

Spring Newsletter

The Quarterly Newsletter of Churches Action for the Homeless (CATH)



Welcome to the second edition of a regular newsletter to let you know what has been happening in CATH and the wider homeless sector. We hope that you find the information interesting. If you have any questions or suggestions please get in touch. There are contact details on the last page.

In the meantime thank you very much for your support.

View from the Scaffolding

Written by Richard Howat CEO

I am not aware of the perfect organisation just as I have never met the perfect person. Even Mary Poppins did not quite reach that accolade.

CATH is definitely not the perfect organisation but we are striving to become better. It goes without saying that we are always seeking ways to improve the services that we provide; to have a greater positive impact by engaging with people and communities in a meaningful way to prevent homelessness. That is our reason for existing. Today however, I would like to write about our staff and volunteers and how CATH is working to become a better employer and an exciting and creative place to work.

Our approach is to develop CATH as a Learning Organisation and over the last year we have put in place many of the systems and processes that underpin this



goal. That may not sound very exciting but it is essential when undertaking significant culture change in an organisation.

What do we mean by a Learning Organisation? Put simply it is an organisation where workers, whether staff or volunteers, feel empowered to carry out their role, to make decisions and take responsibility, to recognise their strengths and the strengths of others, to contribute to the wider organisation, to learn and share learning and to treat everyone with tolerance and respect.

It is a commitment to improve individually and collectively and from the organisation a pledge to create the opportunities for people to grow and develop. For those who are interested it is also a promise to nurture talent and provide opportunities for promotion.

I had the privilege of speaking to a group of new starts during their induction. During my talk I inverted the usual triangular, hierarchical, organisational diagram putting front-line workers to the top. That represents reality. This is where the real, the important work takes place. The rest of us are there to enable that work. One of the reasons this development is so important.

I hope that over time when people read an advert for a position at CATH they will see beyond the specific job and recognise the opportunity that it presents. An opportunity not only to have an important and meaningful role but in addition a chance to create a new career for themselves.

CATH Shop Retains Revolve Accreditation



Angus with the Certificate from Revolve

Revolve is a quality standard for second-hand stores in Scotland and is awarded to stores that meet high standards in safety, cleanliness and service, giving shoppers that extra reassurance to shop second-hand first.

Linda Branter, Revolve Quality and Support Officer, Zero Waste Scotland provided Sarah the shop manager and her team of staff and volunteers with some very positive feedback saying, “What a great example of how it should be done”

The shop manual was the subject of particular praise as was Angus our newest shop employee who was commended for the efficient way he completed the tasks and pulled everything together for the inspection.

Congratulations to everyone involved for retaining the shops accreditation with such flying colours.

CATH AGM

The CATH AGM was held on 15 March in the Day Centre. It was a hybrid meeting with members attending in person and virtually.

In her first AGM as Chair Fiona Hogg acknowledged the years of service and support from Martin Barnicoat, Jane Robertson and Carol Ferrie who had all resigned as Trustees over the past year and thanked them for their commitment.



Fiona Hogg, Chair of Trustees

Fiona also welcomed Daniel Byrne to the Board and Richard Howat and Janice Spencer to their roles as CEO and Finance Manger respectively recognising that it had been a period of significant change for the organisation.

Sadly the meeting was advised of the passing of Brian Cowie in December. Brian had worked for CATH since 2003, latterly as CEO, until taking early retirement in 2019 due to ill health. Fiona spoke very warmly of Brian describing him as the heart and soul of CATH and expressed how much he will be missed.

The challenges of the year past were acknowledged and whilst many of them remain there is a sense that the organisation has started to turn the corner. Thanks were expressed to the staff and volunteers for enabling CATH to continue to support people in their communities and for maintaining service delivery. With the threat of COVID and the challenges of recruitment always in the background the Members recognised how difficult it must have been on occasions to keep projects operating.

Financially, CATH reported a surplus of £62,480 for the year ending 31 March 2021. Thanks in the main to a significant bequest.

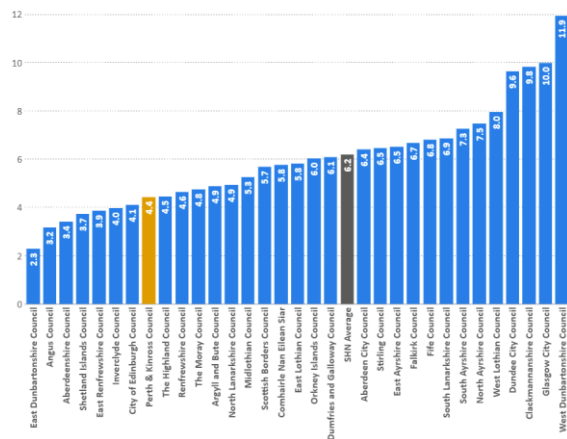
At the short Board meeting afterwards Fiona Hogg was re-elected as Chair whilst Mike Westall was elected as Vice Chair.

Home First Vision

Wherever possible, homeless households move directly into settled accommodation, avoiding the stigma, cost and uncertainty of temporary accommodation and homelessness.

This is the Perth and Kinross Council vision which has been driving their homeless strategy since 2014. Currently represented in their Rapid Re-housing Transition Plan.

The evidence of the success of the vision is clear as Homeless Applications have reduced considerably in the county with statistics from last year continuing to demonstrate a reduction in applications.



In 2020 to 2021 Perth and Kinross Council rate of homeless applications fell to 4.4 per 1000 people. The Local Authority average was 6.2. On the chart to the left the average is shown by the black column and P and K Council by the gold.

However, there is a concern that these statistics do not reflect the true nature of homelessness, particularly in rural areas where it is often hidden.

There is a role for CATH here to connect with local grass root organisations to discover the nature of homelessness and housing need in rural areas to inform the discussion and future planning.

We will seek to take that work on next year.

CATH Ladies Group

The Ladies Group meet weekly at the Day Centre. It is a very supportive and dynamic group who are continually seeking to expand their skills and range of activities. Whilst the ladies are supported by Karen, a member of staff, they are in actuality a healthily independent and self-supporting bunch, planning their own programme and organising activities.



The group were delighted to receive the donation of a new sewing machine from the Perth City North Locality Team based at Pullar House.

The group are regular crafters and are in the process of learning about upcycling. The results of their work are often on sale in the CATH shop to raise money to buy materials for the group. The sewing

machine will be a well-used addition to their range of tools and has already created lots of new ideas for future projects.

New Developments for CATH

CATH has a workshop on the Ladeside in Perth very close to the Day Centre. For several years the social enterprise Giraffe had used the premises. Last year Giraffe moved to new premises more suited to their developing business. Many congratulations to Gareth and everyone involved for their continuing success in such challenging times.

The return of the building created an opportunity for CATH. After some careful consideration it was agreed to develop the building as a resource for trialling social enterprise ideas. It is now called the CATH Enterprise Hub.

There is a garden to the rear of the site with a polytunnel. This has been prepared for planting and will be producing flowers, fruit and vegetables this year. The actual workshop is currently being set up to refurbish furniture and the concept of “Radio CATH” is being evaluated.

The office space now accommodates the Floating Housing Support Team and the Self-directed Support (SDS) Team. Previously located in Head Office the teams are now housed more efficiently in their new home.

With the CATH Enterprise Hub being located so close to the Day Centre it is planned that both buildings will form a campus as services at the Day Centre are expanded.

The FHS and SDS Teams moving out of Head Office created the opportunity to develop a custom training and meeting room for the organisation. Although still a work in progress, thanks to some fresh paint and the donation of

furniture from John Ross of Kinross Wooden Products Ltd we have the bones of a multipurpose room able to provide for large meetings and training options including hybrid and virtual training events/meetings.

Finally, for now, the third development is a new service delivered in partnership with HMP Perth. With funding from the Perth and Kinross Alcohol and Drug Partnership CATH will be working with HMP Perth to provide a Through Care service for people leaving the prison. The service will engage with prisoners prior to and after release to help them in their transition back into the community.

Often this is a time when people can struggle to keep their positive momentum potentially leading to relapse into negative behaviours. This new service will support people through this transition. For example enabling them to maintain treatment, access housing and find meaningful activity. Thereby reducing the likelihood of re-offending.

The service is funded for a year as a test of change. The learning from the project will be shared with partners.

Volunteering with CATH



We really appreciate all the time, effort and skills freely given by our volunteers. They make such a difference to the organisation and the work that we do.

We are always looking for new people to join us and can offer a variety of roles from helping out at an event, passing on your skills and knowledge to becoming a trustee with a myriad of opportunities in-between. We have something to suit everyone.

If you would like to get involved please contact Karen on 01738 580188 or look up our Volunteer Page on the CATH website www.cath-org.co.uk for more contact information.

Contact Information:

E-mail: enquiries@cath-org.co.uk

Telephone: 01738 580188

Website: www.cath-org.co.uk

Charity No. SC021740

Exciting News: £10,000 Donation



David Palmer, MD Barratt North Scotland presenting the cheque to Richard Howat, CEO CATH

To close on some positive and exciting news CATH received a donation of £10,000 From Barratt Homes. Mr David Palmer, Managing Director of Barratt North Scotland, attended the Day Centre to present the cheque to Richard Howat.

Richard thanked Mr Palmer, his colleagues, and Barratt's partners and contractors on behalf of CATH for selecting the organisation for this generous donation.

David was able to spend some time at the centre and took the opportunity to speak with both staff and service users. He said that Barratt Homes were delighted to support an organisation that carried out such important work.

A banner with a geometric design of overlapping triangles in yellow, green, and blue. The text is arranged as follows: 'LOOKING FOR A NEW CAREER?' in a yellow triangle; 'WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?' in a green triangle; 'COME & JOIN US!' in a blue triangle; 'careers@cath-org.co.uk' and 'www.cath-org.co.uk' in a yellow triangle. On the right side, there is a logo for 'Churches Action For The Homeless' featuring a house shape with three stylized figures inside, and the text 'Living Wage', 'Churches Action For The Homeless', 'Working together to end homelessness', and 'Scottish Registered Charity No. SC021740'. There are also social media icons for Facebook and Twitter.

That's all for this edition. Please contact us if you have any questions or comments:

E-mail: enquiries@cath-org.co.uk

Telephone: 01738 580188