

Location: Edinburgh

Transition Edinburgh South

Impact: Moving towards financial sustainability, Tackling the climate crisis



Background

Transition Edinburgh South (TES) is a community-led charity in the Gracemount area, one of Edinburgh's most deprived communities, and is part of the international Transition movement, helping local people take practical action on climate change, inequality and community fragmentation.

Based at Gracemount Community Walled Garden, formerly a derelict space transformed through community effort, TES operates a regenerative growing site where they deliver activities such as gardening, cooking and community lunches to support wellbeing and connection, and reduce cost-of-living pressures.

TES was under financial pressure due to its reliance on short-term project funding. To secure its future and expand its impact, the organisation aimed to transition into a financially resilient community anchor by developing sustainable trading activities.

Need for Support

TES sought a lease from Edinburgh Council for Gracemount Stables to enable them to deliver a more ambitious programme of services, supported by a trading model that includes a public diner-style café, a training kitchen, workspace and community events.

Together with Gracemount Mansion Development Trust (GMDT) - who are restoring the nearby Mansion as a heritage, culture and learning hub - the Stables, Mansion and surrounding greenspaces had the potential to become a vibrant community asset.

"The team at Community Enterprise delivered the work for the Accelerate programme with great efficiency. If you're starting a social enterprise journey then definitely get in touch to see how they can help."

How did Accelerate support the process?

The Accelerate advisor worked with TES to create a business plan to guide redevelopment of the Stables. This included cashflow projections, governance options, partnership mapping and clear strategic next steps. These plans incorporated TES's public diner and hydroponics concepts, ensuring alignment with community needs and national policy priorities.

What is the economic and social impact of the support?

The support from Accelerate has helped TES realise their ambition of growing into a self-sustaining community asset, dedicated to social and environmental justice, which is owned and led by local people.

The redevelopment of the stables will enable TES to address food insecurity, support young people and families, provide green skills and training, improve health and wellbeing, and build local resilience.

Together, the Mansion and Stables sites have the potential to form a hub for heritage, youth, learning, enterprise and wellbeing, a transformative opportunity for Gracemount.