



Impact Report
2023-2024

Community
One Stop Shop

Welcome to the Community One Stop Shop Impact Report 2023-24.

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Services

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Baby Bank
Calders Soup Kitchen
Library Trolley
Community Table
The Big Hoose Aid
Christmas Programme
Holiday Support
C-Card





Carol Swan, CEO

Yet again it has been a challenging year for so many in our community.

The cost of living crisis continues to have a significant impact on our clients with fuel costs being a significant worry for so many people. We hope that the services COSS runs help alleviate some of the pressure that these tough times place on our clients.

Our services continue to be in great demand which has to be managed against the local authority funding cuts which have put

services across the Third Sector under more pressure.

We have been excited to launch two new services in the last year. We opened our new Baby Bank in response to the challenging times families in our area were experiencing. With the support of our Board members and some fantastic donations we are currently supporting many babies and their families.

Our second new service is a Soup Kitchen in the Calders area. We are there every Sunday evening offering hot food and surplus grocery items. A massive thanks must go to the fantastic team of volunteers that give up their Sunday evening to support on average 60 clients per week.

Another highlight of the past year was being awarded Charity of the Year status from Black Rock and we have been overwhelmed with the support we have received from them. More details of the partnership can be found later on in this report.

Finally, I would like to say a great big thank you to all the supporters of our project and our amazing team of volunteers. We could not open our doors without everyone who offers their time, expertise and resources.



Jim Henderson Chair of the Board

When I sit down to write about our year, it is always with mixed feelings. It does not feel right to celebrate that we have helped more people in the food bank or expanded the capacity of the pantry or helped more people with advice on their benefits.

However, with the combined impact of the continuing cost-of-living crisis, changes to the employment market, and degrading of social security benefits, our services continue to be essential.

The fact is that we have provided more food from the food bank. We have increased our service provision at the Calders. Our advisers have helped more people get the benefits they are due. And we have helped more people into employment.

So, while I feel proud of all our hard working staff and volunteers and what we have achieved, I still hope that sometime soon our services will no longer be required. Thank you to all who support us, big and small.

Impact of Services

The addition of the baby bank and the Calders soup kitchen this year brings the total number of services run by Community One Stop Shop to 13. Each of these meets the needs of the people living in the Broomhouse area in a distinct way.

Some of the needs our clients have are immediate. People don't have money to feed their children, pay for their electricity or buy suitable clothing for the Scottish winter weather.

Other services we provide aim to support clients on their path to self sufficiency. The Broomhouse Pantry and the employability service are perfect examples of encouraging clients to take responsibility, whether by managing their own budget or taking a volunteer role which will build their skills to support their job applications.

The statistics below are just a few highlights which show the impact these services have had.

3,333

FUEL VOUCHERS
ISSUED

4,860

HOURS VOLUNTEERED

1,760

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS
GIVEN TO CHILDREN
LIVING IN CRISIS

35,170

TOTAL HOUSEHOLD
MEMBERS FED BY
PANTRY & FOODBANK

41

BABIES
SUPPORTED

92%

PANTRY USERS
EATING MORE FRESH,
HEALTHY FOOD

783

VISITS TO SOUP
KITCHEN

£326,530

VALUE OF ITEMS GIVEN OUT
TO PEOPLE LIVING IN CRISIS

13

SERVICES

479

ADVICE
APPOINTMENTS

28,276

NUMBER OF TIMES SERVICES
HAVE BEEN ACCESSED

34

CLIENTS MOVED
INTO EMPLOYMENT

Advice

The cost-of-living crisis continues to have a significant impact on our advice clients. The ability to manage priority bills and debts are adding increasing pressure to families resulting in repeat appointments and an ongoing need for help.

479

clients
seen

£7,500

value of grants given
out by Edinburgh
Trust Fund

71

clients received
support from
The Big Hoose

Over the course of the year, 479 advice clients were seen by our advice team. The complex nature of the needs clients have coupled with the multiple benefit and debt issues they face have led to an increased need to offer 2-hour appointment slots.

This has had an impact on the service we can provide as it limits the number of appointments offered each day. The advice workers consistently operate at maximum capacity.

71 clients were referred to **The Big Hoose** to receive clothing, bedding, towels, and other household items amounting to an approximate value of £19,840.

We continue to work with **Edinburgh Trust Fund** as a referral organisation. During 2023-24, 6 grants were awarded totalling £7,500.

Examples of client work done by advisers

Client A received support with a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) which took a year to be heard. They were awarded an ongoing award of £14,094 which was backdated.

Client B underwent the same process, also waiting a year to be heard. They were awarded £17,242, ongoing and backdated.

Client C applied for an Adult Disability Payment (ADP) redetermination. They were awarded an enhanced rate for daily living and mobility which totalled £8,996 and was backdated.



"I got a letter today saying that I have been awarded Enhanced Rate Daily Allowance and standard rate Mobility rate. I never thought I would get a decision so quickly. Thank you for all your help."

"Money is tight but I have always been financially independent and managed to live within my means. Lately things have been getting even tighter with the cost of everything going up. I don't think anyone can just keep going with the weight of that - no matter how frugal and careful you are."

Foodbank

Despite reduced inflation and a levelling out of interest rates, our clients are still feeling the full effects of the high price of food. The foodbank consistently proves to be a lifeline for many in the community.

Operating on a non referral basis it enables anyone who is living in crisis to be able to use it. Clients are able to receive a bag of essential grocery items a maximum of once per month, with the majority of clients using it 3.5 times per year.

9,922

foodbank
visits

£297,660

monetary value
of items

7,176

total
clients fed

A total of 2,837 clients used the foodbank, each visiting an average of 3.5 times during the year. This brings the total visits to 9,922. They received grocery items with a value of £297,660.

The foodbank is supported by many local partners including 11 supermarkets and retail outlets. We also received regular donations from individuals, workplaces and community groups who hold collections and food drives on our behalf.



Holiday Support

2,125

lunch packs
given out

2,125 lunch packs were given out to local families to support them during the school holidays.

This is in place of the school meal that primary school children receive during term time.



Broomhouse Pantry



Broomhouse Pantry is part of the **Your Local Pantry** group, an initiative which enables members to purchase a number of groceries at a reduced price.

The cost to the client of each visit to the pantry this year rose to £4.50 and has a retail value of approximately £35.

3,368

pantry
visits

17%

usage increase
since last year

£117,880

value of items
received by
clients

108

pantry
members

323

household
members
supported

Thanks to the support of **CSI Fittings**, the pantry received new shelving units in 2023.

A greater range of stock can now be stored and displayed, and the increase in floor space means mobility scooters, wheelchairs and prams can now enter the pantry.

The number of Muslim clients has risen to 26 this year meaning the demand for halal food has increased.

At Eid, increased stocks of halal meats and sweets allowed clients to enjoy the festivities.

The pantry has been running at maximum capacity since its launch, but memberships are constantly reviewed to optimise the benefit to members.

13 new members were added this year taking to the total to 108. This supports a total of 323 household members.

The pantry has continued to partner with **Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home** who supply pet food for our clients to include in their weekly shop.

During summer 2023, the **National Lottery Community Fund** provided funding for clients to receive 10 free visits to the pantry.

This was used 920 times, saving clients a total of £3,680.



Pantry Events

A large component of pantry membership is about giving members the opportunity to connect with other people and become part of a community.

To further facilitate this, events are held throughout the year including a family day at East Links Family Park and a Christmas afternoon tea.

45

people visited
East Links
Family Park

7

pop up
cafe events

22

attendees at
Christmas
afternoon tea

118

clients received
vouchers from
the Fuel Bank
Foundation

"After recently having surgery, being able to get fresh food on my doorstep has not only helped with my recovery but has also increased my independence at a time when it would have been impossible for me to get to the supermarket."

"The pantry has been a lifeline for me, especially with the cost of a weekly shop. It's a superb help."

Service Users Survey

Pantry users completed a survey in 2023 telling us how using the services benefitted them.

96% have gained confidence from using the service

92% are eating more fresh and healthy food.

92% enjoyed being able to choose their own food.

71% have made friends with others in their community



Employability

The employability service is instrumental in supporting clients in their journey towards being self-supporting. The COSS adviser works with clients to identify and overcome the hurdles they face in the process of finding work.

Freedom from affiliation with a governing body allows the service to be entirely client led in the approach, meaning that the outcomes we see are long lasting and impactful for the clients.

342

Clients received
employability
sessions

34

Clients
started
employment

"I came to my appointment for some guidance on looking for employment and to get a CV written. I didn't know where to start as I have been out of work for a long time."

"Working with my adviser was absolutely amazing. She was very friendly and helpful, and gave me guidance and encouragement, as my confidence was very low."

"My adviser supported me to go to interviews and I have now found employment, thanks to her. I couldn't have done this without the support from this service"

Client H has been working with Jade, COSS Employment Adviser, for the past few years. Originally from outside the UK, she had visa conditions which restricted the type of work she could do.

Keen to engage with and contribute to her community, she began volunteering at various community projects in West Edinburgh.

Once she received permission to work in the UK, Jade spent time with her to find a job which would make use of her skill set.

Her friendly nature and caring personality led her to the care sector.

With two young children to take care of, she was restricted with the hours she could work.

She found vacancies, applied for them, performed well at interview and was offered a role as a care assistant.

She has since worked with a number of employers, and is currently also volunteering with a local project.



COSS Conference

Volunteer board members were invited to attend the **COSS AGM** which was held as part of the bi-annual conference in November 2023. Each of the service leads updated attendees on the key highlights, challenges and successes.

We also had the opportunity to hear more indepth detail from Lee Reynolds, Pantry Co-ordinator, who shared how the service had developed since its inception in 2021. Lead Adviser, Shona McLean, also spoke on the challenges faced by clients with the transition from legacy benefits to Universal Credit, and the subsequent impact on the service the advice team offer.

We were delighted to welcome two guest speakers during the conference. Craig Wilson from **Big Hearts Community Trust** spoke passionately about the work they do with their local community, and how the partnership with us for the annual Big Hearts Food Drive fits into their bigger picture.

Grant Barnes gave us a fascinating glimpse behind the scenes of **The Big Hoose**, showing us where the donated goods come from and how they are processed before the reach us to be distributed to our clients.

The team also enjoyed a meal together with our valued board members who so generously lend us their time and expertise to help COSS serve the community in the most effective way.



Calders Soup Kitchen



783

visits to the
soup kitchen

75

fuel vouchers
issued

77

Big Hoose
referrals

The Calders Soup Kitchen was launched in October 2023 in response to the conditions we saw that people from the area were living in. One of the least supported areas of Edinburgh, a high proportion of its residents do not have secure housing and are living in extreme poverty.

Building on the outreach work that was done pre-pandemic, the service was able to effectively target the client group immediately by engaging a team of volunteers to deliver the COSS services to the community alongside the hot food provision.

On average, the soup kitchen serves 50 people each session and is supported by 7 volunteers. It has also hosted 3 pop up events distributing over £2,000 worth of items donated by The Big Hoose.

Baby Bank

September 2023 saw the opening of the COSS baby bank. It supports babies and their carers for a 6 week period by providing them with practical resources such as nappies, formula and toiletries.

This support relieves families from the stress of providing costly essentials and enables them to focus on the vital task of bonding with their babies.

"I have 3 children under 3 years old and it was such a struggle for me to provide everything they needed."

The Baby Bank has made sure I've had things like nappies and formula which has been such a help. It's run by a lovely, friendly team and I've felt really supported by them."

41

babies
supported

£7,760

value of items
given out

195

visits by
clients



The Big Hoose



The partnership with The Big Hoose flourished during this year. Through the goods they provided us with, we were able to support the most vulnerable people living in crisis situations with vital resources.

Items including clothing, shoes, bedding, household equipment and kitchenware have been given to clients who have been referred to us, either from one of our other services or from external partners such as health workers and social workers.

1,098

people referred to
receive crisis support

£326,530

total value of
items distributed

18,441

items distributed
at events

Examples of clients supported with resources from The Big Hoose:

- A survivor of domestic violence who left her home with her children and needed to provide a safe environment for her and her children to live in.
- Three vulnerable children living in extreme poverty referred to us by the Salvation Army on Christmas Eve because they were not going to receive any presents on Christmas day.
- A family who had fled war-torn Sudan with a babe in arms, who had left with nothing more than the clothes they were wearing.
- A refugee family who had experienced traumatic events and were starting their lives over in a country where they knew no one and had no possessions.

These clients are some of the most vulnerable people in Edinburgh. Making use of this service has enabled them to build a new life.

Many of the people we support have been able to move into employment and become self-sufficient once their initial basic needs have been met.

"I was speechless for two days as I didn't know how to say thank you. The things you have given us are phenomenal. You got the exact items that we needed and we couldn't have picked better for ourselves. From the bottom of my heart, thank you."



Fuel Vouchers



The relationship with the Fuel Bank Foundation has continued, with COSS processing applications for fuel vouchers on their behalf.

The value of the voucher clients receive varies depending on the season. The demand has remained high owing to the continued raised cost of fuel.

3,333

vouchers
issued

£151,525

monetary value of
voucher issued

7,174

household members
supported

BlackRock

BlackRock

Employees at financial services company **BlackRock** voted for COSS to be their charity of the year in May 2023.

Over the course of the year, 22 of their employees took the opportunity to volunteer with us. In total they spent 129 hours helping out with various tasks including sorting stock, picking up donations and serving clients at our pop up events.

They embraced everything with enthusiasm and were an enormous help.

Staff and volunteers also attended a charity ball hosted by Blackrock which raised over £30,000 to support our services.

We are so grateful to BlackRock for everything they have done to support COSS over the past year.

"Through volunteering with the charity, we have witnessed incredible dedication to serving the needs of our local community - and making a positive difference."

We're keen to build on our relationship and look forward to the future with Community One Stop Shop as a key partner in BlackRock's volunteering programme in Edinburgh."

Richard Crawford, BlackRock



Christmas Programme

December is typically the busiest month at COSS and 2023 was no exception. Building on the popularity of last year, we once again opened the doors to the foodbank on Saturday mornings in the run up to Christmas.

70
hampers
given out

1,760
gifts given to
children

£20,496
value of gifts
distributed

510
hours worked
by volunteers

224
food parcels
given out

Thanks to **The Big Hoose, The Edinburgh Spiritualist Church and other charity partners**, we were able to provide Christmas presents for 160 children.

Volunteers were instrumental in delivering extended services, with 510 hours volunteered during December.

A team of volunteers put together hampers packed with festive treats which were given out to 70 nominated people in the community.



The foodbank was busier than ever, with 224 food parcels being given out in December.

Pantry members were invited to an afternoon tea which included a visit from Santa!

Lodge Abbotsford again donated selection boxes for children living in the area.



Volunteers

Volunteers are at the heart of every service COSS delivers to clients. The list of tasks they get involved in grows every year, from serving clients in the foodbank and pantry, driving vans to pick up donations, offering advice sessions, helping at events, serving on the board, supporting outreach work in the Calder and tirelessly sorting stock behind the scenes.

Always throwing themselves into their work with enthusiasm and a smile, they are the very best team of volunteers. COSS could not do all that it does without their commitment.

35

volunteers

4,860

hours worked
by volunteers

£51,030

equivalent saving
in salaries

"Volunteering at COSS is one of the most rewarding, yet eye-opening experiences. You get a first hand experience of the regular struggles people face.

So far, I have really enjoyed my time at COSS as I've been able to help people in need and give back to my community in a way that makes me feel great."

Iona Jackson, COSS volunteer.



In September 2023, volunteer **Melanie Lawrence** scaled new heights to raise funds for COSS by trekking to **Everest base camp**.

A gruelling climb lasting 2 weeks, the trek saw her climbing through treacherous terrain to altitudes of 5,600m to reach the village of Kala Patthar in Nepal.

Volunteer Week was an opportunity for COSS to show its appreciation for all that the volunteers contribute to our services.

In June 2023, in recognition of his service to COSS, volunteer **Nathan Wild** was presented with a Volunteer Award by the Lord Provost at the prestigious event at the City Chambers.

One of our most regularly serving volunteers, Mel managed to raise an incredible £1,470 to support the services COSS runs.



"In 2011, I was looking to volunteer with a local charity for a couple of months until I started a new job. I went to Community One Stop Shop where, at the time, there was just one member of staff and a couple of local volunteers. COSS was only providing an advice service and helped a handful of clients each week.

That was over 13 years ago and I have seen COSS grow to provide 13 services in that time. It has helped hundreds of clients both young and old, from all backgrounds.

At COSS we have always tried to have a holistic approach to the help we provide. We have evolved to ensure that our services meet the changing needs of our clients, while trying to secure funding to provide these services.

We are also a local employer in our own right and have 11 dedicated part time staff who work tirelessly to provide our wide-ranging services. This work is also supported by our great volunteers who give up their time to help provide our services. I am so proud to volunteer and be part of the COSS family."

Alice Finlayson, Volunteer Board Member



The annual **Big Hearts Food Drive** was a huge success again this year with football fans donating 89 crates of non perishable foods, and £3,632 towards foodbank costs.

We are hugely grateful to **Big Hearts Community Trust** who host the event during one of their home games at Tynecastle each year, and to our team of volunteers for their support.

COSS were once again involved in the delivery of the annual **Broomhouse Street Party**.

A dedicated team of volunteers joined us to inform visitors about the services we offer and invited them to take part in a tombola packed with prizes donated by **The Big Hoose**.

Huge thanks go to **Space at the Broomhouse Hub** for hosting this fantastic community event.

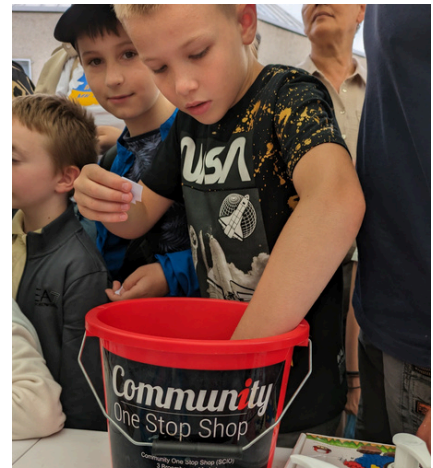


Accounts

The Community One Stop Shop is a Registered Charity Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)

Details of the charity, information on operations and full accounts can be found on the charity regular, OSCR, website www.OSCR.org.uk.

Community One Stop Shop SC049181



Thank You

The Community One Stop Shop could not have the impact it has without a committed network of supporters. They provide us with funding, resources, expertise, volunteers and publicity.

We are extremely grateful to every organisation, business and individual who has so generously given to the Broomhouse community this year.

Some of our supporters are listed here, but there are many more who are not named. Each and every contribution is valued and appreciated.

In addition to those shown, we would also like to thank

The Calders Residents' Association
Provincial Grand Lodge
Grand Lodge of Scotland

Mustang Sally's Golfing Society
Edinburgh Spiritualist Church



Supporters, Funders & Partners





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