

FreshStart

helping people make a home for themselves

FRESH START COOKERS FOR CHRISTMAS



Think for a moment about Christmas - what does it mean to you? For many, it is the celebration of the birth of Christ, spending time with family, and a time to exchange gifts. It is a time when we wish each other a 'Merry Christmas', cards and television present a picture of happy families, lots of presents and food and everyone having a good time.

But Christmas does not mean that for everybody, especially those who have experienced homelessness. For these families and individuals, Christmas can be a time to dread. Many are finding their feet and have

little money to spare. For those with no cooker, how will they be able to even make a pot of home-made soup, far less cook a turkey and all the trimmings?

Every year, Fresh Start's Cookers for Christmas Campaign helps those who are struggling on this special holiday to be able to cook a hot Christmas meal. A small donation from you will help towards a refurbished cooker and will make a real difference to someone's Christmas.

To donate visit www.justgiving.com; or cheques should be made payable to Fresh Start and sent to **Fresh Start, 22-24 Ferry Road Drive, Edinburgh EH4 4BR**; or by bank transfer Sort Code 801105 Account No 00470086

▷ WORD FROM THE WAREHOUSE

As we approach winter the need for Fresh Start's services always seems more acute. It is a sad truth that many tenants in social housing have to make the stark choice between heating their home and eating over the winter months.

Our role at Fresh Start is to give new tenants who have been homeless the best possible start to their tenancy. One of the most consistent pieces of feedback over the years is that providing people with household goods reduces the likelihood of them incurring debt when setting up their home.

In this newsletter we launch our Cookers Appeal for 2016/17. The funds raised by this campaign will allow us to provide new tenants with one of the most important pieces of equipment for setting up home.

Of course a cooker is just one piece of a jigsaw, the Starter Packs of pots & pans, crockery and food also ensure people have the means to cook. And support from our volunteers ensure people have the skills and knowledge to cook on a budget.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

KEITH ROBERTSON
Managing Director



▷ A REAL FRESH START FOR MICHAELA

Michaela is now 45 years old, an intelligent and attractive woman, who wants to help others. But it has been a long and difficult journey for her. Michaela used drugs from a young age, as she says 'anything she could get her hands on'. But she coped and went to college, university and held down jobs. Then she started to use alcohol, which resulted in her losing her job and becoming homeless. Michaela felt her disturbed childhood meant she never put down roots and made wrong decisions which led to a violent relationship. She left in the middle of the night to find safety and security, something she longed for.

After staying in four different homeless hostels and B&B's, she was very unsettled, having nowhere she could call her own, and she felt unsafe. It took three months of intensive therapy to be able to detox from everything. She began to attend Fresh Start's cooking classes, and enjoyed the comfortable atmosphere and feeling part of a 'friendly family'. But she also enjoyed cooking healthy food, and the classes helped with her recovery. 'It was nice to know there was another way of living instead of drink, drugs and desperation'.

After 19 months of being homeless, Michaela was allocated a house, and Fresh Start gave her a Hit Squad to help her decorate, and some Starter Packs. She said she would probably never have decorated without the volunteers' help and support, 'nice company, team work, just felt good'. Now she had her own home 'I kept looking around the house and realised it was actually mine', somewhere where she could feel safe and warm.



To get to where she is now, has taken time and a lot of courage and determination. Michaela has a lot to offer and wants to give something back and help others like herself. Her life is going well, and she wants to get back into work. Her motto is 'If you want to keep it, you've got to give it away'. We wish her all the best for the future.

▷ BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS



appointed to this position, and will be working with Corporate Partners to help them fundraise, volunteer and support Fresh Start over the next three years.

We would like to thank James from Balmoral Asset Management who raised over £2000 taking part in the 2016 Rat Race Coast to Coast. This amazing event is 105 miles by foot, bike and boat through one of the most famous mountain landscapes in the world. Starting in Nairn, he ran, cycled and kayaked through this tough terrain. Balmoral Asset matched James's fundraising, giving us a grand total of almost £4,500!



We value our supporters, without them Fresh Start could not deliver the Services needed to help so many people every year. Our Corporate support has grown over the last few years, as more and more companies encourage their staff to get involved in helping the community. As a result, we have successfully obtained funding from Prana-Stiftung and The Hibbert Family Foundation to create a Corporate Partnership Co-ordinator post. Jen McQuistan, our Hit Squad Volunteer Co-ordinator, has been

▷ STAFF CHANGES

Nothing stays the same forever, and there are some more staff changes at Fresh Start.

Aga Newsome, our Training Co-ordinator left us in September to further her career, and we wish her all the best. Brian Wilson, our Senior PAT Tester has moved into the Training Initiative to work with Duncan Campbell, Technical Training Officer. We have extended David MacFarlane's temporary contract till the end of March 2017 to help out with PAT testing. Jen McQuistan, who was Volunteer Co-ordinator with the Hit Squads has been promoted to Corporate Relationship Co-ordinator. We were fortunate to be successful in getting funding for this new role within the organisation. Jen will work with our Corporate partners to provide volunteering and fundraising opportunities. We are in the process of recruiting for her replacement.

I'm sure you will join us in wishing everyone well in their new roles.



▷ COLINTON BRINGS IN THE HARVEST

Colinton Parish Church have once again given us an amazing donation of food.

The congregation donated at their service on 2nd October, and Gayle, Associate Minister for Children & Youth and School Chaplain to Bonaly, Colinton and Braidburn schools took the message out to the wider community.

She asked the pupils to think about those in our city who are hungry and do not have enough to eat. They responded with an amazing collection of food for Fresh Start.

The church was the collection point, and some of the pupils from Braidburn brought their gifts themselves. We collected from the church, and pupils helped to load the van with around 60 boxes and bags of tins and packets. **We really appreciate the support from the congregation and pupils of the local schools, who have worked so hard to make this collection possible – thank you.**

▷ THE BIG HEARTS WITH HUGE HEARTS



The Big Hearts Foundation have been doing a few Hit Squads with us over the last few months. They have shown what huge hearts they have by donating their time and energy. Their help is really appreciated, and here is Stewart looking as though that paint brush was just made for him! A big Thank You to all who took part!

If you think you might like to volunteer for a Hit Squad – please get in touch, we would love to hear from you. You don't have to be an expert at DIY, as training is given, all we ask for is enthusiasm, and lots of it.

If decorating is not your forte – how about cooking or gardening? We need volunteers for our cooking classes and our growing spaces, both at Craigmillar and at our Food Station at Harrison. Please visit: www.freshstartweb.org.uk/volunteer or e-mail: admin@freshstartweb.org.uk.

Or perhaps you have some questions, then please phone 0131 476 7741 and have a chat.

▷ PAT TESTING AT NO 10

Our PAT testing team made it to No 10 - No 10 Charlotte Square that is – home to the Institute of Directors. This was the first time IOD had used Fresh Start, and they were delighted with the service they received. Here is Brian with Deirdre from the IOD.



▷ DIARY DATES

Annual General Meeting at
The Gillis Centre
4th November 2016

Carol Service at St Cuthbert's
Church, Lothian Road
20th December 2016



▷ FACEBOOK & TWITTER

Our followers on Facebook & Twitter continue to grow. It is a great way to communicate what we are doing on a daily basis, and we enjoy the feedback. If you have a Facebook or Twitter account, please 'like' and 'follow' us. Your support is appreciated.

www.facebook.com/fresh.start.edinburgh and
Twitter: @FreshStartWeb



▷ TRAINING FOR A BETTER FUTURE

There has been a lot going on in our Training Initiative, with our Jump Start course changing from two days a week for 12 weeks to three days a week for eight. We hope the shorter course will accommodate more people. This leads to an SQA Professional Development Award, and hopefully employment in the future.

Our Work Bites course offers young people (16-24) an opportunity to get some practical experience of work – in our warehouse, cooking, gardening, PAT testing and decorating – a 'bite' of everything. This will help them to make a decision on what they would like to do in the future.

Our trainee, Neil, who worked with us for six months gaining experience in the warehouse and PAT testing went on to full time permanent employment. You can read Neil's story in our Annual Review.

Anyone interested in joining any of our courses, please contact duncan@freshstartweb.org.uk or telephone 0131 476 7741



FRESHSTART XMAS HOURS

CLOSED: 23rd December 2016

REOPENING: 4th January 2017

Fresh Start 22-24 Ferry Road Drive, Edinburgh, EH4 4BR. Tel: 0131 476 7741.
E-mail: admin@freshstartweb.org.uk www.freshstartweb.org.uk
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