

# Fresh Start makes progress with Bank of Scotland grant



*Homelessness charity welcomes Bank of Scotland Foundation grant as demand for services in Edinburgh continues to grow*

Homelessness resettlement charity Fresh Start will use a £16,233 grant to help keep up with demand for its services. The charity was awarded the funding from the Bank of Scotland Foundation and said it would go some way to helping it try to meet demand for its Starter Packs and decorating service.

Fresh Start helps around 2,000 homeless households across the City resettle into new homes each year. The charity's Starter Packs are donated to recently re-housed families and individuals who have been homeless to help them make a fresh start in a new home. While the volunteer-driven 'Hit Squad' service helps people with decorating those new homes.

Keith Robertson, Fresh Start's Managing Director, welcomed the Bank of Scotland Foundation chair Kate Guthrie to the Fresh Start offices to explain that the grant would be used to meet the demand for those services.

He said:- "This award will help us to work towards meeting the growing demand for our services. Each year we see more people than we can help come to our doors to access basic goods to

help them make a fresh start in a home. In the current economic climate we don't expect that to get any better quickly.

“We work with some of Edinburgh's most vulnerable individuals and families who have been homeless by giving them a fresh start in their new homes. This includes providing essential items such as cutlery and crockery in our Starter Packs and support with decoration.”

Last year, Fresh Start helped 2,000 households a year – around 5,000 people – with Starter Packs, while its Hit Squad service saw 135 clients being helped decorate their new home. The charity was one of 27 Scottish charities to receive a funding boost from the Bank of Scotland Foundation.

This is the second tranche of donations through the Foundation's small grants programme this year and brings total donations to over £2 million since it was launched in November 2010. The Bank of Scotland Foundation is an independent charity that receives an annual donation of £1m from Lloyds Banking Group.

Kate Guthrie, Chair of the Foundation's Board of Trustees and HR Director, Insurance, Lloyds Banking Group commented:- “As always, the Foundation has had a fantastic response to its Small Grants Programme. We are truly delighted to be making these newest awards to such a diverse range of very deserving organisations – including Fresh Start. The great work undertaken by this charity as well as the other recipient charities is of immense importance and we are proud of the

part these donations allow us to play in helping make a difference within the Lothian communities.”