


# Sleep Out 2012 to raise awareness of homelessness



Just as the weather turns colder, the thought of sleeping out in the open may not actually be an attractive one, but an Edinburgh based charity hopes that hundreds of individuals will come together to support homeless and vulnerable young people in Edinburgh and the Lothians in Sleep Out 2012.

The Rock Trust will host Sleep Out 2012 on 8 November 2012 at Edinburgh's Festival Square, when people will sleep rough on the streets for one night only, helping to raise awareness of homelessness which affects thousands of young Scots.

The event will be held in partnership with with organisations across the country, including Centrepont, The Amber Foundation, St. Basil's, Llamau, Keyhouse and St. Edmund's. Eight cities, including Edinburgh, will host their own Sleep Out 2012 event. All eight will take place on the same evening, hoping to raise awareness of youth homelessness, as well as vital funds for the charities involved.

 In 2011-2012 over 45,000 homeless applications were made in Scotland. 20,000 of these were from individuals aged between 16 and 24. Most of these people rely on the support of charities such as The Rock Trust and Centrepont for a warm place to stay, something to eat or drink or even more simply a friendly face to talk to.

Kathleen O'Mahony, Fundraiser and Events Coordinator for The

Rock Trust, said:- “Sleep Out 2012 does not aim to replicate homelessness in any way. Our main priority is to raise awareness of youth homelessness.

“By working alongside other youth homeless charities, such as Centrepoin and The Amber Foundation, we have created a failsafe network that covers the length and breadth of the country.

“This network ensures we bring a national voice to one of the UK’s most pressing social issues and help those who are most in need of support, education, accommodation or advice.

“At The Rock Trust, we work with hundreds of young people to help prevent youth homelessness and support them to build better future for themselves.

“Yet we can only continue to do this with thanks to the generous support we receive from fundraising and donations from individuals – which is why events like Sleep Out 2012 are so important to us and the young people we support.”

The Rock Trust runs a number of projects which all aim to help support homeless young people throughout Edinburgh and the Lothians.

Seeking to provide practical support and training Compass educates people on money, housing, relationships and employability, ensuring they develop the necessary skills and

knowledge to avoid or escape homelessness.

Individuals have the opportunity to discuss on a one-to-one basis their issues and concerns. The Rock Trust has found that this interaction allows individuals to successfully break down the barriers that inhibit them from fulfilling their desired goals and achievements.

The funds raised from Sleep Out 2012 will also fund Nightstop, an emergency accommodation project for young people aged 16 to 25. Working towards decreasing the extent of youth homelessness Nightstop, a subsidiary of Nightstop UK, provides up to 3 nights emergency accommodation for those in need.

This is not the first time that The Rock Trust has held a Sleep Out event, as for the last 10 years they have organised their own smaller events and raised over £150,000. This year it is hoped that by encouraging more local businesses to join up and with their new charity partnership they will be able to build upon the success of previous events.

Sleep Out 2012 is open to anyone, but The Rock Trust is encouraging individuals to enter as part of a team. Participants must raise a minimum of £250 each and all money raised will go towards providing skills and resources to young people in Edinburgh and The Lothians that will allow them to avoid or escape homelessness.

There is a £25 registration fee to secure a place at Sleep Out 2012 and registration must be completed online following the

link: <http://www.sleep-out.org.uk/>

Companies encouraging staff to take part this year include Taylor Wimpey East and West Scotland, RBS and JCI Edinburgh all of whom provide generous support to The Rock Trust.

The Rock Trust works across Edinburgh and The Lothians with young people aged 16 to 25 who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. It provides advice, education and support to those most vulnerable in order to enable them to make a positive transition to adulthood and avoid the risks that accompanies homelessness.

For more information on The Rock Trust, Sleep Out 2012, or any of the projects associated with The Rock Trust please see [www.rocktrust.org](http://www.rocktrust.org) or email [admin@rocktrust.org](mailto:admin@rocktrust.org).

Photograph shows L to R: Alasdair Marshall from 9 Dots Consulting, Trisha Williams from JCI Edinburgh, Kathleen O'-Mahony from The Rock Trust and Pauline Mills from Taylor Wimpey East Scotland.