



Friday 19th May 2023

Hi Folks,

Welcome to this week's Roundup.

You'll have sensed a greater urgency in some of our shoutouts of late. We are conscious that a WhatsApp timeline full of cries for help is at best a nuisance and distracting and at worst unsettling. For us, the effectiveness of the last minute approach is questionable - if everything is urgent nothing is urgent, right? - and we really don't like landing in your timelines like that as regularly as we have been. We're not sure what the answer is, we know you'd like to at least hear if we need more support and to have the option of considering if you can do something, even if you can't.

We are grateful for all you do and we want you to feel that gratitude without the nagging sense we need more from you. This time of year does present a challenge for us however and the calls for our service are increasing whilst your commitments and plans cannot possibly include us all the time - that's not our expectation. But it does mean that particularly at this time of year and later in the summer we may need to shout a little louder for help.

We do know that we are doing this together but without you none of this would be possible.

This week we hear from our **Garden** lead Tom directly, linking to this Emily talks about the **Shared Prosperity Fund**, as well as sharing her running philosophy in her Profile ahead of the **Marathon Festival** - one week to go! We had a wonderful experience on what was a beautiful day at the **North Edinburgh Festival**....

But we start with our monthly update from **Leila and the Service User Engagement Team**.....In the past month thanks to the amazing work of the Welcome Desk we have onboarded 107 new service users across 80 addresses in the City. This is an incredible number and points to the very clearly challenges people are experiencing. More positively, in the same period there were 96 cancellations across 71 addresses - reflective of needs or circumstances changing and for some it's simply about not needing us any more which is so good to hear! So, in overall terms we've seen a net increase of 11 service users and 9 addresses in the period.

Listening is now a huge part of what we are doing, whether that's on-boarding or supporting people on their path away from us. Remarkably, as a team we have made on average 75 calls per week in the same period, to service users to check that the meals are helping and are still needed, and to check on their wellbeing. We are also making good progress reaching some of our longer-term service users and engaging more with hostel

and other temporary accommodation residence managers to improve our relationship with them and with their residents who are our service users.

This engagement means we are increasingly providing sign-posting support. In the last month, we've signposted service users to the **Edinburgh Crisis Centre** and to **Clothesbank+** at Central Church in Tollcross. We referred two mums to **Ps &Gs** for baby supplies and rockers, and we are collaborating with the **Scottish Book Trust** to reach service users who are caring for someone living with dementia to avail of their new programme, **Reading is Caring**. We also referred two service users to the **Bethany Trust** who delivered a bed, bedding, towels and toiletries to each one.

Thank you Leila, and thank you to all our SUE, Welcome Desk and Logistics & Delivery teams.

Last weekend's **North Edinburgh Community Festival**.....It was a lovely afternoon in glorious sunshine and a great opportunity to talk to our local community about what we do and how they could get involved. We also met some of our service users, team members from other local organisations, and some of our Scottish and Westminster Parliamentary representatives. We're looking forward to next year already!



There's just over a week to go until the **Edinburgh Marathon Festival!** This week we hear from Emily (our Fundraising Manager), who is running the 10K next Saturday.

"I have never been what you'd call a natural runner (or even an unnatural runner) but it's always good to have a goal to work towards, and it's great to be able to turn the miles into meals by fundraising for EKFH.

I've been the Fundraising Manager at EKFH for just over a year, having first been involved as a delivery and packing volunteer. I felt immediately welcomed into the amazing EKFH community, and it truly feels like we're working together to help people in need across the city. It's wonderful to be able to play a part in this work."

To support Emily and others running in various events next weekend, you can visit:

<https://emptykitchens.enthuse.com/cf/edinburgh-marathon-2023>

News from Tom in The Garden..... This week we have made two more raised beds, and small ornamental planters too. We planted a few foxgloves and sowed wild flower seed on the flower bed. The onions, garlic, lettuce and beetroot are growing happily outdoors, and in the polytunnel some squash and pumpkin seeds have been planted - we hope to see them germinating soon!



We are able to do this work on the garden area thanks to funding from the **UK Shared Prosperity Fund**, which is also supporting our **Kitchen Assistant Programme** and **Volunteer Coordinator** role. This week, we had a visit from Georgina, Jessie, and Zoe from **Capital City Partnership** (who administer the fund in Edinburgh) who came in to see the operation and site in action, and talk to Emily about the project and development over the next couple of years. We're excited to continue to work with them and look forward to being connected to the other projects and charities they're supporting.

And before you read the Notice Board (now below this sign off) we'd like to ask again if you'd be willing to share a photo and a little about yourself and your experience as a volunteer with us. As you may have found when you were considering joining us, the views & experiences of those already within the organisation are such an important factor in the decision of prospective volunteers. Thank you.

Finally, this week we say farewell to Lynn & Deborah who are returning home soon. Thank you for your contribution. It's been our privilege having you with us. Bon voyage!

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend in the way that's most meaningful to you,

[Mike](#), [Janet](#) & [Martin](#)

THE NOTICE BOARD

Edinburgh Community Book Shop:

We remain delighted and grateful to be their chosen Charity of The Month for May. Here's how you can support us and them!

- Sharing related **social media posts** to spread the word
- Popping into the shop if you're **looking for gifts** or adding to your own book collection!
- **Donating any books** that you'd like to pass on to their next reader. You can either hand them in to Emily and we'll do a big drop-off, or go directly to the shop.

VACANCIES:

We have now filled the additional Delivery Driver role. More about this We now have the following paid opportunities. If any of these roles are perfect for you, or someone you know, then please see the separate WhatsApp Broadcasts or our website for further information and for details on how to apply.

The vacancies:

Volunteer Coordinator (Closing Date: Sunday 14th May). Interviewing W/c 22nd May.

And of course we are always seeking to welcome more wonderful volunteers.

Please make family, friends and colleagues aware of the work we do and what we offer in terms of the variety of roles and the flexibility we offer....as well as being a great place to come and be!

BUDDY-UP DAY!

Delighted to announce our **Volunteer Delivery Driver & Buddy-up Day on Thursday June 1st**. Part of our Volunteer Week program, this is a great opportunity for you to learn more about delivery driving, meet other volunteers, and explore a fresh perspective on helping us make a difference in the community.

Aimed at anyone who wishes to find out more, would love to do it but are needing to feel a little more confident before doing so, or who simply would prefer to not fly solo or who is looking to ride-along rather than drive.

How it works: On **Buddy-up Day**, you will be paired with an experienced delivery driver who will show you the ropes. You will learn how to load and unload, be introduced to our route planning software, using Google Maps, and understand a little more about the communities we serve.

If you are confident in your driving skills, you can also sign up to do a short run yourself. This is a great way to get some hands-on experience and see how volunteer delivery driving works first hand. You could bring your own buddy!

No matter what your experience level, we encourage you to sign up for Buddy up Day. It is a great way to learn more about this key role, perhaps learn new skills, meet fellow volunteers, and help us all make that difference.

You can let us know via volunteer@emptykitchens.co.uk, if you'd like to sign up, or have a chat with Chris when you're in to find out more.

ROTA CENTRAL:

We are doing a lot of housekeeping on Rota Central, updating and clearing, ensuring roles and details are correct. This work will continue over the coming months. If you are not receiving the Wednesday rota email or you are but the role(s) are not the one(s) you signed up for, do let us know.

Most departments are now showing shift availability through to late June.

This week we've added afternoon shifts (1pm - 4pm) to the **Welcome Desk** with service user on-boarding in particular in mind. Please let us know if you are interested in supporting us here.

Afternoon Delivery Shifts are now available - 2 cars and 1 bike - to allow greater flexibility and choice. Our goal remains 4 cars and 1 bike per day.

Do let us know if you are interested in any of the above roles, have any volunteering or shift queries or problems with Rota Central. Contact us via the WhatsApp channel (07918 121606) or to **Volunteer Services** at volunteer@emptykitchens.co.uk

WEBSITE:

We are extremely keen to include some volunteer testimonies and profiles. You can see the page [here](#). Could you share what being a volunteer with us means to you and perhaps say a little about yourself? Let us or Emily know. You can have a look at the new [Team Page](#) too.

EVENTS:

There's still time to get involved and run Miles for Meals at this year's **Edinburgh Marathon Festival on May 27th and 28th!** And there are a number of ways to get involved - you don't need to run the whole 42.2K! Last year within our team we had those just embarking on their first running journey (pun intended) or as a fitness goal in itself, signing up to do the 5K, 10K, half-marathon, relay. A reminder about how to get involved:

1. Sign up for your chosen distance at <https://www.edinburghmarathon.com/>
2. Go to <https://emptykitchens.enthuse.com/cf/edinburgh-marathon-2023> to register as part of our Empty Kitchens Full Hearts team and create your fundraising page.

Get in touch with Emily (emily.gifford@emptykitchens.co.uk) if you have any questions.

If you're not able to take part in any of the events yourself, we would still be really grateful for your help in spreading the word about our team taking part - sharing social media posts to encourage donations would be an enormous help!

Membership:

We always welcome new applications to be Empty Kitchens Full Hearts Members! As a Member, you have oversight of what we do, you'll influence strategy, and be voting on matters of constitution and governance including electing our Trustees. Members' meetings take place approximately twice a year, so we hope it's not too big a commitment! You can always come and talk to us about it if you'd like to know more before you apply...

Registration forms are available from the Welcome Desk. Our first Members' AGM will be taking place in June, and new Membership applications will be reviewed at the next Board meeting in July.

SOCIALS:

Check out our socials here....



Do please let us know what's on your mind by email at et@emptykitchens.co.uk or just come and have a chat.