of Leith Links now known as Leith Community Croft (which LCCiP currently manages with and for the local community), and for the pavilion building on this land. On the basis of this, LCCiP hopes to proceed with the Big Lottery Fund-supported modification and refurbishment of the building.

Ideas for the building include a social enterprise café and a farm shop, and previous surveys showed great support for these. In addition, we are thinking of basing an education project there, provisionally titled the **Croft Carbon College**, which would be

integrated with our other work and also bring in expertise from other local organisations and individuals (and potentially from further afield). We are applying for support from the Climate Challenge Fund to set this up. As part of the requirements for such funding and as a matter of common sense and our own policy, we are surveying the opinion of stakeholders so that we can incorporate their views into the final funding application.

CCF funding would let us employ a Development Officer, who would have overall charge of setting up the proposed project, and an Engagement and Education Officer, who would organise the courses and workshops. Both officers would work in ongoing consultation with the board of LCCiP and stakeholders (you!) The funding would also potentially let us employ sessional workers to run some courses and help with other aspects of the

project.

While the CCC would ultimately be based in the pavilion building, work on the building might take some time, so those parts of courses and workshops requiring an indoor environment would initially be held in rented premises not far from Leith Community Croft.

Restrictions on courses/workshops

While we want all courses to be enjoyable, because we are applying for Climate Challenge Fund support all participants will need to commit to saving carbon in some way (example given later in this survey). (Carbon-saving information will generally be included in course inductions.)

Everything the CCC does will also have to fit in with LCCiP's purposes:

1. To advance environmental protection and/or improvement by encouraging and supporting the people of Leith:
 - (i) to grow vegetables and fruit for food in urban spaces, so reducing their food miles and carbon footprint;
 - (ii) to grow flowers for bees and other pollinating insects, thus improving both local aesthetics and biodiversity.
2. To provide and organise recreational activities with the object of improving the wellbeing of the people of Leith through:
 - (i) encouraging, educating and supporting them to eat their own locally grown fruit and vegetables, improving diet and dietary awareness;
 - (ii) providing opportunities for recreational activities, such as connecting with nature/nature play for children;
 - (iii) providing opportunities for people to meet each other and exchange knowledge and goods (plants, food, recipes and plant-growing know-how), using Non-Violent Communication (NVC) skills where appropriate, so improving community cohesion, and mental/emotional wellbeing.
3. To advance the education of both children and adults living in Leith with regard to the value of natural systems and on sustainable lifestyles, so that present generations do not threaten the quality of life for future generations.
4. To advance education and environmental protection by supporting schools and nurseries in achieving their environmental goals.