

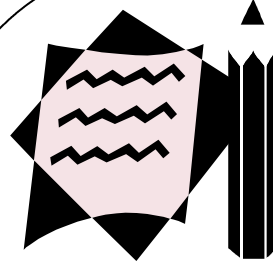
Community One Stop Shop Annual Report 2005

A FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION AND ADVICE SERVICE, WORKING TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR PEOPLE IN BROOMHOUSE AND NORTH SIGHTHILL

we can help with...



money matters



filling in forms



housing

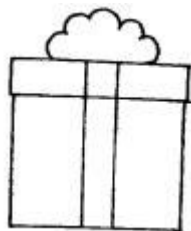


advice and info

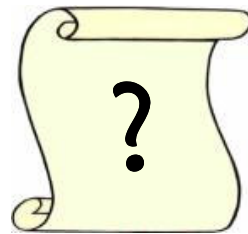


Pensions and pension credits

benefits



consumer issues



legal advice

local services

...everything and anything!

A bit of background

The Community One Stop Shop at 3 Broomhouse Market was opened to the public in January 2004. We provide information and advice on a wide range of topics to people in Broomhouse, North Sighthill and neighbouring areas.

The need for the One Stop Shop was first identified back in 2002. A small and committed group of local community activists realised that there was a need for a service in the heart of the community. There are many other important and useful agencies in West Edinburgh, but they recognised the need for people to be able to access advice and information on their doorstep.

How many people have we helped?

Between January 2005 and November 2005 we saw around 320 clients. Our client enquiry statistics show that our rate of enquiries is steadily rising. We anticipate seeing at least another 400 people in the coming year. Detailed records of our client enquiries can be obtained from the One Stop Shop (contact details on back page).

Where are we going next?

We are having a 'Forward Planning Day' with all staff, volunteers and Management Committee members on 17th February 2006. We will take this opportunity to look at what funding we have secured, what is pending and what the future may hold in terms of funding. We will also be looking at how the Community One Stop Shop can continue to grow and develop; securing funding will enable us to go on to bigger and better things! We will also look at any other topics that COSS staff, volunteers and Committee Members wish to discuss.

What have we done this year?...

- Our new Information and Development Worker, Michelle Davitt, started with us at the beginning of June.
- We had our AGM in September and we now have 2 new members on our Management Committee.
- We have set up regular outreach sessions on Thursday afternoons at Sighthill library.
- We have expanded and developed our networking links with other organisations.
- We have been advertising in local newspapers, staff magazines and have even been on Forth Radio!
- 3 new volunteers have come to work with us.
- We ran a stall at 'Altogether in the Park' in July and raised enough money to buy a memory stick.

“Thank you so much to the One Stop Shop for all the help you've given me.”

COSS client

What do we offer ?

What can we do for you?

People come in to see us about all sorts of things. They might have problems with their gas or electricity bills. They may have a problem with goods or services they have purchased. They might need repairs done to their home. They could be having problems with their neighbours, or be looking for advice and information on finding their way through the benefits system. It's hard to say what a typical day is like, because no two days are the same!

We will deal with any enquiry a client brings to us. If we don't have the skills or expertise to fully answer a query, we will refer or signpost on to the best people to do so - wherever possible, we will make this an organisation that is as local as possible; if that's not feasible, we will try and source what is needed within Edinburgh.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

We have established excellent links with other agencies and organisations and work in partnership with them to provide the best possible service. For example, we have a contact at the Pension Service who will come and see older people from the area in our offices, or visit them at home to give advice on Pension Credits, Attendance Allowance, etc. We also operate a couple of 'surgeries' from our premises. If you're having problems with rent arrears, you can come and see the local Housing Officer here at the One Stop Shop every second Monday. Also, every Tuesday afternoon a Worker from West Edinburgh Action is in COSS to give you advice, guidance and support on issues to do with employment, education, training, setting up a small business, etc. (Contact us to arrange appointments for any of these services – our details are on the back page).



Thanks to our funders: the following organisations kindly gave us funding for the financial year 04-05: West Edinburgh Community Planning Partnership; Halifax Bank of Scotland Trust; Scottish Community Foundation; Homepoint (part of Communities Scotland); Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Trust; Nancie Massey Charitable Trust.

'Be the change that you want to see in the world'

Gandhi



A BIG THANKS! to:

- Our Management Committee.
- Our 3 volunteers who have worked very hard this year – Julie McDonald, Matt Adamson and Jenny Strachan.
- Midlothian Advice and Resource Network, who kindly donated a computer to us.

Project Accounts
If you would like a copy of our audited accounts for 2004–2005 please contact us—details below.

VOLUNTEERING WITH THE ONE STOP SHOP

We recruit our volunteers through the Edinburgh Volunteer Centre. At present we have 3 volunteers working with us on a variety of projects. Their contribution to our service is invaluable and we find that being open, honest and flexible with volunteers fosters a mutually supportive environment. We try to offer our volunteers a variety of tasks to get their teeth into, such as working on our database, developing the website, updating and maintaining our resource library, helping with marketing and advertising, etc, and this variety seems to make us an attractive proposition. If you are interested in volunteering with us, please get in touch; contact details below.

THANKS ALSO TO OUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

Lorraine Blyth, Patricia Blyth, Joan Griffin, Linda Newlands and Ean Taylor.
Thanks also to Lawrence Arscott, Community Education, for his support.



Volunteering with the One Stop Shop has increased my skills and confidence. I feel that I have learned a lot here and the staff are very supportive. There's always a good range of stuff to get on with.

COSS volunteer



If you would like more copies of this report, please let us know.

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Community One Stop Shop is a recognised Scottish charity. Charity number SC033454.