Community Access and Power to Transform Urban Green and Blue Spaces through Research: Lessons from Groundswell

ABOUT SCPHRP

- The Scottish Collaboration for Public Health Research and Policy sits at the School of Health in Social Sciences at the University of Edinburgh.
- SCPHRP mission is to support multidisciplinary research to improve population health that impacts as local, national and global levels, underpinned by a goal to reduce health and social inequalities.

ABOUT GROUNDSWELL

- five-year project that aims to understand how urban green spaces, such as parks, and blue spaces, such as rivers and channels (UGBS), can help prevent the rise of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).
- The research focuses on three large UK cities — Belfast, Edinburgh, and Liverpool — each with large and diverse low-income communities.
- At its core, Groundswell explores the interconnected systems that limit access to and benefits from UGBS, and contribute to health inequalities.

A new approach to research/community engagement

Moving from Information Exchange to Relationship Building

- Research engagement is moving beyond one-way communication and one-off interactions.
- More tailored and audience-centred approaches are helping build stronger relationships with participants.
- This has increased motivation and sustained involvement.
- In turn, it is contributing to meaningful real-world impact.

Expected outcomes:
Relationship-focused engagement encourages participation and helps research create lasting change.

Enabling more informed and responsive engagement

Understanding Social and Health Inequalities

- Researchers have become more aware of the context and factors that drive health inequalities.
- This understanding has helped them design engagement activities that better reflect people's experiences and needs.
- As a result, engagement strategies are becoming more relevant and inclusive.

Expected outcomes:

Better understanding of health inequalities leads to more effective engagement.