

Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 12 October 2021

***Discover!* in Partnership with Edinburgh Community Food**

Executive/routine
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 The Education, Children and Families Committee is asked to:
- 1.1.1 note the contents of this report;
 - 1.1.2 agree to officers continuing to work in partnership with **Edinburgh Community Food** to deliver the ***Discover!*** programme;
 - 1.1.3 agree to awarding Edinburgh Community Food a grant of £111,000 per year for the continued provision of **Discover in a Box** and other aspects of a strong and evolving partnership;
 - 1.1.4 note that ***Discover!*** contributes to the End Poverty Edinburgh Delivery Plan
 - 1.1.5 agree to receive a further report in October 2022 updating Members on progress

Julien Kramer

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***Discover!* In Partnership with Edinburgh Community Food**

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The aims of ***Discover!*** Are:
 - 2.1.2 reduce food and financial stress during school holidays
 - 2.1.3 help close the poverty related attainment and achievement gap
 - 2.1.4 reduce social isolation and improve health and wellbeing
- 2.2 With families' need clear and growing, and as a reaction to Covid and lockdown, **Discover in a Box** (boxes containing food, recipes, utensils, art/craft materials and information etc) was developed in Summer 2020 and has since become a key aspect of ***Discover!*** It is now intrinsic to the online and in person programme and carries a cost of £25 per box with very tight margins.
- 2.3 **Edinburgh Community Food**, (a partner and member of the Discover Planning Group) used £50k of its own funding to support the provision of Discover in a Box during summer 2020. Since then ***Discover!*** has paid Edinburgh Community Food for the boxes. This unit cost is not reflective of any staff time planning, programme delivery or evaluation – it is simply the cost of the food box. That both parties continue to work in collaboration demonstrates the motivating factor is to improve outcomes for families with children who live in poverty.
- 2.4 The partnership, trust and increasing collaborative potential is not a simple payment for goods or services. That it is a strong partnership delivering best value, justifies awarding a grant to Edinburgh Community Food.
- 2.5 This report describes the relationship between, ***Discover!*** (led by Lifelong Learning) and Edinburgh Community Food, and the rationale for awarding a grant from the ***Discover!*** budget

3. Background

- 3.1 ***Discover!*** (Edinburgh's response to holiday hunger), was piloted in summer 2018 and is now established city-wide, supporting children and families living in poverty. It is highly valued and is viewed very positively as having impact.
- 3.2 ***Discover!*** is a key programme to reduce child poverty and address food and financial insecurity and learning loss during the school holidays. It is the only Lifelong Learning service-wide programme and benefits from a highly effective Planning Group led by the Strategic Creativity, Health and Wellbeing Team. The

Planning Group is populated by Lifelong Learning strategic and locality officers, the Transport team and Edinburgh Community Food.

- 3.3 Children are recommended to **Discover!** primarily by schools, although other professionals and third sector partners can also make recommendations. At least one parent/carer must attend however many children are in the family. The number of new recommendations for each holiday is steadily and cumulatively increasing.
- 3.4 A keystone principle of **Discover!** is to be stigma free and genuinely meet the needs of families living in poverty with dignity and kindness. It strives to meet its stated aims, and its success is so doing is demonstrated by feedback from families.
- 3.5 **Discover!** is delivered during every school holiday; previously it was in person taking place in Hubs in school buildings. Since Easter 2020 it has been delivered remotely. With Covid restrictions easing, **Discover!** Summer 2021 adopted a blended approach, delivering a live and pre-recorded online programme and trips to local parks and beaches, country parks and outdoor venues further afield.
- 3.6 Since its inception, **Discover!** has maintained a strong focus on healthy eating, food education and sustainability. The partnership with Edinburgh Community Food has developed from an informal arrangement, to a genuine partnership where each holiday programme is jointly planned - and where shared endeavour is underpinned by shared values and outcomes.
- 3.7 The relationship between **Discover!** and Edinburgh Community Food, inevitably and rightly involves payment for food boxes. Edinburgh Community Food and **Discover!** have evolved how and what they do, and together deliver best value. Working flexibility towards common aims providing additionality through staff time, shared resources and capacity, defines true collaboration.
- 3.7 The programme is constantly evolving to achieve this with feedback and rigorous evaluation of each holiday helping inform its development and confirms the value families place on the programme and boxes
- 3.8 Edinburgh Community Food is a key partner in both planning and delivery.

4. Main report

About Discover

- 4.1 This report is not a full report on **Discover!** and its impact, rather it provides background to the aspects of **Discover!** that underpin and exemplify the partnership with Edinburgh Community Food.
- 4.2 A significant aspect of **Discover!** is about cooking, nutrition, fun and sustainability in healthy eating. It delivers a programme of activities including cooking, arts and music, sport and outdoor, family learning through fun, all linked to a theme, usually topical and/or seasonal.
- 4.3 In addition to the work with Edinburgh Community Food other delivery partners such as CHAI, Maximise, SDS, The Transactions Team, Edinburgh School Uniform Bank, Home Energy Scotland, (to name just some), regularly provide information, workshops, 1:1 drop in sessions and other advice and support.
- 4.4 There are also weekly trips giving families opportunities they would not otherwise have and building happy shared memories of holidays. This impacts positively on family relationships, wellbeing, reduces social isolation and improves confidence.

- 4.5 With food and financial insecurity being a constant in families' lives, particularly during schools holidays, the partnership with Edinburgh Community Food has become increasingly important in the ethos of **Discover!**.
- 4.6 If providing food was the only consideration, any number of organisations could have delivered this. However, a recognition that each of the aims of **Discover!** is interconnected has led to a rich programme each holiday, not least of which is Discover in a Box, around which pivots much of the activity. This is highly valued by the families, who often refer to **Discover!** as a 'family' and regularly share stories about the difference it makes - not just within families but also between families.

Discover in a Box

- 4.4 Edinburgh Community Food works closely with Schools and Lifelong Learning Officers to pack and deliver boxes every week of every holiday to each recommended family's home address. The boxes contain the following:
- fresh and packaged ingredients, recipes and utensils (linked to the online (or in person) programme of cookery workshops for children and families
 - art and craft resources for the online (or in person) programme of arts/crafts— all of which share the holiday theme with the recipes and cookery workshops
 - sport resources also linked to the theme of the holiday
 - financial advice, leaflets and other support information for families
 - weekly gift/book for the children
 - food vouchers, bus tickets and other useful additions as appropriate

Discover online

- 4.5 Discover online is planned and delivered by the Discover Planning Group of which Edinburgh Community Food is a key partner. A private Facebook group offers a weekly programme of live and pre-recorded workshops and activities (supported at home by the contents of Discover in a Box).
- 4.6 Families are encouraged to engage with the programme and are supported by Lifelong Learning Development Officers in both the locality and strategic teams. Facebook posts are moderated by members of the Planning Group
- 4.7 The Discover online programme is delivered by a range of partners and providers. one of the main contributors being Edinburgh Community Food. They deliver live streamed and pre-recorded cookery workshops and live talks on topics such as:
- healthy eating and how to reduce food waste – save money
 - safe food storage
 - food and herb growing in community gardens and window boxes

Discover Edinburgh and Beyond

- 4.8 Because in person hubs are not currently operating due to Covid restrictions and mitigations, Summer 2021 re-introduced family trips to the weekly programme. Each trip took place outdoors and families in small groups enjoyed local picnics in the park, picnics in country parks, visits to beaches and other outdoor venues
- Each trip/picnic was accompanied by activities such as outdoor music workshops, games and there was an early programme for families with babies and very young children at the local parks.

4.9 The weekly cookery workshops delivered by Edinburgh Community Food included making interesting and healthy picnics for the trips the following day.

Barriers to participation

- 4.10 Schools recommend children to **Discover!** The Lifelong Learning Team then follows these up with phone calls and emails to the families. In the main positive contact is made which usually results in some form of engagement. Occasionally the family cannot be contacted because they have no email/changed their email and/or changed their mobile number.
- 4.11 Some families are reluctant to answer a call from an unknown number. The team always leaves a voicemail message where there is the facility to do so and arranges to call back later. Officers find as many ways as possible to reach families. Occasionally a family does not want to participate despite being recommended by the school.
- 4.12 When the family is initially contacted the Lifelong Learning Officer talks to them about potential barriers such as IT connectivity. Through successful applications to Connecting Scotland and People Know How, Chromebooks, iPads and Mifi devices have been given to families to enable participation.
- 4.13 Most families sign up for Discover in a Box which then encourages them to participate in the linked online workshops and activities (both live and pre-recorded)
- 4.14 Some families participate in all/almost the events, while others select only some. Being a working parent/carer can mean missing live events, but many parents/carers feedback that they enjoy catching up with recorded activities at a later stage.
- 4.15 Being a blended offer this summer meant it was harder to build relationships and confidence between and among staff and participants. This meant the trips could be more daunting for some, although a lot of effort was made to encourage participation. Other parents/carers posting on the Facebook group provides good reassurance for others to try things, and these posts are actively encouraged by staff, delivery partners and moderators.
- 4.16 The self-led trips using bus and rail tickets were very popular and uptake was good.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Formalise a grant award of £110,000 per year to Edinburgh Community Food for the continued partnership delivery of **Discover!**
- 5.2 The next cohort of newly recommended children and parents/carers will be invited to be part of a year long study of the impact of **Discover!**
- 5.3 An Educational Psychologist on placement with Communities and Families will evaluate the impact of **Discover!** during term time when children are back in school

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The cost to deliver **Discover!** is contained within the existing council budget, which is £250k per year (with an additional £250 in the current financial year).

- 6.2 Awarding Edinburgh Community Food a grant of £110,000 from the existing core budget of £250k is affordable at the current levels of participation and takes account of predicted growth over the current year.
- 6.3 Increases in numbers and associated costs will be closely monitored and any changes will be reported back to this committee before the next financial year if required.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 Parents/carers regularly provide feedback on Discover! via the Facebook Group and through formal evaluations. This is used to inform and develop **Discover!**

8. Background reading/external references

- 8.1 Education, Children and Families Committee, 15 December 2020: Child Poverty Update, Item 7.1
<https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/documents/s29882/7.6%20Child%20Poverty%20Update.pdf>
- 8.2 Education, Children and Families Committee, 18 May 2021: Lifelong Learning Service Plan Update, Item 7.
<https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/documents/s33922/7.5%20Lifelong%20Learning%20Service%20Plan%20Update.pdf>
- 8.3 Policy and Sustainability, 5 October 2020: End Poverty in Edinburgh – Annual Progress Report

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Evaluation overview of Discover Summer 2020

Discover! Summer 2021 Programme

108

Responses

05:26

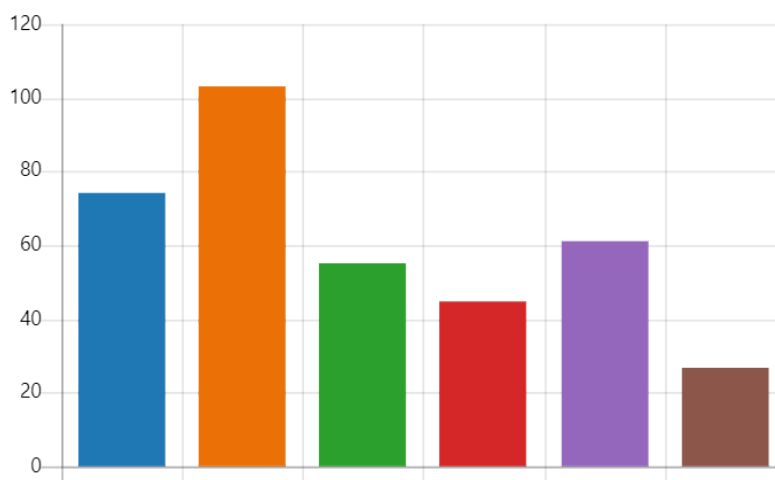
Average time to complete

Active

Status

1. What Discover Programme activities have you benefited from this summer 2021?

Discover Facebook Online (On...	74
Discover in a Box (Food, Art P...	103
Discover Picnic Trip to Countr...	55
Discover Picnic in the Local Pa...	45
Discover ScotRail Trips	61
Discover Advice and Support (...)	27



2. If you received it, how would you rate Discover In a Box (food, recipes, art materials, resources, bus tickets)? 5 stars = Excellent, 1 star = Poor

Insights

106

Responses

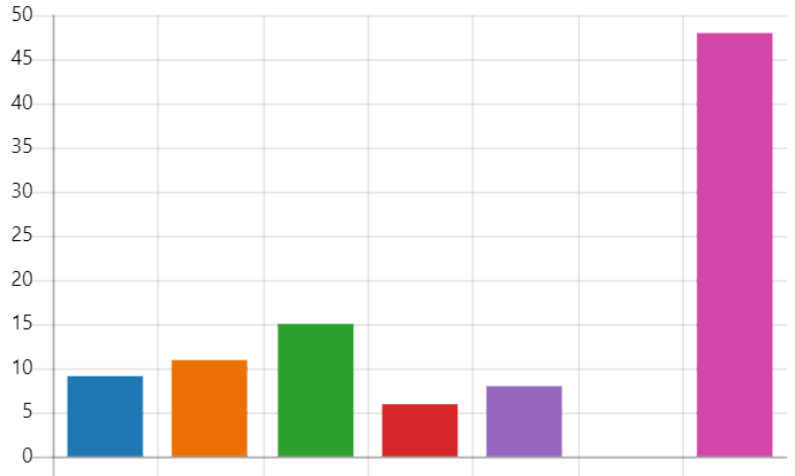


4.96 Average Rating

3. If you attended a Discover Picnic in Country Park, which one did you attend?

💡 Insights

● Beecraigs Country Park	9
● Newhailes House and Gardens	11
● Yellowcraigs Beach	15
● Jupiter Artland	6
● Vogrie Country Park	8
● Penicuik House and Garden	0
● Did not go on a trip to a coun...	48



4. If you attended one of the above trips, how would you rate the Discover Picnic to the Country Park (staffing, transport, activities)? 5 stars = Excellent, 1 star = Poor

💡 Insights

58

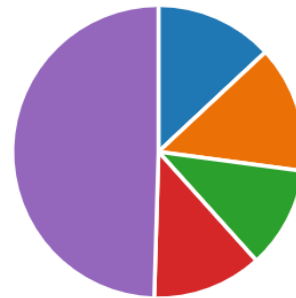
Responses



4.78 Average Rating

5. Do you know which Discover Locality Group you are in?

● North West	💡 Insights	14
● North East		15
● South West		12
● South East		13
● Not sure		53



6. If you have attended a Discover Picnic in your local park how would you rate this (staffing, activities etc)? 5 stars = Excellent, 1 star = Poor

💡 Insights

57

Responses



4.79 Average Rating

7. If you have engaged with Discover Facebook Online activities, what do you think about the variety on offer?

💡 Insights

- Too many activities 4
- Too few activities 6
- Just the right amount of activi... 86



8. In general, how would you rate Discover Online (Facebook Activities, Online Cooking, Art & Science Workshops etc)? 5 stars = Excellent, 1 star = Poor

💡 Insights

102

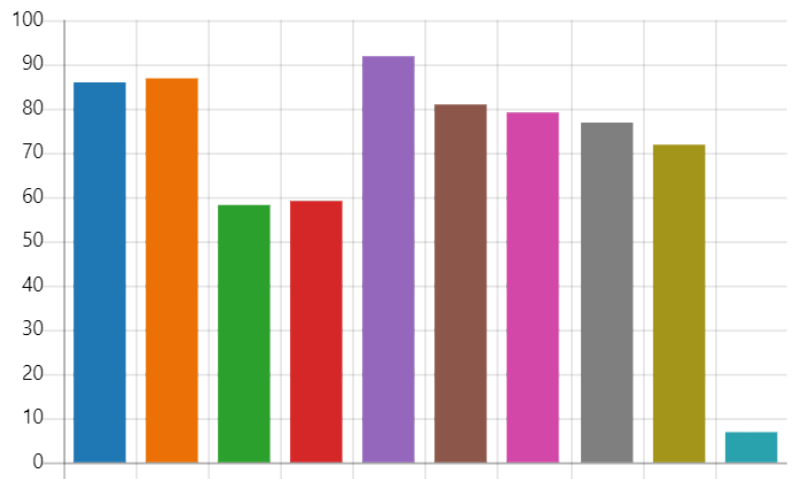
Responses



4.79 Average Rating

9. In what way has being part of the Discover summer 2021 programme made a difference to you and your family? (Tick any that apply).

- Encouraged us to spend more... 86
- Helped children to learn new t... 87
- Helped parents and carers to l... 58
- Helped us to connect with oth... 59
- Helped reduce the costs of fo... 92
- Helped reduce the costs of act... 81
- Helped us to eat healthier as a... 79
- Helped our family to feel less i... 77
- Helped reduce family stress 72
- Other 7



10. If you selected 'other' to Question 6, please provide some more details below.

 Insights
15
 Responses


Latest Responses

"Myself & my son now eat fresh & healthy meals which we have been ..."
"Uniform bank is amazing and so helpful "

5 respondents (42%) answered **family** for this question.



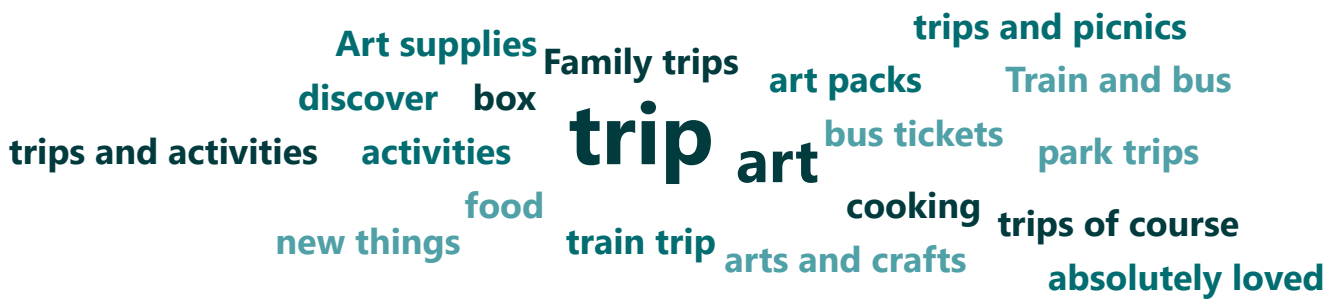
11. What would your children say was the best thing about the Discover programme this summer?

 Insights
103
 Responses

Latest Responses

"He loved all the art packs as it helps his well-being, he does mindful c..."
"Cooking new things "
"Being a part of a group outing, they like that. "

30 respondents (31%) answered **trip** for this question.



12. Do you or your children have any other feedback or suggestions for future Discover programmes?

71  Insights
Responses

Latest Responses

"To get back to the way we used to attend discovery. "

14 respondents (21%) answered **love** for this question.





Discover Summer 2021

- Discover Online and Discover in a Box
- Picnic in the Local Park
- Picnic in the Country Park
- Discover Families Explore Together



A reminder of our Aims

- To reduce food and financial stress during the holidays
- To reduce social isolation during the holidays
- To promote and encourage healthy eating
- To contribute towards closing the poverty related attainment and achievement gap



Discover Online and Discover In a Box

- 310 Boxes delivered in Week 1 and rising weekly to 345 in Week 6.
- 900 Discover Art Packs, Historic Environment Activity Packs and Edinburgh University Chromotography sets distributed.
- 23 online workshops from independent artists, The Royal Observatory, Edinburgh University, Heriot Watt University and Edinburgh Museum.
- 395 posts, 1,143 comments, 5,127 reactions



Healthy eating



- 24 recipes for healthy meals sent out to families
- 6 LIVE cooking sessions around the themes of Soil, Seed, Sun, Shoots, Share and Store
- Lots of information on healthy eating advice

I am so so grateful for everything you helped us with over the holidays ... 🥰 now my son eats new (healthier) food that he wouldn't normally eat, this is an absolutely amazing help for mums like me.. I struggle with so many health issues but this summer holiday has been a little less stressful thanks to Discover for Families 🥰 myself & my son would like to thank you again ❤️



Picnics in the Local and Country Parks



- 46 Picnic in the Park events overall (only one cancelled by the rain!!!!)
- 42 staff involved
- By the end of week 2- 62 parents and carers and 106 children and young people had attended a trip.

Discover Families Explore Together

- 1700 Family Daysavers distributed
- 710 adults and children benefited from ScotRail tickets to North Berwick, Linlithgow, Burntisland, Glasgow and Stirling.
- Also zoo trips offered to newly recommended families, those who couldn't attend trips

“Going on the trains they’re not going far but for them it was like they were in a different country for the day. Also the [Discover] staff have all been so friendly and helpful and I've loved my stress free summer this year”



And on top of this we had.....

- 219 children receive free school uniform
- Parents and carers received support an employment from Access to Industry and energy advice from Home Energy scotland
- Young People attended a BBC: Microbit course and are working towards a DYW
- Over 200 JASS Award Packs were distributed to families

Thankyou so much for the school clothes for start of term . You have absolutely no idea how much this helps me . My husband passed away this year and I am a kinship carer for my 3 grandchildren . This has taken so much of the worry I am overwhelmed and emotional for the kindness of others helping others 😞

So What Did the Families have to say?

- 85% felt it had reduced costs of food during school holidays
- 81% that it helped children to learn new things (81%)
- 78% that it encouraged them to spend more quality time together as a family
- 73% that it helped them to eat healthier as a family e.g. eating more fruit and vegetables
- 73% that it helped reduce costs of activities during school holidays
- Families reported they felt more connected to others.

The boys have had a ball. The delivery drivers were lovely and all the staff we have been in contact with are kind, friendly and so helpful. Team Discovery must be the best support team around. Thank you so very much



Thank you so much for everything and thumbs up for all the staff that have made discover such a great success!! We cant wait till the next time! Thank you so much!!

Thank you so much for everything! We had one of the best summers ever xx

By the end we all felt a little like this.....

Thankyou for all your hard work and dedication in making Discover such a success!!!

Now over to you.....

