“It is important that I am made to feel welcome and that staff here actually care about me. It’s more than just hot food and a warm place to sleep at night, it is knowing that you guys care about me.”
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Quotes found throughout the report were said by people staying at the Care Shelter. Photos - all images used with consent.
The winter of 2017-18 was a cold one that saw the highest number of people accessing the Care Shelter in its 22 years of operation. Thanks to additional funding received part-way through the season, the Shelter capacity was increased and everyone was accommodated from then on. We thank God for this provision and for His goodness to us; in allowing us to serve in this way and enabling us to support so many people in crisis.

Operational Context See page 8
The Care Shelter was open every night of the week from 9 October 2017 - 22 April 2018; 28 weeks in total. There were 45 bed spaces available per night from 9 October until 1 December when capacity increased. Additional funding from the Scottish Government and Social Bite allowed an increase in capacity to 75 people per night. This meant that no one had to be turned away. Over 91,500 bed spaces have been provided at the Care Shelter across the 22 winters it has been open.

Church & Volunteer Overview See page 11
Involved this season were 16 venues and over 1,000 volunteers from 71 different catering teams; 69 churches and 2 non-church teams. For the first time in its history, the Care Shelter was located in one venue for a period of 15 weeks. Meadowbank Church being large, could accommodate 75 people and was available for this period. Churches that had signed up to host the Care Shelter were very gracious when bookings were cancelled and they shared our vision to be able to accommodate everyone who would otherwise have been rough sleeping. The Care Shelter heavily depends on the support of the churches and other volunteers who turn up night after night to cook nutritious meals and open up their venues for our use. Thank you to all who are involved.

Staffing See page 14
The staff team consisted of two team leaders, four full-time project workers and three part-time project workers. Following the increase in capacity a further project worker was on shift throughout the night.

Finance See page 16
The total expenditure up till financial year end in March 2018 was £225,531 and the total restricted income was £225,315 showing a difference of -£216. This is the first time that the Care Shelter has been delivered on a break even model and this is due to the incredible support and giving that the project has benefitted from this year. We also received funding for April 2018 to continue full delivery up till planned closing date of 22 April 2018.

Partnership Working See page 20
Eight agencies visited the Care Shelter regularly over the winter period providing medical services and various forms of housing support and advice. Many people linked in with these services and accessed help that they would not have acquired independently. The presence of the various services at the Care Shelter also helped to breakdown barriers and create relationships. People were encouraged that services came out to meet them where they were.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“I really appreciate all that you have done for me. You guys chat, listen, encourage, support, love. And you do all this and expect nothing back in return.”

The winter of 2017-18 was a cold one that saw the highest number of people accessing the Care Shelter in its 22 years of operation. Thanks to additional funding received part-way through the season, the Shelter capacity was increased and everyone was accommodated from then on. We thank God for this provision and for His goodness to us; in allowing us to serve in this way and enabling us to support so many people in crisis.
Feedback and Qualitative Updates
It is quite emotional to read the comments passed on to staff across the course of the season, for example:

“This is the first time anyone has shown hope in me.”

“You guys saved my life. Changed my life.”

For more comments and for Paul’s story, page 24-25
Tim’s story, page 18
Howard’s story, page 26
Karen’s story, page 32

Attendance See page 28
Attendance at the Care Shelter is analysed in section 10 in terms of number of nightly presentations and additionally the number of unique individuals who stayed at the Care Shelter over the winter.

- 722 individuals accessed the Care Shelter during the 2017-18 season. An average of 42.6 people attended each night which resulted in 8,330 presentations.
- The number of presentations was down this winter from 9,565 the previous season to 8,330, as was the average length of stay—from 13.6 to 11.3 nights. The improvements in these statistics are because fewer individuals stayed at the Care Shelter for more than half the season (99 nights or more). This number halved, from 3.6% in 2016-2017 to 1.8% this season. This is encouraging and shows that the measures implemented on the back of the HRSAG (see section 3.1) recommendations have had an impact. If these changes had not occurred, the number of presentations and the average length of stay would have exceeded the previous winter’s attendance.
- 33% of people stayed only one night at the Care Shelter across the winter, and 70% stayed for seven nights or less.
- 80% of individuals who stayed this winter had not attended the Care Shelter in the preceding two seasons. Only 2% of the total number of attendees across the last three seasons stayed at the Care Shelter in all three seasons.

Monitoring Forms & Analysis See page 33
- Gender: 18% female, 82% male. There was an increase in the number of women staying at the Care Shelter.
- Age: The mean age was 39 with the youngest being 16 and the oldest 77. There was an increase in the number of young people staying at the Care Shelter.
- Nationalities: 68% British, 27% rest of Europe, 5% rest of the world. There is a gap in service provision for non UK nationals which results in people staying homeless for longer.
- Reason for homelessness: Relationship breakdown was again the main reason identified for homelessness, often coupled with another expressed reason. Eviction and attendees having no local connection were reasons given that increased significantly this season.
- Length of time homeless: The largest proportion of those using the service had been homeless for less than a week when they first presented. This group stayed longer on average this season than last, suggesting that it is now harder to access immediate help when becoming homeless.
- Most recent accommodation: 37% of people reported sleeping rough the previous night.
- Guests’ only alternative to Care Shelter that night: 95% said their only other option was sleeping out.
- Length of time in Edinburgh: 48% of guests had been in Edinburgh for more than 5 years, 22% had been in the city less than a week.
• **Homeless presentations to the council:** 50% of people attending the Care Shelter for the first time had not presented to the council as homeless. This points to confusion about what to do when people first become homeless and the number of barriers that prevent people from approaching the council for help. 36% of attendees had been directed to the Care Shelter by the council because no suitable accommodation was available for them. This is a shocking finding and shows the pressures of a housing shortage.

**Conclusions** See page 46

1. **HRSAG (The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group) recommendations had an impact:** Initiatives such as the Hopetoun direct access hostel, the Inter-agency Street Network and personalised budgets all contributed to the reduction in the average length of stay at the Care Shelter. Additionally, the Care Shelter could not have accommodated the presenting individuals without the major grant injections to support the staffing for a larger capacity venue. We very much hope that these efforts can be continued. Providing people with more options and ways to move forward has a huge impact for those with chaotic lifestyles or those for whom there are barriers to them accessing housing via the usual routes.

2. **Rough sleeping numbers continue to rise:** Without the above initiatives, presentations at the Care Shelter would have likely been the highest ever (over 10,000—see section 10.4). This winter also saw 722 individuals access the Care Shelter which was an increase in unique individuals on the previous season, revealing the scale of the challenge that exists in Edinburgh.

3. **There is a gap in service provision for non-UK nationals:** Some people are excluded from particular public funds because of their nationality or immigration status. This is a barrier to them moving on from homelessness as is evident at the Care Shelter. However, there are many more Brits that stay in the Shelter than non-UK nationals and on average they stay for eight nights compared to 19 for non-UK nationals.

**Recommendations for 2018-19**

1. **Increased capacity:** The Care Shelter is the last option for many people when they have not been able to get temporary accommodation from the council. Therefore, it is essential to have the capacity to accommodate everyone who needs to stay at the Care Shelter. The two main hurdles are obtaining a large enough venue and funding for an additional worker.

2. **Permanent venue:** Tied into the capacity issue is the need for a permanent venue. The Care Shelter has outgrown a great number of the church halls that used to be accessed as the capacity has been increased to meet the need. Being in one venue also opens up many possible improvements to the service such as proper beds, showers and laundry facilities.

3. **Longer Care Shelter season:** Weather in Scotland can be severe during most months of the year, it is not just restricted to winter. We plan to increase the duration of the Care Shelter season by four weeks next winter. This would allow us to reach, on average, another 22 individuals per additional week.
OPERATIONAL BACKGROUND

- Introduction, Aim, Operational context
- Church and volunteer overview
- Staffing
- Nightly timetable
- Finance
1 INTRODUCTION

The Care Shelter began as a two-week pilot in 1996 and has grown to 28 weeks, covering the coldest months of the year. We offered the essential provision of a safe place to sleep and a hot meal in partnership with 75 different churches from across Edinburgh and surrounding areas. Individuals who would otherwise be sleeping rough were welcomed into a caring, safe environment where they were treated with dignity and love.

The purpose of this report is to give an account of the work carried out and by considering some of the findings, recognise trends, patterns of use and need within the city. Throughout the operation of the Care Shelter an online monitoring form was used to help us to assess these trends and patterns.

“I feel safe here. Not alone.”

“Thank you for this place. I feel I can relax here and I don’t feel unwelcome like I normally feel going anywhere else.”

2 AIM

Through showing the love of Christ in action, the Edinburgh Care Shelter aims to provide a warm, safe and secure overnight place to sleep for those who would otherwise be rough sleeping; to offer hot nutritious meals and beverages; to provide high quality advice, guidance and signposting; and to treat each person with genuine care, respect and dignity. These four service aims are underpinned by an overall objective to provide opportunity of access to a wide range of partner agencies onsite, thereby assisting individuals to gain more appropriate accommodation and improved personal outcomes.

“I like it here, people show me respect and look after me.”

3 OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

People who access the Care Shelter have nowhere else to turn. Often they have exhausted other options—friends, family or hostels—or did not have these as alternatives to begin with. As a result, there is a high level of vulnerability and risk associated with many of our guests. This can be seen in the levels of addiction and mental health disorders.

People who use the service are asked to give their name upon entry but even if a false name is offered, they will still be able to gain access. This low level of accountability can also attract people who have been excluded or feel unable to access other homelessness services. However, there is no stereotype and people from all walks of life make use of the service at a point of crisis in their housing situation.

This winter the Care Shelter opened on 9 October 2017 and operated every night until 22 April 2018. There were 45 bed spaces available from 9 October until 1 December when capacity increased. Due to additional funding from the Scottish Government and Social Bite we were able to accommodate 75 people per night for the subsequent 20 weeks of operation.
3.1 Increase in capacity due to additional funding

This winter the Scottish Government formed the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HRSAG)\(^1\) whose remit included reducing rough sleeping in Scotland this winter. Their recommendations to the Scottish Government included increasing the capacity of the Care Shelter in Edinburgh to ensure that no one would be turned away because there was not space. Up until the end of November different individuals had been turned away on 70 occasions due to the Care Shelter being at capacity. As a result of this recommendation, the Scottish Government provided £27,000 to meet the existing deficit in the Care Shelter budget, and Social Bite gave £25,000 from their sleep out to increase the capacity to 75 bed spaces per night.

3.2 A cold winter

This winter saw a lot of bad weather, with one particularly unpleasant period at the end of February/beginning of March when roads became impassable and all public transport in Edinburgh stopped due to the snow. This presented various operational challenges such as getting staff and volunteers to the church. Thanks are due to everyone who went the extra mile to get to the Care Shelter open on those nights so that the service could continue. St. John’s Church at the west end of Princes Street opened its doors 24 hours a day so that people could shelter from the elements. This was an amazing effort by the church and various supporters and meant that no one needed to be on the street in the snow.

Snow is not the only adverse weather that frequents Edinburgh, sometimes heavy rain can be even worse, soaking people to the skin. The weather does not have to be particularly bad or cold to mean that people are at risk of dying on the street.

“This weather’s a killer, the Care Shelter is a life saver.”

“I have been sleeping rough for a year and a half and my body couldn’t take the cold over the winter. I’m glad the Care Shelter is here. It’s safe, warm and you get something to eat.”

\(^1\) For more information on the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group and its work see https://beta.gov.scot/groups/homelessness-and-rough-sleeping-action-group/
### 3.3 Historical provision of beds at the Care Shelter

This table shows the number of beds provided per season based on the average number of people staying over per night:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Average stayed over per night</th>
<th>Winter beds provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996-1997</td>
<td>2 week pilot</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-1998</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-1999</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-2002</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>22 weeks</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3669</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>22 weeks</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>22 weeks</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>22 weeks</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>22 weeks</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>22 weeks</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>22 weeks</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>5915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>20 weeks</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>21 weeks</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>22 weeks</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>5698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>24 weeks</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6048</td>
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<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>27 weeks</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8637</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>28 weeks</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>9251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
<td>28 weeks</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8260</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NB** numbers estimated for the first four years as no verifiable data available.

The impact of the Care Shelter has been massive over the 22 winters it has been running with over 91,500 bed spaces provided.
We are incredibly grateful to all the churches that offer their buildings for use by the Care Shelter, whether for just one night or many. One of the most inspiring things about the Care Shelter is that so many different denominations and churches come together with the shared goal of serving the poor for the sake of showing love to those who need it. Congregations are mobilised in unity around this one purpose, laying aside theological or traditional differences.

“Thank you for the lovely meal and coming out to feed us.”

The Care Shelter has always operated on a rota basis; moving around different church venues (see Appendix 1). In an effort to accommodate more people and better meet the presenting need, the larger venues had been grouped together in the rota to provide a period of increased capacity for three months (December to February, operating with a capacity of 60 instead of 45). Few existing venues are large enough to accommodate 75 people per night and so, due to the increase in capacity following the additional funding (see section 3.1) the search was on to find one venue that was large enough and available for an extended period of time. Meadowbank Church on London Road was a venue that had accommodated the Care Shelter in the past and they answered the call to provide a home for the Care Shelter for 15 weeks, from 8 January until 22 April 2018. We are grateful to them for providing their hall and for supporting the Care Shelter in this way.

This season, the Care Shelter was accommodated in 16 different venues, less than usual due to these mid-season changes. Three churches had come on board as new venues but were not due to host the Care Shelter until the new year and so were not able to be involved as a venue (two of them also provided catering teams). This was a big change to the usual rota system and we are very grateful for the good will of the churches who understood why we were cancelling pre-arranged bookings and shared our vision that no-one should have to sleep on the streets of our city.

Churches that are not located in central Edinburgh are able to be involved as catering teams, coming from as far as Falkirk and North Berwick. There were 71 different catering teams involved, of which 11 also provided a venue (and an additional six had been willing to). The effort that the volunteers put in on a nightly basis is incredible; providing all the food, cooking a hot two-course meal, chatting to the guests and clearing up afterwards.

“Have you hired professional chefs in tonight? The food is amazing.”

Catering teams:

Abbey Church * Barclay Viewforth Church * Bethany Fundraising Team
C3 Edinburgh * Canongate Kirk * Capital City Church International * Central Chalmers Church * Charlotte Chapel * Christ Church, Morningside
Christ Church, Britwell Crescent * Church of the Sacred Heart
City Gates Baptist Church * Community Church * Craiglockhart Church
Currie Kirk * Dalkeith Full Gospel Church * Davidson's Mains Parish Church
Dedridge Baptist Church * Destiny Church * Duke Street United Reformed Church
Elcho Place Hall * Falkirk Free Church * Found Church
Catering teams continued:

Gorgie Dalry Stenhouse * Grace Church * Granton Parish Church
Greenbank Parish Church * Greenside Parish Church * Holyrood Evangelical
Hope! Church * Howgate * Juniper Green Parish Church
Kings Church, Viewforth * Kirk of Calder * Kirkliston Community Church
Leith Baptist Church * Liberton Kirk * Liberton Northfield
Livingston Free Church * Longniddry Parish Church * Maclay Murray & Spens
Maddiston Evangelical Church * Meadowbank Parish Church
Morningside Parish Church * Musselburgh Baptist Church
Musselburgh Congregational Church * Musselburgh Northesk
North Leith Parish Church * Palmerston Place Church * Penicuik South Kirk
Polwarth Parish Church * Portobello and Joppa Parish Church
Prestongrange Parish Church * St. Andrew's and George's West Church
St. Columba's by the Castle * St. Columba's Free Church
St. Giles Neighbourhood Group * St. John the Evangelist
St. John's & St Mary Magdalene * St. Margaret's Church * St. Mark’s Portobello
St. Michael's Parish Church, Inveresk * St. Michael's, Linlithgow
St. Mungo's, Balerno * St. Ninian's Episcopal * St. Ninian's, Marionville
St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church * St. Paul's and St. George's Church
St. Peter's, Musselburgh * St. Peter's, Lutton Place

"Whoever made the crumble, oh, that was phenomenal!"

The venues that were actually used this winter:

Barclay Viewforth Church * Central * Charlotte Chapel
Church of the Sacred Heart * Community Church * Davidson's Mains Parish Church
Gorgie Dalry Stenhouse * Greenside Parish Church * Meadowbank Parish Church
Polwarth Parish Church * South Leith Baptist Church * St. Columba's Free Church
St. Cuthbert's Parish Church * The Crags * Willowbrae * YMCA Edinburgh

The following churches had been willing to be venues for the 2017-18 season but were not utilised when the extra funding was provided and the Care Shelter required to be in a venue that could accommodate 75 people per night. We are most grateful to them for their understanding. (It should be noted that other churches had bookings cancelled but had already hosted the Care Shelter earlier in the season and so are included in the venues list above.)

Carrubbers Christian Centre * Craigmilar Park * Destiny Church
Holyrood Evangelical * Kings Church Viewforth * St. Columba's by the Castle
St. Ninian's, Marionville * St. Peter's, Lutton Place
“Lots of thanks to the cooks for the best ever food.”

There are over 1,000 volunteers registered as part of the Care Shelter—an amazing show of support for the project. The food is always nutritious, of a high standard and is well received by the guests. The volunteers also spend time interacting with the guests, an aspect of the service that is much appreciated by those staying there.

“The fish pie was flipping great!”

Induction was offered to all volunteers and covered a variety of topics, for example boundaries, confidentiality and food hygiene. Each night, at the start of the evening, there was a briefing delivered by the staff. This covered the fire safety of that particular building, as well as recapping some of the more important topics covered in induction. A short devotion and open time of prayer then followed in order to dedicate the evening to the Lord.

Regarding the volunteers: “You do a really good job, you really do.”

Donations of clothing and toiletries were often brought by the catering church. These would include warm clothes collected from the congregation and often new underwear and socks. These contributions are very well received and make a big difference to the people who use the service. One individual was delighted to receive a pair of shoes that they could wear to their new security job. Others felt better about themselves in fresh clothing.

“I feel brand new with these clothes.”
5 STAFFING

Two Team Leaders, four full-time Project Workers and three part-time Project Workers were recruited during summer 2017. Five of the staff had prior experience of working at the Care Shelter, three were completely new to this work and one person worked for another homeless related service in Edinburgh. Three waking staff were on shift at a time (a Team Leader and two Project Workers) from 8pm till 8am, working seven nights on and seven off. Additionally, a fourth member of staff worked from 8pm till midnight. There was constant on-call cover from management and in addition, the Project Manager and Deputy Manager were in attendance at the Care Shelter regularly.

"I'm blown away at how amazing you guys are."

"I love you guys."

With the aforementioned additional funding to increase the capacity to 75, there was an expansion in staffing to keep the project safe. An extra full-time Project Worker was on staff every night from the 4th of December. This was covered by pool staff. A big thank you to all the pool staff who covered these shifts but in particular to Hugh Smith, Karol Pawlak and Daniel Brady who worked a great number of the shifts and brought a wealth of shelter experience with them to the team. The additional funding also covered an extra 10 hours per week of Deputy Manager time. This allowed the Deputy Manager to visit the Care Shelter to support the staff team an extra time per week and also to contribute more hours to planning and admin. The additional 10 hours were of huge benefit to the service.

With the move to Meadowbank Church on the 8th of January one Project Worker started at 7pm (and finished an hour earlier) to allow the volunteer catering team access to the kitchen. Usually a member of the church provides access but it was not practical to expect a member of Meadowbank Church to open up every night for 15 weeks.

"Thank you for chatting to me when it feels like everyone else doesn't want to know me."

The Team Leaders received an initial three-day induction, followed by a five-day induction for the whole staff team. This included the following topics: Policies and procedures; Care Shelter rules; team dynamics; food hygiene; health and safety; the vision and ethos of the Care Shelter; building culture and a welcoming environment; local agency awareness; professional boundaries; behaviour management; breakaway training; first aid and body spillage; administering Naloxone; mental health and addictions. Throughout this time the team grew together and began to commit to one another for the work that lay ahead.

"These people are here to help you. They will move mountains to help you."
6 NIGHTLY TIMETABLE

Volunteer catering team arrives and prepares a two-course meal

8.00pm

Full-time staff start their shift at Bethany House where they collect supplies and the minibus.

8.30pm

Staff start registering anyone who is already waiting to get in, recording names and DoB

8.45pm

Briefing and devotions with staff & volunteers

9.20–9.30pm

Set-up of hall with separate eating and sleeping areas

9.15 & 9.30pm

Two trips in the minibus to Waterloo Place to pick up guests. The majority make their way on foot and often there is only one minibus journey needed.

9.30–10.30pm

The meal is served. Any donations of clothing are laid out for people to look through and take what they need. Visiting services are available for people to talk to.

9.15pm

Lights out. Everyone is in bed. Volunteers leave having cleared up.

11.00pm

Part-time project worker leaves.

Midnight

The staff then rotate responsibilities between watching the hall, providing security at the door, checking the toilets and also each having a 45 minute break.

6.00–7.00pm

Self-service breakfast of toast, cereal and hot drinks set out for the lights coming on again.

6.30am

All guests leave. The venue is then cleaned and the minibus loaded.

7.00am

Bethany team leave the venue to return to Bethany House.

8.00am
The Care Shelter benefits from a huge amount of gift in kind. The volunteers give their time for free, the venues are provided free of charge along with the use of the kitchen, heating and lighting. Catering teams also provide the food supplies for the project each night as part of their voluntary church giving. We estimate that the in-kind giving provided to support the project is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Per night</th>
<th>Full season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>£200</td>
<td>£39,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of volunteers if paid living wage</td>
<td>£250</td>
<td>£49,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>£100</td>
<td>£19,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>caretaker</td>
<td>£30</td>
<td>£5,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities (for 91 nights)</td>
<td>£20</td>
<td>£1,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other donated goods</td>
<td>£100</td>
<td>£19,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>£135,100</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Without these high levels of gift in kind we could not fulfil the project. The level of donated goods and the voluntary service offered is exceptional.

We budgeted and received restricted income as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restricted Income Overview</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Gifts</td>
<td>£10,000</td>
<td>£9,777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gift Aid</td>
<td>£1,000</td>
<td>£780</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants Received</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organisations</td>
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<td>£6,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Gifts</td>
<td>£50,000</td>
<td>£58,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust Income</td>
<td>£75,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company Gifts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>£7,500</td>
<td>£5,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>£191,000</td>
<td>£225,315</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In total the restricted income was up £34,315 against budget for year end to March 2018. The very high level of financial support from churches in addition to the volunteering and meals provided reflects the care and concern shown by the local churches in partnering with Bethany in this project.

The total expenditure up till financial year end in March 2018 was £225,531 and the total restricted income was £225,315 showing a difference of -£216. The Scottish Government grant of £27,000, the Social Bite donation of £25,000 and the Buy-a-Bed Campaign of £8,329 represented new substantial financial support for the Care Shelter enabling us to operate at the higher capacity of 75 right through till 22 April 2018.

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2 The exception to this was Meadowbank Church who were offered a contribution to heating and lighting due to the Care Shelter being there for 105 nights.
All the good work of the Care Shelter is only possible because of the incredible generosity of existing and new donors and supporters; whether financial support or giving goods or time. No matter how big or small the gift, it all comes together to facilitate conversations, to support people to move into accommodation and ultimately to save lives in what has been a cold and snowy winter. The Care Shelter owes a huge debt of gratitude to everyone who gave their time, or who gave financially to facilitate this service. Tim’s story (on the next page) shows the impact that one conversation can have on an individual.

In addition to the generous donations of many churches, individuals and sponsored events towards the work of the Care Shelter we are also very grateful to the various trusts, organisations and funds that responded generously to Bethany’s Fundraising Team in enabling us to fulfil this work:

<p>| |</p>
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Edinburgh Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cruden Foundation Ltd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evelyn Drysdale Charitable Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inchcape</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leith Benevolent Fund</td>
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<td>Margaret Murdoch Trust</td>
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<td>Martin Connell Charitable Trust</td>
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<td>Nationwide</td>
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<td>Ponton House Trust</td>
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<td>Pret Foundation Ltd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rozelle Trust</td>
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<td>Social Bite</td>
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<td>The Alfred Haines Charitable Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Challenge Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Edinburgh Bar Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Fair Food Transformation Fund, Scottish Government</td>
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<td>The Graham Trust</td>
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<td>The Hinshelwood Gibson Charitable Trust</td>
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<td>The James M McNab Trust</td>
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<td>The John Wilson Robert Christie Bequest Fund</td>
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<td>The Netherdale Charitable Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Scottish Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Wilson Family Trust</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Tim’s story

Tim arrived at the Care Shelter one night and was recognised by the staff as someone who had been homeless a few years ago. He explained that he had been working recently but his contract had come to an end. He had been staying with a family member but did not want to be a burden on her when he did not have any money to pay his way. His concern for her and her kids caused him to move out. He was brought to the Care Shelter by the police who found him sleeping rough and were concerned for his welfare. Tim hopes that he will soon be able to find more work and can get back on his feet again.

Tim chatted to a member of staff that he remembered from the Care Shelter four years ago. One conversation had stuck in his mind all that time; it was about the drugs he had been taking back then. Tim said, “You convinced me to give up legal highs and I firmly believe that saved my life”. The staff member had explained the long-term effects of using so-called legal highs (New Psychoactive Substances or NPSs), something that Tim had not considered before. He had been unaware that these drugs that were labelled as “legal” could affect your mental health causing psychosis, paranoia and depression. So often at the Care Shelter there is no opportunity to have follow-up conversations with people who have stayed there to find out where they have moved on to or how the Care Shelter has affected them. The impact of one conversation can be life-changing.

Tim is still struggling with his substance use although he is staying away from NPSs. Staff continue to encourage him to make steps towards dealing with his addiction and will seek to have many more conversations with him while he is staying at the Care Shelter.
IMPACT

▪ Partnership working
▪ Feedback and qualitative updates
8  PARTNERSHIP WORKING

This winter, eight services regularly visited the Care Shelter to provide specialist advice and support. This partnership working is so important to the successful operation of the Care Shelter and to the aim of helping people to move on from homelessness. The support offered included housing and homelessness advice, legal advice, routes into employment, housing advice, and physical and mental health support.

There are fewer barriers to accessing the Care Shelter than there are often perceived to be with other services. This means that individuals who are not linked in with other services will attend the Care Shelter. People receive help and have access to various services through being at the Care Shelter despite these services existing and being available to them elsewhere. The presence of these services on the night also helps to remove some of these hindrances and perhaps enables access to them through other routes. This is well illustrated by the presence of City of Edinburgh Council Housing Officers at the Care Shelter on two evenings a week. To begin with, they had somewhat of a frosty reception but after a couple of nights and with staff encouraging people to speak with them, there was often a queue of people waiting to see them. This breaking down of barriers may mean that people feel more comfortable with presenting to the council in the future.

“I couldn’t handle waiting again for hours at the council just to be told they didn’t have anything.”

“The two housing officers visiting the Care Shelter tonight were really helpful and friendly.”

8.1  Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td>Streetwork</td>
<td>Streetwork</td>
<td>Streetwork</td>
<td>Streetwork</td>
<td>Streetwork</td>
<td>Streetwork</td>
<td>Streetwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td>EAP nurse &amp; CPN</td>
<td>Crisis</td>
<td>Shelter (fortnightly)</td>
<td>GP</td>
<td>Cyrenians (monthly)</td>
<td>CEC Housing Officers</td>
<td>CEC Housing Officers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The services in the timetable above visited on a weekly basis unless specified. In addition to these services, the Rock Trust made one visit to the Care Shelter to speak with anyone present who was 25 years old or younger.

A member of the staff team also worked for the Bethany Visiting Support team. He was able to talk to people about the option of receiving housing support to help them navigate the housing system or deal with complex housing related problems.

Two staff members from Bethany Christian Centre did a number of pool shifts throughout the winter and made many good connections with men who were keen to address their addictions. Bethany Christian Centre is an 18 bed recovery unit for men with addictions and has proved to be a great next step for individuals to take from the Care Shelter. Care Shelter staff constantly encourage people to consider various recovery options and a number of referrals were made to Bethany Christian Centre over the course of the winter.

“I’m looking forward to getting into Bethany Christian Centre, I really need this!”
8.2 Reports by visiting partners

Contained below is a brief summary of each services’ involvement. For fuller reports with more detail, statistics and case studies please see Appendix B.

8.2.1 Crisis

We visited 24 times over the season; every Tuesday except Christmas and New Year. We provided housing advice, arranged homeless assessments, accompanied people to City of Edinburgh Council, supported people with information and support around their housing options, welfare issues and to access other Crisis services; and signposted to other services. We provided a Romanian speaking volunteer for the first part of the season.

We helped at least 23 people move into temporary accommodation, mainly by accompanying them to the council. Six of these people then moved into permanent accommodation, with our direct support. We are still actively supporting 13 people with the whole range of Skylight services. We will continue to actively support several others who we met in the Care Shelter but who we have not yet managed to get into accommodation.

8.2.2 Cyrenians Outreach Team

We provided support with access to services in areas such as housing, health, employability and substance use with a particular focus on rough sleeping.

We met with six people who engaged in follow-on work. Four moved into accommodation and one engaged with an employability service. Two people continue to use our support as they navigate the temporary accommodation system in the hope of securing permanent accommodation in due course.

8.2.3 Edinburgh Access Practice and Volunteer GP

A practice nurse and Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN) from the homeless GP practice visited on Monday evenings and a volunteer GP attended on Thursday evenings.

Approximately eight people were seen by EAP staff during each attendance at the Care Shelter, totalling about 184 people across the winter. 17 people registered at EAP after having been seen at the Care Shelter.

Physical health presentations ranged from long-term conditions such as epilepsy to wound care, bodily injuries, a lack of medication and foot problems. Mental health presentations included anxiety, depression, borderline personality disorder, schizophrenia and paranoias.

Our input lead to people feeling more able to present to the EAP clinic sites to register or re-present. We do not think we would have had this level of attendance from this population had there been no EAP outreach in the Care Shelter. People who are homeless have commented that our presence at the Care Shelter helps them feel EAP are prepared to “come out to see me, where I am”.

8.2.4 Homeless and Housing Support, City of Edinburgh Council

Over the course of the winter, 12 housing officers were involved in visiting the Care Shelter; two at a time on Sunday and Tuesday evenings. They attended on 36 evenings to
provide housing and homelessness advice, direct referral and signposting.

The housing officers spoke directly with 130 individual people at the Care Shelter: 107 who gave names and 23 who preferred to remain anonymous. For those that gave their name, 18 people accessed temporary accommodation the day after speaking to a housing officer at the Care Shelter.

### 8.2.5 Shelter Scotland

Shelter Scotland attended the Care Shelter on 10 occasions, on a fortnightly basis throughout the winter. The visits were covered alternatively by a solicitor and a housing advisor. We were there to advise people of their rights in relation to making homeless applications and securing temporary homeless accommodation.

**Housing advisor:** Seven people were advised on their rights. In some cases contact was not maintained and so the outcome is uncertain. Three people accessed temporary accommodation.

**Housing solicitor:** Eight people were advised on their rights resulting in temporary homeless accommodation being offered the next day by the council. (There were two couples, so this is six homeless applicants.)

### 8.2.6 Streetwork

The Streetwork Outreach Team visited the Care Shelter Monday to Friday from 6:30-7am. On arrival, the team would liaise with the Bethany staff, prioritising new rough sleepers and people the staff had identified as being particularly vulnerable. We would then engage with people, providing general housing advice as well as signposting. The team would encourage, and accompany people back to the Holyrood Hub where they could follow up on further support needs and people could access basic amenities. Engaging with people in the Care Shelter affords Streetwork the opportunity to provide more intensive support out-with the Care Shelter.

- 114 visits in total: From October to mid-December 2017 - three times per week; then from mid-December 2017 to April 2018 - five times per week.
- 305 individuals were supported through 1,082 contacts (including 120 anonymous contacts).
- Approximately 68 people were supported into temporary accommodation, 16 people were supported to return to existing accommodation³ 8 people were repatriated, 7 people were supported to access self-funded accommodation and 2 people secured private lets.

### 8.2.7 Police

The police brought 115 people to the Care Shelter across the season. This table on the next page shows the number of people dropped off by the police per month.

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³ The Care Shelter is for people who do not have accommodation however occasionally someone might end up at the Care Shelter because they are unable to return to their tenancy for a number of reasons. Some of the situations that Streetwork came across were: people who had lost keys and were unable to get a spare set or an emergency lock smith; people who felt unsafe in their tenancies, some of whom have since re-accessed their tenancies after support has been put in place; others were using the Care Shelter rather than their tenancies because they had no support/nothing in the tenancy; and one person had been flooded out of his tenancy and had not been offered alternative accommodation (there seemed to be a breakdown in communication between his landlord and the council as to who should be finding him alternative accommodation).
This number exceeded the 101 people who were successfully dropped off during the previous winter. As the Care Shelter was at capacity less often this winter there were more successful drop-offs. The year before, if the police brought someone after lights out there was a good chance that the Care Shelter was already full.

The police are asked to phone in advance when dropping people off to make sure the service is appropriate for the individual and to check for a bed space. Although the police were in regular attendance to drop people off and check for missing persons, they were also entrusted to attend in the rare event of an escalating situation.
9 FEEDBACK AND QUALITATIVE UPDATES

9.1 Positive comments

Some examples of comments and stories from nightly reports submitted by team leaders:

The Care Shelter has saved my life more than once. It’s great to be here, I feel safe here.

So many people would be dead if it wasn’t for you guys. This has made a huge difference to me, thank you.

The pudding was sublime! The Care Shelter has been a real life saver. Where else can you go in the cold of night and get a good meal and a roof over your head?

Its good that staff are not separated from the service users. We are all equal here.

The Bethany staff are amazing. You’re Bethany Christian Trust? You’ve saved my life before.

I’m really appreciative of this food as I’ve had nothing all day. You are God’s hand and feet, you are working for the Lord.

You guys are amazing, I wish you were open all year. People in this shelter really care. I’ve travelled all around [Britain] and this is the only shelter where there are mental health nurses and I’ve been crying out so long for that. Thank you so much.

Last night that was the best sleep I have had in my life.

Thank you for looking after and keeping us safe. I am sad this place is closing (on the last night).

It’s just so good to get a safe place to sleep and somewhere warm with a roof over your head. I feel safer here than I do staying at a B&B.

You are the only people who are willing to help me. There are nice people in the world.

Thank you for being so kind to me.

When it’s as cold as this, it makes me appreciate the Care Shelter and the staff all the more. You guys are pretty amazing. Thank you guys.
Thank you for letting us in early from the rain.

I'm so amazed about how much Bethany wants to help me.

You guys do an amazing job and I have so much respect for you.

Thank you for being there for me and making me feel like a human being.

Best meal I've had in years.

The Care Shelter is my last option and I'm glad I'm here.

If I got myself sorted I would really love to do what you guys do. Help people.

Staff: It's good to see you.
Guest: It's good to be seen!

In the B&B's the food is awful and you don't get much and it's poor quality, but here you get plenty and it tastes great.

9.2 Snapshot story: Paul

Paul struggles with his mental health and when things get bad he leaves his hometown of Edinburgh and heads off to another part of the country. In December, things were not going well for Paul and he took himself to Fife for a change of scene. A month later he returned to Edinburgh and went along to the council to see about getting into accommodation. City of Edinburgh Council determined that he had an open homeless application in Fife and so refused him any accommodation. That night Paul found himself at the Care Shelter as he had nowhere else to go in the city and didn't want to go back to Fife. Edinburgh is his home and this is where he wanted to be.

A staff member at the Care Shelter got chatting to Paul and found out about his situation. Through speaking with his CPN it was discovered that Paul had a mild learning difficulty and would not be able to make the call to Fife Council to close his homeless application on his own. This was not immediately obvious through speaking with Paul and so he often found that services would expect him to fill out forms and make phone calls that he actually was not able to do on his own. The staff member made the call for Paul and was able to confirm that he did not have a live application in Fife. Another call to the City of Edinburgh Council confirmed that Paul would now be eligible for temporary accommodation again. Paul was delighted, shaking the staff member's hand and grinning from ear to ear. He exclaimed that this had “made his day”.

Sometimes people just need a little help to navigate the complex housing system in order to get back on their feet. The Care Shelter aims to support people, link them into other services and offer a listening ear. Providing a safe space to sleep is only part of the service.

See also:
Tim’s story, page 18
Howard’s story, page 26
Karen’s story, page 32
Howard’s story

Howard is a New Zealander who has been in the UK for more than 10 years. His work is mainly seasonal in the East Neuk of Fife. In the winter he lives with his brother in the south of England. The week before he ended up at the Care Shelter he was contacted and asked to come up to the flat he shared in Fife where he discovered that his flatmate had not been paying the bills. Howard ended up spending all that he had to cover what was outstanding and pay for repairs. He used the last of his money to get to Edinburgh but had no way of getting back down south.

In Edinburgh, he approached the police for advice as he had nowhere to go and no money to pay for a hotel. They told him about the Care Shelter. He went to the Care Shelter pick-up point in Waterloo Place and was collected and taken to Meadowbank Church. He was very appreciative of the lovely meal provided, the welcome given and the warm, open friendly environment of the Care Shelter. He talked of how he had been through recovery from alcohol addiction some years previously and how great it was that the Care Shelter takes everyone.

Howard had a good night’s sleep and in the morning was directed to Streetwork where he was able to shower and contact his parents by email, asking them to try to book transport for him. The Care Shelter staff explained that help would be available to get him home if needed.

Howard returned to the Care Shelter the next night, explaining that his ticket was booked for the following day and that he would be heading home. He also excitedly announced that he had become a grandfather again!

The Care Shelter is a place of safety and security for anyone who needs to use it, whether the need is long-term or just a temporary stay of a few nights.
STATISTICS

- Attendance
- Monitoring forms and analysis
10 ATTENDANCE

Attendance at the Care Shelter is analysed in the following section in terms of number of nightly presentations and also the number of unique individuals who stayed at the Care Shelter over the winter.

10.1 Nightly attendance

The average attendance was 43 (42.6) people per night with a high of 64 presentations on one night in April. The graph above shows the average nightly attendance by month compared with the previous four seasons. Other than in the month of April, an overall reduction can be seen in the number of presentations from last season. We will look at potential reasons for the late increase in the season in section 11.5.

The Care Shelter opened on 9 October and numbers rose steadily over the first 10 days with the capacity of 45 people per night being exceeded at that point. Over the following three weeks, demand was steady and we were unable to accommodate an average of three people per night over this period.

The original plan had been to increase capacity to 60 from 1 December for a three month period to cover the coldest and likely the busiest part of the winter. However, as detailed in section 3.1 of the report, we increased in capacity to 75 people per night from 4 December until the end of the season. Up until the end of November different people had been turned away because of the Care Shelter being full on 70 occasions but thankfully, after that point, no one was turned away for the rest of the winter. It is worth noting that without this increase in capacity, somebody would have been turned away on 121 occasions over the rest of the season.

The increase in capacity made a significant difference. Not only were people spared from sleeping outside but because they were confident about being able to get a bed for the night they were more relaxed. This was reflected in various ways, for example the number of people queuing to get in at opening time was significantly reduced which in turn lessened the tensions and benefitted the overall atmosphere. People arrived in a steady stream over the evening and often into the early hours instead of a big rush when the doors opened at 9.30pm. We were also able to accommodate everyone brought to the Care Shelter by the police (having been picked up sleeping rough or with nowhere else to go) which usually happened after lights out. Before the capacity increase there was a good chance that the Care Shelter was already full. The number of people successfully dropped off by the police rose to 115, up by 15% on last season and 46% on the season before.
10.2 Total number of presentations

The reduction in presentations this season is very welcome and at least in part reflective of the actions taken by the HRSAG and partner agencies to try to address rough sleeping on a wider scale this winter. The direct access hostel in Hopetoun Crescent and the personalised budgets have been instrumental as they provided alternatives to the Care Shelter in light of the shortage of temporary accommodation. As we will see later in the report (see sections 10.3 & 10.4) this unfortunately does not mean a reduction in the number of people who are rough sleeping; the actual number of individuals using the Care Shelter increased. However, the average stay reduced by roughly 17% to 11.3 nights per person which reduced the number of nightly presentations.

10.2.1 Presentations by temperature

The number of people presenting to the Care Shelter trended upwards on colder nights. The figures are distorted by the fact that during the really cold spell (28 February-6 March) St. John’s Church on the corner of Princes Street and Lothian Road opened its doors 24 hours a day for that week. Some people took advantage of this 24 hour provision and so numbers using the Care Shelter actually reduced during this period. St. John’s reckoned that they had around 350 overnight stays during the week, on average 50 people staying over per night. An average of 27 people per night stayed at the Care Shelter during this
week which suggests an average of 77 people needing shelter in Edinburgh. Given that these are average figures it seems likely that the actual figure could be higher.

10.3 How many individuals used the Care Shelter?

The continued need for the Care Shelter is evidenced by the fact that 722 unique individuals used the service this season, an increase of at least 2% from the previous season. In addition, there were 70 occasions when somebody had to be turned away at the start of the season due to capacity limitations and there could be a number of additional unique individuals included within this figure.

Most weeks saw 20 or so first-time attendees as illustrated below. In fact there were only fifteen nights where we did not have someone present for the first time this season. The first two weeks saw 88 and 58 new arrivals because everyone had to be registered for the first time. These have been restricted on the chart to better show the variation in the other weeks.

576 (80%) of these individuals were new to the Care Shelter this season, with 146 returning from a previous season. See section 10.5 for more details.

10.4 How many nights did people stay?

The average number of nights each person used the Care Shelter was 11.3. This is a reduction of 2.3 nights (17%) per person from last season.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Nights/ Percentage of Individuals</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>7 or less</th>
<th>14 or less</th>
<th>31 or less</th>
<th>More than half the season</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>2.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>3.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-18</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>1.80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.5 Who came back to the Care Shelter?

Over the last three seasons a total of 1,794 individuals have used the Care Shelter, with around 500 to 600 new people each year.

The chart below shows the percentage of those coming back, with 12% accessing the service in two different seasons including 2% (the centre section) staying in all three.

- Population: 1,794 individuals over the last 3 winter seasons.
- The percentages shown represent the percentage of this total, in each segment.
- e.g. 2% in the centre equates to 40 people who have attended all 3 seasons.
- 32% in 17-18 means that 576 individuals were new to the Care Shelter this season.

There is a common perception surrounding rough sleeping individuals which suggests that they are an entrenched, static population. However these statistics indicate that in Edinburgh this is not correct. The 2% (40 people) who have attended in all three seasons stayed an average of 29 nights this season. Of these 40 people, 20 (50%) stayed seven nights or less. Only four used the Care Shelter for more than half the season.

The Care Shelter is there for everyone who needs it and we operate with a low threshold for access. The struggles and underlying issues associated with rough sleeping and the accompanying chaotic lifestyle mean that the pathways in and out of homelessness are far from linear. Individuals often experience short periods of rough sleeping and so need the Care Shelter on and off over a period of time, sometimes many years. This is particularly important because those who are experiencing the most turbulent times are often the individuals who have had the most support removed with the potential for them being barred from other services for issues such as time-keeping and behaviour.
Karen’s story

A lot of people who stay at the Care Shelter are at a crisis point in their lives; they have lost their housing, they do not have anyone to lean on to help them out at this difficult time and they might be struggling with other things such as poor mental health, a bereavement, an addiction or some form of trauma in their lives. Karen had stayed at the Care Shelter a few times, turning up with different people each time she was there. Some nights she found somewhere to stay and some nights she would be at the Care Shelter. She was often under the influence and on one occasion her behaviour led to her being excluded from the service for a period of time.

Three days later Karen turned up at the Care Shelter again, asking if she could get in. The staff explained to her that she was not able to stay that night because of her behaviour last time she had been there. Karen had not remembered what had happened and was upset when the staff explained. Through tears she said, “I always mess up.” She was given a meal and a member of staff spent time talking with her. Worried about how vulnerable she is, the council out of hours service was phoned to see if she could be accommodated in a hostel or B&B for the night. It had been noted by the staff earlier in the evening that there was a female bed available at Bethany House. The council agreed that she could go there for the night and sent a taxi to transport her. As she left, Karen was full of thanks and gave the staff a big hug. She said, “You have saved me.”

The next day Karen presented to the council and was booked in formally to Bethany House. There she will not only have somewhere safe and warm to stay each night but also support to help her work through some of the issues she is facing in her life. Karen said that this was “her opportunity” and that she was going to make the most of it. In her own words Karen said that she “struggles to accept kindness”. This perhaps won’t be an easy journey for her as she learns to receive love and to trust people again but she is now on a road that leads to a brighter future.

What initially looked like a bad situation turned out for the good. Instead of having to turn a young woman away into the cold, the Care Shelter staff were able to show her grace and love, feed her and find her alternative accommodation with hope for better days ahead.
On entry to the Care Shelter, names were taken electronically on a tablet. At this point, if a new person presented to the service they were asked to complete a few further questions from our monitoring form. There was no obligation to answer any of the questions. The details provided in this section is based on the 90%+ who did respond.

The information allows us to have a more comprehensive understanding of those who are accessing the service to inform future developments.

### 11.1 Gender

![Gender Pie Chart]

While this split is fairly consistent with previous years and also other rough sleeping services, the percentage of women has increased from 16% last season to 18% this winter. There were 111 women who attended in 2016-17 and 129 in 2017-18; a 16% increase. This is a worrying discovery because women who are on the street are extremely vulnerable.

### Average nights stayed

![Average Nights Stayed Chart]

The average stay for a man was 12 nights while for a woman it was 8. See section 10.4 for more detail on the average lengths of stay.
11.2 Age

The average age was 39 which is very similar to the findings in previous years. The youngest person was 16 years old, in line with our lower age limit, and the oldest was 77.

One significant change on the previous winter is that the number of those aged 30 and under rose by 23% from 159 to 196. 22% of this group were female and in fact, of those who were aged 20 or under, 11 of the 31 (35%) were female. This growing group of rough sleeping young women is a concern. Homeless Link’s 2018 report *Young and Homeless* suggests that welfare reforms are exacerbating youth homelessness in England and Wales.

Of the 31 people aged 20 or under, 50% stayed at the Care Shelter for only one night and 87% stayed seven nights or less. It is good that these individuals were able to move on quickly from what is deemed an unsuitable environment for young, often vulnerable adults. 75% of this group were from the UK.

The reasons given for homelessness will be looked at in more detail in section 11.4 but the chart above covers the reasons given by those aged 20 and under. Relationship breakdown among this group often with parents and the cause of a real and immediate crisis. The Care Shelter was able to provide a place of safety and warmth as well as signposting and advice.

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11.3 Nationalities

The breakdown of nationalities of people staying at the Care Shelter is similar to the previous season with 68% of those staying at the Care Shelter being from the UK and 27% from the rest of Europe. The population of the Care Shelter comprised 44 different nationalities this season.

This chart breaks down the 27% from Europe by country of origin.

Average nights at Shelter

This graph shows the average number of nights stayed by nationality. The average number of nights that UK nationals stayed at the Care Shelter is lower than any other group (except...
Australasian which accounts for two individuals who only stayed three nights between them). This indicates that they are far more likely to have access to other routes out of rough sleeping and illustrates the difficulties other nationalities face in obtaining help. Whether that be due to a less extensive network of friends and family to support them in times of crisis or less entitlement to support from the government, other nationalities are forced to stay far longer at the Care Shelter than those from the UK.

There was an increase in focus on the entitlements of this group this season. Following a grant of £5000 from City of Edinburgh Council to help those with No Recourse to Public Funds a question was added to our monitoring form to help track people with this status. No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) is an immigration status which limits benefit entitlement and can affect people with a right to reside in the UK such as European Economic Area (EEA) nationals, as well as those from other places who may be here on specific visas. This group is not entitled to a full range of benefits or support when things go wrong. Therefore, they are at risk of losing accommodation when they lose a job for example meaning that a higher proportion end up staying at the Care Shelter.

The question of whether someone is classified as NRPF is very complex and dependant on a range of factors. Many of those asked did not know themselves or did not understand the question due to language barriers. Despite this, 27% of those who answered the question responded that they did not have access to public funds.

It is evident that more needs to be done to help foreign nationals who find themselves in difficult times, irrespective of whether the individual has access to public funds. Given the current “hostile environment” created by the Home Office, this is obviously a very controversial topic. This report is not the place for a debate on immigration but the fact remains that foreign nationals are ending up destitute and homeless and, as human beings, we have a duty to respond. For Bethany Christian Trust, the Bible calls us to love our neighbours and in particular to care for those in poverty, irrespective of nationality. Unfortunately, there is a gap nationally in service provision for foreign nationals because they are not eligible for certain statutory services. The third sector tries to fill this gap but with less funding available to work with immigrants, this is difficult.

Currently, there is much discussion around the aim to end rough sleeping in the UK with Crisis publishing a plan. One feature of this is the need to have universal access to support and housing options. We hope and pray that this end goal will become reality in the future. It is only going to be possible with improved access to help for migrants.

This chart shows the proportion of bed spaces per week taken up by the different nationality groups. It shows quite clearly that at least half of bed spaces used each week were occupied by non UK nationals.

5 See www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/the-plan-to-end-homelessness-full-version/
11.4 Reason for homelessness

On their first night at the Care Shelter everyone was asked about their reason for being homeless. Individuals could choose more than one option so the chart reflects the total number of times each of the subjects were mentioned.

As in previous years, relationship breakdown was the main reason given for being homeless. Often people would select relationship breakdown plus another. The strain caused by the issues in people’s lives on relationships is enormous but it is often only when these relationships eventually break that people end up on the street. Frequently, as a result of this, individuals who used the Care Shelter had suffered a lot of rejection, broken relationships and burnt bridges prior to coming to the service. This can have a devastating effect on self-worth and outlook. It is in these very situations that God seeks to bless people and it was the staff’s privilege to show love and kindness as we served in that context.

“It felt good you always asking how I am, it feels good to know people still care.”

Eviction and having no local connection both increased significantly this season as reasons why people became homeless. Grouped together with those labelled as intentionally homeless, those reasons comprised more than 40% of the reasons given for being homeless.

For the first time, mental health was given as an option and 7% of people said that this was a contributory factor in them becoming homeless.
A review of the reasons for homelessness by the nationality of those affected illustrates the difficulties experienced by those from outside the UK when circumstances change. For example those from the EEA or further afield, do not have the same rights to benefits or housing support as those from the UK and so are much more at risk of losing accommodation if they suffer the loss of a job. Additionally having no local connection is a huge impediment for people in these circumstances.

The chart above shows the average number of nights people stayed based on the reasons they gave for being homeless. This indicates that the loss of a job or benefits can take a significant amount of time to overcome. In this next season it might be worthwhile inviting a service along to the Care Shelter that specialises in income maximisation and employment.
This chart illustrates the percentage of the total available Care Shelter nights taken up by each reason. This demonstrates that, contrary to the popular misconception of rough sleeping individuals mainly being those struggling with addictions, alcohol and drugs comprise only 14% of the nights taken up. The vast majority are due to a change in circumstance or falling foul of the barriers to accommodation and changes to social benefits and income levels.
11.5 Length of time homeless

This graph indicates that the largest proportion of those using the service had been homeless for less than a week at the point of first staying at the Care Shelter.

It is important to point out here that ‘homeless’ in this question does not specify rough sleeping but could cover any hidden homeless, sofa-surfing, being in homeless B&Bs and other temporary accommodation. The advantage of being in contact with people who are very recently homeless is that they can be signposted to and put in touch with organisations that they may not be aware of. Therefore the provision of signposting advice and the presence of the visiting services are vitally important at the Care Shelter (see section 8).

The charts above show that those who had been homeless for less than a week when they first came to the Care Shelter stayed on average 8.1 nights and took up 29% of total bed spaces over the season. While the Care Shelter average stay reduced by 17% overall, in this group it actually increased by 10% suggesting that immediate help remains out of reach for many. This might be due to a shortage of temporary accommodation which means that it is taking people longer to get into a B&B or hostel. The City of Edinburgh Council closed their Parliament Square housing office on 23 March. This was one of two city-centre based housing offices, the other one being The Access Point which deals with complex needs. People now have to travel to outlying locality offices to access a housing officer and go through a homeless assessment. The last week of the Care Shelter season was one of the busiest with the number of weekly presentations up by 30% on the week ending 25 March. It seems possible that this was in some way linked to the closure of the Parliament Square office. Anecdotally, people talked of not being willing to travel to outlying areas to see their housing officer when the perception was that they would not be able to help them anyway.

Similar analysis of the other segments reveals that those who were homeless for one to two years stayed the most nights on average, suggesting that perhaps by this time most accommodation alternatives have been exhausted.
11.6 Most recent accommodation

On their first visit to the Care Shelter everyone was asked where they had stayed the previous night. The proportion who had been rough sleeping the night before remained fairly constant this season at 37% (or 248 individuals) and it continues to be the prevalent answer and a major concern. The answer “family and friends” continues to feature strongly with anecdotal evidence indicating substantial reliance on sofa-surfing to keep people off the streets.

11.7 Where would you be staying tonight?

The Care Shelter is there to prevent people having to sleep rough. This chart indicates the continued need for such a provision.

It is sometimes claimed that not everyone can use the Care Shelter. There are no restrictions to entry; everyone is welcome. Only those who are shown to pose a danger to other guests or staff may on occasion be excluded due to their behaviour.
On their first night at the Care Shelter people were asked how long they had been in Edinburgh. Results indicate that 48% had been here for more than five years and almost two out of three had been here six months or more.

The proportion of total Care Shelter nights taken up by those within each category shows similar results, perhaps surprisingly so. 67% of nights are taken up by the 64% of people who have been in Edinburgh for more than six months (at the point of their first attendance). People need to have been in Edinburgh for six months or more to establish a local connection for the council to have a duty to house them. Therefore, it might be expected that those that had been here longer, would have had better access to temporary accommodation. Hence this alludes to the fact that local connection is only one of many hurdles to obtain housing.
11.9 Have you presented as homeless to the council?

Have you presented to the Council?

This graph shows that 50% of people on their first night at the Care Shelter had not been to the council to declare themselves homeless in the last 6 months and that 36% of people had been signposted by the council to the Care Shelter because there was no accommodation available to them. Six percent were not entitled to accommodation, five percent were awaiting the results of a homeless application and three percent had temporarily lost their temporary accommodation and needed to go back to the council.

The charts below break these totals down by nationality and show that while 43% of people from the UK have not been to the council this rises to 69% among those from elsewhere. A further 8% of this group have been told that they have no entitlement.

It is concerning that as many as half of the people attending the Care Shelter had not presented to the council since becoming homeless or had not been in the last six months, not least because this will have the council figures under representing the need. There are a variety of reasons that people do not go to the council despite this being the first step that every homeless person should take. Some people have been turned away by the council due to no accommodation being available which then deters them from going back and discourages others from going in the first place, believing it futile because the council will
not be able to help them anyway. The complexity of the housing system itself leads to a lot of confusion around eligibility and we often see the benefits of people being accompanied by a support worker to attend the council for a homeless assessment. Furthermore, at the beginning of this Care Shelter season many EEA nationals were in fear of the Home Office policy of deporting those found rough sleeping for being in breach of their residence agreement. Many talked openly about friends who had been sent home due to this policy. Although this has now been challenged and deemed unlawful, a strong mistrust and lack of understanding remains a barrier to engagement.

It seems that there is need for a clear message that people should present to the council as soon as they become homeless as this data suggests that either people are not always aware of this or that there are barriers to them doing so. There is definitely work to be done to break down some of these barriers surrounding presenting to the council as homeless. For example, people need to understand the process, what their rights are, what they are entitled to and whether there is a risk to their immigration status in declaring themselves homeless.

As reported in section 8, housing officers attended the Care Shelter twice a week for most of the season. This was not only of benefit to those who spoke to them but it was also a big step in building a relational bridge. Whereas at first, the housing officers were viewed from a distance and people had to be encouraged to approach them, by the end of the season many people desired to communicate with the council.

Another worrying statistic to examine is that 36% of people said that the City of Edinburgh Council had sent them to the Care Shelter. Again this winter we were aware that the council was suggesting people attend the Care Shelter because there was no temporary accommodation available. Previously we would have been able to call the Out of Hours service to get people accommodated during the night but this flow of people has completely reversed in recent years. There was also no evidence of Winter Contingency being in operation during the nights when the temperature felt like below 0° Celsius (a provision where anyone will be accommodated irrespective of entitlement), revealing the pressure there is on temporary accommodation due to a shortage of housing. Councils have a legal duty to house people that meet their criteria. As much as we are understanding of the strain that the council faces due to a lack of accommodation and ever tightening budgets, we need to reverse the trend that so many people that attend the Care Shelter have been requested to attend by the council instead of being accommodated.
CONCLUSION
Winter 2017-18 saw another successful Care Shelter season with 722 individuals welcomed through the doors and 8,260 bed spaces provided. Churches and volunteers went above and beyond to prepare nutritious, home-cooked food and to open up their buildings as an expression of God’s love. Conversations took place each night that made a difference in people’s lives. Even a few words of greeting could affirm in someone their worth and that other people care for them. Longer conversations built relationships which allowed deeper discussion regarding seeking help and making big life changes. Chats about the weather, football or politics helped people to feel part of society again when so often they feel marginalised. Professional support and advice from the team about housing, employment or benefits allowed people to move on from the Care Shelter and their homeless situation. Lives were transformed. Wonderfully lives were saved because people were not outside in the cold temperatures or driving rain.

We are very grateful to all our supporters who give in whatever way they can. A big thank you is due to those that support the Care Shelter financially, whether individuals, churches, companies, trusts or grants. We are also indebted this season to the Scottish Government and Social Bite for their first time funding which allowed the Care Shelter to expand its capacity and accommodate everyone for the remainder of the season. The Care Shelter is the last option for many people when they have exhausted all other possibilities. In many ways, it’s a safety net. Therefore it is heart breaking to turn someone away because the Care Shelter is full when you know that person has nowhere else to go. Having enough space to accommodate everyone from the beginning of December onwards made a huge difference and we will not be able to return to smaller capacity venues until we know that the need has lessened. Increasing the capacity of the Care Shelter for a whole season, say to 70 people per night, has its operational difficulties and financial implications. Being able to accommodate more individuals necessitates having another staff member on duty each night. We will seek to gain the necessary funding to continue to meet the need of those acquiring the service.

The Care Shelter has outgrown a great number of the church halls that have been regular venues for years. Remaining in the same large venue for 15 weeks last winter was highly beneficial and it provided a solution to the capacity issue. It allows the service to be run differently; less time is needed for set-up and more options open up when everything does not need to be packed into a minibus each morning. For example, this winter for the first time we had a supply of books from Streetreads (streetreads.org), a local initiative that provides second-hand books to homeless services in the city free of charge. This initiative was possible because the books could be stored in the church during the day, it was not practical to do this when everything had to fit into the minibus. An additional benefit to being in one location is that people have no trouble finding the Care Shelter each night. It has sadly previously occurred that people turn up complaining that someone told them the Care Shelter was in the wrong church and that they had walked half-way across the city in error. The consistency of being in same, familiar place is helpful and dependable.

Bethany Christian Trust was recently approached by Gorgie Dalry Stenhouse Church about the possibility of using one of its buildings as a longer term Care Shelter venue; the old St. Aidan’s Church at Stenhouse. After much exploration and prayer, the Care Shelter will go there for a period of 22 weeks next winter. This change is something that has been thought about and prayed about for a number of years and never before has a proposal as good as this one been brought to the table. It is hoped that it will allow the service to develop; having raised beds instead of lower down mats, with access to showers and laundry facilities. Plans are progressing to increase the available transport to take people to and from the venue as the location is not in the city centre. It is hoped that this can be overcome and will not create a difficulty for people. We will begin the season in the usual
manner, rotating around the 60 capacity venues to allow time for alteration work to be completed at the Stenhouse building.

The weather this winter was, at times, very harsh with a particularly snowy spell in early March. Weather in Scotland can be severe during most months of the year, it is not just restricted to winter. Heavy rain can be just as dangerous as snow for people who are rough sleeping. Being soaked through can leave people very cold. We are therefore keen to extend the Care Shelter season by another four weeks next winter, to run for 32 weeks in total. With 22 new people on average attending the Care Shelter each week, this would allow us to reach an additional 80 individuals next season. There is no sign of a reduction of the number of people sleeping rough during the summer months so any extension to the Care Shelter season will benefit more individuals. The plan is to open the Care Shelter two weeks earlier on Monday 24 September 2018 and extend it by two weeks so the last night would be Sunday 5 May 2019.

The recommendations of HRSAG to the Scottish Government to address rough sleeping this winter resulted in the direct access hostel in Hopetoun Crescent, the personalised budgets and the Inter-agency Street Network weekly meeting. All of these new initiatives have had an impact and we would be keen to see them continue along with support for the additional Care Shelter staffing to support the larger capacity. As has been discussed in the report, the average length of stay at the Care Shelter reduced this year by 2.3 nights. This was largely due to less people staying for more than half the nights in the season; only 13 people compared to 25 the previous season. A number of these people were helped by these new initiatives. Giving people an easier route into accommodation has an impact. We know of a gentleman who had not managed to endure the wait for hours to be seen at the council, even when accompanied by a worker. He moved in to Hopetoun in January and then on to other accommodation and he has not returned to the Care Shelter since.

A particular need that became apparent this season was the gap in support for non-UK nationals, something that needs addressed if ending rough sleeping is to be a realistic goal. It can be very hard when you are working with an individual and presenting them with options only to discover those avenues are not open to them because of their nationality or immigration status. One example would be a gentleman from Poland who struggles with his drinking and was keen to enter recovery and move into Bethany Christian Centre. The Centre was also keen to have him but due to a lack of access to benefits he was not able to do so. When people are motivated to make changes in their lives and tackle their difficulties it is sad when the system does have a clear route for them to do so.

Again this winter it was evident that there is not enough affordable housing in Edinburgh and that temporary accommodation does not have the capacity to house everyone that is homeless. While it is the case that it would be better if there was no need for the Care Shelter, the fact is, on 8,260 occasions last winter, representing 722 different individuals, people did not have to sleep rough because the Care Shelter was open. We do not see shelters as a long-term solution to rough sleeping and we would be delighted if there was no need to run a shelter every winter. Unfortunately we find ourselves in the opposite situation; increasing the length and nightly capacity of the Care Shelter in order to meet the rising presenting need. Bethany Christian Trust provides a broad suite of homelessness services on a continuum of care from prevention to crisis intervention through to housing with support. The Care Shelter is a vital crisis intervention service for people who have no other alternative to sleeping on our city’s pavements, in parks or doorways. Bethany Christian Trust in partnership with the church and all our financial and gift in kind supporters, will continue by God’s grace to meet this serious need while it continues.

Report prepared by Robert Thomson and Ruth Longmuir

“I see that staff members’ faith in God alters how they care for people at the Care Shelter. It is really good.”
APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Care Shelter posters 1-3
- Appendix B: Visiting partner reports
13.1  **APPENDIX A: CARE SHELTER POSTERS**

**Care Shelter**

Monday 9 October 2017 – Sunday 22 April 2018

A free night shelter offering food and sleeping facilities to people who are homeless

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Transport from Waterloo Place at 9.15pm and 9.30pm unless the shelter is already full. Doors open 9.30pm – arrive early to ensure entry.

Evening meals will be provided by local churches from 9.30-10.30pm.

Breakfast is available at 6.30am and people using the service must leave the venue by 7.00am.

Staff members will be on duty each night.

**Zero tolerance on drug use or dealing**

*No alcohol consumption inside the venue*

Respect for others

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A project organised by Bethany Christian Trust. For enquiries phone 0131 561 8930 (day) or 07919 557 673 (night) or email careshelter@bethanychristiantrust.com

Bethany Christian Trust is a registered charity SC203793 www.bethanychristiantrust.com
Reissue of poster covering 13 Nov-17 Dec

Care Shelter

Monday 9 October 2017 – Sunday 22 April 2018
A free night shelter offering food and sleeping facilities to people who are homeless

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Transport from Waterloo Place at 9.15pm and 9.30pm unless the shelter is already full.
Doors open 9.30pm – arrive early to ensure entry.
Evening meals will be provided by local churches from 9.30-10.30pm.
Breakfast is available at 6.30am and people using the service must leave the venue by 7.00am.
Staff members will be on duty each night.

Zero tolerance on drug use or dealing
No alcohol consumption inside the venue
Respect for others

A project organised by Bethany Christian Trust. For enquiries phone 0131 561 8930 (day) or 07919 557 673 (night)
or email careshelter@bethanychristiantrust.com

Bethany Christian Trust is a registered charity SC003783 www.bethanychristiantrust.com
# Care Shelter

**Monday 9 October 2017 – Sunday 22 April 2018**

A free night shelter offering food and sleeping facilities to people who are homeless

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**8 January to 22 April**

**Meadowbank Church**

83 London Road
(at the junction of London Road and Marionville Road)

Transport from Waterloo Place at 9.15pm and 9.30pm.
Doors open 9.30pm.
Evening meals will be provided by local churches from 9.30-10.30pm.
Breakfast is available at 6.30am and people using the service must leave the venue by 7.00am.
Staff members will be on duty each night.
Zero tolerance on drug use or dealing
No alcohol consumption in or around the venue
Respect for others

A project organised by Bethany Christian Trust. For enquiries phone **0131 561 8930** (day) or **07919 557 673** (night) or email **careshelter@bethanychristiantrust.com**

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13.2 APPENDIX B: VISITING PARTNER REPORTS

13.2.1 Crisis
Report prepared by Hazel Benza

We visited 24 times over the season; every Tuesday except Christmas and New Year. We provided housing advice, arranged homeless assessments, accompanied people to City of Edinburgh Council, supported people with information and support around their housing options, welfare issues and to access other Crisis services; and signposted individuals to other services. We provided a Romanian speaking volunteer for the first part of the season.

We helped at least 23 people move into temporary accommodation, mainly by accompanying them to the council. Six of these then moved into permanent accommodation, with our direct support. We are still actively supporting 13 people with the whole range of Skylight services. Crisis will continue to actively support several others who we met in the shelters but who we have not yet managed to get into accommodation (we are working on it!)

Case study

- Two young men, both staying at the Care Shelter, both working.
- Met with housing coach who intensively supported them with property searching, viewings etc. Streetwork also supported them.
- Crisis paid for the deposit for a flat and Streetwork paid for first month’s rent (from personalised budget).
- Crisis provided starter packs and furniture

We were very happy to be part of the work that is done in the Care Shelter and greatly value the service. It has allowed us to engage with a client group that can be hard to reach, to engage with people in a low-key and gradual way, and in some cases to work together with them to move them out of homelessness. Thank you for including us a partner, and we look forward to further partnership working in the future.

13.2.2 Cyrenians Outreach Team
Report prepared by Mike Wright, Outreach Services Manager

We provided support with access to services in areas such as housing, health, employability and substance use with a particular focus on rough sleeping.

We met with six people who engaged in follow-on work. Four people moved into accommodation and one engaged with an employability service. Two people continue to use our support as they navigate the temporary accommodation system in the hope of securing permanent accommodation in due course.

Case study

Rudi is a man we met at the Care Shelter in November 2017. Rudi encountered difficulties in sustaining accommodation and did not feel comfortable accessing mainstream homelessness services. Rudi linked in with support from the Homeless Navigator Project and formed a supportive relationship with Benny, our peer navigator. Through the use of his own experience, Benny began to build up trust with Rudi and they attended the Housing Office a short time after. Rudi was found to be intentionally
homeless and required some advocacy from Benny as to how his circumstances had changed. Benny and Rudi were able to show that Rudi was making efforts to address some of the issues that had resulted in him becoming homeless and an action plan was built with support from one of the Housing Officers at the Access Point. Rudi was then able to access supported accommodation and continues to meet with Benny regularly to look at future accommodation as well as other ambitions he holds. Rudi has always struggled to make use of housing when he was offered it and that partnership working between Benny, Bethany and the Access Point has allowed Rudi to move indoors and begin addressing some of the challenges he faces.

Closing comments

No matter how well we respond to homelessness in the future, there will always be, in my mind, a need for the type of safety net that Bethany Care Shelter provides. People can find themselves in a crisis for a variety of reasons at short notice and have nowhere to go and it is extremely reassuring that there is an option for people who would otherwise be left to sleep outside. When I think back to the winter we have just experienced you wonder what might have been if it wasn’t for Bethany’s compassionate staff and service for people faced with the harsh reality of rough sleeping.

13.2.3 Edinburgh Access Practice
Report prepared by Jane Taube, practice nurse

A practice nurse and Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN) from the homeless GP practice visited on 22 Monday evenings. A volunteer GP also attended weekly on Thursday evenings.

Approximately eight people were seen by EAP staff during each attendance at the Care Shelter, totalling about 184 across the winter. 17 people registered at EAP after having been seen at the Care Shelter.

Types of presentations/input

Physical health
People presented with multiple and complex needs; long-term conditions (variously managed); acute wound care needs from post-surgery, self-harm, needle entry site abscesses or infections; finger and toe injuries; self-discharge from hospital needs; lost appointments for OPA follow up; lack of medications (through new/sudden homelessness); uncontrolled epilepsy; poorly controlled heart conditions; lost reliever/preventer inhalers; sleep apnoea; skin rashes; dry or wet skin conditions; poor foot care from walking a lot; bruises; lacerations; circulatory problems; toenail care needs; and dental care needs.

Mental health
Deteriorating mental health states including exacerbated anxiety states, phobias, depressions, borderline personality disorder, schizophrenia and paranoias. Some had come out of treatment or fallen out of treatment for ORT many had various degrees of substance misuse history including alcohol misuse. Some people, new to Edinburgh, presented at the Care Shelter in mental distress, needing signposting to services and support such as to how to register with Edinburgh Access Practice.

Case studies
A vulnerable man first met by EAP CPN at the Care Shelter during winter 2016-17. He has been linking in with mental health support since but remaining street homeless
sporadically due to his mental health. Able to maintain continuity of contact at the Care Shelter when ‘lost’ to the system during working hours – feels significant in respect of his mental health, his trust in staff, his fragile capacity to contact his CPN.

Wound management: Abscesses and post-hospital discharge (including self-discharge) care was promoted, and people were linked into EAP and GP outreach at Streetwork via contact at the Care Shelter. In three instances this care would not otherwise have been achieved; the people involved actively avoiding registering with formal GP including EAP.

Closing comments

Our own perspective is that the EAP health input is supporting the work of the Care Shelter in three main ways:

1) To provide both physical and mental health supports to people who are staying at the Care Shelter, many of whom are registered with GPs but are in a state of crisis and are often away from their GP area at the time of being seen by us. Our input lead to people feeling more able to present to the EAP clinic sites to register or re-present following encouragement to do so by Care Shelter staff. We do not think we would have had this level of attendance from this population had there been no EAP outreach in the Care Shelter.

2) To support the Care Shelter staff by attending regularly and reliably. Staff asked the nurses to speak with individuals who they had particular concerns about. Especially appreciated was the on-going mental health input by the CPNs attending, as often it is deteriorating mental health issues which cause the staff the most concern.

3) To expand EAP health input to the homeless community outwith the physical constrictions and barriers of the clinic sites. People who are homeless have commented that our presence at the Care Shelter helps them feel EAP are prepared to make an effort, to “come out to see me, where I am”. Third sector staff in other organisations also feel encouraged to suggest that people link in with us at the Care Shelter, suspecting they would not attend at the clinic sites. There were very useful links made between the EAP Health outreach on a Monday night at the Care Shelter, followed by the volunteer GP’s attendance on a Thursday night and the signposting option of the EAP GP at Streetwork on a Friday morning.

13.2.4 Homeless and Housing Support, City of Edinburgh Council

Report prepared by Gavin Snape

Over the course of the winter, 12 Housing Officers were involved in visiting the Care Shelter; two at a time on Sunday and Tuesday evenings. They attended on 36 evenings to provide housing and homelessness advice, direct referral and signposting.

The Housing Officers spoke directly with 130 individual people at the Care Shelter: 107 who gave names and 23 who preferred to remain anonymous. The gender split was 84% male and 16% female.

Closing comments

It appears that many of the people who accessed temporary accommodation on the morning after the Care Shelter meeting did so as a direct result of the advice he/she was given by a Housing Officer.
It is a success that this is the first season where we had consistent Housing Officer representation at the Care Shelter and it appears that this has proven beneficial to many customers in clarifying their position in relation to housing/homelessness, prevention of homelessness and areas related to this.

Many of the Housing Officers involved have advised me about how much they enjoyed going into the Care Shelter and how the experience has positively affected their understanding of the issues around for people using the Care Shelter and the excellent shared work undertaken there on behalf of residents.

13.2.5 Shelter Scotland
Report prepared by Fiona McPhail, Principal Solicitor

Shelter Scotland attended the Care Shelter on 10 occasions, on a fortnightly basis throughout the winter. The visits were covered alternatively by a solicitor and a housing advisor. We were there to advise people of their rights in relation to making homeless applications and securing temporary homeless accommodation.

**Housing advisor:** Seven people were advised on rights. In some cases contact was not maintained and so the outcome is uncertain. Three people accessed temporary accommodation.

**Housing solicitor:** Eight people advised on rights resulting in temporary homeless accommodation being offered the next day by the council. (There were two couples, so this is 6 homeless applicants.)

**Case studies**

One client had serious health issues and had recently been in hospital. He was relying on the Care Shelter at night and wandering the streets during the day. His health was poor and all he wanted was a safe space to rest and recover during the day and night. We took his case on and made representations to the council in relation to their statutory obligations and the concerns we had around this client’s health. The client did not have any contact details and so we relied on Streetwork’s Holyrood Hub where he would attend during the day, to pass messages on. The client was offered accommodation the following day.

The client went to Parliament Square the day after we advised him at the Care Shelter. He had reported having difficulty making a homeless application. A couple of weeks later he came to the Edinburgh Hub Drop-In. He told us that the day after speaking with the housing advisor he was provided with interim accommodation and his homeless application was accepted. He was still waiting for a decision and was advised to contact us should he wish advice about reviewing his homeless decision.

**Closing comments**

We would like to thank Bethany Christian Trust, its staff and its volunteers who have yet again managed to provide a lifeline and a safe space for many homeless people during what was a particularly harsh winter.

Whilst we are aware of the pressures on council housing stock and homeless services, the statutory obligation to prevent homelessness and provide temporary homeless accommodation lies with the council. There were individuals we spoke with who were in particularly poor physical or mental health and who had a statutory right to temporary accommodation. They should not have had to rely on the Winter Care Shelter and we hope
that the findings of the Trust’s report can be factored in to any assessment of need/demand for homeless services which the City of Edinburgh Council may undertake.

13.2.6 Streetwork
Report prepared by Cindy Pritchard and the Outreach Team

- 114 visits in total: From October to mid-December 2017 - 3 times per week; then from mid-December 2017 to April 2018 - 5 times per week.
- 305 individuals were supported through 1,082 contacts (including 120 anonymous contacts).
- Approximately 68 people were supported into temporary accommodation, 16 people were supported to return to existing accommodation, 8 people were repatriated, 7 people were supported to access self-funded accommodation and 2 people secured private lets.

The Streetwork Outreach Team visited the Care Shelter Monday to Friday from 6:30-7am. On arrival, the team would liaise with the Bethany staff, prioritising new rough sleepers and people the staff had identified as being particularly vulnerable. We would then engage with people, providing general housing advice as well as signposting. The team would encourage, and accompany people back to the Holyrood Hub where they could follow up on further support needs and people could access basic amenities. Engaging with people in the Care Shelter affords Streetwork the opportunity to provide more intensive support outwith the Care Shelter.

The Outreach Team supported clients in many ways including supporting people: To CEC homeless services, advocating on their behalf; to register with the homeless GP practice and access healthcare; to access specific mental health providers; to link in with specific addictions services; to attend the social work drop-in at the Access Point; to make benefit claims and accompany them to the Jobcentre; to access funding and apply for ID documents; to access specialist immigration advice and support services; to attend embassies and providing advocacy; to access employability services; and helping with telephone calls, writing applications and letters.

Case studies

At the Care Shelter we met a 41 year old Polish national who had been living in the UK for around two years but had only recently been made homeless. He had significant health issues and was supported to the homeless GP service to register with a GP and access a CPN for support with this mental health and addiction issues. We were able to support him to healthcare appointments until he felt confident to go on his own. Using online and Streetwork’s phone translation services we established that he may well have entitlement to both housing and benefits as an EEA retained worker. As he had some physical health issues, exacerbated by rough sleeping, we accompanied him to City of Edinburgh Council to make a homeless application and advocated on his behalf. Unfortunately, we were initially unsuccessful so we referred him to the Civil Legal Assistance Office (CLAO) for specialist legal advice and advocacy. We assisted him to gather various documents relating to evidencing his right to reside in the UK and were able to use the Scottish Government’s personalised budget fund to pay for accommodation for him so he could begin treatment for his physical health issues in a safe environment off the streets. CLAO were able to successfully advocate on his behalf and he is now in temporary accommodation. We also supported him to make an ESA claim and access welfare rights advice and advocacy from Granton Information Centre.

During one of our visits, the Care Shelter staff introduced the Outreach Team to a young man they were concerned about. He did not speak English and from the basic information we were able to get from him, he had only just arrived in the UK. The Outreach Team
accompanied him back to the Holyrood Hub where, using the phone translation service, we were able to establish he was a Kurdish-Iranian and had fled Iran. He had made an asylum claim when arriving in Edinburgh the day before but had no idea what to do next. We arranged and accompanied him to an appointment with City of Edinburgh Council’s Refugee Migration Team later that day and were able to confirm that his asylum claim was being processed. Staff from the Refugee Migration Team made contact with the Home Office to arrange asylum seeker accommodation and support for him in Glasgow. We then accompanied him to The Access Point to arrange temporary accommodation for him in Edinburgh until his accommodation in Glasgow was ready. Working together with the City of Edinburgh Council and the Bethany Care Shelter staff, he only spent one night sleeping rough.

Our visits to the Care Shelter gave us the opportunity to continue to build links with longer-term rough sleepers, one of whom had been rough sleeping for just over a year. During that time our Outreach Team, along with our team at the Holyrood Hub, had been encouraging this person to make a benefit claim and go to the council to make a homeless application and access temporary accommodation. However, this client felt this was too overwhelming a process to deal with while also sleeping on the streets. This year, City of Edinburgh Council started an initiative called Hopetoun Rapid Access program, where people who are rough sleeping can access accommodation immediately, supporting them through the assessment processes of making a homeless application and benefit claim. The ethos behind having a rapid access program for accommodation is it removes as many potential barriers for the client, focusing on getting them off the streets and then addressing the other presenting challenges the client may be facing. The Outreach Team discussed the details of the rapid access program with the person and decided the program would be beneficial to meet his needs. That morning he was booked into Hopetoun. He is now receiving ongoing support from our Streetwork Visiting Housing Support team and working with Edinburgh Council staff to plan a suitable move on.