



Rapid Re-Accommodation  
Welcome Centre

**Annual Report 2023 - 2024**

# Introduction



## **The Rapid Re-Accommodation Welcome Centre 2023/24 was one of our most challenging seasons to date.**

We have all seen the news reports on how Scotland is experiencing a housing crisis. With an estimated 5000 households living in temporary accommodation in Edinburgh alone, services in Edinburgh are already stretched to breaking point.

The housing crisis has been felt in the Welcome Centre over the whole season. A few weeks before the Welcome Centre opened its doors on the 4th October 2023, Bethany Christian Trust supported other long-standing partners to conduct a rough sleeper count in and around Edinburgh. On that night, 80 people were found rough sleeping in Edinburgh. A list of individuals known to services who were found to be rough sleeping that night was brought together and shared amongst Edinburgh's homelessness services. The Welcome Centre opened its doors and immediately started taking in individuals who had been sleeping rough on the streets of Edinburgh. Nearly 80% of those eligible for accommodation who were rough sleeping were accommodated at the Welcome Centre in the first fortnight of being open, making a direct impact on the number of people sleeping rough.

Once an individual is signed in to the Welcome Centre, they are shown to their own warm room with a big, comfy bed and ensuite bathroom. Guests have access to 3 meals a day, 24/7 care and over 40 partner agencies providing tailored

support for individuals. With those already high numbers of people sleeping rough, the Welcome Centre reached capacity within 48 hours of opening its doors. On 2nd November, councillors in Edinburgh overwhelmingly voted to declare a Housing Emergency to recognise and address the scale of Edinburgh's housing crisis.

### **Partnership thanks**

The Welcome Centre is only made possible thanks to the City of Edinburgh Council and the Scottish Government providing essential financial support along with advocating for the Welcome Centre itself. Thank you to the Scottish Government who provided a grant for staffing costs and breakfasts. Thank you to the City of Edinburgh Council who paid for the room hire and security at the Haymarket Hub Hotel and provided a grant for staffing costs. These major stakeholders are crucial to the successful Welcome Centre model and we want to extend our heartfelt thanks for the support. Thank you to each partner, volunteer and Haymarket Hub Hotel for making the Welcome Centre possible.

### **Inside this report**

Contained within this report are detailed statistics and analysis on the impact the Rapid Re-Accommodation Welcome Centre made in supporting men and women off the streets of Edinburgh and into their own rooms at the Haymarket Hub Hotel. There are comments and good news stories from individuals who have

stayed in the Welcome Centre this season throughout.

**James Milligan**, Manager  
**Emily Millar**, Deputy Manager  
**Eleanor McLachlan**, Senior Team Leader & Administrator  
**Arran MacGregor**, Senior Team Leader



Photos taken by Liam Rotheram.

Images used with consent of those featured.

Quotes found throughout the report were said by people staying at the Welcome Centre.

Names in stories have been changed to protect guest identities and are not connected to featured pictures.

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# What is the Rapid Re-Accommodation Welcome Centre?

## **Aim**

The Rapid Re-Accommodation Welcome Centre is designed to support individuals from their moment of crisis into stable housing options. People are either diverted from rough sleeping or have been rough sleeping before coming to us. There is only a 1% crossover of people using the service consecutively over the last 3 years, showing it is primarily new people accessing support.

Rooted in Christian love, our goal is to provide as much support as possible for everyone, no matter their circumstance. We provided emergency accommodation to those in Edinburgh with nowhere to stay. Working in tandem with 40 other partners across Edinburgh we endeavoured to implement support measures to help people sustain the options they move on to. As the demographic and needs of the individuals change, the Welcome Centre adapts to meet the needs. The aim of the Welcome Centre is to offer a person-centred approach, placing high value on quality care, respect, dignity and empathy.

## **Why**

This season, more than ever, it was evident that there was a need for emergency accommodation in Edinburgh. On our opening day we saw a 158% increase compared to the previous season, resulting in an exceptionally busy start. Due to the high tolerance approach, the Welcome Centre can accommodate many people for whom

mainstream accommodation is currently not suitable. 89% of people who answered the question, "Where would you be sleeping if not at the Welcome Centre?" said they would be rough sleeping. Individuals could self-refer and we took referrals from many services including City of Edinburgh Council, Streetwork, Cyrenians, Citizen Advice Bureau and many more. This partnership approach ensured we knew there was not an alternative option for that individual before they were signed into our service. On average, 26 new individuals were signed in each week, highlighting the need for this provision.



## How

For the 4th season now, The Rapid Re-accommodation Welcome Centre operated from the Haymarket Hub Hotel. Each guest has their own ensuite room, 3 meals a day and access to support day and night.

The team was comprised of 1 manager, 1 deputy manager, 2 senior team leaders, 5 team leaders, 26 full and part-time project workers and 1 link worker. Before the season started, staff were trained in how to administer Naloxone, First Aid, Trauma Informed Practices, De-Escalation, Suicide Prevention, Human Trafficking Awareness and much more. We were grateful to have a team of people who were united in the desire to show Christian love in action and provide high quality care.

There were two services within the Haymarket Hub Hotel, with City of Edinburgh Council temporary accommodation and the Welcome Centre co-existing in the same building. Despite the challenges that come from running both services in the same hotel we have seen this continue to work thanks to the co-operation and support of the team at the Haymarket Hub Hotel.

The City of Edinburgh Council provided a door steward, from Inubis, who was an essential part of the team, greeting everyone who arrived.

*"You guys genuinely care!"*

*"Here people treat me very well, always asking about my health and giving me everything in support. I want to study English and stay here. I will miss you so much"*

## Thi's Story

A new trend the Welcome Centre experienced was young people from Vietnam being brought to the UK against their will. Thi came to the Welcome Centre having fled a human trafficking situation where she was being exploited. She was 16 years old and was brought from Vietnam where her family were bound by debt. She was brought by Police, visibly scared and only had the clothes she ran away in. She didn't know where in the UK she was and spoke no English.

While in the Welcome Centre, staff continued to look out for Thi, ensured she had food, support and friendly staff she could approach 24/7. Partnership working was key in the support and the team worked alongside Social Work, Police, Survivors of Human Trafficking in Scotland, Streetwork and Cyrenians to ensure Thi had the support she needed. She attended groups with young people in the same situation and saw her Social Work support most weeks.

After staying at the Welcome Centre for 59 days she moved into a young persons' supported accommodation unit, with a large smile on her face.

## Jane's Story

Jane came to the Welcome Centre after leaving a marriage where she was experiencing psychological abuse from her husband. Since leaving she had been sofa surfing and staying with friends but had nowhere to go now. After presenting to the Council to seek accommodation she was referred to the Welcome Centre as there was no accommodation available for her and her two dogs.

After just over a month in the Welcome Centre Jane moved into a Move On Flat with Bethany Christian Trust, where she gets support from Bethany Christian Trust visiting support workers and she is able to start afresh.

## Craig's Story

Craig came to us in mid-March having been asked to leave his mother's flat due to his alcohol addiction. Prior to this, Craig was staying in his own tenancy, but he couldn't keep up with rent payments and ended up with rent arrears. As staff were booking Craig in, he made it known that he had never experienced living in emergency accommodation before. He was nervous and wanted to tackle his life controlling issue. Staff reassured him that he would be able to be signposted to the correct support. Staff connected Craig to support for his alcohol addiction. When he left the Welcome Centre he moved to a residential alcohol rehabilitation centre.



***"I feel like no-one has ever cared if I live or die before I came here, thank you for your support and care"***

***"We appreciate you guys! Thanks for your kindness"***



# Impact

**787 individual people** accessed our service

**70 people**, on average, accessing the service **each day**

**15,002** presentations

**95% of days capacity was reached** at some point during day

**98%** of known outcomes are positive

**17 days** average length of stay

**26 new people**, on average, came to the service each week

**Less than 1% of people** stayed each of the last **three seasons**

Over **24,500 meals** provided

**442** catering volunteers

**66** nationalities stayed

**82 presentations** on busiest day

**167,877** presentations since 1996

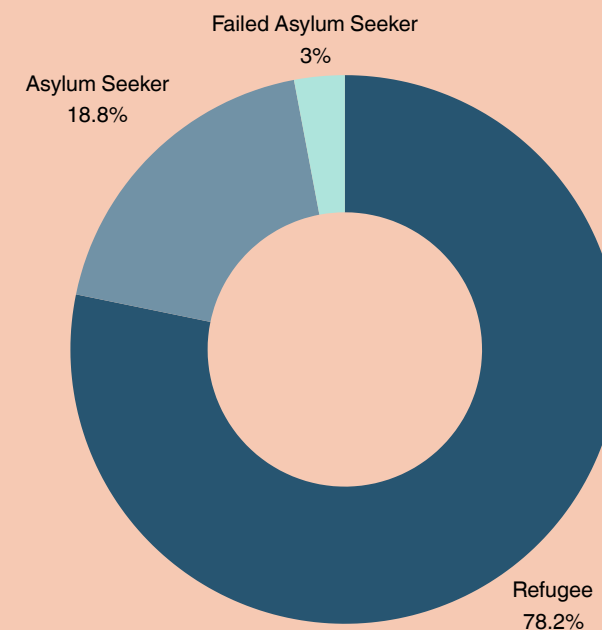
# Who stays?

## Nationality Breakdown

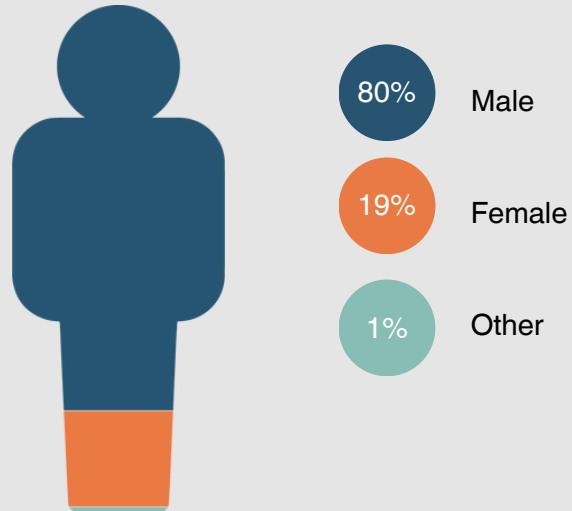
Country	%
British	59%
Middle Eastern and North African	12.3%
Eastern European	9.2%
North, South and West European	6.2%
Romanian	5%
East, South and West African	4.5%
South Asian	1.7%
Other	1%
South East Asian	0.6%
North and South American	0.5%



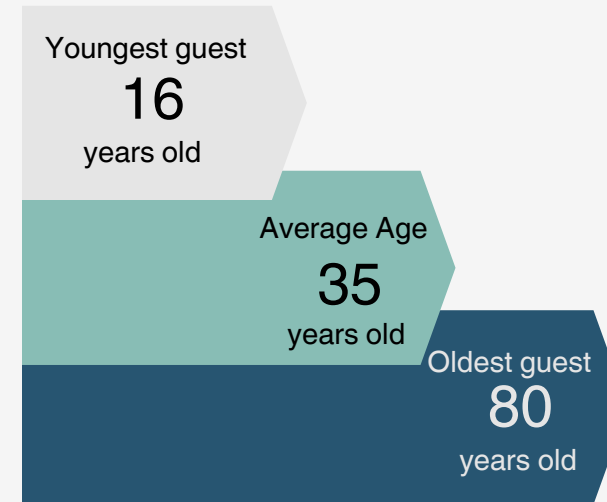
13% of all guests have been involved in the asylum process. A breakdown of those 101 people:



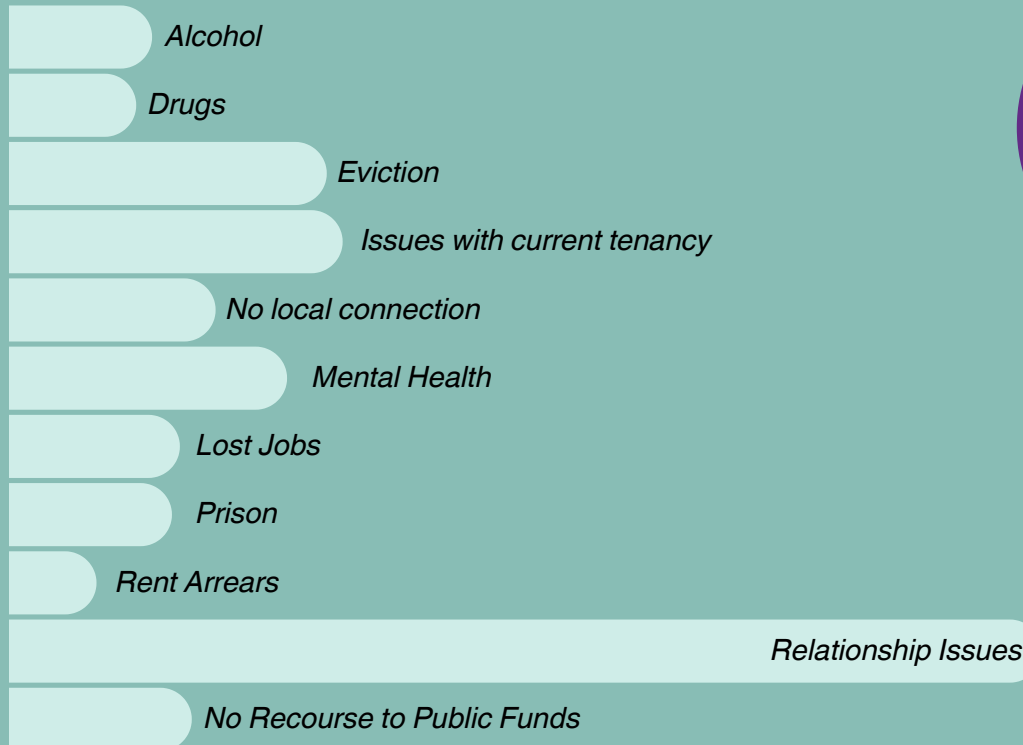
## Gender Breakdown



## Age Breakdown

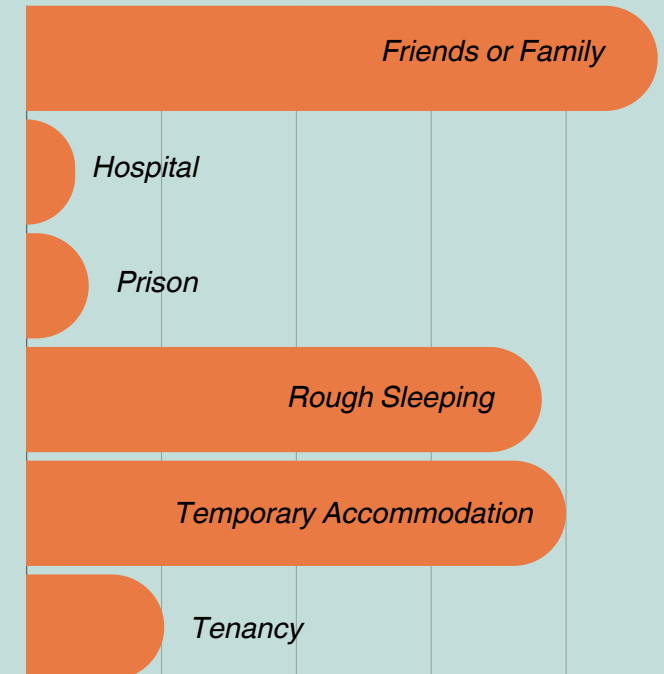


## Reason for homelessness



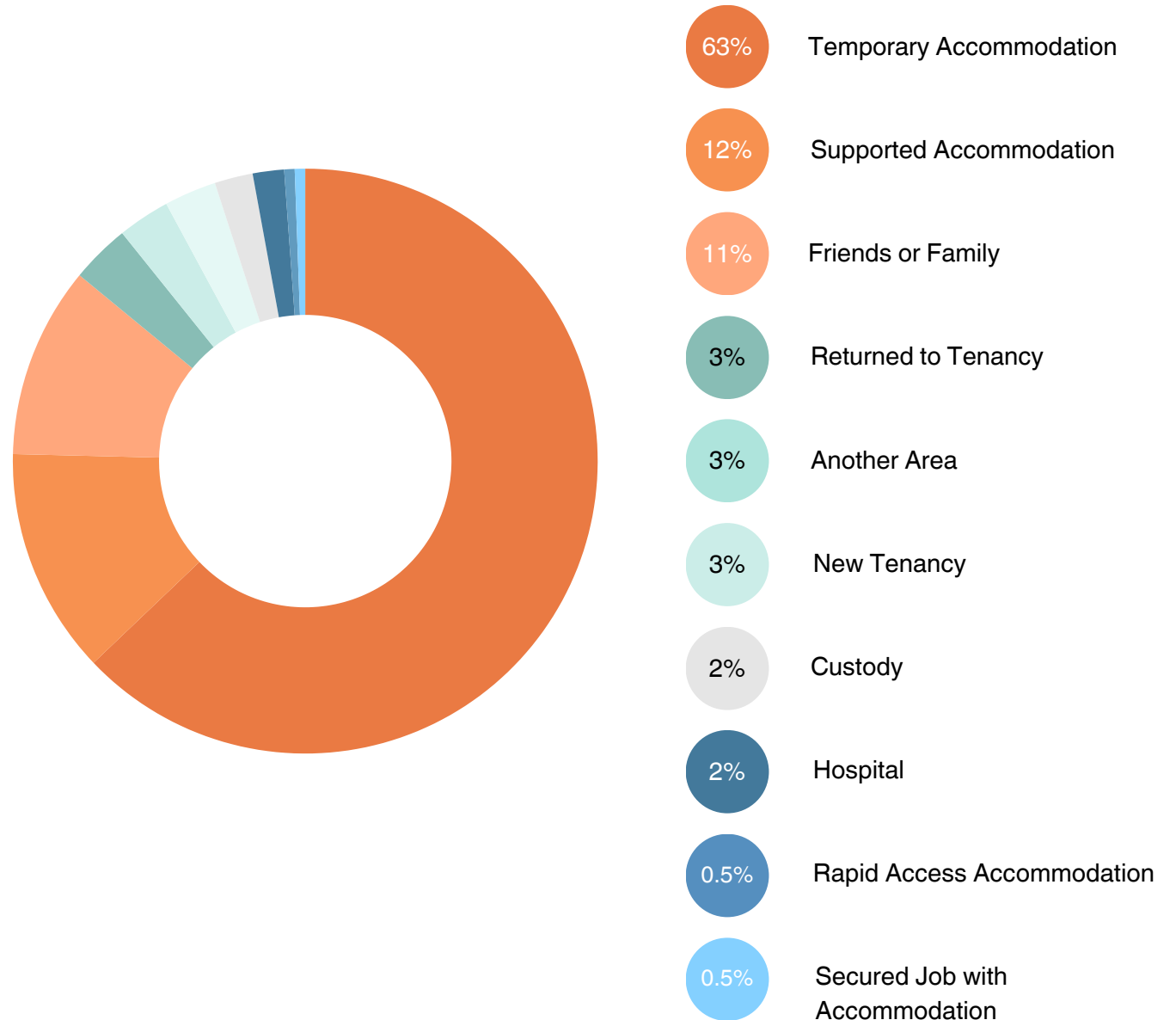
13% of guests have been through residential care

## Where were you last staying?



# Outcomes and support

Due to the nature of the Rapid Re-Accommodation Welcome Centre, we cannot always know where people move on to. A comprehensive effort was made with partners to ensure we had as full an understanding of where people moved on to as possible. 57% of outcomes are known and of known outcomes **98% moved on positively**. Full breakdown below:



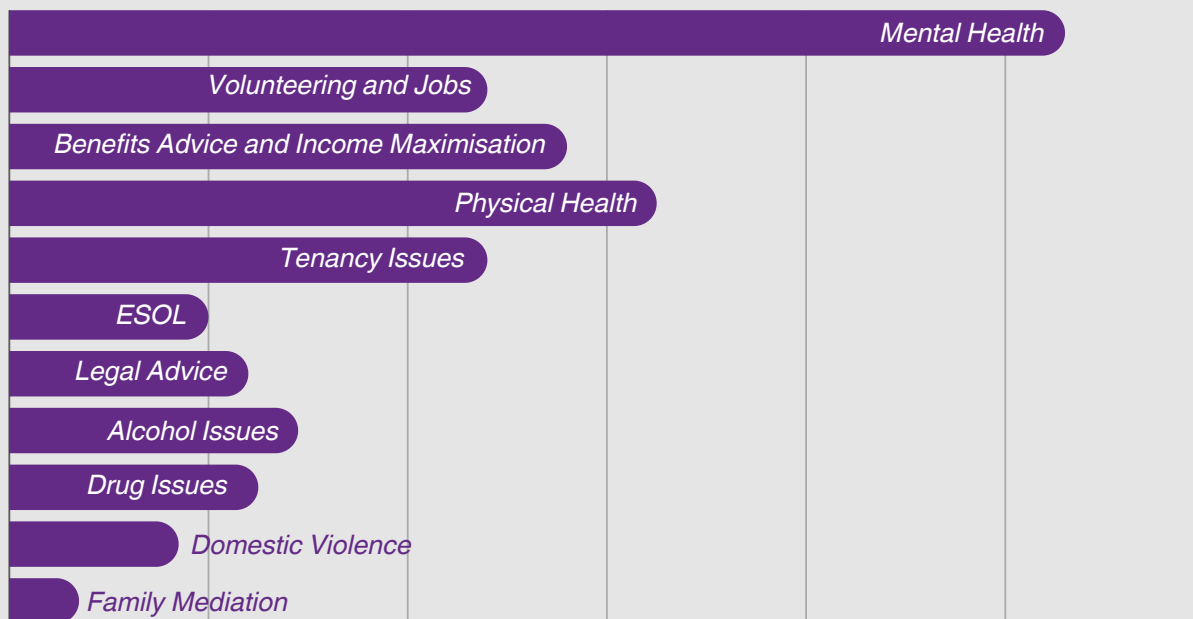
## Link Worker

The Link Worker role was designed to strengthen the partnership between the City of Edinburgh Council and Bethany Christian Trust. The position has sight of Rapid Access Accommodation and the Rapid Re-Accommodation Welcome Centre, supporting as many people into accommodation across the city as possible. The Link Worker could provide on-site pre-homelessness assessments, reducing barriers to people accessing support.

The role was also a huge asset to the Welcome Centre team on a daily basis as they coordinated a range of support needs, facilitating engagement with health, housing, social work, and community services. The Link Worker coordinated efficient move on options which take both the short-term and longer-term needs of the individual into account, whilst also meeting the high demand for bedspaces in light of the housing emergency.



Each guest is asked what support they would like while at the Welcome Centre. Breakdown below:



I'm really grateful for the season that has been, and the way that God has provided for us as a team and for the guests at the Welcome Centre. I am continuing in this role over the summer months across a number of Rapid Access Accommodations as part of a secondment with City of Edinburgh Council.

Rebecca Haley  
Link Worker

# Challenges

The 2023-2024 season undoubtedly had challenges; much of what is seen around the world is reflected in the Rapid Re-Accommodation Welcome Centre. We saw a rise in those fleeing war which was reflected in the increase of those from Sudan and Syria. The Mental Health crisis was acutely felt with guests suffering the effects of relationship breakdowns, job losses, addiction and immigration concerns as well as diagnosed mental health disorders. Staff sought to embody a person-centred approach and aimed to understand what support each individual person might benefit from.

## **Housing Crisis**

In November 2023, the City of Edinburgh Council declared a housing emergency acknowledging that the demand had outstripped the resources available. Housing supply had a direct impact on the length of time people stayed in emergency accommodation. Due to the scarcity of move-on options, people stayed on average 17 nights. Last season 64% of people moved on within 7 days whereas this season it reduced to 46%. Out of the 210 days we were open, on 199 of those days we reached capacity at some point in the day. The consequence of this was that we had more presentations than we had space for. If someone presented to the Welcome Centre and we did not have availability, we would contact City of Edinburgh Council and Rapid Access to see if there was an option anywhere else across the city. We also provided a sleeping bag, warm clothing, hot drinks, food and signposting to other

services in Edinburgh. As soon as a room was vacated by a guest, the staff worked to get the room cleaned and ready as quickly as possible.

10% of the total RRWC population this season were refugees. Record number of backlogs in the asylum process, caused by the Covid-19 pandemic delays and the rise in people seeking asylum in the UK, meant that the Home Office expedited many applications granting people Refugee Status. Once Refugee Status is granted, the individual becomes eligible to receive housing support from any local authority in the UK and can choose where to settle. Any New Scot was then connected to organisations who could provide community and connection.

## **NRPF**

In the 2022-2023 season, No Recourse to Public Funds (NRFP) became a larger challenge for the RRWC to tackle. We had to discover pathways for those who couldn't use statutory services. During this last season we built upon the previous years' work, receiving specialised training from Migrant Help about the Asylum Process, and were able to connect many people to specialised support and advice. This season we saw a 50% reduction in the quantity of people who had NRPF. Due to changes in legislation, NRPF has continued to become an increasingly complicated field to support individuals in. Access to specialised immigration support can be very time consuming due to the pressures on the sector. For many, despite not having access to mainstream support there are routes to support, including those with

failed asylum cases. We were grateful to have Streetwork and Survivors of Human Trafficking in Scotland on site each week to support those who needed help with NRPF. 73 individuals were supported by the weekly drop-in provided by Streetwork. Over the 30 weeks, this equated to 339 support sessions which saw people referred to a range of immigration lawyers, the Scottish Refugee Council, Consulates and Embassies and the Refugee and Migration Team in the City of Edinburgh Council.

Despite being a complex group of individuals to support, of those who engaged with the Streetwork Drop-in, 73% moved on positively into a range of options including:

- Supported to gain Settled Status and move into temporary accommodation
- Home Office Voluntary Return Scheme
- Moved into accommodation for Asylum Seekers via Migrant Help
- Fairway accommodation for Appeal Rights Exhausted Asylum Seekers
- Accommodation tied with jobs

## Drug Related Deaths

Sadly in Scotland, we continue to see many people die from drugs. There is undoubtedly a link between homelessness and drugs, and our team supported everyone no matter the challenges they were facing. We have many procedures to manage the associated risks:

- First Aid training with a focus on those who are unresponsive

- Staff are trained to administer Naloxone, which reverses the effects of an opioid overdose
- Weekly Drop-in by Change Grow Live (CGL) to support those who wish to make positive changes regarding their addiction
- Referral route to Bridge to Freedom, community-based recovery groups
- Worked closely with Harm Reduction who provided an in-reach service at the RRWC
- Staff attended a weekly multi-agency meeting which is designed to prevent Drug Related Deaths
- Regular Welfare Checks

*"I feel safe here"*



The positive by-product of the extended length of stays was the strength of relationships that were built with those who used the service. We had a greater focus on connecting individuals to community groups, befriending and skills groups. The story below is an example of the type of work that was done.

Simon arrived at the Welcome Centre very quiet and withdrawn, having been discharged from hospital following a relapse. Over time, Simon opened up to staff about his alcohol dependency, ensuing physical health difficulties, and the consequential relationship breakdown with his family. Having arrived with no prior support in place, Simon began to engage daily with Welcome Centre staff and the Link Worker, and subsequently opened up to the prospect of connecting with partner organisations for help. This included the Four Square Young Persons' support and employability programme 'Springboard', as well as being involved in Bethany's Passing the Baton befriending scheme and a young persons' art course. Simon also began to engage with CGL alcohol support services to work towards reducing his daily consumption, to be supported to detox safely, and hopefully, in the long-term work towards sobriety. Simon has since been referred and moved on to supported accommodation where staff can encourage him in his efforts towards this. His allocated key worker will be able to continue in coordinating wrap around support for Simon, and in time, hopefully facilitate the means for him to re-instate a healthy and restorative relationship with his family again, as well as help him fulfil his vision of starting a nursing degree.

# Partnership working

In order to provide the diverse types of support that people need, the Welcome Centre could not fulfil its remit without the many partners we have the privilege to work with.

There are multiple ways for partners to engage with the Rapid Re-Accommodation Welcome Centre: fortnightly meetings to discuss specific guests, on-site drop-ins and appointments and also via partner specific referral routes.

**This season we welcomed more partners than ever to work alongside staff.**

Over the years, the number of nationalities staying at the Welcome Centre has diversified, with many people coming from distressing circumstances and possessing little to no English language. To this end, the City of Edinburgh Council's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Team came on board, providing access to English classes directly from the RRWC to support with daily living in Scotland.

The Welcoming, which supports people in their journey to settle in Scotland, has many inroads to various ethnic communities around the city. This can help a person find friendship through a very lonely process.

Fed Cap offers employability support and can be offered in many different languages, if required.

Everyone wants to feel their best, and this year we had a skilled barber visit us to provide haircuts. He was extremely popular and worked

hard to make sure everyone who wanted a haircut received one.

A huge thank you to those who work with us year after year, who are committed to offering legal, housing, addiction, health, debt, unemployment, and financial support and advice. We are grateful to have staff on site who care for the exploited and to have others who bring books. Thank you to the team who support in the hospitals and those who accompany clients in the community. We couldn't provide the level of care that we do without the support of each partner.

**Advocard:** Can support with advocacy

**Anne Hope House:** Recovery focused, therapeutic accommodation for women

**Barber:** Providing free haircuts

**Bethany Christian Centre:** Abstinence based residential recovery programme for men

**Bethany House:** Emergency resettlement accommodation

**Bridge to Freedom:** Recovery worker was available to engage with anyone seeking to explore recovery

**Change Grow Live (CGL):** Offer one-to-one and group support in addiction recovery, planning and accessing harm reduction information



**Christians Against Poverty:** Supporting people out of debt

**Civil Legal Assistance Office:** Legal advice and information on housing rights

**Crisis:** Housing and employment advice, life coaches, courses and helping people move into private lets

**Connect to Community:** Mentoring relationships for men and women leaving prison to reintegrate into their local community and achieve their goals

**Cyrenians Outreach:** Assist guests with support tasks and accompany them to appointments

**Cyrenians Hospital In-reach:** Referrals directly from hospital also supporting those who have gone into hospital, from the Welcome Centre

**Dental Nurses:** Monthly Oral Health Drop-in provided by Outreach Dental Nurses

**Dogs Trust:** Providing vet support, food and other essential items

**ESOL classes:** Direct referrals from RRWC to English classes

**EUSS Drop In:** Support guests with all aspects of EUSS applications

**Fedcap:** Employability support

**Foursquare:** One-to-one visiting housing support to help with health, unemployment, rent arrears, benefits or any other issues preventing people

from managing their housing situation

**Harm Reduction nurses:** Advise guests who are actively using substances and test for blood-borne viruses

**Junction 42:** One-to-one befriending and mentoring for prisoners and prison leavers

**Migrant Help:** Support asylum seekers and providing training for staff

**Police Scotland:** Brought people who were homeless, assisting in emergency situations and welfare concerns

**Public Health Scotland:** Provide guidance around Covid-19 precautions

**Right There:** One-to-one visiting housing support for any issues preventing people from managing their housing situation

**Rock Trust:** Offered training and support for anyone aged between 16 and 25

**Salaam:** Edinburgh City Mission supporting New Scots, refugees and asylum seekers

**Scottish Refugee Council:** Supporting those who are refugees and asylum seekers

**Salvation Army:** Niddry Street Drop-in and Rapid Access Accommodation

**Shelter Scotland:** Support guests with legal issues with their accommodation and homelessness

**Social Bite Employment Programme:** Support people into work

**Street Pastors:** Supported people found in the city centre along to the Welcome Centre

**Street Pharmacist:** Medical and general support interventions

**Street Soccer:** Supporting positive change through football

**Streetreads:** Provide a library of books for the guests, including foreign language books

**Streetwork:** Support guests into accommodation and to attend other services

**Survivors of Human Trafficking in Scotland (SOHTIS):** Support guests who have been exploited

**The Access Place:** Providing mental health outreach and housing officers

**The Advice Shop:** Support guests with benefits, debt and income maximisation

**The Welcoming:** Supporting New Scots to transition to life in Scotland

**Turning Point:** Supporting individuals experiencing addiction issues

## Dogs

In homelessness, many people will have faced trauma and loss, and their dog may be the only constant in their lives. Studies have shown that a pet can provide company, purpose, security, love and in some cases be the only positive relationship and a reason to live. As a trauma-informed and person-centred service, it was important for us to be a dog friendly service.

Dogs Trust tailored their Welcoming Dogs package to the Welcome Centre requirements and introduced us to their Hope Project: a project specifically for people experiencing homelessness with their dogs.

The Hope Project provides free veterinary care, an online directory of dog friendly homelessness services in the UK, and a special Christmas parcel delivery service so that owners can have something to give their pet on Christmas day.

In addition to this, the Welcome Centre received a very generous supply of dried dog food, treats, collars, leads, toys and warm beds. Through our Regional Officer, we sourced coats for the wet winter weather for some of our older dogs.

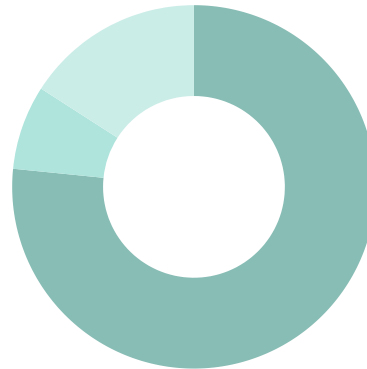
### **The Welcome Centre hosted 663 dog presentations.**

Accommodation options for people with dogs are very limited due to there being only a few housing options that accept dogs. This resulted in those who had dogs having extended stays. They all benefitted from the generous service of the Dogs Trust.



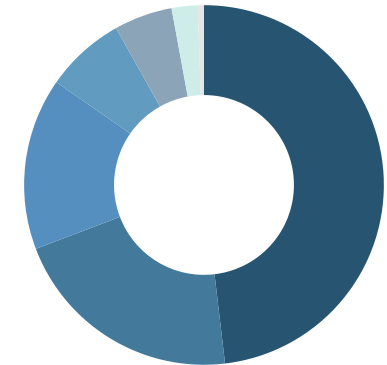
# Finance

## Expenditure



● Staffing	£482,432
● Central Costs	£100,205
● Other Direct Costs	£47,240
<b>Total</b>	<b>£629,877</b>

## Income



● Grants Received	£280,771
● Trust Income	£123,016
● Individual Gifts	£90,232
● Company Gifts	£41,901
● Church Gifts	£30,557
● Gift Aid	£13,619
● Other Income	£3,257
<b>Total</b>	<b>£581,353</b>

With thanks for the generous grants and donations from trusts that we have received which have enabled the work of the Welcome Centre this season.

City of Edinburgh Council  
 Challenge Trust  
 Spurgin Charitable Trust  
 The Graham Trust  
 The Hinshelwood Gibson Trust  
 The Lady Marian Gibson Trust  
 The Mackie Foundation

The Scottish Government  
 The Social Bite Fund  
 The Wilson Christie Fund  
 TOR Christian Foundation  
 William Purves Funeral Directors  
 Wilson Family Trust

# Volunteers



We are very grateful to our volunteers, without whom we would not be able to offer the service we do. This year **43 church teams** and additional individual volunteers committed their time and resources to provide good food for our guests. They cooked and served in excess of **10,150 hot meals** over **198 nights**.

In addition, after a last-minute call, they supported the lunch provision by supplying sandwiches or the ingredients for sandwiches. A massive thank you.

We also want to mention Pizza Geeks on Dalry Road who generously supplied pizzas for the Welcome Centre free of charge when catering teams were unavailable. Thank you for your generosity towards our guests.

#### **Gifts in Kind**

Thanks again to the volunteers who provided innumerable hours of service, meals and clothing donations, which has a huge beneficial financial impact on the project. We simply could not do it without them.

*"I'm very thankful to you for helping me"*

*"Thank you for the food, that was amazing, I really enjoyed that and thank you for the service"*

*"The food here is restaurant quality"*



#### **A huge thank you to:**

Barclay Viewforth Church | Birtwistle Family | Central Church | Centrepoint Church | Chalmers Church | Charlotte Chapel | Sacred Heart | City Gates Baptist Church | City on a Hill | Craiglockhart Church | Christ Church Britwell | Cumbernauld Free Church | Currie Kirk | Cyrenians Community Cook Club | Gorgie Dalry Stenhouse | Grace Church | Greenbank Parish Church | Holyrood Evangelical Church | Hope City Church | Hope! Church | Joseph Accommodations Ltd | King's Church | Liberton Kirk | Liberty Church, Dunfermline | Leith Baptist | Maddiston Evangelical Church | Palmerston Place Church | Penicuik Trinity Community Church | Portobello & Joppa Parish Church | Prestongrange Parish Church | South Edinburgh Cluster | St Andrew's & George's West Church | St Anne's Church | St Columba's by the Castle | St Giles Neighbourhood Group | St John the Baptist and St Kentigern | St John the Evangelist | St John's & St Mary Magdalene | St Margaret's Church | St Mark's, Portobello | St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral | St Michael's Linlithgow | St Mungo's, Balerno | St Ninian's, Marionville | Willett Family

## Antoni's Story

Antoni had been in the UK since 2008 and had been homeless for 4 years; he lost his job due to the Covid-19 pandemic. His lack of identification documents meant his EUSS application had stalled. Due to his immigration status, Antoni lost his access to benefits. Before coming to the Welcome Centre, Antoni was rough sleeping. During the sign in process he said he would like some support.

During his stay Antoni was able to continue connecting with Streetwork and was given a British Red Cross card to have some money for essentials. Streetwork EU Settlement workers also supported getting a new passport and immigration advice from specialists. The Welcome Centre was able to refer Antoni to Feniks for support with his mental health and to the Social Bite Skills Lab for help getting back into work.

Just before Christmas, staff were delighted to celebrate with Antoni when his Settled Status was granted and he could present to City of Edinburgh Council for accommodation. Within a couple of weeks of his status being granted he moved into temporary accommodation. Antoni is seen regularly by Bethany Christian Trust staff and is happy and engaged in looking for work.



## Conclusions and recommendations

## **The Rapid Re-Accommodation Welcome Centre had a lifesaving effect in supporting people sleeping rough on the streets of Edinburgh.**

The need for accommodation has never been greater, evidenced by how often this emergency accommodation was at capacity, the length of stays experienced and the limited move-on options.

The Welcome Centre had a profound impact on the lives of people trapped in crisis. People have been saved from the need to sleep rough and supported with a whole range of issues from poor mental health to drug dependency, family breakdown to lack of income.

The Welcome Centre made an immediate impact when it opened its doors last winter. High numbers of people were known to be sleeping rough on the cold streets of Edinburgh. The Welcome Centre was able to half the number of those rough sleeping in the city in 48 hours. The Welcome Centre model is about wraparound care and support at the moment of crisis, one person at a time. Each individual can access over 40 partners to support them moving from the Welcome Centre into longer-term accommodation.

The winter overnight Care Shelter started in 1996 as a two-week pilot. This life-saving service has grown every season to meet the needs of those struggling with homelessness. Halfway through

season 2019/20, the Care Shelter changed from an overnight to a 24-hour service, operating over 7 months. Since 1996, there have been 167,877 presentations at the service (first few years of operation numbers were approximate).

### **Trends**

Those accessing our service are waiting longer for accommodation offers from City of Edinburgh Council. The UK-wide housing crisis has been truly felt in the Welcome Centre this year. The lack of accommodation available has seen the number of people waiting long periods for suitable accommodation growing significantly.

The Welcome Centre has seen more people this season who have been granted refugee status. We have seen higher numbers of refugees entering the homeless system than we did previously.

### **Our Commitment**

The Rapid Re-Accommodation Welcome Centre will continue to meet the needs of people struggling in crisis. The Welcome Centre model has worked on so many levels in supporting some of the most vulnerable in our community. We will continue to meet the needs of those accessing our service. We will build on the work that has gone before to ensure the best quality of care is being offered to every person who stays.

### **Our Recommendations**

We recommend that the Welcome Centre continues to support those in need by offering warm and safe accommodation for when people have no alternative. We will continue to operate the Welcome Centre model, operating from a hotel setting, offering 24-hour wraparound care and support over the winter months.

We will continue to increase our number of agency partners to bring the necessary support to each individual.

We will enhance the training to provide more immigration education and support pathways for New Scots and asylum seekers.

We are committed to exploring new ways to reach those who are at risk of or are rough sleeping.





**Bethany  
Christian  
Trust**

**Ending Homelessness  
in Scotland,  
one person at a time**

Bethany Christian Trust | Registered Scottish Charity No. SC003783 | A Limited Company  
Registered in Scotland No. 228528 | [www.bethanychristiantrust.com](http://www.bethanychristiantrust.com)