

Cyrenians

IMPACT REPORT 2021



At Cyrenians we tackle the causes
and consequences of homelessness

The past year has been difficult for all of us; but covid-19 has unfairly impacted some of the most vulnerable people in our communities and at Cyrenians we have been at the forefront of trying to ease that pressure.

Over the past 12 months I have been so proud to be part of Cyrenians, working alongside colleagues and volunteers who have shown incredible compassion and tenacity during a year that seemed to provide little to no respite. At every juncture I have been humbled by their dedication to those we journey with.

Through innovative and collaborative working we were able to respond quickly and efficiently to the ever-changing issues created by the pandemic; whether that was working with colleagues across the sector to ensure those experiencing street homelessness could safely isolate, or creating entirely new projects to better support our local community.

Now more than ever I am struck by the incredible generosity of those who support our work, and believe in what we do to tackle the causes and consequences of homelessness. From those who were able to provide financial gifts to allow us to pivot from in-person to remote support overnight, to the volunteers who came out in their hundreds to help us reach more people more efficiently – it has been a real celebration of the power of community.

After the last 18 months, we know more people than ever will require our support to ensure they are able to live valued and fulfilling lives. I am tentatively hopeful that the surge in community spirit, and respect for the Third Sector's ability to innovate and deliver tangible solutions to those who most need them will continue, allowing us to keep supporting people towards more positive futures.

With my sincerest thanks,

Ewan Aitken
CEO

2020/2021 OUR JOURNEY IN NUMBERS

Cyrenians supported
13,398
people at their time of need

106 staff
trained in
Trauma Informed Practice

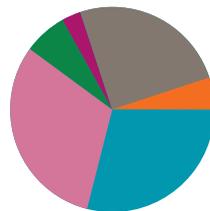
87p in every
pound raised is
spent directly on
frontline work

An additional **32,730**
people participated in our events,
services or training courses

1,147
wonderful volunteers
gifted a total of
70,456
hours of their time,
knowledge, support
and experience to us

Income 2020/2021*

£5,584

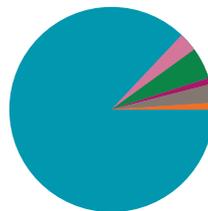


Local Authority	£1,655	30%
Other Public	£1,718	31%
Earned Income	£391	7%
Lottery	£158	3%
Companies & Trusts	£1,370	25%
Donations	£292	5%

*Draft figures awaiting audit sign off

Expenditure 2020/2021*

£5,401



Direct Costs	£4,684	87%
Strategic Development	£165	3%
HR, Finance, IT	£266	5%
Governance	£74	1%
Fundraising	£173	3%
Other	£39	1%

*Draft figures awaiting audit sign off

OUR COVID RESPONSE

The pandemic highlighted just how interconnected we all are, and how vital it is that we build our communities in a way that ensures we all thrive.

Overnight we had to change how we deliver our services, from face-to-face meetings to virtual groups and telephone calls. Whilst keeping everyone safe was our utmost priority, we were faced with new difficulties in being able to support those who needed us most due to digital exclusion or an increase in direct needs including access to food, health provision and more.

The impact of Covid-19 will continue to be felt throughout our communities long after this pandemic. We are committed to contributing to our collective recovery by building up communities, and supporting those we work with through values-led, people-centred work.

£272,941
generously gifted through our emergency appeal to help provide additional support to those impacted as a result of the pandemic

4.2 MILLION MEALS

delivered through our FareShare project across Central and South East Scotland

80,000 MEALS

lovingly prepared and distributed from our Flavour and Haver Community Cook School

140+ DEVICES

provided to individuals across our services to help facilitate continued support and build connection

50 WINTER WARMER

packs distributed to people over 60 in Edinburgh via our Golden Years service



WE CAN'T DO IT ALONE

We can only do what we do as a result of the generous support of individuals, companies and funders who donate their time and money, and we are grateful to every single one of them.

From raising awareness to raising funds, and donating their own time or skills, our supporters make the work we do possible:

"I'm fortunate in life and I can give to a few different charities but I always make Cyrenians one of them because they make such a difference. I know my money will be spent making life a bit easier for someone."

A generous sponsor

587 individuals volunteered **67,650** hours of their time

54 supporters took part in, or hosted their own fundraising event

Over **£103,000** was generously donated through our winter appeal to support our work throughout the hardest time of the year

560 corporate volunteers gifted **2,806** hours of their time

2 people generously left us a gift in their will

There are lots of ways to get involved; from volunteering to running a marathon, and anything in between. If you'd like to support our life changing work please contact us at fundraising@cyrenians.scot to find out more.

WHO WE ARE Cyrenians

Cyrenians tackle the causes and consequences of homelessness, using our values-led and person-centred approach. We build relationships which support people to flourish and move towards more positive and stable futures.



COMMUNITY



Arnotdale House

Belonging to a community gives us the strength and resilience to create the life we want. Our projects build community and nurture relationships so that people have a say in the change they want to create, and access to support or advice.

ALL IN FOR CHANGE

Created and funded by the Scottish Government and St Martins to test and implement the Ending Homelessness Together recommendations, this project brings together those who are impacted by homelessness.

Through the change team, a group made up of those with lived experience, frontline workers, and academics, we are able to consult people across the sector on the impact of policies and the barriers that prevent us being able to implement them and highlight what needs to change. This vital work ensures that new policy is shaped by real experience, and provides a voice to those who are directly impacted by these changes in a space where previously there was no opportunity to feed-in to the process.

Over the past year the monthly retreats had to move online, with 24 Change Leads participating throughout the year contributing to the Prevention Report, Everyone Home campaign, and helping shape the Everyone Home route maps. We also helped highlight the impact of

digital exclusion on those experiencing homelessness, leading to the Scottish Government providing significant grants to address the digital divide and provide more opportunities for our community to participate in shaping the future.

ARNOTDALE HOUSE

Set in the heart of Dollar Park, Arnotdale House is home to our charitable work in Falkirk and our thriving social enterprise. Through a family-friendly café and beautifully fitted function rooms we provide a space for the local community to gather, reconnect and absorb the history and beauty of our walled garden and surrounding green spaces.

Like many businesses the past year has been difficult, with the café closing when lockdown restrictions were announced. However, despite being limited at times in being able to welcome the public to our premises, our community still needed our support.

Repurposing our kitchen, we provided a fresh-meal production service throughout the lockdowns, creating and distributing over 8,500 meals to key community groups and supporting the delivery of over 1,600 emergency food bags directly to households experiencing food insecurity.

In the short periods we were able to welcome people back to the café we were humbled by the £800 worth of donations to our pay-it-forward scheme which provides dignified access to a hot meal and drink to those needing it in our community.



"I had terrible symptoms of the virus that kept me in for several weeks. I'm not sure what I would have done without your support. I barely had the strength to make meals so when you provided some homemade meals, I can't tell you how grateful I was for these - they were so full of goodness I'm convinced you helped nurse me back to health."

Falkirk Resident

CAMELON CONNECT

Our Camelon Connect project supports those who have been involved with Justice services, helping provide links between local services, businesses and employers creating a more positive perception of those with a conviction which ultimately supports people to feel safer in their community.

Through a combination of telephone calls, Zoom meetings and finally bringing back our favoured 'walk and talk' support we were able to ensure those we supported pre-pandemic continued to feel seen and heard, despite the restrictions imposed by the various lockdowns. With many services having to close over the past year it was more important than ever that the individuals we connected with continued to feel supported by us, and not feel cut off or isolated from the community they had worked so hard to be part of. This included providing

devices and WiFi to ensure people could participate fully in our services, and connect with friends and family whilst unable to leave home.

Over the past 12 months we were able to support 19 people to continue volunteering with local activities and provide a further 28 individuals on-going 1-2-1 support.

COMMUNITY LINK WORKER

Based in Falkirk and Edinburgh, our community link workers provide flexible support to individuals to help improve their wellbeing and create opportunities to re-engage with their community. From support accessing services, to help with benefits, housing issues and accessing health care, our community link workers support individuals to move towards a more stable and secure lifestyle.

Over the past year, with many GP services temporarily closing and waiting lists growing longer, our community link work has become more about providing 1-2-1 support and a friendly listening ear to bridge this gap. Through the building of strong, trusted relationships, we have been able to ensure those who need us are able to stay engaged despite lengthier wait times and the uncertainty created by the pandemic.

In Falkirk we've received 89 referrals from 2 GP Practices since August 2020 and provided over 570 hours of support.

In Edinburgh, our community link worker supported local practices to reach more patients by providing 630 appointments at a time and place that suited them without the pressures of a 7-10 minute



time slot traditionally offered in health services. This holistic approach supports the recovery of individuals by placing them at the heart of the decision making, and therefore the recovery process.

GOLDEN YEARS

In Edinburgh, our Golden Years Community Connecting service provides support to those aged 60+ who may be experiencing social isolation or limited daily social connection. The support, encouragement, and care provided by our Golden Years team has undoubtedly resulted in significant improvements in physical and mental wellbeing particularly over the past year, with many saying that they feel more mentally stimulated, less isolated, and with a renewed sense of purpose and motivation.

With face-to-face befriending and community groups put on hold due to the pandemic we were quick to introduce telephone check-ins and built telephone trees connecting people with similar interests to help recreate the social aspects of our pre-pandemic group work.

Digital inclusion was a major focus of our work over the past 12 months and we provided numerous devices and training to help people connect digitally with friends, family and online activities.

We supported 98 individuals through our telephone befriending, and visited a further 65 people during our covid-safe doorstep visits. We were also keen to ensure our lunch club members still felt the benefit of our support and were able to deliver over 6,000 meals throughout the year.

OLDER PEOPLE ACTIVE LIVES (OPAL)

Our OPAL project provides support to those aged 60+ in the Bathgate area to maintain or increase their independence and wellbeing. Through 1-2-1 support and group work we help combat social isolation by providing companionship, activities and a community in which people can connect with peers, share their experience and lead their own growth.

Despite the limitations of the pandemic OPAL continued to offer a range of activities, including telephone calls, online groups (including our choir!), doorstep visits, puzzle packs, support with essential shopping and, when restrictions permitted, socially distanced walks.

Over the past 12 months OPAL have engaged with 250 individuals and hosted 96 zoom groups providing a welcome reprieve from the difficulty of lockdown, and the chance to see lots of familiar friendly faces in a safe way.



PEER SUPPORT PROJECT

Our peer workers have been at the forefront of supporting those who have been amongst the most vulnerable throughout the pandemic. Offering a different kind of service, our peer workers support those who do not fit into "traditional forms" of support.

Over the past 12 months we were able to deliver 1,020 keywork sessions which included providing support to access benefits, housing repairs, recovery support or food parcels. Although our way of working changed due to the pandemic, we were still able to maintain our person-centred focus, providing a much needed emotional and social support to those we work with.

This challenging period has enabled us to fully understand the power of lived experience, particularly when working alongside those who experience multiple complex needs. Being able to speak from a place of experience removes the feeling of 'othering' that can be felt by those seeking support. Our Peer workers are able to create



Walled Garden

strong, trusted relationships with people who may struggle to trust others or have negative experiences of previous support services. By allowing people to shape their own pathway to recovery, we are able to provide more meaningful and flexible support.

WALLED GARDEN

Although the Garden was unable to welcome as many guests this year due to lockdown restrictions, we used this period of time to build on our accessibility work, incorporating wheelchair safe paths around the garden ensuring as many people in our community can benefit from the

beauty and tranquillity of the space as possible.

Throughout the year we have also provided fresh produce and plants to the local community through our garden cart, ensuring that whilst people couldn't visit us, they were able to benefit from the growth and hopefully start their own green space at home.

Keen to ensure we remained connected to our community, we increased our digital activity, documenting and sharing the growing stages of the garden and even inviting people to crochet or knit poppies for a display. Over 1,000 poppies were sent in, with responses from across the community.



FAMILY



Creating and sustaining healthy relationships is key to a fulfilled life. Our services support families to manage conflict well so that people can avoid relationship breakdown; one of the biggest causes of homelessness.

We know that having a strong support system allows people to grow and thrive, and often means that when life does get difficult there are safety nets to prevent people falling into crisis. Without these lifelines it can be harder to know where to turn to, or how to recover from a setback. By providing support to families before the crisis point we can break the cycle of homelessness caused by relationship breakdown.

HMP ADDIEWELL VISITOR CENTRE

At our visitor centre in HMP Addiewell we are there for families during one of the most stressful times in their lives. Navigating the experience of having a loved one in prison is not easy, and the ripple effect can create tension throughout a person's life including financial worries, a feeling of isolation, childcare difficulties and more.

Prior to the pandemic we relied on being a face-to-face service offering support to those visiting, whether that be through a simple hot cup of tea or providing links to additional support. The past 12 months has seen us flip the service on its head, reaching out to people directly, offering support with home learning, digital inclusion, providing devices, wellbeing packs, and creating a newsletter that helped share updates about visiting arrangements in an accessible and friendly way.

Our non-judgmental approach helps make the lives of those visiting loved ones in prison a little easier, and aids the maintenance of a support network for those currently imprisoned, easing

the transition upon release. We are in contact with over 300 people on a weekly basis, and are an emotional support to visitors as well as a practical one.

"I am wary of people even when they are trying to offer me help – I've built up relationships in the visitor centre and trust their judgement, particularly when I just need some reassurance."

Addiewell Visitor



LIVE LIFE

Working with 7 partners across the sector we provide support to Scotland's veterans and their families. By working collaboratively with our partners we are able to offer an alternative to the one-size fits all approach of traditional services, allowing those we support to engage with us in a fluid and flexible way.

We support people to build more positive and stable futures, helping to reduce stress and feelings of isolation by providing positive experiences with art therapy, mediation support, and helping to build valuable communication skills.

"I want to thank you so very much for the girls' activity box that arrived. OMG my girls faces they lit up with excitement, absolutely overwhelmed. We spent yesterday talking about my time in the RAF, probably the first time in a long time, it pulled us all together...I had a cry with the support we are receiving."
Parent

Although our partner drop in centres had to temporarily close throughout the pandemic we were still able to provide vital food and supplies to families, including activity and wellbeing packs and our partners were fortunate enough to welcome two families to a residential retreat when restrictions eased.

We've supported over 160 people, including 86 children.

MEDIATION AND SUPPORT

Our Mediation and Support service offers access to skilled family outreach workers and professional mediators to provide support to families who are experiencing conflict at home. Whilst family arguments are common place, our team are able to help when these become overwhelming and create safe spaces to explore these difficult conversations together.

Through a combination of formal mediation, 1-2-1 support, workshops and further signposting we aim to prevent relationship breakdown that may lead to homelessness. Our support is shaped around the family's need and we work with both the young people and parents/guardians alike.

This year we also embarked on an ambitious new national service – Keeping Families Together (funded by Cashback for Communities) which saw us expand our award-winning mediation services to include supporting young people in Scotland's secure units.

Last year, 113 families benefited from our mediation and support projects with 100% of the young people we engaged with remaining/returning home or moving out in a planned and supported way.

We also welcomed 108 young people to our conflict resolution workshops, delivered online to ensure young people could continue to explore how to deal with conflict.



SCOTTISH CENTRE FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION (SCCR)

The SCCR plays a key strategic role in developing a progressive model of earlier intervention across Scotland and beyond. Through our award-winning digital resources, free training and events we enable young people, families and the professionals who support them to address conflict and access knowledge, understanding and life skills, to create healthy, safe and loving relationships.

We were well placed to respond to the pandemic with our educational resources being available for free online, and we developed our training packages to provide additional online support to professionals and families at risk and in the care system.

Over the past 12 months we were able to engage with 1,159 individuals and support 329 organisations from 31 Scottish Local Authorities.

We welcomed global support at our first digital conference in October. 11 events brought together speakers, film makers, writers and artists to help foster connection, understanding and kindness during a year like no other.

"Sessions on Conflict Resolution allow our young people to engage in positive learning, conversation and shared experience around conflict. Whilst previously these sessions had been around maintaining employability in challenging circumstances, now we can also show how they are helping maintain a sense of self and resilience in the current climate."
Jessie – WorkingRite



FOOD



Everyone has the right to dignified access to good food. Our projects remove food insecurity and build community, connection and resilience through the sharing of food.

From sharing meals, to redirecting surplus food from landfill to frontline services, our food projects provide a lifeline to many. Food insecurity is on the rise, with many people unsure where their next meal will come from. By providing hot meals through our community cook clubs, dignified and affordable food through our pantries, skills and budgeting support through our cook school courses and support to frontline services through our FareShare work, we are at the forefront of tackling food insecurity in our community.

The past year has shown how precarious many people's situations are, with an increased demand on all our services, but particularly those providing food parcels and meals. By meeting the immediate need through our food provision, we are then able to continue engaging with people and offering additional support that empowers them to move towards a more stable future.



FARESHARE

At our FareShare depot we distribute surplus food, tackling food insecurity and also preventing unnecessary landfill waste. Over the past 12 months we have distributed almost 1,800 tonnes of surplus food to 256 community food members, helping create over 4.2 million meals.

Demand for our service more than tripled over the course of the pandemic, with more people than ever needing support to access healthy, quality food. With three times as much food coming into and subsequently leaving our depot we have been overwhelmed by the additional support and help from volunteers who have made this possible.



In addition to our food distribution we also offer a dignified, low-cost shopping option via our community pantries. Although some of our pantries had to close due to Covid restrictions, we were fortunate enough to still be able to offer 7 locations for members in Edinburgh.

Supporting over 350 households through our community pantries we were able to positively impact about 425 adults and 700 children. Our pantry model allows people to choose 10 items for a nominal cost of £1, helping to stretch the weekly budget and supplement the weekly 'food shop'.

100% of our pantry members said that using the pantry leaves them better able to manage finances, with 97% saying it helps them to eat a wider range of food.

We offer chilled, ambient and fresh foods at our pantries but people gain so much more from participating; from sharing recipe tips with other members, to being able to introduce children to

new foods without worrying about food waste and budget.

"They always make me feel welcome, and there is always a smile on their faces!"

Pantry member

FARM ENTERPRISE

Our Farm Enterprise is a social enterprise and working community farm which produces a range of organic food for the community, while giving people values-led work, volunteering and training opportunities to increase their skills, confidence and employability.

The past year has highlighted the fragility of the food system in the UK and many people have turned to local producers as a result. Empty shelves and

the increased demand for local, healthy produce spurred on the development of our new Veg and Fruit Bag Scheme, which utilises local independent retailers as collection points for weekly or fortnightly subscriptions to our produce.

We have also introduced a new project which will provide 16 young people in West Lothian with an outdoor learning qualification, employability training and work experience helping us build a more resilient farm and provide local young people valuable skills and qualifications for the future.

We produced 4,800 organic veg bags last year, with over 10,000 portions of fruit and veg grown on our own farm, with profits from sales supporting our work tackling homelessness.

The farm is not only a space for growing food, but also for growing skills, ideas and community and we are excited to continue building on the developments of this past year.

We welcomed over 100 attendees to our Virtual Community Kitchen events, bringing people together online to learn from guest chefs and support our work with the refugee community in Edinburgh.

For most of the year we were unable to welcome people to our community lunch clubs, however many of the attendees still needed our support so we developed recipe bags which helped divert 2,443kg of food from landfill and supported over 100 families and 70 students to learn new skills and nurture relationships during a stressful time for us all.

Although we had to shift some of our activity online, our cook school still helped to build community through food by bringing people together to learn and share new skills; to cook together and to eat together. We believe that sharing food is the glue that sticks society together – a meal shared is nourishing for more than just the body!

FLAVOUR AND HAVER COOK SCHOOL

Our Flavour and Haver Community Cook School is a thriving hub of cooking classes, events, lunch clubs and social activities. Throughout 2020 our cook school was a crucial part of our covid-19 response, creating over 80,000 healthy, freezer-ready meals between March and September for distribution across Edinburgh to those currently isolating, shielding, and NHS staff on the frontline.

"You've done an absolutely fabulous job with the meals. I have used your meal service for many of my clients and I must say it's been fantastic. You've been really quick in responding and it's saved so many lives. Without your service, the impact of the crisis on people would have been even worse."

NHS worker





HEALTH



Good Health is fundamental to a fulfilling life. We support access to healthcare, wellbeing resources and whatever individuals need to sustain a level of wellness that allows them to flourish.

When life gets difficult, our mental and physical wellbeing can be negatively impacted. By providing support to address this we can help people reach or maintain a level of wellbeing that allows them to fully engage with their life and community. Removing the barriers to accessing healthcare and wellbeing resources ensures that people can seek interventions before they reach crisis point.

ACCESS TO FREE PERIOD PRODUCTS

Our Access to Free Period Products (AFPP) Service aims to address the stigma of menstruation and break down barriers to access to help address the issue of period poverty in Scotland. We want to ensure that people have dignified access to these essential items, and feel empowered to take products for themselves and their families without embarrassment or difficulty.

The past year has been difficult to navigate, with many of our collection points closing due to restrictions. However, demand for our products has continued to grow and including period products in emergency food parcels, food banks, and community pantries has ensured we're able to reach those who need them most.

A positive outcome of the past year is the increased uptake of our reusable products with feedback suggesting that people were more likely to try these products out from the comfort of their own home. By switching to the reusable product we have reduced the need for people to collect more product every month and made a positive impact on the environment too.

Over the past 12 months we've distributed 4,598 cases of tampons and pads, 1,897 menstrual cups and 2,148 washable pad packs helping people with periods feel comfortable, hygienic and able to participate fully!



COMMUNITY HOSPITAL GARDENS

Our Community Hospital Gardens based at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital and Midlothian Community Hospital offer therapeutic green spaces to aid recovery and foster connection to others and the natural world.

Although the pandemic meant we had to reduce the number of volunteers we welcomed to the gardens at any one time, being able to provide a beautiful oasis in the middle of the city provided many people a source of comfort and sense of escape.

*"The gardens have been a sanctuary, a haven."
A visitor*

Our gardens boast a wide range of flora and fauna, with something for everyone. Our activities support patient recovery, encouraging participation in shaping the growth of the garden and gives patients who have been admitted for long-term care a chance to be involved in something that feels distinctly separate to the routines of hospital life.

During the past year our gardens have become a more vital resource than ever before. With visiting hours suspended due to covid-risks the gardens provided a sanctuary where people could safely meet, nurturing vital family connections and providing a space to reflect and relax.

HOSPITAL IN-REACH

Based at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and the Western General we provide support to patients experiencing homelessness.

This support can be a lifeline to hospital patients who may have no-one else to turn to advocate for them, or support them to engage fully with their treatment and discharge planning. Being unwell is an incredibly vulnerable time in our lives, and to do it alone can be terrifying. We provide a friendly and supportive face, that ensures people can fully participate in their recovery before they are discharged. This has been particularly needed over the past year when restrictions have reduced patient support even further.

We help to ensure patients are not discharged to rough sleeping and have access to ongoing support and treatment in the community. By doing this, people are more likely to be able to maintain their recovery and treatments, reducing the need for repeat hospital visits and stays. We are the link between health, housing and social care, with the individual needs at the centre of all we do.

Last year our hospital team supported 193 people, and supported 72 patients to access accommodation for after their discharge.

"I was scared I'd have to leave [hospital] and sleep rough, I still don't feel very well, thanks for finding me somewhere to stay." Patient

NEW PROJECTS - LEAP & RANDOLPH CRESCENT

Responding flexibly to the pandemic allowed us to identify gaps in service provision and create projects that filled these gaps, providing much needed support and assistance to those experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.

In May we embarked on our Randolph Crescent Cohorting Centre project, a short-term offering that provided accommodation for individuals who had tested positive, or showed symptoms, for covid-19. We provided a safe space for individuals at a time of crisis to isolate and recover, while helping to reduce the spread of covid-19 through the community.

Our Randolph Crescent team provided 24hour support, including follow-on

accommodation options and links to additional services. Thankfully the number of referrals remained low so we were able to utilise the space as emergency accommodation for 77 individuals between May and July.

Our new LEAP Out of Hours Service provides a supportive, homely environment for those currently participating in the 12 week residential rehabilitation programme.

Working in partnership with the NHS we provide complementary activities and support to ensure those on their recovery journey have the best possible chance of success. At only 2 months into the project we have already welcomed 15 individuals to the project, all of whom have been a vital part of shaping our wellbeing offering and building the community with us.



Residents participating in a virtual bake along hosted by our cook school

HOME



Good, safe housing is a human right. We support people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness to access adequate housing and the support they need to make that house a home.

From providing residential accommodation and supporting people to maintain their tenancies, to engaging with those experiencing street homelessness or staying in temporary accommodation, our teams work hard to remove the barriers for people experiencing homelessness.

PRS PILOT

A less short term let market, coupled with an increase in local housing allowance has meant more properties in the Edinburgh and Lothians becoming affordable to those in receipt of benefits. In response we developed a new service, in partnership with Crisis, supporting people who are homeless to access a home within the private rented sector. To date we have secured tenancies in the private rented sector for 18 households, and are working with a further 52 households to progress their applications.

Through this project we've built up relationships with landlords and letting agents, with many supporting us to secure properties for tenants within weeks of their application. The freedom this allows people in terms of location and the option to reject a property is in stark contrast to alternative housing routes. We help tenants settle in, linking them to additional support services in their local community, providing more than just a house, but a step towards a more stable and secure future.

OUR COMMUNITIES

Our residential communities provide a supportive living environment for people who have experienced

homelessness. We have two young people communities, the City and Farm, our Crighton Place community for those moving out of the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, and our Social Bite Village for those aged over 18.

This year we also introduced our new Lotus Community model supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people aged 16 to 25.

Our community models offer people the opportunity to learn vital life skills that will equip them to live independently; from budgeting and cooking skills, to exploring further training, volunteering and employment options. We provide a supportive environment that allows each individual to explore what living independently means for them, creating personal goals and a plan for the future that is led by them.

Over the past year we are immensely proud to say;

10 PEOPLE

have moved into the Lotus community since it began in Nov 2020

1 OF OUR

Crighton Place community members has moved on to live independently

10 COMMUNITY

members moved on from the Social Bite Village

22 RESIDENTS

were supported at our City and Farm community, with 6 moving into their own tenancies!

The pandemic heavily impacted our communities, with restrictions severely limiting the ability to connect and rely on previous support networks. Changes to staffing patterns to allow for social distancing and safe working practices meant that community members and staff had to get creative and rely on zoom calls and WhatsApp groups to stay in touch and maintain a consistent level of support.

Community members, residential volunteers and staff pulled together over the past 12 months to make the best of a difficult situation, from developing outdoor spaces to exploring creative pursuits and supporting each other when times got tough.

HOMELESS NAVIGATOR PROJECT

Our Homeless Navigators are on 'the frontline' of helping tackle homelessness. Carrying out street outreach across Edinburgh our Navigators go to where people are, and support them to navigate

their way through often complex systems of support. We demonstrate extreme 'stickability' and don't operate a sanction-based service. We know the people that need our support most are often the same people who have been let down by other services. There are no penalties for missing an appointment, we'll simply arrange another time and place and show up again, and again, and again.

Through this determined and consistent approach we were able to support 71 people to access emergency accommodation, provide intensive 1-2-1 support to 15 individuals and had a 0% rate of those we support representing as homeless after we engaged with them.

The pandemic changed the way we worked, with hotels, temporary flats and other locations being opened up and repurposed to provide safe accommodation for people experiencing street homelessness. This accelerated availability of accommodation resulted in no rough sleepers on Edinburgh's streets through April and May 2020, for the first time in living history.



HOUSING FIRST

Based in both Edinburgh and West Lothian our Housing First projects support individuals with long histories of homelessness with a variety of severe and complex support needs to access a permanent and stable home. Housing First has been a system-changing project, offering people accommodation with wrap around support to help them rebuild their lives.

The support is truly flexible; no other project sticks with clients wherever they go or whatever their circumstance. Sometimes moving to a different area would mean having to change worker and this could be a huge setback for some people, or missing key appointments could lead to a loss of support. Our project offers support to people who have been hard to reach, who might not have had a place to call home, and by using our diverse skills sets we are able to connect with them on a more human level and support them to maintain their tenancy whichever way works best.

"HF has helped me push forward with keeping engaged which has helped me talk things through to stop me losing my tenancy."
Housing First Client

Despite the pandemic creating some delays and difficulties in accessing properties, we were determined to ensure that those we support experienced minimal disruption. Over

the past year we have supported 15 people in West Lothian with 4 people currently maintaining permanent tenancies. In Edinburgh we were able to support 29 individuals, with 88% maintaining their tenancies.

ST MARTIN'S SCOTTISH FRONTLINE NETWORK

The Frontline Network exists to harness the ideas, energy and experience of those at the frontline working with homeless and vulnerably housed people, by building relationships, sharing best practice, developing solutions and communicating the experience and views of the frontline to influence policy and change.

By involving frontline workers in the decision-making process we can ensure that the real concerns of those we support, and those providing the support, are heard, with new policy and work practices reflecting this expert knowledge. Our role, providing a platform for these voices to be heard, is one we're incredibly proud of and over the past year the ability to gather, albeit virtually, to respond to the constant change and adversity facing our communities has provided us with an avenue to easily develop new ways of working using creativity and new ways of good practice.

Over the past 12 months we have welcomed 90 people at our online events including representatives from the voluntary, statutory and public sectors.



WORK



We all need a sense of purpose or the ability to support ourselves, to thrive. Through our projects people discover their potential, build relationships and access opportunities including training and employment.

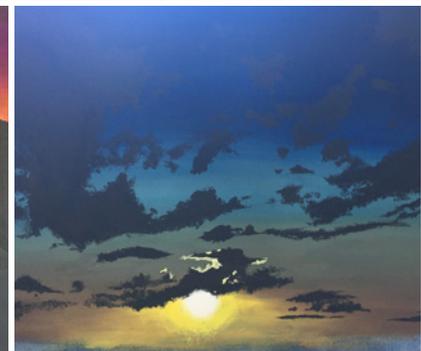
From providing support to young people who have left school early and creating a creative community for others to explore their talents and build confidence; to providing industry-recognised training in the care sector and representing frontline staff on a national level, our work projects help individuals explore their options, creating meaningful change and development opportunities.

CREATIVE NATIVES

We offer young people aged 15-24 who are experiencing social isolation and poor mental health, opportunities to explore creativity and develop skills in conjunction with our partners Community Enterprise.

Our Art and Design studio is a safe learning environment where young people, many of whom have disengaged from school, can grow in confidence, try out new things and nurture their ideas while learning new skills. We offer guidance and support, encouraging each individual to run with their own ideas and make the most of the opportunity. Whilst we provide practical support and skills around art styles, we also offer emotional support in a non-judgemental manner allowing those who attend our sessions to really grow into themselves and gain the confidence they need to take positive steps beyond our project.

Over the past year we have supported 19 young people, 3 of whom moved on from our studio to participate in college and 2 others started new jobs.



Artwork by our creative natives

EMPLOYABILITY

Our employability projects based in Falkirk (Quest, Fair Start, Justice Employability) and Leith (FareShare Employability) aim to provide people facing barriers to employment with the support and skills they need to access the job market.

At our FareShare project we supported over 200 people currently in receipt of benefits by providing vocational training such as Communications Skills, Customer Service, Manual Handling and more. Our participants were guaranteed interviews with employers in the St James Quarter, with a large number going on to secure permanent employment.

Our Fair Start project supports the Employment Training Unit at Falkirk Council to deliver needs-based training courses for individuals participating in the Fair Start programme. Over the past year we have supported 23 individuals with courses such as Building Confidence and Self Esteem, Managing

Stress and Anxiety, and providing support around practical tasks such as digital access and CV advice.

Our Quest and Justice Employability projects support individuals who have experience of the Justice system. This support includes helping individuals breakdown the barriers associated with being part of the justice pipeline, whilst offering access to practical courses such as confidence building, disclosure letter writing, and 1-2-1 support sessions.

Over the last year our Quest and Justice Employability projects supported 76 individuals, providing over 540 1-2-1 sessions.

FOUNDATIONS

We work with people who want to start to make changes in their lives, progressing towards employment, training or further education, despite facing multiple disadvantages and having complex needs.

Our trauma-informed approach allows us to support those furthest from

employment by addressing each individual's immediate needs and creating the space they need to move forward and begin rebuilding a sense

“Lost in the system, with no-one to help, my state of mind rapidly diminished and all hope began to evaporate.

Evelyn and Karen at Cyrenians instantly took full ownership of all aspects of the challenges I was facing from offering me support through my illness and valiantly fighting my corner against what seemed like endless bureaucracy.

As a hard-working individual, who floated from pay cheque to pay cheque I had no idea how precarious life could become. It really felt like no-one cared. Humanity was what was called for and in Cyrenians, I encountered this in abundance. Evelyn and Karen saved my life and for that I will always look to Cyrenians with endless kindness and gratitude. They are a modern-day miracle.”

Foundations to employment client

of self and belonging. The relationship we build with each person is the main intervention we have, creating a resource that facilitates self-led change.

Over the past year we have supported 38 people, with 7 moving into employment and a further 14 moving into structured volunteering or vocational training.

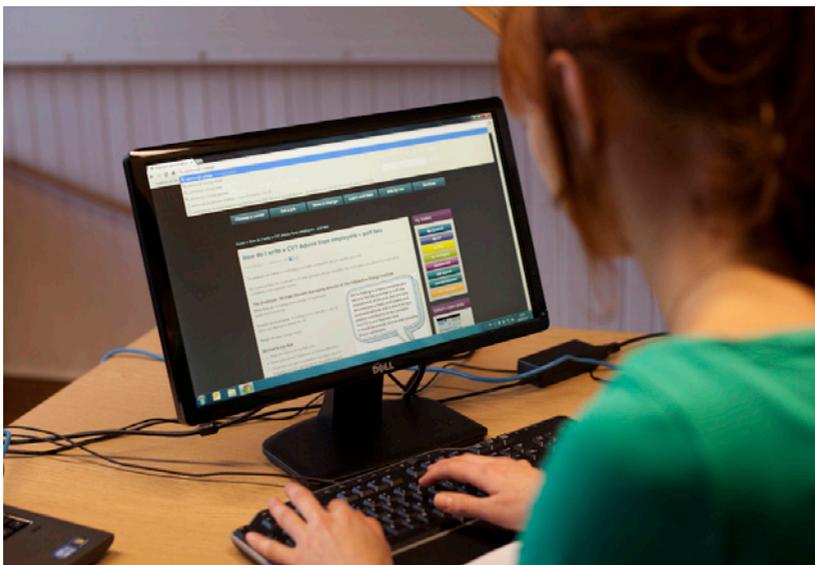
KEY TO POTENTIAL

Our Key to Potential service provides outreach careers support to young people who have experienced disrupted education. We bridge the gap between their experience and what options are available after school. We provide direct support to the young people, encouraging them to lead the decision making process while involving their parents/guardians in the planning and activity to foster a sense of shared hope.

We believe that every young person has the right to be supported towards a positive future that allows them to realise their full potential.

Throughout the pandemic we continued to receive referrals, and this only increased as other services closed down. We moved from providing careers advice and exploring future pathways, to also providing food parcels and sourcing IT equipment to support digital inclusion.

Last year we supported 66 young people towards positive destinations, including supporting 28 young people through online college applications and enrolments.



KEY TO WORK

Our newest project for young people has been running for 9 months, and is a direct response to the decreased availability of work experience projects and young people 'falling through the gaps' of support provision. Without meaningful support, young people who are disengaged can find it difficult to access new opportunities and suffer from poor mental health and low confidence.

We designed this project around our existing experience, providing taster session activities to small groups of young people at our Farm, Cook School, and community gardens, as well as with partners the Edinburgh School of Food and Wine, and Wildside Nature. By offering short and engaging experiences in small groups we are able to provide each young person the space to really explore the opportunities and provide dedicated support to each individual.

In just nine months we have supported 27 young people through our Key to Work project.

MARKET LED TRAINING

Our Market Led Training courses are industry-recognised courses verified by Skills Development Scotland that offer a supportive route into the social care profession.

We work with individuals providing key skills training, and support them to apply, interview and sustain that employment long-term.

As a result of the pandemic we had to change the way we offered training. Moving from group sessions in person to online 1-2-1 learning. Over the past year we've trained 71 people, with 30 people already in roles and a number of students embarking on the interview process.

"I wouldn't be where I am without the care course. I lost my job in hospitality in March due to the pandemic and wanted to use this as an opportunity to change career to something where I could help people. I didn't know much about care though so when the Job Centre told me about Cyrenians course I thought it sounded like a good idea. The training was really helpful, gave me an insight into what the job is and the different opportunities. Getting help with actually applying for jobs was great too. I've been working as a Support Worker for 8 months now and it's going great!"

Course participant



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Cyrenians is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), registered charity SC011052