HELPING PEOPLE MAKE A HOME FOR THEMSELVES

FreshStart
helping people make a home for themselves

ANNUAL REVIEW 2018
FRESH START AIMS TO:

• Enable people who have been homeless to settle in the community
• Provide volunteering opportunities that offer practical and emotional support to our clients
• Help our clients develop life skills
• Involve church members and the wider community in our work to help people avoid homelessness and gain skills and qualifications that will increase their employment prospects

FRESH START VALUES

Collaborate: we are committed to working in collaboration with one another, our partners, service users, volunteers and communities to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Respect: we will treat people with respect and consideration and provide our services without judging or discriminating

Empower: we seek to empower all those with whom we work, building self-esteem and providing opportunities to learn new skills

FRESH START SERVICES

Fresh Start meets our stated aims through services that are delivered around three themes:

Provision of goods: to ensure vulnerable people have essential household goods to help them set up a home, and improve the likelihood of them sustaining it successfully.

Social and Practical Support: to provide people who have been homeless, and others at risk of homelessness, with support and the skills to enable them to live independently in the community.

Employability: to help people that are unemployed gain skills, experience, and qualifications that will increase their employment prospects.
As Fresh Start approaches its twentieth anniversary, it is a time to reflect on all that has been achieved. Over the years we have helped countless people make a home for themselves. It is a fantastic achievement and everyone who has been involved with Fresh Start should be rightly proud.

It is equally important to look forward. Despite many advances in our society, homelessness remains a problem and the need for the services that we can offer is unabated. The Board is committed to ensuring that Fresh Start continues to provide the goods and services required and does all that it can to meet the needs of those in our communities. Over the last year, we have taken steps to ensure that we are best placed to meet these challenges and our future plans will ensure we are at the heart of the communities we serve, and that we are open and accessible to all those who require our services.

We are delighted to have appointed Biddy Kelly as our new Managing Director and have welcomed other new members of staff and board members. We highly value our motivated and enthusiastic team and have every confidence that we can build on the success of the last twenty years and help achieve our aims and goals for the years ahead. Our volunteers remain at the heart of our charity and all that we do. Our achievements over the last twenty years would be considerably less without them and we remain ever grateful for all the time and effort that people have so willingly given to enable Fresh Start.

We are focussed on ensuring a positive and rewarding experience for everyone who engages with us, our service users, our volunteers, our community and corporate supporters and our partners. We know that this remains key to enabling us to meet the challenges of the coming years.

LINDSAY WALLACE, CONVENER
96% of people received Starter Packs said that they felt more settled in their home as a result of the goods received.

After a period of homelessness, people may have very little in terms of personal belongings. Fresh Start can help by providing Starter Packs, packs of essential household goods to help set up and sustain a new home.
Jane had been living in a women’s hostel for a period of 18 months, an experience that she described as ‘dreadful’. Fresh Start met with Jane just as she received the keys to her new tenancy.

The flat was full of potential but was bare, with no furnishings, carpets or electrical goods and due to Jane’s circumstances, she had very few personal belongings. Working in conjunction with her support worker and other agencies, she received carpets, a couch, a bed, a cooker, a washing machine and a fridge. We provided her with crockery, pots and pans, towels, bedding, a cleaning pack and curtains. Due to the generosity of our donors, we were also able to give her a vacuum cleaner and an ironing board to help her new home feel like a home.

*Name has been changed to protect service user’s identity*
Hit Squads are teams of volunteers who will work alongside new tenants in their home to decorate up to two rooms. We provide the paint and the enthusiasm, and our clients increase their confidence and develop practical skills.
After living in a private sector leasehold for some time, Amber was delighted to secure a Council property. Following advice from her dad, who had previously received assistance from Fresh Start, Amber tentatively contacted Fresh Start to carry out a Hit Squad in her new property to help her settle in.

Having experienced issues with anxiety in the past, Amber was nervous leading up to the day of the Hit Squad, but once she met the volunteer team and began to relax, she had a great day decorating her new home. Amber said, “If I didn’t have the help with the painting I would still be trying to get things done now. I’m glad I’ve got my house and I’m safe and settled.”

Three months later, Amber is settling into her new home and reflected, “Fresh Start really helped – I was struggling with money when I first moved and had to pay for bills and moving vans so receiving the food pack and things like a hoover did the world of good. Thanks so much!”

Amber is looking to the future and hoping to gain some work experience and go to college in the next year or so, expressing, “The past few years have been tough and they’ve set me back but I’m feeling much happier now”.

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Fresh Start has used 482kg of food in our cooking classes that would have otherwise gone to landfill.

Fresh Start works with service users to give them cooking skills and learn how to make simple, healthy and nutritious meals and how to achieve this on a budget.
Jimmy started attending Fresh Start in his late 60’s after being sadly widowed to help him gain confidence when cooking – something that his wife had previously dealt with.

Jimmy had a history of homelessness from a young age, when his family were made homeless and he had to live in a children’s home and sleep rough. Although Jimmy found this experience unsettling, he obtained an apprenticeship as a baker in Edinburgh and worked hard.

Jimmy was not confident with cooking following the passing of his wife and the Fresh Start staff and volunteers were really good and “really patient” with him and helped him gain confidence. Jimmy now feels he knows the correct way to prepare food and has even had his friends round to display his new skills. Jimmy expressed, “The volunteers have been marvellous to me and shown me the way. Now it’s up to me to go forward.”
Fresh Start is keen to seek relevant, constructive feedback from the people that have used its services. The Service User Involvement Group was set up with this intention, to identify ways in which we could constantly improve the service that we provide.
Francia & Jan’s Story

Francia got involved when the project started back in 2017 and Jan joined in September of this year. Both said they joined because they wanted to give back and help people who were on the same journey as they had been.

Francia shared, “It’s a good idea to get likeminded people like yourself together who can relate to each other and share their experiences.Everybody has had their own journey, but everybody comes together to tackle homelessness”. Jan added, “it’s nice to know you’re not on your own and that there is help out there for you”.

Fresh Start recognises that Service Users have unique experiences, skills and abilities that enable them to provide “expertise” in what and how we deliver our services. Francia said, “Trying to imagine what you need when you haven’t been homeless is difficult. That is what is so good about the SUIG - you don’t appreciate what you need until you’re homeless. What I enjoy most about the group is that I feel listened to and heard. Fresh Start is helping you, making you feel appreciated and equal. They don’t look down on you or belittle you, but give you a platform to give your wisdom.”
511 hours of corporate volunteering was kindly gifted to Fresh Start in 2017-2018.
Digby Brown Solicitors was proud to support Fresh Start this year as part of their Charity Partnership Scheme.

Digby Brown was first drawn to Fresh Start in 2017 and their staff were so inspired by our dedicated volunteers’ efforts that they agreed to retain their partnership for a second year to ensure as many people as possible received our service. To date, Digby Brown’s efforts include marathons, bake sales and a cross-country walk across Scotland for Fresh Start, raising a fantastic £8,000.
TO GAIN FURTHER SKILLS, TRAINING AND CONFIDENCE TO ASSIST THEM IN GAINING EMPLOYMENT IN THE FUTURE.

FreshStart are a SQA Accredited Centre, giving our Trainees the opportunity to gain valuable SQA qualifications. Alongside these qualifications, we can give practical experience and workplace skills.
DAVE’S STORY

On Dave’s return from working in America, he found himself homeless, sleeping on a friend’s sofa. He then moved to Cross Reach Cunningham House, where he was introduced to Fresh Start.

Dave started attending supper club ran for the residents, which then led to Dave running the club. It was a great feeling for Dave to be entrusted with the finances and responsibility of running the club. After 4 months, Dave secured his own property and Fresh Start were able to help him out with starter packs and even a new cooker for his home.

Dave’s involvement with Fresh Start continued, volunteering with cooking classes and in the growing spaces. Part of Dave’s ongoing involvement with Fresh Start includes being a member of the Service User Involvement Group.

In June 2018, Dave commenced the Jump Start training program with Fresh Start, it was a real confidence builder for Dave and helped develop new skills. Upon completion of the course, Dave learned of a work opportunity with Fresh Start and “was chuffed to bits” when he was successful at interview.
**STARTER PACKS**
- Number of packs delivered: **10,297 packs**
- Number of white goods/cookers distributed: **53**
- Additional appliances for cooking on: **185**
- % who said Starter Packs made them feel settled in their homes: **96%**
- % of recipients who said they have been able to eat due to receiving a starter pack: **67%**

**HIT SQUADS**
- Number of Hit Squads carried out: **114**
- Number of regular volunteers: **46 (28 regular)**
- Number of corporate volunteers: **101 volunteers giving 897 hours of their time**
- % who said they felt more settled in their own home: **100%**
- % who said it made their home/flat feel more homely: **87%**

**EMPLOYABILITY**
- Number of people engaged in a training course: **57**
- Number who attended where an accredited qualification was achievable: **34**
- Number who gained accredited qualification: **24**
- Number who attended training course where gaining qualification was not possible: **23**
- Number who went into employment: **15**
- Number who completed vocational work experience modules: **39**

**WHAT WE’VE DONE THIS YEAR - THE FIGURES**

**COOKING CLASSES**
- Number of clients who have attended cooking classes: **128**
- Number of volunteers: **19**
- Number of social drop in sessions: **41**
- % who said they will manage a home budget better: **86%**
- % who said they have benefitted from socialising with others: **86%**

**COMMUNITY GROWING SPACES**
- Number of clients: **22**
- Number of volunteers: **45**
- % who said they were more skilled at working in a team and able to have a conversation with people: **71%**
- % who said they gained new skills: **57%**
INCOME: £685,572
EXPENDITURE: £708,617

This information is taken from our annual financial statements, audited by Whitelaw Wells CA. The accounts are still to be finalised. Copies of the annual accounts incorporating the auditor’s and director’s reports are available from admin@freshstartweb.org.uk.
My first full year working for Fresh Start has been very insightful and provided me with additional passion and enthusiasm to find more ways to help more people. This drive has come directly from experiencing first hand the time, energy and effort each of our volunteers and staff give, their commitment to the roles that they play and most of all the impact that this has on the people who need assistance and support most all. Fresh Start would need to employ 20 additional staff members to complete the vital work that our volunteers carry out, that is an incredible number of man hours and dedication.

2017 / 2018 has also been a year for us to work in collaboration with more partners including service providers, community groups and a wide range of different companies. This partnership working is a key element in reaching more people who need our assistance.

This year we have brought service users involvement to the core of everything that we do - the group have met on a monthly basis and have helped us review and develop our services so that we continue to deliver a high standard.

I would like to whole heartedly thank everyone who supports Fresh Start and I look forward to working with you all as we go in to our 20th year of service.

BIDDY KELLY, MANAGING DIRECTOR
Fresh Start operates as a company limited by guarantee, and is recognised as a charity with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. The overall governance and management is the responsibility of the Board of Directors. The Directors are either nominated by Christian denominations or co-opted as set out in our constitution and are legally bound to adhere to the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.

**FRESH START’S BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

Lindsay Wallace - Convenor  
Michael Balfour - Treasurer  
Michael Green - Company secretary  
Gary Cameron  
Dr Allan Gordon  
Morag Hutchison  
Sabina Kadic-Mackenzie  
Tim Martin
For more information about the charity or to find out how you can support us, contact:

22-24 Ferry Road Drive, Edinburgh, EH4 4BR

Telephone: 0131 476 7741 or admin@freshstartweb.org.uk
www.freshstartweb.org.uk

Fresh Start (Scotland) is a company Limited by guarantee and registered in Scotland No. SC197784
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