

# annual report 2006

## What have we done this year?...



We have started **evaluating** our service, gathering feedback from clients



Volunteers and staff have been working on our new, improved **website**; it will be going live in October/November



We produced our first general advice and information **newsletter**, filled with useful info for school leavers



We had our team **awayday** in February and came up with an 'action plan' for the year



We host **surgeries**; the most regular are fortnightly with the local housing department and weekly with West Edinburgh Action



We helped to organise and run the 'Value Beyond Measure?' **event**, where the West Edinburgh Voluntary Sector Forum launched the **research** report they had commissioned on the added value of the voluntary sector

# WORKING WITH OTHERS



As an organisation, COSS is aware that there is much mutual benefit to be gained from working in partnership with other projects and bodies. This year we have become regular members of two city-wide forums which involve colleagues from a wide range of other agencies—the Edinburgh Housing Advice Network and the Edinburgh Volunteer Organisers Forum.

We are also part of the West Edinburgh Voluntary Sector Forum (WEVSF—see the item about the event on the front page) and we also attend the WEVSF Events sub-group. WEVSF involves a variety of local organisations and provides a very useful forum for sharing ideas and making contact with other local groups.

We also work closely with the 2 projects with whom we share premises—the Community Empowerment Project and the Health Strategy Group. Other groups and organisations whom we have made links with, established contact with, visited, or who have visited us this year include: the Broomhouse Centre Carers Group; the Integrated Pregnancy Support Service; Heriot-Watt University; One Parent Families Scotland Young Parents Network; Edinburgh Volunteer Centre WAVE project.

## Our brilliant volunteers!

This year, two of our volunteers moved on from volunteering with us, to paid employment (one working with Project Scotland and one with Edinburgh Council Social Work Department). We have taken on two new volunteers, Graham and Linda. We are also very happy that Julie, who has volunteered with us in the past, has come back to volunteer with us again. We would like to thank all our volunteers past and present very much for all their hard work and their invaluable input to our team.

## WHAT ELSE HAVE WE BEEN UP TO?...

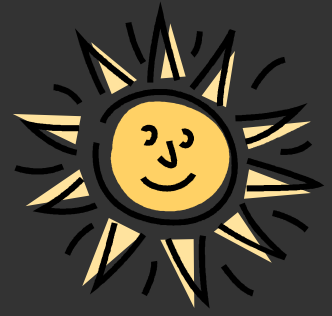
COSS staff have taken advantage of a variety of training opportunities over the last year. Michelle Davitt, Information and Development Worker, has undertaken various pieces of training in relation to housing. She has also undertaken training on benefits and tax credits. The Project Administrator, Irene Spankie is undertaking an Introductory Management Certificate and both members of staff have been through training on 'lone working'. COSS staff take advantage of training in order to offer COSS clients the best possible service!

## OUR COMMITTEE

We are run by a Management Committee who are also made up of volunteers drawn from the local area. We would like to thank Linda, Lorraine and Pat, our committee members, for their support. We would also like to thank Lawrence Arcscott, Community Education Worker, for his help, input and advice over the year.

# What do our clients say about us?

We work very hard at the One Stop Shop to provide our clients with the service they want. We treat each person as an individual and will do as much as we possibly can to support people to find solutions to their problems. Below is some of the positive feedback we have had from our clients; it is gratefully received. We couldn't do what we do without the people who use us!



“ One Stop is brilliant, really helpful.  
Keep up the good work! ”

“ I found myself made very welcome. ”

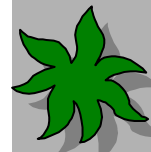
“ This is one of the most helpful and  
polite advice centres I have ever used. ”



## “I need to know...” INFORMATION RESOURCES

At the Community One Stop Shop, we have a wide range of leaflets and information handouts available on a huge variety of topics—just come in and ask and we will help you find what you need. We also produced a newsletter in summer targeted at school-leavers, with lots of useful information on places to contact when you leave school; there are copies available for anyone who wants them. Also, keep an eye out for our next newsletter in December/January—this one will have lots of info about money and debt issues—which might be useful around Christmas-time!

We are also planning on having our website up and running by the end of 2006. Our volunteer Graham has been doing a lot of work behind the scenes on this. The website will be another information resource for people to use to find out a range of information and advice. It will also have information about COSS and hopefully some articles that you will find interesting. The website address will be [www.cossinfo.org.uk](http://www.cossinfo.org.uk); check it out around November/December!



## Growing and Growing!



The Community One Stop Shop are seeing more and more clients through the doors as time goes on and word spreads that we are here to help. Between January 05 and November 05, we dealt with around 320 client enquiries. In a shorter period this year (January 06 till October 06) we have had around 390 client enquiries—meaning we are well on the way to overtaking our target of dealing with 400 client enquiries a year.

# Money Money Money...



A big thanks to our funders  
this year:

Lloyds TSB  
Comic Relief  
Homepoint (part of Communities  
Scotland)  
West Edinburgh Community Planning  
Partnership

## Project Accounts

If you would like a copy of our  
audited accounts for 2005–2009,  
contact us.

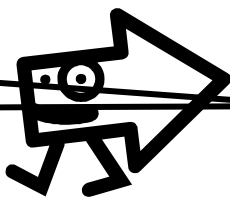
## How do we help people?

When someone first comes into the One Stop Shop, we will discuss with you what you need advice or information on. We will take some details from you (name, contact details, date of birth, nature of enquiry etc); these details are simply for our own records, to enable us to compile statistical enquiries on the number of people and the nature of things we deal with.

The information we take from you is completely confidential to our service. Once we have your details, we will usually try and help you resolve your issue 'on the spot' - by seeing if we have the relevant information in the office, searching the internet, making phone calls, writing letters, filling in forms, or anything else that needs to be done. If we cannot deal with your issue there and then, we will make you an appointment to come in and see us on another day. We can usually arrange to see you the same week or the following week. Depending on how complex your enquiry is, we may need to see you on several occasions over a period of time.

It is our aim to help to empower our clients to take control of their lives. We will endeavour to provide support in a way that suits you, so let us know what you need.

more  
copies?!



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

## CONTACT US!

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