

# The Edinburgh Reporter meets Ian Grimwade of Cyrenians



Ian Grimwade is the newly appointed Head of Business Development at Cyrenians the Edinburgh based charity.

We met him to find out a bit more about the charity founded here in Edinburgh and the work it does.

Most recently Ian worked with Edinburgh Leisure as Head of New Business Development and had only just completed his first week in his new office. Prior to that Ian had pursued his dream of becoming a golf pro and he worked in the software industry too.

[The Edinburgh Reporter NEWS](#) from [Phyllis Stephen](#) on [Vimeo](#).

The job which Ian has just begun is a newly created role at the charity.

At the time of his appointment last month CEO Ewan Aitken said: "The creation of this new post is part of Cyrenians' strategy to face austerity measures head on rather than battenning down the hatches.

"Cyrenians recognise that in order to continue their work they need to increase the income they receive from outside the public sector, and to develop collaboration between the third, private and public sectors. In particular they aim to develop their social enterprises and their ability to generate an income stream that is longer term and more within their control than income received from the public sector."

The charity was founded to help those who feel excluded from society with no route back. The vision is of an inclusive

society where we all have the opportunities to live valued and fulfilling lives.

The Cyrenian philosophy is one of journeying together on the road to change and the charity also has a care for the environment in which that journey happens. A sustainable future needs a sustainable planet. This is one of the reasons behind the farm but is also the firm ethos behind the Fareshare and Good Food Programme.

What the charity does is collect surplus food from wholesalers and retailers and then redistributes it round member agencies. This is not food which has gone off; it is simply food which cannot or will not be sold for some reason, but it remains of good quality. Each week they save 9 tonnes of food from going to landfill and the programme involves around 13,000 hours of work each year.

But more than that they also offer support and advice on food safety and healthy eating and they offer a Good Food Handbook (which you can download below) packed with loads of information about setting up a cooking class or eating healthily.

The name Cyrenians is derived from the Biblical personage Simon of Cyrene, who was "volunteered" from the crowd to share the burden of the Cross with Jesus. However, Edinburgh Cyrenians is not affiliated to any religious creed or organisation.

The charity was formed in 1968 by local people out of concern for the evident problem of homelessness in Scotland's capital city. Although sharing the name "Cyrenian" with other groups in Scotland and the UK, there are no operational links.

Since its founding, Cyrenians has built a reputation on being willing to think differently, working with others, never giving up and delivering services of the highest standards for some of society's most excluded citizens; especially those

grappling with the challenges of homelessness, poverty, unemployment, recovery from addiction and recidivism.

Cyrenians in Edinburgh set up a 24-hour drop-in in The Cowgate, and then a community house in Broughton Place in July 1968, followed by Cyrenians Farm Community near Kirknewton in 1972 for people who needed to get away from the pressures of the city as part of their recovery.

If you or your company (they run great team building days!) would like to get involved with the charity then please [click here.](#)



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