

# The nights are fair drawin' in



A community focused guide to wellbeing  
support and practical advice this winter

# Welcome

## **Councillor Tim Pogson, Chair of Edinburgh Integration Joint Board.**

Cost of living increases impact so many aspects of people's lives. This includes our mental and physical health.

It's a worrying time for many. This is why, on behalf of the Edinburgh Integration Joint Board\*, we were keen to support this short publication to help shine a light on help that is out there across Edinburgh.

As a sizeable city – a capital city – we are incredibly fortunate to have a significant network of community organisations within and around our neighbourhoods. The first step is often just understanding what help is out there. We often don't know what we don't know, so this short booklet helps with just that. From there it's taking the right steps for our own individual needs, to help keep ourselves well.




This booklet is a brief guide to inspire ideas and actions we can all take to access support, get advice, or simply arm ourselves with knowledge to help others.

We know many folk will be worried about the coming winter. In reading this, I hope it's clear that help is out there. Support is out there. To thrive, we must stay connected.

We are always keen to hear from you on what has been helpful. If you have any feedback, you can email me at [Cllr.Tim.Pogson@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:Cllr.Tim.Pogson@edinburgh.gov.uk)

For more ideas and information on community services and support in Edinburgh, you can find a number of helpful resources on the City of Edinburgh Council website, access the EVOC red book (see page 19), and for support with mental health and distress please go to [www.ithriveedinburgh.org.uk](http://www.ithriveedinburgh.org.uk)

*\*The Edinburgh Integration Joint Board (EIJB) leads on the planning of health and social care services in Edinburgh. The EIJB is responsible for a single strategic plan for health and social care. Responsibilities for the delivery of the plan sit across the NHS, Council, Third and Independent sectors in the commissioning and provision of services that provide care, and wider support for health and wellbeing. The EIJB is made up of representatives from the City of Edinburgh Council and NHS Lothian, Third Sector representatives, service users and carers. You can find out more about the EIJB on the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership website [www.edinburghhsc.scot](http://www.edinburghhsc.scot)*



**How can  
I heat  
my home?**

## Help and support with the rising cost of living

**If you're worried about paying the bills, rising inflation or how to make ends meet – then you're not alone. Rising energy and food prices will affect most households this winter. These worries can have a knock-on effect on our mental health and wellbeing – including on those around us. So, it's important to know that there's help and advice out there.**

### Feeling overwhelmed?

Anxiety and low mood can impact on your social life and relationships. **ithrive Edinburgh** has mental health and wellbeing self-help apps, services, activities and advice in one place:



[ithriveedinburgh.org.uk](https://ithriveedinburgh.org.uk)

Breathing Space 0800 83 85 87

### Money worries

If you're worrying about money, heating your home or paying the bills, the **Scottish Government** and the **City of Edinburgh Council** have pulled together a range of help and advice services, as well as information on benefits and other support:



[www.gov.scot/costofliving](https://www.gov.scot/costofliving)



[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/costofliving](https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/costofliving)

Call the City of Edinburgh Council's Advice Shop on 0131 200 2360

### Cannot get online?

If you do not have a computer or smart phone, please come to any of the Council libraries where we can help you get online for free. We also have free WiFi in all Council libraries.

# Cosy conversations at your local Community Café

## Warm-hearted food, environments, and conversations

It is estimated that 55% of UK households will fall into fuel poverty by January 2023.

This may impact our health, especially for those who are maybe more vulnerable. Because of this, Community Cafés are now more important than ever, offering a warm, safe meeting space for everyone – serving low-cost delicious food, in local communities.

But Community Cafés are far more than just a safe and warm space. Here's five facts you may not know about Community Cafés across the city:



- **There are 30+ Community Cafés located across Edinburgh.**  
Each one is different, tailored to their own community's needs.
- **Community Cafés help people stay socially connected**  
– this applies to both café visitors and those in the wider community who volunteer.
- **Community Cafés provide a diverse range of volunteering opportunities.**  
And don't worry if you don't see yourself as a chef. Thanks to the broad range of initiatives often run by Community Cafés, there's a wide variety of opportunities out there – from drivers, to group facilitators, to IT tutors, to arts and crafts volunteers.
- **Some Community Cafés offer training to enhance job skills.**  
Some also offer specialist opportunities to those with learning disabilities. To find out more, check out your local community café for further details on what's happening in your area.
- **Many Community Cafés offer inclusive services to their local community.**  
This may include support for older people, dementia support, lunch clubs, baby and toddler groups. No two cafés are the same, but the willingness to act as a hub for local community needs, is what binds all Community Cafés across the city.



### **Brenda Black from Edinburgh Community Food comments:**

*"Social isolation and loneliness remain one of the biggest public health concerns in Scotland. It's more common than people may think, and it can affect anyone at any time in their life – youth, adulthood, and in older age.*

*"Community Cafés play a valuable role for so many to access and build good quality social connections that benefit our individual wellbeing. Many who visit, quickly find themselves met by many friendly faces, and they keep coming back."*

### **Good food from the volunteering souls of Community Cafés**

We caught up with three volunteers from Cafés across the city to discover their favourite easy, affordable, and delicious recipes, which are making it onto local café menus. Why not try some of these recipes at home for yourself and let us know how you get on!

## **Bob's lentil and ham soup**

### **Bob, Volunteer, The Mill Café, Balerno Parish Church**

*"I am a member of Balerno Parish Church and when the Church set up The Mill Café 10 years ago I have volunteered. Over the years I have made lots of different soups but the ham and lentil has been the favourite, liked by all our customers and is regularly asked for. It's a filling soup and easy to make".*

### **Ingredients**

- 250g cooking ham (fat removed and slice into chunks)
- 250g red lentils (rinsed)
- 125g carrots (peeled and roughly chopped into small bits)
- 125g onions (peeled and roughly chopped into small bits)
- 1 or 2 ham stock cubes (taste the soup towards the end and check if it requires a second stock cube)
- Pinch of thyme
- 1 litre of boiling water

### **Method**

1. Pop the lentils into a pot with the ham bits and add the water
2. Then add the onions, carrots, thyme and stock cube, and bring to the boil
3. Boil for 30 – 40 minutes, stirring it every 10 minutes. Add more water if the soup becomes too thick
4. When the vegetables and lentils are soft, liquidise the soup.  
You don't have to do this for too long or at all. It depends on preference
5. Taste and season with salt and pepper (add a second stock cube if needed), and simmer for a short time before it's ready to serve.



# Heather's awesome cheese and ham omelette

**Heather, Newhaven Connections, Community Café**

Heather's awesome omelette is fast, affordable, nutritious and super tasty. It's one of the most popular dishes on the café menu, and of course when making it at home, you can make endless variations by adding whatever toppings you like.



## Ingredients

- 2 large free range eggs
- Splash of milk
- Small knob of butter
- Pinch of salt and pepper
- Handful of chopped cooked ham
- Handful of grated cheddar cheese

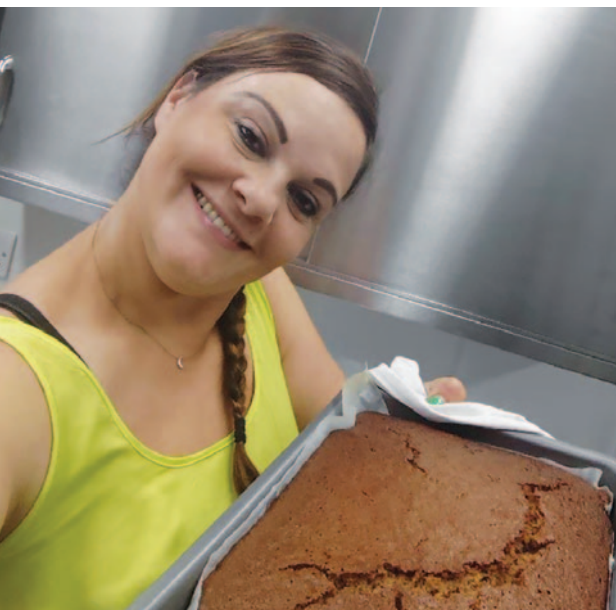
## Method

1. Whisk together the eggs, milk and seasoning in a small bowl
2. At the same time, add a small knob of butter to a frying pan, and have it heating on a medium heat
3. Once the butter has melted, pour the whisked mixture into the pan, tilting the pan slightly from one side to another to evenly cover the pan
4. Let it cook for approximately 30 seconds and pull the egg mixture away from the sides of the pan with a spatula
5. Keep tilting the pan to spread the mixture
6. Sprinkle in ham and cheese over the top of the omelette once most of the egg begins to set. Cook for approximately 20 more seconds.
7. Fold the omelette over the top of the cheese and ham, then serve. Feel free to sprinkle some fresh herbs on top as you serve the omelette.

# Lindsay's Granny's inspired plum cake

**Lindsay, Dalmeny Kirk Café**

*"A member of the community handed in some plums from a tree in their garden. I was already feeling autumnal so this seemed the perfect excuse for some seasonal baking. I remembered my Granny's plum cake from my childhood, so I looked online and found a similar one. The result is delicious cold with a cup of tea or hot with custard... I'm not sure if it quite lives up to Granny's standards though!"*



## Ingredients

- 2 tbsps demerara sugar
- 500g plums
- 175g butter (plus a little extra for greasing)
- 175g dark muscovado sugar
- 140g golden syrup
- 2 eggs (beaten)
- 200ml milk
- 300g self-raising flour
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tbsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp mixed spice

## Method

1. Heat the oven to 180°C/160°C fan/gas 4
2. Grease and line the base of a 23cm square cake tin, with parchment paper. Butter the paper generously, and sprinkle the paper with the demerara sugar
3. Halve the plums and arrange on the base of the tin – 1 layer only
4. For the cake, melt the butter, muscovado sugar, and golden syrup together, in a large pan over heat. Stir until smooth. Cook for 10 minutes
5. Stir in the eggs and milk, then sift in the flour, bicarbonate of soda, and spices. Mix to a smooth batter
6. Pour the mix into the tin, over the plums, spreading the mix evenly
7. Bake for 45 – 55 minutes until firm to touch
8. Remove from the oven and turn the cake upside down onto a wire rack. Leave it to cool. Then enjoy!



# ithrive

EDINBURGH

## Your online space for mental health and wellbeing information in Edinburgh

Find local support that  
works for you

Access to a wide range of  
self-help materials on topics  
including **anxiety**, **depression**,  
**sleep problems** and **anger**

Keep up to date with latest  
mental health and wellbeing  
news and events in Edinburgh

Read stories from citizens of  
Edinburgh about their own  
experiences of mental health  
and wellbeing and how they  
keep well



Scan to find support now



# A day in the life of a Community Link worker

**Ever heard of a Community Link worker? Don't worry if you haven't. Although understanding that Community Link workers exist, is a most helpful thing to be aware of.**

Across Edinburgh, there are 24 Community Link workers based at a range of GP practices within Edinburgh's communities. Community Link workers are generalist social prescribers. In practice that means that they offer non-clinical support to patients, helping people to community based services that can help people make good social connections, access key advice and support, and overall take greater control of their health and wellbeing.

The service is ideal for anyone experiencing hardship, who feels they could benefit from guidance and support to overcome barriers that may be impacting their individual welfare.

Those who access the support of a Community Link worker are often referred by their GP practice. Via a special consultation, a Community Link worker will use good listening and conversation to identify issues someone is experiencing, as well as work to understand their needs and what really matters to them.

**Here we catch up with Flora Ranachan, a Community Link worker based in both Wester Hailes and Riccarton, as she shares a glimpse into her day working to help others, within her community.**

*"No two days are the same in the life of a Community Link worker! Today I'm starting my morning with an accompanied visit to WHALE Arts. This is my third meeting with Ms S - a young woman who was referred to me as she is new to the area, doesn't know many people and is feeling quite lonely and isolated.*

*"Over our first couple of meetings, we talked about what daily life is like for her, and how a lack of routine and social connections are impacting her mood. She tells me she used to like making things at home but doesn't feel motivated anymore. So today we're going to visit the craft club at WHALE Arts to see if this will help with inspiration and meeting like-minded people.*

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*"We arrive at 11am and are welcomed into a small group of people. This craft club meets every Thursday and aims to make small things that can be sold at one of WHALE's regular craft fairs. This week the group are making wooden badges, so we have a look at the art supplies and Ms S settles in with a cuppa and some materials. After chatting to the group member, I leave her to it and head back to surgery."*

*"Back at the surgery, I join the GP practice staff for morning coffee. This is a small practice, so everyone joins in for a catch up and to check in. I make a quick to do list for the rest of the day."*

*"After coffee, I join a meeting to discuss the surgery's quality improvement project, which is focussed on social prescribing. We talk about the challenges around this and how we can support GPs to further increase their use of social prescribing. It's a productive meeting, and the GPs tell me they didn't realise we had such a wide range of services available for patients."*

*"In the afternoon I have appointments booked with patients. I meet an older lady who has recently been experiencing low mood, and social isolation. We talk about her sense of purpose in life and agree to explore some possible volunteering opportunities for her."*

*"Once the afternoon appointments are finished, I update my case notes on our specialist database. After checking my email and completing a few onward referrals for clients, it's 5pm."*

*"It's been a busy but productive day, and it comes to an end with a text from my patient Ms S, about the craft club we went to earlier. She said how much she enjoyed the group and that she hopes to go back next week. She thanked me for my support and helping her have the courage to go along to the group and tells me it was the best morning she's had in a long time."*

*"Although the Community Link worker role can be hard at times, it's moments like this that show the value social prescribing has and the difference it can make to people's lives."*

**Community Link Workers in Edinburgh are based in selected GP practices across the city. Those referred to a Community Link worker would be referred via the existing referral pathways established within your registered GP practice. Referrals are made by Primary Care professionals and are based on an individual's specific health and wellbeing needs.**



# Support for carers this winter

**Did you know that three in five people will be a carer, at some point in their life? In fact, some of us may already be a carer and we don't recognise it.**

Many people don't realise they are a carer. However, if you support a family member, parent, child, partner or friend who needs extra help to manage a long-term condition, disability, physical or mental condition or addiction, then you are a carer. This can be anything from helping someone to wash, dress, and eat, taking them to regular appointments, doing their shopping, or keeping them company. If you aren't paid to look after the person you are caring for, yet you are spending a lot of time caring for them, then you are a carer.

This winter, to support carers, the Edinburgh Carer Assistance Fund has opened for applications. With funding from the Scottish Government and the City of Edinburgh Council, the fund will be targeted at those carers in greatest need.

Carers will be asked to describe what difference the funding would make to their life. Each carer household can apply for a one-off grant from £250 up to £500. The grant does not need to be repaid.

**This fund can be used to assist with:**

- fuel costs related to their caring role, increasing fuel costs, or fuel debt
- food vouchers (for use in Tesco or Scotmid stores) to help carers and those they care for, eat well and stay healthy
- wellbeing activities to reduce stress
- costs associated with caring, for example, transport, training, equipment.

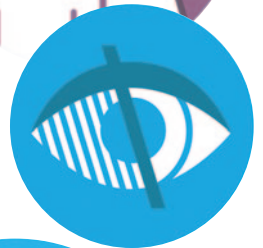
**Find out more at [vocal.org.uk](https://vocal.org.uk)**

# Random acts of mindfulness to help stay safe this winter

No one wants to end up in hospital this winter. That said, the winter season is the busiest time of the year for hospitals across the capital, and across Scotland. The onset of cold weather not only brings increased illnesses, but also everyday things such as cold homes, which can affect our health and wellbeing. Those who are older people are often the most vulnerable.

We caught up with Angela Lindsay who manages a number of services across the city to ask her for some advice on the things you can do to reduce the risk of a hospital admission this winter.

- 1) Get the flu vaccination** – The annual flu vaccine is the safest and most effective way to help protect against the flu. All those over 50 as well as those with an eligible pre-existing health condition, will be offered the flu vaccination. For more information, visit [nhsinform.scot](https://nhsinform.scot)
- 2) Get your eyesight checked regularly** – Poor vision impairs balance and increases the risk of falls and fractures. Visit [nhsinform.scot](https://nhsinform.scot) for information about getting your eyes checked. Contact your local optician to arrange an appointment.
- 3) Dress warmly as well as keep your home warm** – Keeping warm over the winter months can help to prevent colds, flu and even more serious health problems. Keep windows closed in the winter months – breathing in cold air can increase the risk of chest infections. For energy saving tips and advice please visit the Home Energy Scotland web pages (see page 17).
- 4) Keep active** – Regular exercise can not only improve your mental health, but particularly for those at a heightened risk of falls, gentle regular exercise can increase balance and strength, as well as reduce the risk of falling. It can also be beneficial for recovery if you do get ill.



- 5) Reduce the amount of time you spend sitting down during the day** – Break up your time spent being inactive by walking around your home ideally every hour, or standing up from your chair during TV advert breaks or when you're on the phone.
- 6) Carry a fully charged mobile phone with you** – If you have an accident, however minor, it's important you can reach out for help. Keeping a fully charged phone with you can help you get help quickly.
- 7) Check your lighting** – 60-year-old eyes need three times more light than 20-year-old eyes. As well as removing any hazards or clutter that could cause a fall, also check your lighting around the house.
- 8) Get your medications checked at a local pharmacist** – If you are on a number of medications, it may be time to get them checked over. It's estimated that 36% of people over 75 are on four or more different medications, and some common ones are associated with dizziness, drops in blood pressure when you stand up, or sleepiness – all of which can raise the risk of falling.
- 9) Eat well and stay hydrated** – Having a balanced diet and drinking lots of water is a good way of making sure you have enough energy. Eating foods with plenty of calcium and taking the right amount of vitamin D can help maintain healthy bones.
- 10) Feet and footwear** – Foot problems and shoes that are well worn or don't fit well can increase your risk of falls. A podiatrist can help and it's worth booking an appointment. It is a good idea to consider replacing your shoes if they are well worn.



**If you or someone you know has already had a trip or fall, it is natural to feel anxious about falling again. Left unaddressed, a fear of falling can become a serious worry.**

Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership's **Be Able** service can arrange for an at home risk assessment to help anyone worried about falling at home. The assessment can be used to build a personal plan that can help build strength, as well as look at bespoke future falls prevention strategies, including help to rebuild confidence. To refer yourself or a family member to the **Be Able** service, please contact **Social Care Direct on 0131 200 2324**.

# A day in the life of a community hub

**Community hubs in essence, are what they say on the tin. Community based, community needs driven, community led, and above all, multi-purpose hubs/spaces that provide a setting for a wide range of events, gatherings, and meetings that take place... well... in a community!**

Many of us at one time or another may have heard about or even use a community hub. But through our individual interactions we may only see a glimpse of hubs in action. In any given week, community hubs can transform into a wide range of uses as they host and welcome hundreds through their doors for special groups and events. The **Space, Broomhouse Hub** is a perfect example. A multipurpose space, it welcomes nearly 350 people every week through its doors.



Neil Hay, CEO at Space, shares, *"For over 30 years, Space at The Broomhouse Hub has provided personal, social and community development opportunities for groups of people in and around Broomhouse, Parkhead and Sighthill in south west Edinburgh. This is done via an array of groups, support and activities, which enables local people of all ages to flourish, thrive and achieve their highest potential."*

*"In addition, Space at The Broomhouse Hub offers volunteering roles and provides training and development opportunities to help people of all ages progress towards work or education."*

He continues, *"This includes supporting people with dementia. In Vintage Vibes, we offer a befriending service for older people. The charity also has groups for young carers and provides counselling services for primary school-aged children and up. Our services really do reach everyone from toddlers to our more seasoned members, reaching people in our communities from all walks of life and backgrounds."*

## **Want to see this for yourself?**

With thanks to Broomhouse Space, here they share an exclusive peek at a typical day-in-the-life of the hub.

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## Early morning

The first people to arrive are our kitchen staff, preparing our homecooked food for the day. This includes food for The Beacon Club, community meals, our café and external catering. We open for breakfast from 9am.

## Morning

### 9.30am – First event – Bookbug

Bookbug starts at 9.30am every Tuesday. This is open to preschool youngsters (including babies) and families. We offer 'Bookbug Plus' with breakfast rolls and hot drinks for parents and toast for children. After the Bookbug session the toys come out for a playgroup session allowing parents to chat and children to make new friends. Additional signposting for help with benefits, energy or housing is also available.

### 10am – The Beacon Club

The Beacon Club operates every day from 10am. Supporting people with mild cognitive impairment (dementia) as well as those not formally diagnosed, The Beacon Club offers respite day care for carers and social activities for members.

This is a small group, 10 people per day, 50 per week. The group delivered 11,000 hours of respite for carers in the last year. 'Members' as they are known have regular refreshments and a delicious dinner, complete with a traditional dessert. They also have regular activities and learning sessions, enjoying yoga, live singers, arts and crafts, games as well as getting to grips with iPads!

In the Main Hall, a local partner charity, B Healthy Together hosts a seated yoga class. (Our event spaces are available for hire.)

### 12 noon to 2.30pm – Our community café now serves lunch

Our trainees prepare our food in the training kitchen, and specials today include homemade veggie burgers and lasagne. We have many regulars and take time to chat with all who come in. Our team also help identify anyone who may require broader support.

Via our 'navigator' support, we help link anyone in need, to wider information and guidance that may help them and encourage them to keep coming back and connecting.

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## Afternoon

After a quick turnaround, our meeting rooms are being used by one of the Mental Health support programmes we run with Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership.

The main hall is now partitioned to cater for two groups. The Pick'n'Mix young persons employability group are learning about hospitality opportunities, and our Women's Collective ethnic minorities social group are meeting in the other half.

## Evening

The evening sees one of the services we deliver for carers of all ages, from five years of age to adults, with a Friday Youth Club for local kids up to age 15.

## In the community on any given day

While all this is happening in the Hub, plenty is going on outside too – it's not just the indoor spaces that keep us busy. Our connections, partnerships and range of support mean we are directly involved in many external services to support our community.

### We tackle isolation and loneliness via a variety of friendship projects.

- **Space Age Connections** is our befriending service for people with dementia who cannot join The Beacon Club or would like a different level of support. Our 'connectors' link up for chats, strolls, tea, days out and much more. The relationship is fulfilling on all sides, and great friendships are made for life.
- **Our partnership with Lifecare Edinburgh** delivers support to older people struggling with isolation and loneliness, via an organisation called Vintage Vibes. These VIPS also meet up with befrienders for trips out or just a wee blether on a regular basis.
- **We also provide befriending services for young people** across the city with our partners – **Big Hearts**.

**Every day, there's so much going on. Community hubs are vital to so many in communities. Anyone who believes they could benefit from the support, groups, events or services, is encouraged to get in touch with their local community hub, to find out more.**

**Those in the Broomhouse/Parkhead/Sighthill areas, can find out more details at [www.spacescot.org](http://www.spacescot.org)**

# WANT TO MAKE YOUR HOME MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT AND SAVE MONEY ON YOUR BILLS? HERE'S WHAT TO DO!



Scan the QR code to complete  
our Home Energy Check or  
visit [bit.ly/HEC22](https://bit.ly/HEC22)



Then talk to our advisors  
free on **0808 808 2282**  
or drop us an email at [bit.ly/HEScontactus](https://bit.ly/HEScontactus)

We can help  
you reduce your  
energy use and  
save money on  
your bills.

# Community Pantries

**Community Pantries offer a unique, low-cost way to access a variety of foods, including chilled, fresh produce and basic cupboard staples. Unlike food banks, food is purchased at an affordable rate with membership based prices starting at £2 for 10 items.**

Membership is limited at each location, so if a pantry is full it is worth checking back regularly for updates. We also hope to add more locations over the coming months.

- 1. Monday:** Valley Park Community Centre,  
37 Southhouse Road, Edinburgh EH17 8EU,  
10am – 11am
- 2. Tuesday:** Goodtrees Neighbourhood Centre,  
5 Moredunvale Place, Edinburgh EH17 7LB,  
12.45pm – 2pm
- 3. Wednesday:** The Ripple Project, 198 Restalrig Road, Edinburgh,  
10am – 11am
- 4. Thursday:** Granton Hub, Granton Park Ave, Edinburgh EH5 1HS,  
10.30am – 11.30am
- 5. Friday:** Brunstane Nursery (for school/nursery parents),  
106 Magdalene Drive, Edinburgh EH15 3BE, 9am – 10am
- 6. Friday:** The Braidwood Centre, 69 Dumbiedykes Road,  
Edinburgh EH8 9UT, 10am – 11am

**Visit [www.cyrenians.scot](http://www.cyrenians.scot) for more information.**

Cyrenians' are a national social enterprise whose mission is to tackle the causes and consequences of homelessness. This includes working to help people overcome any fears around food insecurity, by providing dignified access to high quality food via Community Pantries.





# Our little Red Book!



**Want to find a community organisation in your area that appeals to your interests or needs?**

The **EVOC Red Book** is an online directory of community and voluntary sector organisations and services across Edinburgh. It brings together details of opportunities and services and can be searched in a number of ways including by:

- **organisation name**
- **type of service**
- **location of a service**
- **who the service is aimed at.**

Find out more: [evocredbook.org.uk](http://evocredbook.org.uk)

# Useful contacts

## Help now

### **Police, Fire, Ambulance (emergency)**

Call: 999

### **Police (non-emergency)**

Call: 101

### **NHS 24**

Call: 111

Provides urgent care and advice when your GP, pharmacy or dental practice is closed.

### **Social Care Direct**

Call: 0131 200 2324

Out of Hours call 0800 731 6969.

Open: Monday to Thursday 8.30am – 5pm.  
and Friday 8.30am – 3.55pm.

If someone needs urgent social care or you think an adult or child needs protection.

### **Samaritans**

Call: 116 123

Open: 24 hours.

A listening service for people having a difficult time, thinking about suicide or are worried about someone who is having suicidal thoughts.

### **SHOUT**

Text: SHOUT to 85258

Open: 24 hours.

Free, 24/7 mental health text support service.

### **Edinburgh Crisis Centre**

Call: 0808 801 0414

Open: 24 hours.

If you are experiencing a mental health crisis and need to talk to someone.

### **Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline**

Call: 0800 027 1234

Open: 24 hours.

Provides support for anyone with experience of domestic abuse or forced marriage, as well as their family members, friends, colleagues, and professionals who support them.

### **Mental Health Assessment Service**

Call: 0131 286 8137

Open: 24 hours.

For people in crisis who need an emergency mental health assessment.

## Parents

### **Lone Parent Helpline**

Call: 0808 801 0323

Open: Monday to Friday 9.30am – 4pm.  
Support and advice for single parents.

### **Parentline Scotland**

Call: 0800 028 2233

Open: 24 hours.

Advice and support for parents living in Scotland.

### **NSPCC Helpline**

Call: 0808 800 5000

Open: Monday to Friday 8am – 10pm.  
and 9am – 6pm at weekends.

Advice and information for parents or carers who are looking after a child.

# Useful contacts

## Young people

### **Papyrus Hopeline**

Call: 0800 068 4141

Text: 07860 039 967

Open: 9am to midnight, every day.

A helpline for young people having suicidal thoughts.

### **Young Minds**

Text: YM to 85258

Open: Monday to Friday 9.30am – 4pm.

Text service for young people experiencing a mental health crisis.

## Older people

### **Age Scotland**

Call: 0800 124 4222

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

Provides information and advice to tackle loneliness and isolation.

### **Silverline**

Call: 0800 470 8090

Open: 24 hours.

Offering friendship and advice to older people.

### **Hourglass**

Call: 0808 808 8141 (Press 2 for Scotland)

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

Provides information and support for anyone concerned about harm or abuse of an older person.

## Housing and homelessness

### **Shelter's Housing Advice**

Call: 0808 800 4444

Open: 9am – 5pm.

One-to-one personalised help with housing issues and homelessness.

### **Emergency Housing (Edinburgh)**

Call: 0800 032 5968

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

Advice and support for people with emergency housing issues.

### **Edinburgh Housing Advice Organisation**

Call: 0845 302 4607

Open: Monday to Thursday 8.30am – 5pm and Friday 8.30am – 3.40pm.

Provides free housing, advice, information, and representation to tenants of all tenure types in Edinburgh and Midlothian.

### **Home Energy Scotland**

Call: 0808 808 2282.

Text: WARM to 81025.

Open: Monday to Friday 8am – 8pm, Saturday 9am – 5pm.

Advice on energy saving and keeping warm at home.

### **Citizens Advice**

Call: 0131 510 5510

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

Specialising in confidential information and advice to assist people with housing issues in the UK.

# Useful contacts

## Housing and homelessness

### **The Access Place**

Call: 0131 529 5015

Opening hours: Monday to Friday  
9am – 1pm and 2pm – 5pm.

**\*\*Closed until 10am every Tuesday\*\***

Integrated services including housing, health and social work from one city centre location. We offer services to anyone experiencing homelessness who has additional needs.

## Money

### **Citizens Advice**

Call: 0131 550 1000

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.  
Specialising in confidential information and advice to assist people with legal, debt, consumer, housing, and other problems in the UK.

### **Scottish Welfare Fund**

Call: 0131 529 5299

Open: Monday to Friday 8.30am – 5pm.  
Provides grants for people on low income.

### **Debtline**

Call: 0808 808 4000

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 8pm  
and Saturday 9.30am – 1pm.  
Free and independent debt advice.

## Advocacy and legal

### **Advocard**

Call: 0131 554 5307

Open: 9am – 5pm.

Independent and collective advocacy for people in Edinburgh.

### **Partners in Advocacy**

Call: 0131 478 7723

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.  
Independent advocacy for adults in Edinburgh and children and young people across Scotland.

## Carers

### **Voice of Carers Across the Lothians (VOCAL)**

Call: 0131 622 6666

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.  
Working with family members, partners and friends who are caring for someone.

### **Edinburgh Carers Council**

Call: 0131 322 8480

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.  
Advocacy for carers supporting someone with physical or mental health difficulties.

### **MECOPP (Minority Ethnic Carers of Older People Project)**

Call: 0131 467 2994

Open: Monday to Thursday 9am – 5pm,  
Friday 9am – 4pm.

Support for black and minority ethnic carers to access appropriate support and services.

# Useful contacts

## Carers

### **Carers Scotland Advice Line**

Call: 0808 808 7777

Open: Monday to Friday 8am – 10pm,  
Saturday and Sunday 9am – 5pm.

Advice line for carers.

## Substance use

### **Alcoholics Anonymous**

Call: 0800 917 7650

Open: 10am – 10pm, every day.

Advice and support for those who  
feel they have or are developing an  
addiction to alcohol or are worried  
about someone who is.

### **Drinkline Scotland**

Call: 0300 123 1110

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 9pm,  
Saturday and Sunday 10am – 4pm.

Advice to callers concerned about their  
own or someone else's drinking.

### **Narcotics Anonymous**

Call: 0300 999 1212

Open: 10am – midnight, every day.

Support for people who have a drug  
problem.

### **Gambler's Anonymous**

Call: 0370 050 8881

Open: 24 hours.

Advice to callers concerned about their  
own or someone else's gambling habits.

### **Al-Anon**

Call: 0800 0086 811

Open: 10am – 10pm, every day.

Support for families and friends of  
alcoholics.

### **Frank**

Call: 0300 123 6600

Text: 82111

Open: 24 hours.

Support and information about drug use.

## Listening services

### **Samaritans**

Call: 116 123

Open: 24 hours.

A listening service for people having  
a difficult time, thinking about suicide  
or are worried about someone who is  
having suicidal thoughts.

### **Breathing Space**

Call: 0800 83 85 87

Open: Monday to Thursday 6pm – 2am,  
Friday 6pm to Monday 6am.

A confidential, phone and webchat  
service for anyone in Scotland over  
the age of 16 experiencing low mood,  
depression or anxiety.

### **CALM**

Call: 0800 58 58 58

Open: 5pm – midnight, every day.

For people who are down or have hit a  
wall, who need to talk to find information  
and support.

# Useful contacts

## Listening services

### No Panic

Call: 0844 967 4848

Open: 10am to 10pm, every day.

Advice and support for people living with phobias, OCD and anxiety.

### Switchboard LGBT+

Call: 0300 330 0630

Open: 10am – 10pm, every day.

Confidential listening service for LGBT+ communities.

### ChitChat Britain

Call: 0800 001 4455

Open: 9am – 9pm, every day.

Free helpline to just have a chat about how you are feeling.

## Food

### Edinburgh Community Food

Call: 0131 467 7326

Open: Monday to Friday 8am – 4pm.

Help for people to access a healthy diet.

### Eat Well Age Well Malnutrition Helpline

Call: 0131 447 8151

Open: Monday 9am – 4pm, Wednesday 9am – 4pm, Thursday 9am – 4pm.

Provides practical tips and advice about how older people can stay well-nourished.

### Edinburgh Food Project

Call: 0131 444 0030

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 4pm.

Provides emergency food and support to local people.

### Edinburgh Northeast Foodbank

Call: 0131 554 2578

Open: Monday 1pm – 2.30pm,

Tuesday 10am – 12pm and 1pm – 2.30pm,

Wednesday 4.30pm – 6pm,

Thursday 10am – 11.30am,

Friday 10am – 12pm and 3pm – 5pm.

Foodbank located in north east Edinburgh.

### Edinburgh Southeast Foodbank

Call: 0131 664 9353

Open: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 10am – 1.30pm.

Foodbank located in south east Edinburgh.

### Edinburgh Southwest Foodbank (Salvation Army)

Call: 0131 346 2875

Open: Monday 1pm – 3pm,

Wednesday 11am – 1pm

and Friday 10am – 12pm.

Foodbank located in south west Edinburgh.

## Grief and bereavement

### Cruse Bereavement Care

Call: 0808 802 6161

Open: Monday 9.30am – 5pm,

Tuesday 9.30am – 8pm,

Wednesday 9.30am – 8pm,

Thursday 9.30am – 8pm,

Friday 9.30am – 5pm,

Saturday and Sunday 10am – 2pm.

Support for anyone who is bereaved.

# Useful contacts

## Grief and bereavement

### **PETAL (People Experiencing Trauma and Loss)**

Call: 01698 324 502

Open: Monday to Thursday 9am – 5pm,  
Friday 9am – 4pm.

Support for people experiencing trauma or loss.

### **The Scottish Funerals Costs Helpline**

Call: 0300 0113 301

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

Support making arrangements for funerals.

## Practical support

### **Gas helpline**

Call: 0800 111 999

Open: 24 hours.

Support with any queries about gas.

### **Electricity Helpline**

Call: 105

Open: 24 hours.

Support with any queries regarding electricity.

### **Scottish Water Helpline**

Call: 0800 0778 778

Open: 24 hours.

Support with inquiries about water supply.

### **Edinburgh Council Emergency**

Call: 0131 200 2000

Open: 24 hours.

Support if you are experiencing a critical situation. [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/contact](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/contact)

## Keeping safe

### **Rape Crisis Scotland**

Call: 0808 801 0302

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 4pm.

A national rape crisis helpline and email support for anyone affected by sexual violence.

### **Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre**

Call: 0131 556 9437

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 7pm.

Confidential emotional and practical support, information and advocacy to women, all members of the trans community, non-binary people and young people aged 12–18 in Edinburgh, East and Midlothian, who have experienced sexual violence at any time in their lives.

### **Scottish Women's Aid**

Call: 0800 027 1234

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline.

### **Edinburgh Women's Aid**

Call: 0131 315 8110

Open: Monday 10am – 3pm,

Tuesday 10am – 7pm,

Wednesday 10am – 3pm,

Thursday 10am – 3pm,

Friday 10am – 3pm,

Saturday 10am – 1pm.

For support or advice from Edinburgh Women Aid's services.

# Useful contacts

## Keeping safe

### **Victim Support Scotland**

Call: 0800 160 1985

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

Provides support and information to people affected by crime and campaigns for victims and witness rights.

### **Shakti Women's Aid**

Call: 0131 475 2399

Open: Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm.

Support for black and minority ethnic women and their children who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse.

**Many thanks to all our partners who have contributed to this booklet including:**



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