



**GRASSMARKET
COMMUNITY
PROJECT**

Spotlight



**TARTAN TAKEOVER
VOLUNTEER WEEK
SUMMER PROGRAMME**

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE TO SOCIAL IMPACT



**VOL
02**

FROM

Social Enterprise

What a spring we have had!

Our Coffee Saints cafés have been busy, we've supported events including the Church of Scotland's General Assembly, our tartan shop has made hundreds of products, and our woodwork team have been creating beautiful commissions for homes and gardens. We also proudly took part in the Tartan Parade.

Now we're looking ahead to a busy summer with the Royal Highland Show, the Edinburgh Festival, and exciting new partnerships.

While things are busy, what matters most is that every coffee bought, every tartan product purchased, and every handcrafted woodwork piece helps provide opportunities and support for some of Edinburgh's most vulnerable adults and helps keep our charity going.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support us, it really does make a difference.

Catherine, Social Enterprise Director

TO

Social Impact

It has been a busy and inspiring few months across our Members and Open Door Services. From daily community meals, art, textiles and yoga sessions to residential trips, storytelling workshops, museum visits and new learning opportunities, our members have continued to make the most of everything on offer!

This year an average of 150 individual members have engaged with our activities each month, while attendance at our Open Door Meals service on has seen an average of 50 people each week - serving over a 1000 meals so far! We now have more than 430 registered members and 100 active volunteers helping to make our community such a welcoming place to be.

We're particularly proud of our new Member Learner Pathway, which is already supporting members to volunteer in our Social Enterprises building skills, confidence and progress towards their goals. Across all our activities, members consistently tell us about the difference GCP makes in their lives:

"I really enjoy coming... it makes me feel good about myself."

"Thanks so much for making me feel more confident about myself."

Looking ahead to summer, we're super excited about our showcase preparations, a new poetry publication, our first ever single will be released, more partnership activities across the city, and plenty of opportunities for members to connect, learn and have fun together.

Thank you to everyone who helps make this community what it is!

Perry, Head of Member Services

Volunteer Week 1st - 7th June

“The volunteers are very special people.”



We want to take a moment to celebrate one of the things GCP does best – our volunteers. We are incredibly fortunate to have such an amazing team who support GCP throughout the year. Whether it's helping with activities, supporting Tartan, or being part of our meals, their time and dedication make a real difference.

It's rare to have such a wide range of people who commit week after week to supporting our community. Quite simply, we couldn't run our members' programme without their generosity and commitment.

Keep an eye on our socials as we introduce you to some of our incredible volunteers, #Volunteerweek

We're also really looking forward to our upcoming celebration night, where we'll be highlighting and sharing their successes from across GCP.

“The volunteers are so kind and really make us feel seen.” – Doreen (GCP Member)



Thank you for being your amazing selves, and for being part of such positive change in our community.



Community Journeys

One of the things that makes our community so special is the people who bring it to life. Anne and Frank have each taken their own path through the project, getting involved in different ways and sharing their time, skills, and passion with others. Their stories show how community is built through connection, participation, and a willingness to give back.

Frank: From Member to Mentor

Frank first joined us as one of our members, getting involved in many different activities and it quickly became clear why! Frank has many, many talents and is always keen to share them with others.

Today, Frank is one of our valued art volunteers, bringing his inspiration, expertise, and calm nature to support the group alongside Sophie, who also brings creativity and joy to every session. Together, they help create a welcoming and encouraging space for everyone involved.

Frank also supports our events with his incredible piano playing and loves sharing his passion for the arts whenever he can. His creativity, kindness, and willingness to help others make a huge difference to our community.

We appreciate Frank so much and are incredibly grateful that he shares his amazing talents with us.



Anne: At the Heart of It All

Anne has been a volunteer with us for many years, and over that time she has become such an important part of our community. She has supported our cafés, served meals during our Open Door meal service, and regularly gets involved in activities and trips. Anne also co-leads our long walks, helping to promote physical wellbeing and encourage others to stay active. One of the many things that makes Anne so inspiring is her involvement with our Tartan project. Whether she is working in our tartan shop or helping to lead corporate tartan cutting days, Anne always throws herself into everything she does.

Anne truly gets involved in every part of the project, and we all love having her around. She is such a light within our community and is always working hard with a smile on her face.

Thank you, Anne, for everything you do!



Making Every Mile Count

Edward has been a valued part of our community for many years, regularly supporting our Open Door meals and always willing to help wherever he can. While many people might avoid the biggest task of the day, Ed quietly takes it on with a smile keeping on top of the dishes week after week and helping everything run smoothly behind the scenes.

This year, Edward went above and beyond in support of the project by taking on the incredible challenge of the Edinburgh Marathon. Running over 20 miles in the recent heat was no easy task, but Ed showed determination, commitment, and resilience every step of the way.

Not only did he complete this amazing challenge, but he also raised over an incredible £1,100 for the project.



Thanks to Edward's fundraising efforts, we will be able to continue supporting our weekly meals service and provide essential skills opportunities for adults in our community. His kindness and dedication will make a real difference to so many people.

Edward's support reminds us what community is all about showing up for others, helping where you can, and going the extra mile (quite literally!) to make a positive impact.

We are so proud of everything Ed has achieved and incredibly grateful for his continued support.



Thank you, Ed!



Partnership in Action

Mercat Tours

Since 2017, our partnership with Mercat Tours has been helping break down barriers for our members, opening up new ways to experience the city they call home.

Through guided walking tours of Edinburgh, members explore the streets, stories, and hidden history of the city in a way that is welcoming and accessible. For many, it's a chance to see familiar places differently, build confidence, and feel more connected to their community.

The partnership also offers something truly special: the opportunity to take part in a residential stay at Mercat's Birnam House. This experience gives members time away to relax, build independence, and strengthen friendships in a supportive environment.

Year after year, Mercat Tours has shown a genuine commitment to creating inclusive, meaningful experiences, helping our members grow in confidence and connection.





SUMMER SHOWCASE

BOOK YOUR TICKETS!

16TH JULY 4PM - 6PM

**GREETING
CARDS**

WOODWORK

TARTAN

FOOD

MUSIC

JOIN US AS WE THROW OPEN THE DOORS OF OUR FOR OUR ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF CREATIVITY, COMMUNITY, AND CONNECTION.

ENJOY MEMBER PERFORMANCES, EXPLORE OUR SUMMER ART EXHIBITION, AND BROWSE STALLS AND DISPLAYS FEATURING THE TALENTS OF OUR MEMBERS AND PARTNERS — AND TRY OUR KITCHEN'S TASTY TREATS. DISCOVER THE HEART OF THE EDINBURGH AT GRASSMARKET COMMUNITY PROJECT, A THRIVING NETWORK OF PEOPLE WORKING

TOGETHER TO BUILD CONFIDENCE, PURPOSE, AND BELONGING.



GCP Shines at Scotland's 2nd Tartan Parade



We were very proud to take part in Scotland's 2nd Tartan Parade on Saturday 9th May 2026, joining more than 2,500 pipers, dancers, charities, and clans in a spectacular celebration of Scottish culture and community spirit through the heart of Edinburgh. The atmosphere throughout the city was truly unforgettable, with thousands of spectators lining the Royal Mile, standing five and six people deep to catch a glimpse of the colourful procession. From the sound of the pipes echoing through the historic streets to the incredible energy of the crowds, the parade showcased the very best of Scotland and its people. This year was especially exciting for us as we were joined by our very own mascot, five-month-old puppy Mabel, who quickly became the star of the show. Wearing her beautiful Greyfriars tartan coat, Mabel captured hearts all along the parade route and brought smiles to everyone she met.



We were also delighted to be joined by Nashy from Keep Edinburgh Thriving, whose support and enthusiasm added even more positivity to a fantastic day.

The event was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate community, connection, and the spirit of Edinburgh. Our staff, members, and volunteers represented the Grassmarket Community Project with pride, warmth, and enthusiasm throughout the day, and we could not be prouder of everyone involved.

Most of all, the parade reminded us how fortunate we are to be part of this beautiful city and its vibrant community. It was a truly memorable day filled with laughter, music, friendship, and celebration and one we will cherish for years to come. We can't wait till next year!



Tartan Parade - 2026 | E
LENS STORIES | Follow Us On
By Sandarwan Kathasiri

The Grassmarket Community Heads to the Royal Highland Show



We're really looking forward to heading to the Royal Highland Show from 18th-21st June with Grassmarket Tartans & Woodwork.

Our tartan volunteers and woodworking team have been working really hard creating lots of different stunning products for the home and garden. We'll be bringing along a great selection of handmade items, including tartan bags, cushions, dog wear, wooden bird boxes and squirrel feeders. Everything is made with care and inspired by the Scottish styles and traditions we love.



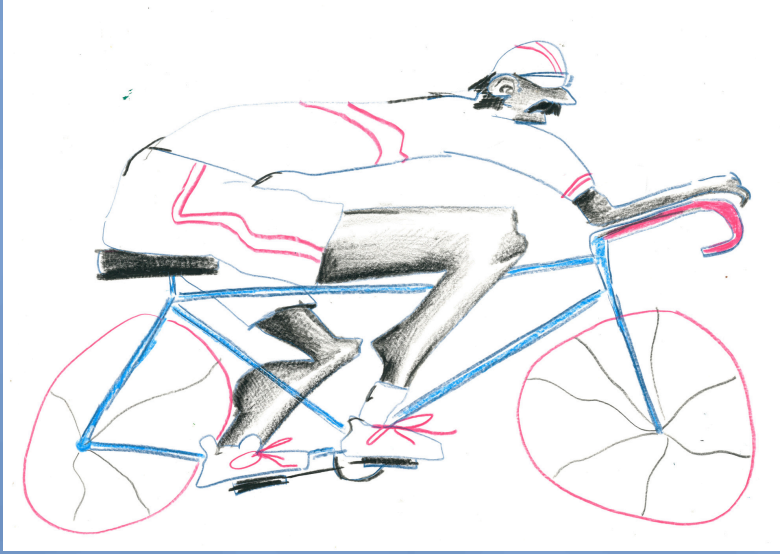
The Royal Highland Show is always a brilliant few days and we're excited to meet lots of new people, and share what we've been working on. We're also hoping the weather stays fine and the sun makes an appearance!

If you're visiting the show, come and say hello

we'd love to see you there!



Members



PO



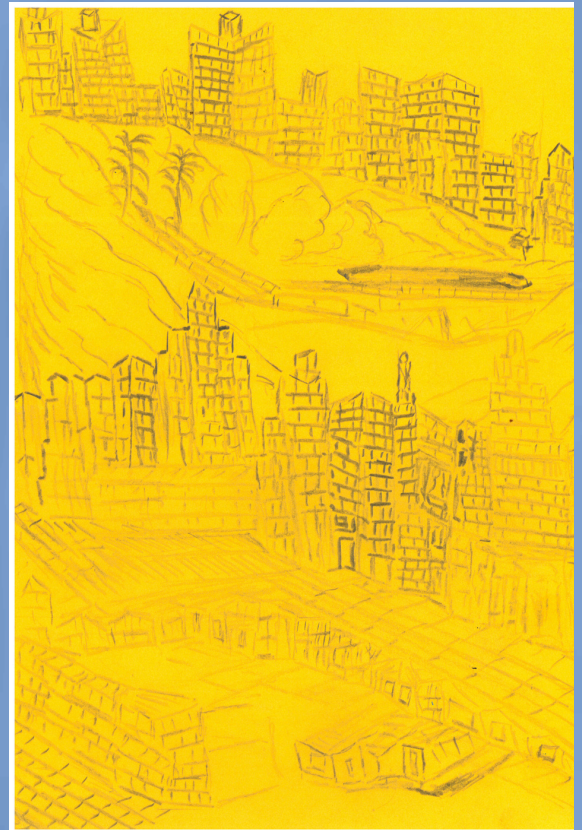
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Showcase



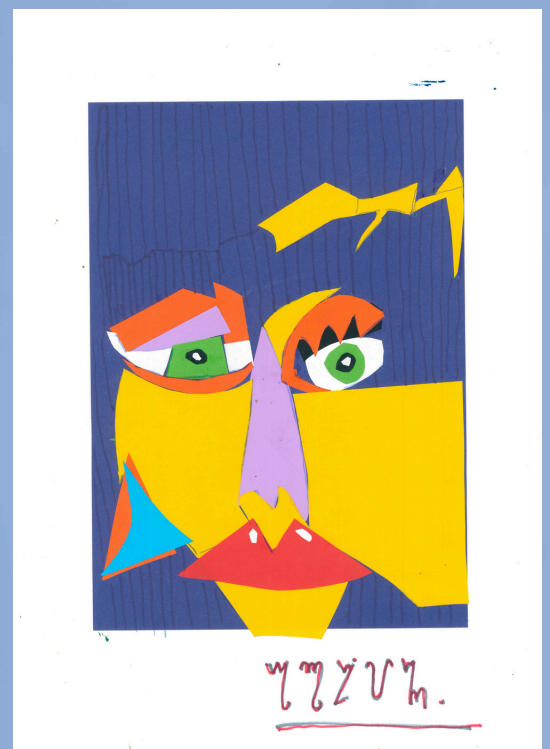
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MEMBERS COLLAGE



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Hidden Heroes



Our kitchen team plays a huge role in keeping things running smoothly every day, and one of those important faces is Peter, who has been part of the Grassmarket community since 2015.

Working as a KP, Peter's role is simple but essential: washing dishes and helping keep the kitchen moving during busy lunch services. But for him, Grassmarket has always been about more than just kitchen work.

Peter first came to Grassmarket to meet new people, learn new skills, improve his computer skills, and learn how to work alongside others. Over the years, it has become an important part of his weekly routine and community.

Mondays begin with the IT class, followed by lunch and an afternoon kitchen shift washing members' lunch dishes and café dishes. Thursdays are spent in the kitchen all day, where he enjoys chatting with staff, volunteers, and fellow members over a coffee while helping out behind the scenes.



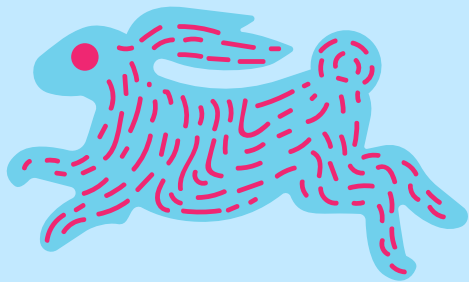
Q+A with Peter!

What Peter enjoys most is the people:

"Mixing with friends and people who I get on with. I like helping with members lunch and doing the dishes."

Even on the busiest days, teamwork keeps motivation high:

"Other people help me with dishes and that motivates me."



He also shared a fun fact many people might not know about kitchen work:

"The chopping boards are different colours for different foods."

And when it comes to favourite members lunches, the answer came quickly:

"Baked potato with cheese, beans and tuna."

Peter's advice for anyone thinking about volunteering is simple but meaningful:

"It helps to get on with other people."

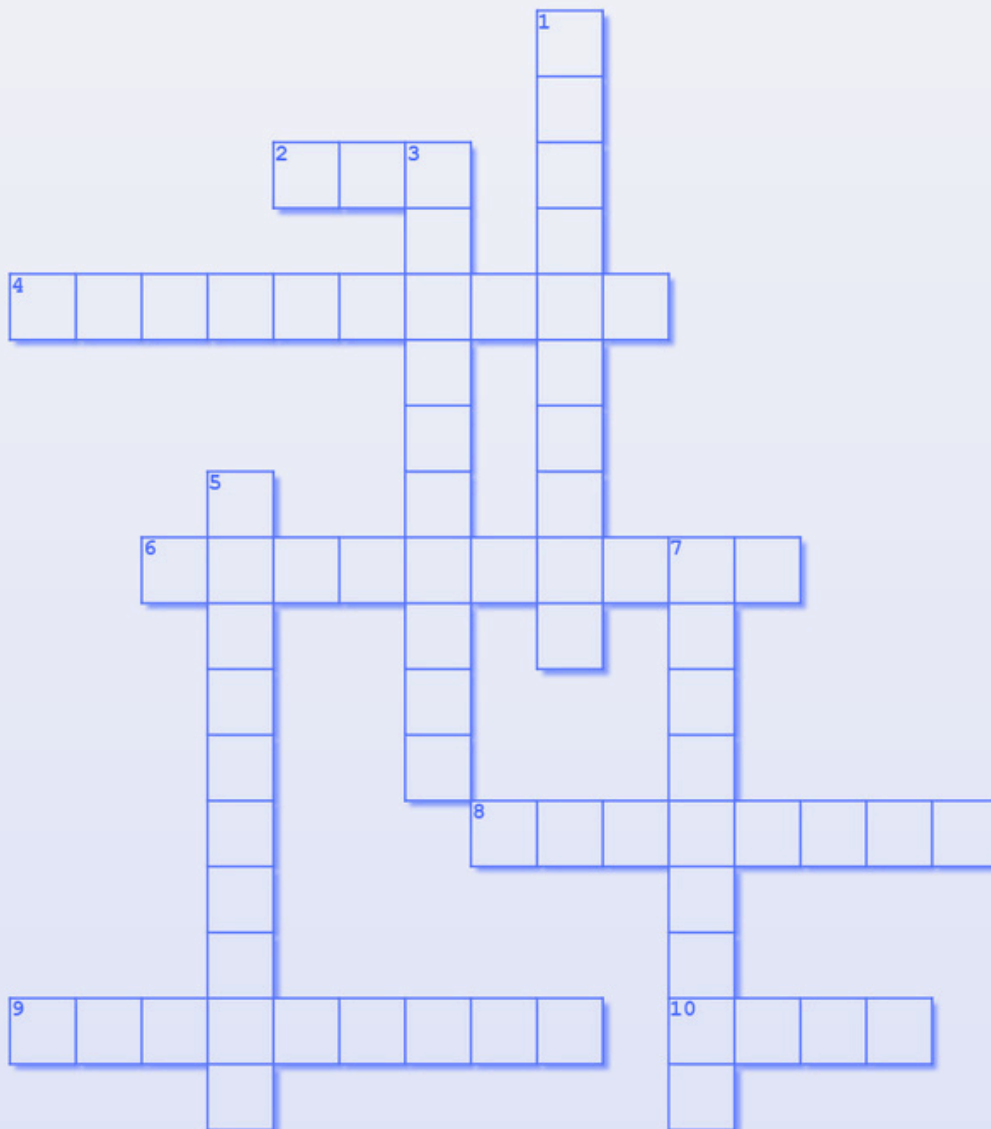
When asked to describe Grassmarket in two words, his response was:

"Very good."

Name: _____

GCP Volunteer Crossword

Complete the crossword puzzle below



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

2. Scheme volunteers need to join
4. People who help run activities, workshops and meals
6. What volunteers help build in members
8. To grow, develop and thrive
9. City where GCP is based
10. Something volunteers generously give

Down

1. Event organised to raise money for a cause
3. Historic Edinburgh Kirk that helped launch the project
5. A promise to regularly support a cause
7. A place where everybody belongs and all are welcome



Celebrating Our Volunteers

Recently, we came together for a special Volunteer Celebration Night! an opportunity to recognise and thank the incredible individuals who give their time, energy and enthusiasm to our community.

The evening was a chance for volunteers to relax, connect with one another and celebrate everything they have helped achieve over the past year. Over dinner, there was plenty of conversation, laughter and shared stories, reminding us just how much our community is built on the dedication of local people.

Entertainment came in the form of a lively "Guess the Tune" piano game hosted by Alison Gregson, which brought out everyone's competitive side and created lots of memorable moments. We were also treated to wonderful musical performances from volunteer students Catriona and Ellie.

To round off the evening, volunteers were entered into a raffle featuring a fantastic range of prizes. Thanks to the generosity of local businesses and neighbours, prizes included a £100 voucher from Highland Experience, family tickets to Camera Obscura, and a tote bag filled with books from Lighthouse Books. There was plenty of excitement as the winning tickets were drawn and prizes found their new owners.

Most importantly, the evening was about showing our appreciation. Volunteers are at the heart of what we do, helping to create a welcoming, vibrant and supportive community for everyone. It was wonderful to see so many people come together to celebrate their contributions, strengthen friendships and simply enjoy a well-deserved evening of fun.

A huge thank you to every volunteer. We are incredibly grateful for everything you do, and we were delighted to have this opportunity to celebrate you.



Breaking News: Members Launch Rival Publication

They say competition brings out the best in people and if that's true, we're proud to be competing with the talented team behind Grasshopper!

Created entirely by our members, Grasshopper is much more than a magazine. It's a celebration of creativity, collaboration, and the diverse voices that make our community so special. From thoughtful articles and personal stories to poetry, artwork, and everything in between, each edition reflects the passion, talent, and individuality of those involved.

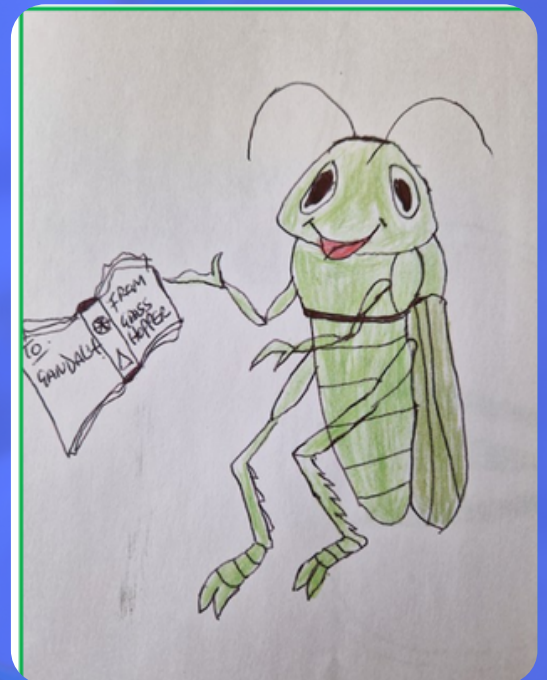
Behind every page are members who have worked hard to develop ideas, share their experiences, learn new skills, and support one another in bringing the magazine to life. Watching Grasshopper grow has been inspiring, and we're incredibly proud of everyone who has contributed to its success.

What makes the magazine truly special is the range of perspectives it showcases. Every piece adds something unique, creating a publication that is rich, engaging, and unmistakably community led.

So while we might jokingly call them our rivals, the truth is we're delighted to share the spotlight with such a talented group of writers, artists, and creators. Their enthusiasm and dedication continue to inspire us all and demonstrate what can be achieved when people come together to create something meaningful.

Take a look at the latest edition of Grasshopper by scanning the QR code or following the link below. We think you'll agree that the future of publishing is in very capable hands!

QR Code



Grasshopper: Created by members, inspired by community, and enjoyed by all

<https://grassmarket.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Publisher-Magazine-Edition-2.pdf>

Support Us

DONATE ❤️

With your support, this is what our members say:

"GCP gave me a space to talk and feel understood."

"I've had the chance to try new things and build my confidence."

"Being part of this community helped me improve my skills and believe in myself again."

"I've made connections here that genuinely changed my life."

"GCP helped me feel included, supported, and valued."



grassmarket
community project

Every donation helps create more moments like these.

Your support gives people opportunities to grow, connect, learn new skills, and become part of a community where everyone is encouraged to thrive together.

Without donations, these opportunities would not be possible.

Get involved

Help us continue building a welcoming community where people can improve themselves, support one another, and discover new opportunities.

Every contribution makes a difference.

DONATE ❤️



Creating Summer Memories Together

Summer is always one of the most exciting times of the year for our community. It is a chance to get out, try new things, explore new places, and most importantly, create lasting memories together.

Every year, our summer programme gives members opportunities that many of us can take for granted! whether that's travelling somewhere new, spending time outdoors, visiting local attractions, or simply enjoying a day out with friends.

Over the years, these experiences have led to some truly unforgettable moments.

"I have never sat on a train before."

"This is my first trip out with others."

"I have enjoyed being outdoors and seeing parts of Edinburgh I have never seen before."

These are the moments that remind us why our summer programme matters so much.



In previous years, we have worked hard to make these opportunities possible. Alongside the support of our community, we have often had to hire out our space and find creative ways to raise funds so that we can continue delivering meaningful activities and experiences throughout the summer months.

Thanks to that support, our members have enjoyed day trips, outdoor adventures, new experiences, and opportunities to build confidence, friendships, and independence.

This summer, we want to do even more.

Whether it's discovering a new place, sharing a picnic in the park, travelling on a train for the very first time, or simply spending quality time together, every activity helps create memories that can last a lifetime.

How You Can Help

We know that great communities are built when people come together. If you would like to support our summer programme, every contribution big or small makes a difference. Your donation can help cover transport, activities, meals, and the costs of creating opportunities that many of our members may not otherwise experience.

We would also love to hear from local organisations, businesses, attractions, and community groups who may be able to host a visit, offer an experience, or suggest somewhere our members could explore this summer.

Together, we can help create new experiences, new friendships, and new memories.



Help Us Make This Summer Amazing

Every journey starts with a first step, a first train ride, a first adventure, or a first day out with friends.

With your support, we can continue making those moments happen.

Donate, partner with us, suggest a visit, or simply spread the word. Together, let's make this an amazing summer full of memories that will last for years to come.



SUPPORT A GREAT
SUMMER
THANK YOU!



Where to find us

The Grassmarket Community Project

The Grassmarket Community Project is a community of over 500 people working together to support positive changes in one another's lives. Whether you're looking for connection, support, opportunities to learn, or simply a welcoming place to belong, you'll find a warm welcome here.

📍 86 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh EH1 2QA
Follow us: Facebook: @grassmarketcommunityproject
& Instagram: @grassmarketcommunity



Coffee Saints

Visit one of our two Coffee Saints cafés:
Coffee Saints at The Grassmarket Community Project

📍 86 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh EH1 2QA
Coffee Saints Little King Street
📍 2a Little King Street, Edinburgh EH1 3AR
Serving great coffee, delicious food, and a warm welcome in the heart of Edinburgh.

Follow us: Instagram: @coffeesaintscafe

Grassmarket Tartan

Discover a range of quality tartan products, Scottish gifts, and souvenirs at our independent tartan shop.

📍 58 Candlemaker Row, Edinburgh EH1 2QE

