



Friday 8th December 2023

Hi Everyone,

How are you doing?

This week, we provide our monthly **Service User Engagement** update, we shine a light on a few folk who've been busy fundraising on our behalf, there's the next sponsored football match at Meadowbank on Sunday, and a reminder or two. But first.....



### **Christmas at Empty Kitchens Full Hearts!**

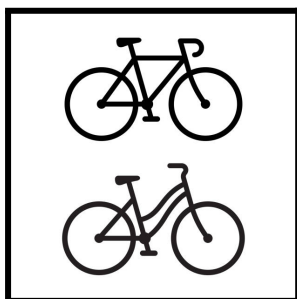
If you have not been on site this week, we are starting to look festive! Big thanks goes to Trish on the Welcome Desk who brought in a couple of lovely Christmas trees to welcome us in from the cold. From the 18th December, there will be festive goodies available at break times, so please dig in.

And if you have already decked your own halls and have a spare bauble or strip of something glittery, we'd be happy to take them.

**Can you help over the holidays?** As you know, we will be operational throughout the period and as we get closer to the holidays, shifts are starting to fill up. You'll have seen that the demand - help needed, is greater on the 24th and 31st, and a change of timing, all this to allow a shortened operational day. **There are still plenty of spaces though so please, if you can, consider coming along even if for a few hours.** On Christmas Day and New Year's Day we have **greater need for Volunteer Delivery Drivers**, this again to spread the load (no pun!) If you have not done a delivery run before there is no more rewarding time to try! As we write we need 5 more drivers but happy to hear from more.

**If you'd like to bring a family member, friend, colleague or neighbour along, we have space.** Simply let [Sarah](#) know or drop us a note at [volunteer@emptykitchens.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@emptykitchens.co.uk).

### **Cycling Scotland - Bike shelter feedback**



In August, we fitted a new bike shelter and repair station, thanks to Cycling Scotland funding. Our aim was to encourage more of our volunteers and staff to travel to us by bike, and we would love to hear your feedback!

We have put together a very short 8 question survey, [linked here](#). All answers are anonymous, and we will share the responses with Cycling Scotland.

**Please complete the survey before Monday the 11th of December.**

## Monthly Update - Service User Engagement Update

Long-term health conditions are more prevalent amongst households with lower levels of income, and low income in turn leads to worse health outcomes, creating a vicious cycle. This is confirmed in the Trussell Trust Hunger in Scotland June 2023 Report which finds that **“disabled people and people with poor health are overrepresented among those experiencing food insecurity and forced to rely on food banks”** and that there is a significant evidence base about the **“complex and cyclical relationship between poverty, and disability and ill health.”**

The reasons service users get in touch with us for meal support reflect the Trussell Trust’s findings: 39% are struggling with sickness (55% suffer from mental health conditions and 50% suffer from a physical disability), 48% are on low income due to a change/delay in benefits (or benefits now not covering costs) and 48% are unemployed and unable to work long-term.

We’ve provided sign-posting in 3 key areas: mental health support, advice on money/debt/benefits and clothing bank referrals. We’ve referred more service users to clothing banks than ever before and, not surprisingly, clothing banks have reported seeing a tremendous increase in demand. The result is longer waiting lists and some are only taking referrals for people in crisis. They could really do with all the help they can get, so please consider donating to the **Edinburgh Clothing Store**, 156 Lower Granton Road, EH5 1EY (open Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 10:00am to 12:30pm) and **Clothing+**, Central Church Hall, 2 W Tollcross, EH3 9BP (open Monday 10-12:30). Clothing+ is especially in need of men’s clothing. The **Leith Collective Winter Coat Exchange** is also very much in need of coats if you have any to spare. They have 2 locations: Ocean Terminal, 1st Floor (open 10am-6pm M-Sat/ 11am-5pm Sun) and Fort Kinnaird Retail Park, Unit 3a (open 9am-9pm).

## Hibernian Women - Sponsored Match on Sunday!

We’re looking forward to our next **sponsored match with Hibernian Women on Sunday!** As well as being there in person, there will be an awareness-raising campaign sent out via their newsletter and broadcast before the match on BBC Alba. Part of the campaign is this video, which was put together when some of the team came in to do some volunteering a few weeks ago. You can watch the video here:

▶ [Hibs Stars Visit Empty Kitchens Full Hearts | Hibernian Women](#)



## Fundraising Updates



We are very pleased to be working with some local businesses on some fundraising and food donations this December. If you're out and about in Edinburgh, why not consider popping in?

**Cafe Milk** (Newhaven) has a lovely Christmas Tree in the courtyard where people can donate to us and Make a Wish to tie to the tree.

**Cloisters Bar** (Tollcross) are donating £1 for every main meal they sell throughout December!

**Malones** (Leith) are running a food collection for us and doing some fundraising alongside this.

We're grateful that they've chosen to support us and Do Good With Food This Winter!

Please do also keep spreading the word about our **Winter Fundraising Appeal** - we're 40% of the way to our target! Thank you to everyone who has shared and donated already - every time you share the link it makes a huge difference.

<https://emptykitchens.enthuse.com/cf/winter-appeal>

You can find the information on the notice board below!

## Garden Update

"It was a wet and windy day at the garden this week, so only short update. We added some fertiliser mulch to the outdoor beds, this will help to protect the soil over the winter - stopping the nutrients from getting washed out by the rain, and also adding some in too! After that we retreated indoors for a nice hot tea and sorted through the bags of seeds we've accumulated. This is helping us decide what we need to buy for next year, and was also a good excuse to get out of the rain!"



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Next week we'll reflect on our 2nd Granton anniversary, we'll let you know how the [Nourish](#) gathering went and there will be more to share about our work with [The Hibs Foundation](#).

Until then, thank you for being with us, for reading this, for everything you do. Have a terrific weekend,

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

P.S. Do please let us know what's on your mind by email at [et@emptykitchens.co.uk](mailto:et@emptykitchens.co.uk) or just come and have a chat

## THE NOTICE BOARD



### Winter Fundraising Appeal: Do Good With Food This Winter

We have launched our Winter Fundraising Appeal! We are asking people to 'Do Good With Food' and donate to help us to support our service users throughout the winter. We are **aiming to raise £15,000**.

**Can you help** us to spread the word about the campaign? You can do this by:

- **Sharing** our posts on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X (Twitter)
- **Sending** the [website link](https://emptykitchens.enthuse.com/cf/winter-appeal) to family, friends, and colleagues who could donate

**The link** to the donation page is: <https://emptykitchens.enthuse.com/cf/winter-appeal>

We can also provide a **printed flyer** if that is something that would be helpful. Ask Emily about this!

**Could you share this five times?** That could be telling friends and family, sharing on social media, or sharing the link. If everyone does this, imagine how many people we will reach!

If you would like to make a donation that would of course be very much appreciated but we are well aware of how much time and energy you already give to us! Please chat to Emily if you have any questions or other ideas about reaching more people.

### Volunteer Services & Rota Central

Shift availability is now live for **January 2024** on all departments.

**December** and the holidays.....To confirm we will be operational throughout the festive period. **There is extra volunteer capacity on Sunday 24th and on the morning of the 25th across Kitchen, Packing and, specifically on the 25th, drivers.**

Please, if you can, let us know if you're unable to attend a shift, we know sometimes it's not possible to give us notice, but if you can it's really helpful!



**If you are not receiving the Wednesday Rota Central email or you are but the role(s) are not the one(s) you signed up for, do let us know.**

If you would like to leave anonymous feedback about volunteering with us, you can always complete [this form here](#). We check the responses regularly.

Let us know if you wish us to add or remove roles, have any volunteering or shift queries or problems with Rota Central or are leaving us.

Contact us via the WhatsApp channel (07918 121606) or to **Volunteer Services** at [volunteer@emptykitchens.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@emptykitchens.co.uk) Our **Volunteer Coordinator**, Sarah, can be contacted on [sarah.hutchison@emptykitchens.co.uk](mailto:sarah.hutchison@emptykitchens.co.uk)

**Health & Safety**

**As some of you are unfortunately aware, there are a number of viruses doing the rounds. If you are unwell or are sensing the onset of symptoms, please do stay home and let us know you are unable to attend. We wish you a swift recovery.**

**If you have a gastro related illness or are displaying symptoms please remember that we ask you not to attend a shift until you've been symptom free for at least 48 hrs.**

**Board of Trustees**

**The next Board Meeting is on 23rd January 2024.**

If you are interested in attending future Board meetings then do let the Secretary, Sam, know.... [sam@emptykitchens.co.uk](mailto:sam@emptykitchens.co.uk)

**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.

