

Everybody's Edinburgh



Introduction

Our Manifesto is a call to action to prioritise the wellbeing of Edinburgh's citizens. We have noticed a polarisation in society and politics – rich vs poor, left vs right, union vs independence. Our Third Sector acts as a bridge across these divisions, bringing people together to problem solve and reduce inequality and isolation. We passionately believe that only through investing in our communities will it be possible to create a stronger foundation to tackle inequalities, poverty and injustice.

As a sector, born out of direct community action, we are uniquely positioned and skilled to help deliver a brighter future. We are consistently rising to the challenge to provide new services, as well as re-imagine old ones. We want to shift the focus for inequalities from short-term firefighting, to long-term sustainable and preventative solutions. This means working together, and we expect better communication and collaboration to be at the heart of everything we do.

From our experience a person does not benefit from one service alone, but from the combined efforts of those working in the Public, Private, and Third Sectors – when these systems break down, when communication fails, we lose touch with the most vulnerable in our communities.

We are calling for all our partners, our politicians, our citizens, in all sectors, across Edinburgh to unite to fundamentally change the way we care for each other.

We can do this. We can make positive change in the next five years. Yes, it can be easy to become overwhelmed by the scale of the challenges we face. However, the cumulative sum of the parts of small positive actions can make all the difference, can create impact on a larger scale, and help us to stay focused on the issues that matter in our communities.

The following **examples** illustrate some of the issues that affect the lives of Edinburgh's citizens, and how collaborative action and problem solving can deliver positive change. These examples are not exhaustive, and it is important to recognise that they are the starting point to a much wider conversation on inequalities that should move beyond the council election campaigns to improve the wellbeing of our City for many years to come.

Who we are

Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council (EVOC) and Volunteer Edinburgh support the Third Sector through advice and training, volunteer engagement and representing Third Sector interests to partners. Our aim is to ensure the contribution volunteers make to the city is recognised and the knowledge, expertise and experience of the Third Sector is heard by policy makers.

4,000

Third Sector
Organisations operating
in Edinburgh*

70%

of Third Sector
organisations focus on
reducing inequalities in
health and wellbeing†

270,000

hours per week donated
by volunteers, equivalent
to **c.£3.9m** worth
of working hours†

Total income of Edinburgh's
Third Sector in 2015 was
£2.45 billion^

*Compact Voice 2015 – includes: registered charities, community and voluntary groups, social enterprises. †Volunteer Edinburgh.
^OSCR, includes: housing associations. ‡Compact Voice 2015.

Housing and Homelessness

Lack of affordable housing is one of the contributing factors to homelessness in our City. This is a pressing concern and one that requires the collaborative efforts of citizens, communities and organisations alike, to find solutions.

Fact

In 2015/16 there were **3,567** homelessness applications* in Edinburgh. The current spend of CEC on temporary accommodation is

£8,222,179 net*

Challenge

People who become homeless are spending more time in temporary accommodation because of a lack of move-on options.

This is expensive and unhealthy as people living in B&Bs are unable to cook and maintain life skills, and are unable to access social networks, which causes further isolation.

Objective

Affordable housing that meets the needs of Edinburgh's homeless population, and temporary accommodation that helps to improve basic life skills and reduce isolation.

Action #1

Bring together homeless people, Third, Private and Statutory Sectors to ensure that commitments to deliver affordable houses are met, and work with private developers to increase affordable housing in the city. Encourage land owners to make land available for development. Increase tax on land which is not being developed and increase charges on empty homes and second homes.

Action #2

Listen carefully to homeless people and forge close partnerships between community groups, Third Sector organisations and statutory services. We want to build strong and appropriate social and occupational networks which meet the needs of those requiring our long-term support.

*Freedom Of Information request City of Edinburgh Council.
†Scottish Government Homelessness Statistics.

Caring for Older People

Social isolation is a major factor in the decline in the wellbeing of older people. Cross-sector collaboration, and better understanding of the needs of older people and those who care for them, can help us shape services that work for them and improve health and wellbeing.

Fact

It is estimated that over

12%

of older people in Edinburgh suffer from loneliness and isolation;*

The number of unpaid carers caring for a family member or friend in Edinburgh is estimated at **65,084** (Scottish Household survey 2011). Of these, some **50%** are older people or care for an older relative or friend

Challenge

Social isolation is as damaging to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day†. In turn, those who are socially isolated are more likely to be admitted to hospital for longer periods of time, and struggle to be successfully discharged without repeat admission.

Caring for a relative often leads to the loss of social contact. Older people are particularly at risk of social isolation, more prone to depression, cognitive decline and dementia, and more susceptible to chronic illness such as cancer and diabetes.

Objective

Caring well for older people is the responsibility of every community. To share the care and combat isolation, older people, families and relatives need to be better supported by increased provision of in-home and community services, building stronger links into wider community resources such as art clubs, libraries and friendship groups.

Action #1

Build on community experience and knowledge to provide activities and support close to home, and work with communities and citywide community transport providers to support activities to get people out of the house and socialise with their peers.

Action #2

The implementation of the Carers (Scotland) Act from April 2018 will bring new and additional resources to the City with opportunities to strengthen carers' rights and support.

City of Edinburgh Council and the Health and Social Care Partnership should commit early to prepare for the implementation of the Act through a process of joint planning and co-production, not competitive procurement. Carer-led and Third Sector organisations should be equal partners in the implementation and delivery of national and local priorities to identify carers early and strengthen, in particular, peer support and short breaks developments.

Environment

Nearly a quarter of all Scottish homes are improperly insulated. Not only does this mean that precious energy resources go wasted, but more importantly it often forces the more vulnerable members of our community to live in poorly heated and damp houses.

*Changeworks.

Fact

Approximately

26%

of the Edinburgh population live in fuel poverty*, of which

43%

are pensioners. Housing is responsible for a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions*

Challenge

Fuel poverty and inadequate insulation are driving up costs for Edinburgh households who can least afford it. This is compounded by a general lack of awareness within households on the best ways to manage the temperature of their home efficiently, or who to turn to when costs become too much to manage.

Objective

Work effectively to provide affordable heating solutions, and ensure that insulation and energy advice is available to householders in their own homes to combat fuel poverty.

Action #1

Ensure Local Housing Strategy and Local Planning Regulations dictate the highest possible energy efficiency standards, such as implementing Passivhaus principles, combined with construction industry skills training to bridge performance gaps. This will lead to the warm, comfortable and energy efficient new-build homes.

Action #2

Ensure high quality in-home energy advice is provided within all council capital spend programmes and Scottish Energy Efficiency Programme work (SEEP), to reduce carbon emissions and address fuel poverty. This is also important for tenants moving into existing properties with renewable technologies installed that they may not have encountered before. It is vital that the advice provider is fully experienced in all heating technologies and adapts their delivery to meet the needs of each householder to ensure the information has been understood.

Children and Young People

Poverty has detrimental effects on the lives of young people. Better access to, and better provision of services for families can have a positive and lasting impact for future generations.

Fact

20%

of children in Edinburgh live in poverty* and

30%

of these children come from lone parent households†

Challenge

Housing and childcare are the biggest costs to lower income and lone parent households, and this affects the ability of parents to provide the necessary environment for their children to develop at the same rate as their more affluent peers. Child poverty requires a cohesive response from community organisations, schools, social services and employers, which can often be difficult to achieve.

Objective

Improve employment opportunities and childcare provision for lone parents, and provide affordable housing for those with greatest need.

Action #1

Work together with single parents and Private, Third and Statutory Sectors to increase awareness and build skills and confidence in providing the right employment support to lone parents and families.

Action #2

Improve access to affordable childcare to be able to offer increased opportunities for training, mentoring, career guidance and peer support for parents seeking employment.

*Edinburgh City Council 1 in 5 Child Poverty Report May 2016.

†Making it Work Edinburgh, Report June 2016.

Mental Health

It is widely accepted that we need a significant shift in Scotland's approach to mental health. This means moving from a system primarily focused on crisis and maintenance, towards prevention of distress and the promotion of good mental health and wellbeing for everyone.

Fact

25%

of Edinburgh's population are estimated to experience common or complex mental health*

Challenge

The crisis in social care as a result of austerity has led to long waiting lists for community mental health services such as counselling and visiting support. This can leave people stranded and result in a worsening of conditions, which could often have been avoided. The sector as a whole is now suffering from poor staff retention and recruitment problems, work overload, low salaries, job insecurity and lack of career structure.

Objective

More community mental health services are needed. It is clear that reduction in available opportunities is increasing crisis intervention at great cost to the individual and service budgets. Community services need greater flexibility and current procurement arrangements are working against this.

Action #1

Work together with service users and Third and Statutory Sector partners, to create a network of opportunities which are flexible and reflect the changing interests and needs of the individual. Look at appropriate measures which help clearly illustrate the positive impact on individuals and costs.

Action #2

Explore with Statutory Sector partners the appropriate investment routes that help support flexible opportunities for service users tailored to their interests and needs.

*A Sense of Belonging Report, Edinburgh Wellbeing Services, Edinburgh Integration Joint Board.



Summary commitment

We are seeking the administration 2017 – 2021 to commit to:

- Focus resources on addressing poverty and inequality.
- Recognise, nurture and support in-depth co-production and partnership working.
- Participate in a Third Sector led 'Commission on Prevention' to quantify investment in preventative services and recommend future actions to shift the balance of spend.

To further this agenda, Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council and Volunteer Edinburgh will commit to:

- Constructing productive space where Third Sector, Statutory Sector and Private Sector can come together to practically tackle inequalities.
- Work with elected members to ensure involvement from across Sectors in finding solutions and ensure their full understanding of the work of our Third Sector.
- Work to support partnerships and collaborations.

The Third Sector will maintain a clear focus on the need to address inequalities and to work for social justice – building on our reputation for being creative problem-solvers.



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