

Supporting New Scots What difference are we making? What are we learning?

Background

In June 2022, 13 groups supporting New Scots were awarded funding from The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF). The funding is administered by the Scottish Refugee Council (SRC).

In June 2023 the projects, staff from the TNLCF and the SRC came together for a learning day facilitated by Evaluation Support Scotland (ESS).

We discussed and shared

- impact – that our projects had made impact so far
- learning – what we have learned about supporting New Scots
- funder relationships – what works well and what could make funder relationships better

This report is a write up of the day and has been cleared by all the participating projects.

The list of projects is at Annex A.



A: What difference are we making?

Outcomes are the differences or changes we make through our activities. The 13 projects are contributing to the following outcomes:

- ✓ New Scots have more connections and friends
- ✓ New Scots have better access to services and the local community
- ✓ New Scots have increased skills to do things for themselves
- ✓ New Scots have improved mental health
- ✓ New Scots have reduced poverty
- ✓ Settled communities have increased understanding of New Scots

The following pages have example evidence of each outcome.



Writing
up
outcome
evidence

Scots tell us that our project helps them socialise with others outside our classes / activities

One Chinese participant made a whole cohort of new friends by finding another participant (through our project) who speaks Chinese

New Scots say they are able to chat to other mothers/young people with similar life challenges.

New Scots say they are able to chat to other people with similar life challenges.

**OUTCOME:
New Scots
have more
connections
and friends**

New Scots mothers tell us we are reducing loneliness as we allow mothers to bring babies & toddlers along and provide a safe space

New Scots say that they feel more confident talking to local people

One young New Scot's teacher said she doesn't talk to anyone at school but she is participating our programmes and signing up for more

New Scots have helped each other paint and decorate their homes

Women in our group are sharing their skills (henna, cooking etc) with each other (start doing so after just one week).

"I can attend to group activities and events and am no longer lonely"

"...I like to come here, I like to be at group together. I enjoy the time here because I feel like exciting things and we're doing so well together. ...communicate with other people, and I meet friends here from Syria. ...so like as a refugee, I like to be coming here and basically making friends and also for social."



Bellshill & Mossend YMCA

New Scots get free bikes and connect with essential services, meetings and community activities. Some use it to get to college or work

We connected creative New Scots to the wider creative community giving them opportunities to exhibit their work

We helped a New Scot register with the dentist and as a result his tooth was saved.

New Scots got internet data

New Scots now attend and volunteer and others projects – eg Men's Shed, Veterans Garden

**OUTCOME:
New Scots
have better
access to
services and
the local
community**

Young New Scots have applied for and received (with our help) their Young Scots cards which means free travel

New Scots know how to access the NHS, housing support or benefits thanks to information and advice

New Scots are more familiar with local community thanks to cultural orientation classes and visits

New Scots tell us that they are better able to engage with their children's teachers, and access resources and benefits easier thanks to our programmes

"I was an artist in Ukraine and the Welcoming Inspire have helped me to find a volunteering placement in an art gallery"

"I would go to any churches and places I wish to be with the help of all my friends"

"Our family received bicycles today. And we are very happy. Our children have great joy and we are happy. Thank you to each of you for your support. This period is not easy for us. A thousand words of gratitude. I wish each of you the best! You are the best people in the world! NB

"Many thanks for the opportunity to visit Edinburgh Castle. It was my best day! Many thanks. I had a great time!" M.B.

"I now know where to take my kids for fun"

"I participated in a dental care workshop as part of the ELREC's 'Life is Good in Scotland' Project. I hadn't gone to the dentist in 7 years. The workshop facilitator advised me to register for a dental Practice and helped me to register. I went to the dentist, and they discovered a small cavity. They said to me it was early stages, but it was lucky as the decay could have damaged the nerve later on, and I would have needed a painful tooth extraction costing over £1000. Now I need a small filling. The Project's session saved my teeth! The Project is doing a lot of good to many people very effectively!" M.J.

"I have attended English classes offered by ELREC and sessions that helped me understand how everything operates in Scotland. I have managed to find a volunteering position at NHS and hope to find a job. Thank you, Life is Good in Scotland Project, for helping us integrate into society." T.B.



Bield Christian
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We helped a New Scot become self-employed and meet HMRC and Universal Credit reporting requirements

New Scots tell us they are now able to attach files to emails when applying for support and benefits – saving time and enabling them to get the help or money they need.

A participant took our SCQF level 3 IT course and then volunteered to help others the next time we ran it.

New Scots are able to ask the questions they need answers to

One artist successfully applied for funding to stage an exhibition in Refugee Week and got her people from her Ukrainian community to come and take part.

Thanks to the information we provided, New Scots have got driving licenses which helps them be more independent

"If I can speak to my employability advisor I can speak to anyone"
New Scot after they build confidence and skills to communicate with the advisor

**OUTCOME:
New Scots have increased skills to do things for themselves**

New Scots gained sewing skills

We trained a New Scot to volunteer how to fix a bike. He now can carry out his own bike maintenance

New Scots tell us they can buy the right bus ticket, talk to people in shops thanks to our programmes

New Scots gained cooking skills

Volunteering at our project has led New Scots to gain employment locally

"I can use traveling Scotland app to find my way to different locations"

New Scots able (thank to our programme) to use social media, google maps, PowerPoint, excel and word which helps them in life and employability.

New Scots take up education or training thanks to advice on how to navigate these systems

As a result of our support one New Scot successfully applied for an apprenticeship

"My mentor has helped me with speaking English"

"I had training as a barista as part of my volunteering. I now have confidence to move into paid work. I feel like I can do anything now!"

"I'm very happy to work (volunteer) at the woman group there, all people is very kind and friendly. It's very good for me, my English better now, when I came in the woman group I can't speak English. Now I'm a little bit better.."



Edinburgh &
Lothians Regional
Equality Council
"Life is Good"
language classes



Bellshill & Mossend
YMCA

A participant said it makes her happier to come to classes with people
One of our Ukrainian guests could not stay in the house to think about what's left in their village because all has been bombed but was able to come to DGMA to be "normal".

New Scots move on from trauma by sharing experiences and talking about hope

**OUTCOME:
New Scots have
improved
mental health**

A participant has visibly blossomed as a result of finding someone he can communicate with

"...forget your sorrow. Anytime we come here, our mental health becomes stabilised and we're happy about that. I personally am happy anytime I come here, I feel good. I feel better. Thank you!"

"I have a mentor who I will speak to every week. This makes me feel happier and less lonely"

"I can talk about my problems now without fear of stigma or shame"



Sewing2gether
All Nations

Photo by Paul
Chappells,
www.paulphoto.co.uk

Pupils from a local school took part in a sewing workshop with New Scots, shared their skills. One young person said they had previously been scared of asylum seekers because the word asylum made them think of dangerous people who had to be locked up.

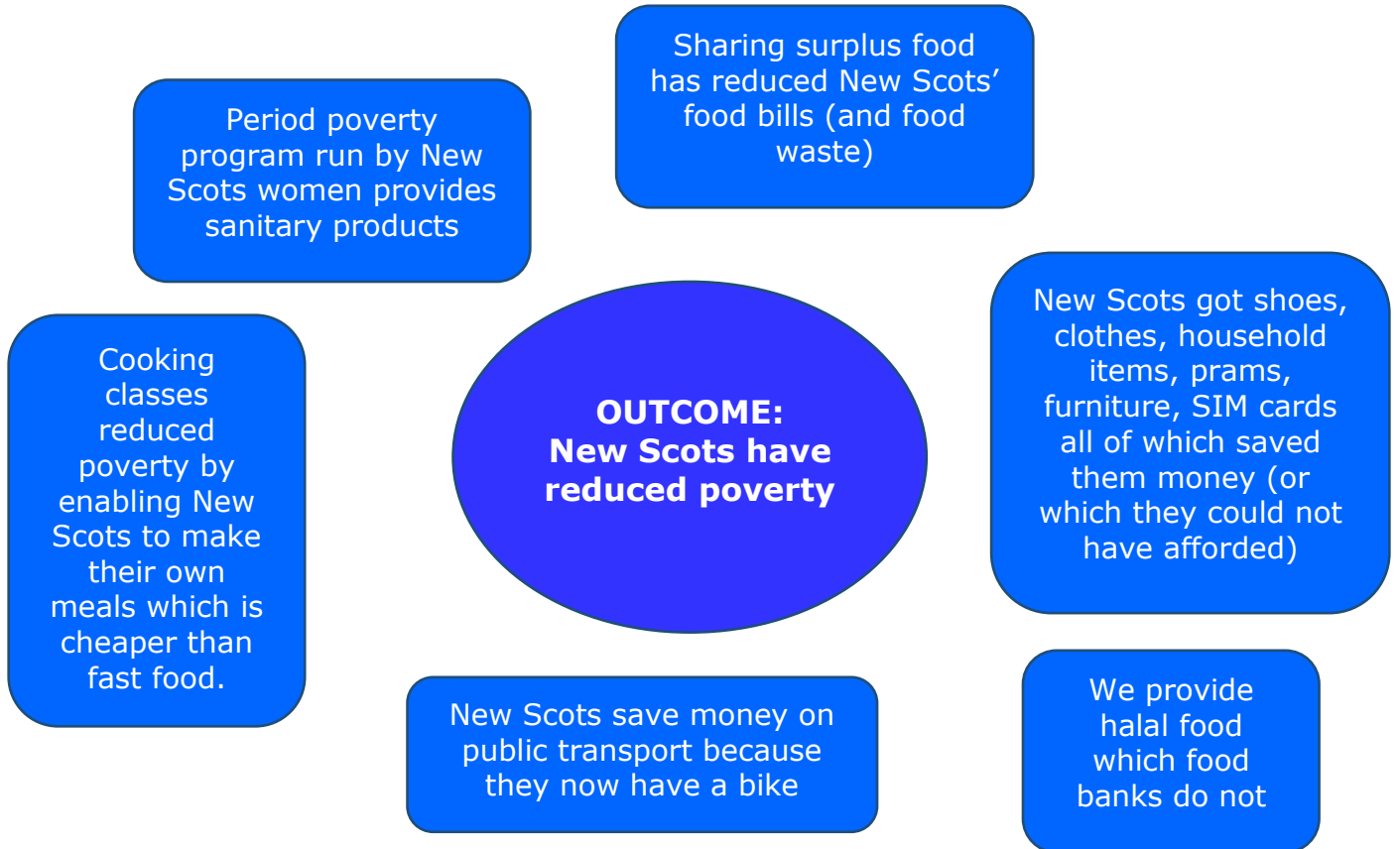
Exhibition about the war in Ukraine held in Perthshire opened local people's eyes to the reality and pain of the war. They got to meet Ukrainian families, eat their food and hear their stories.

**OUTCOME:
Settled
communities
have increased
understanding
of New Scots**

Local people say that events and meals at the community centre help them learn New Scots culture and reduce fear of the unknown



Bield Christian Company Limited



Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council
"Life is Good" energy advice

B: What works in integration? What are we learning?

Practicalities

- Build in time and different approaches to **reach New Scots** (including New Scots leading in bringing in other New Scots)
- Provide **practical support** to New Scots (an integration pack, money for travel, support with childcare, signposting to other services)
- **Language proficiency** is key to integration. To help:
 - Alexa, Siri, Google, others apps can help but be aware of limitations (Google translate does NOT work for Swahili!)
 - Connect to ESOL
 - Use multilingual staff and volunteers
 - Simple vocabulary, speak clearly and slowly, use pictures and emojis
- Create a **safe space** for activities and programmes
 - welcome on arrival, venue tour, culturally appropriate food

About programme design

1. Ask New Scots what they need to feel welcome and integrated and then provide exactly what they ask for. They understand their situation better than anyone so help them self-advocate.
2. Consistency is helpful - eg regular sessions. But it's not one size fits all. Flexibility is key to respond to individual needs; help New Scots deal with uncertainty (eg about the asylum system) or personal crisis. Flexibility also needed in timekeeping – allow time for late start and overrunning.
3. Pathways – have achievable progress pathways that enable New Scot to progress at pace that suits them.
4. Do not focus too much on numbers; intensive support for individuals is valuable.
5. New Scots need a safe space and time to simply “be” rather than a lot of programme content.
6. Be mindful of individuals who are in uncertain situation and may not be able to integrate (eg relocated by Home Office).
7. Where appropriate run events that involve New and Settled Scots.
8. Provide opportunities for New Scots to showcase their culture – reciprocity of cultural experience.
9. Provide opportunities for New Scots to share their skills and help others.
10. Bring people with similar experiences or language together if that's helpful.
11. Focus on similarities rather than differences.
12. The simplest of interventions can have the greatest impact.

C: What works well in funder and funded relationships?

This Fund has combined the funding expertise of The National Lottery Community Fund with the subject expertise and connections of the Scottish Refugee Council and aims to build trusting relationships between funder and funded to help projects achieve positive outcomes for people. We reflected on our (almost entirely) positive experiences so far and produced the following list of what makes for positive funder and funded relationships.



About shared goals and trust

1. Good relationships with funders are built on the perspective that both the funder and the project are teammates working towards the same goal.
2. Funders: trust projects as the experts in what we do and having a light touch approach that includes flexibility and understanding of the challenges.

About the application processes

3. Funders: Provide step by step guidance on applying for funding get better applications.
4. Funders: Have more creative application processes can result in better projects (eg conversations, videos, involving people with lived experience)

About getting to know each other

5. Funded: Meet the funder as early on as possible, and invite them to come and visit the project - makes it easy for them to see the project's potential
6. Funded: Before you agree with any finding make sure you understand the terms and conditions of the grant.

About keeping in touch

7. Funded: Maintain open and transparent communication with funders to avoid confusion. This involves providing regular updates on project progress, discussing any challenges or risks, and sharing relevant information to keep the funder informed about the project's direction and outcomes.
8. Funded: Be honest with funders about things that haven't gone as well as you hoped. If there are issues, be transparent and show them how you are responding to address or overcome them.
9. Funded: Promote photos on social media makes for a good relationship with your funder as they are able to see all the great work, successes and or unexpected outcomes of the project and its progress.
10. Funders can worry that a visit might be stressful and a funded organisation might be scared of inviting the funder. So a visit that would benefit both doesn't happen! Both sides need to ask "would a visit be helpful?"

11. Funders: A meeting is great especially if English is not projects' first language. Someone from the funder can take notes and that counts as the report. They can send questions previously to help the org prepare for it.

About the money

12. Funders: pay grants promptly and in instalments.
13. Funders: promote things to include in the budget (based on the experience of other projects) such as refreshments, insurance, transport.
14. Funders: be flexible with the project budget as the project unfolds

Here are individual messages we wrote for each other:

Messages for funder

This whole funding approach has been really good and rewarding. I really encourage the Community Fund and the Scottish Refugee Council to continue it.

Thanks for the time today. We need more of these sessions.

Thank you! Keep applications and reporting simple.

Thank you for this opportunity! Many great projects have come from this fund.

Thank you for your continued support and care.

Keep up the good work and make funding applications simpler by encouraging us from the start.

Thank you for providing us with this opportunity to share our project.

I would like to support this funding for next year. Keep it up!

Please keep funding us to improve quality of life and wellbeing of our community

Remember that community groups are the experts on the community and know what is needed

Support and signposting for additional funding would be beneficial

Keep in touch and visit. Follow us on social media and 'like' our posts- it lets other followers know we have a relationship and promotes both organisations.

Please help us organise evaluation team meeting exercises and tie in with funding officer visit so you can meet the people we support and hear it first-hand. At the same time you connect to our service users not just words on the report. Plus our service users will be so excited to meet you in person and to thank you for your support so that they have a safe space.

Message for funded (from funder participants)

Call/email enquiries, speak to funding officers for larger grants and provide an A4 sketch of the project with a rough budget. Include co-ordination costs! Project or volunteer coordinator etc

Please don't be shy about talking to us about your work and your challenges

D: Feedback on the day (summary)

The following is a summary of feedback.

Best thing about today

The most common "best things" were:

- Meeting and learning from each other
- funders and funded to get to know each other
- the way the day was structured
- the lunch!

Example quotes:

"The room was filled with amazing like-minded people."

"Opportunity to learn from others and share our experiences"

"Group discussions were very helpful. I felt supported in this event today. Lots of variety and good pace. Facilitator was excellent."

"Being listened to"

"Getting to know funders. They aren't scary beasts! (Lovely lunch too)"

"The fact that funders actually turned up to listen to what we have to say"

What could have been better

Most people said "nothing".

Other comments were

- practical suggestions (name badges and contact details)
- more time to talk about problems and how to overcome them
- support on future funding

The organisers will take these helpful suggestions on board for future events.

What I will do next

In summary actions were grouped into:

- Actions about improving their evaluation (7)
- Actions about funding and funding relationships (5)
- General reflection and sharing with colleagues (3)

Example quotes:

"The discussion on evaluation is already positively impacting on how I plan to approach our annual report and how we can communicate impact more widely."

"Go back to my staff and think clearer about funding. Evaluation can be simple and does not need to be overcomplicated"

Messages for others

Our projects alone cannot assist New Scots to integrate and achieve positive outcomes. Other parts of the system need to change. Here are messages we wrote for others.

Messages for policy makers and the Home Office

- Consider the population who came to this country with various skills and ready to contribute to society but could not because they are not being supported to access employability. Let people be free to work and make decision for themselves
- Human rights allows for people to be given the opportunity to work and shape their lives
- Give refugees dignity by allowing them to work. Scotland needs more workers. Our New Scots have so much to offer to our society. Allow them to earn money, pursue careers and thrive.
- Stop treating New Scots differently.
- Lift the ban
- Integration is not assimilation, it's a two-way process. You need cultural competency training
- Give free bus passes to asylum seekers
- There is a wealth of expertise within the New Scots community. There needs to be more support for creative entrepreneurs and less pressure from Universal Credit to earn huge amount of money when they are starting out. Support to mentor these amazing resilient New Scots to do this.

Messages for funders

- You need to challenge and pressurise the Government to change their approach. You need to take risks, make it clear, push back, tell them it is not working. Tell the story of what is not working rather than just the feelgood stories
- New Scots need these projects to continue. Funding stopping in December is worrying. New Scots need support in getting jobs and self-care.
- Funding flexibility is paramount to the project's success
- Grassroots organisations are bearing al the load of New Scots. There is a need for long term funding support
- Come and visit us! An hour in the room will tell you so much more than we could ever type into an application or evaluation form.
- Specifically for Third Sector Dumfries & Galloway- please open up the 3rd round of mental health wellbeing fund with ethnic minority communities' mental health and wellbeing in mind. Support us at an early stage to help us successfully progress to the next stage. We were not successful in the last 2 rounds.

- Be open-minded to funding small vital things that help remove barriers to inclusion eg child-care costs, travel, food, housing etc. The “small” things need to be stable for the bigger things to be accessible.
- New Scots need food and travel costs covered to be able to attend sessions
- New Scots need English classes to be able to integrate quicker.
- Understand the value of helping one person. Higher numbers of service users does not mean higher quality of service.

Messages for other organisations that support New Scots

- Let’s develop a network to support each other (even just a list?)
- (specifically for the Scottish Refugee Council) Big thank you to be there for refugees and New Scots – supporting, assisting them to integrate.

Messages for everyone

- Let’s create a progressive, thriving society where all individuals are able to live a good quality of life regardless of status.
- New Scots have come to Scotland to contribute in positive ways. Please do not assume they are here through choice, they often had to escape horrendous situations. Please be kind and let them thrive not just survive.
- Be the change you want to see (for anyone who says “why aren’t we helping people already here?”)
- Refugees trying to rebuild their lives need stability of accommodation and support to ensure their skills and experience is valued and appreciated.
- People have different needs, come from different countries, create a better Scotland for everyone.

Message for New Scots

You have the passion. Seek support. If you don’t ask you don’t get.

Annex A - Projects

There is information about these projects (and other funded through different programmes) on this web page here: <https://newscots.scot/the-projects/>

Africa Delice
Africa Future
African Collaboration group
Bellshill & Mossend YMCA
Bield Christian Company Limited
Bikes for Refugees
Dumfries and Galloway Multicultural Association
Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council – Life is Good in Scotland
Heart of Africa
Inclusive Homework Club
Pachedu
Sewing2gether All Nations
The Welcoming Association – Inspire Project
Volunteering Matters – Inspire Project

Also attending/facilitating the learning event were
Evaluation Support Scotland
Scottish Refugee Council
The National Lottery Community Fund