



City of Edinburgh Council  
Waverley Court  
4 East Market Street  
Edinburgh  
EH8 8BG

Date: 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

**RE: Application from the Corstorphine Community Centre for the Community Asset Transfer of Westfield House**

I am writing in support of the above application, in my role as public health practitioner for the North West of Edinburgh for NHS Lothian and the Edinburgh Health & Social Care Partnership. The Corstorphine Community Centre (CCC) is an essential community organisation at the heart of Corstorphine. As a Health and Social Care Partnership we work closely with our community and voluntary sector colleagues on a range of initiatives to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities. In West Edinburgh the CCC is a longstanding partner in this work.

The Community Asset Transfer of Westfield House to CCC would greatly facilitate the development of a sustainable community hub for Corstorphine and the immediate surrounding areas. CCC has always strived to respond to the needs of the community of which it is a part, and it has well established relationships in the local area. The ongoing high levels of participation in its programmed activities, and a committed cohort of local volunteers, are testament to the regard in which it is held and its significance for local people.

A permanent physical site for the CCC at Westfield House would enable the creation of a warm, inclusive space for social connection, participation, and learning that is led by and for the communities where it is situated. The importance of social connection in community space has been set out clearly in *A Connected Scotland* - the Scottish Government's strategy to tackle social isolation and loneliness. This has been brought sharply into focus over recent years through the coronavirus pandemic.

The CAT would be very much in line with the priorities of area strategic plans, including the Locality Improvement Plan for NW Edinburgh, and crucially the call to action of the Edinburgh Poverty Commission that "*people in all parts of the city have local, safe, welcoming community spaces within walking or pram-pushing distance where they can connect with others, access the right support for them and make progress at the right pace.*"<sup>1</sup> The relative affluence of wider West Edinburgh masks pockets of poverty that cannot always be identified using conventional measures; we know from the EPC's work that there are people affected by poverty in every area of the city.

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<sup>1</sup> Edinburgh Poverty Commission (2020). *A Just Capital – Actions to End Poverty in Edinburgh*.

Community owned and managed spaces also create potential for increasing access to health and social care teams, particularly for vulnerable groups that may find attendance in more formal spaces difficult.

I am very happy to support this application. If you wish to discuss further around any of the public health aspects, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely



**Katrina Smith**  
Public Health Practitioner

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