

Edinburgh homeless village plans unveiled

Plans to build a village in Edinburgh for homeless people were confirmed today by a Scottish social enterprise group.



Social Bite want to build ten purpose-built houses in the Granton area, and the move is in partnership with EDI Group and City of Edinburgh Council.

The project aims to produce an innovative, low cost, supervised, safe living environment for up to 20 homeless people for around 12 months each.

Work is expected to begin early next year and the first residents will move in by the summer.

Social Bite will work with the council and other homelessness charities to identify suitable residents.

The individuals will live in a managed environment where they can learn new skills and get their life back on track, however the site will not be open to anyone with serious addiction problems.

Residents will be people who are currently living in mostly unsupported temporary accommodation, shelters, and B&Bs. After 12 months the group will help transition the residents into permanent accommodation and provide employment in the company's broader business and partners supporting their journey back into society.

Bruce Mickel, of housebuilders Mactaggart and Mickel, will providing expertise on the technical aspects of the development.

SP Energy Networks staff are volunteering for the design and

installation of the electrical network.

The units will be transportable should City of Edinburgh Council and EDI wish to develop the land on the Granton site. According to the council it currently costs an average of £47 per night to put someone up in a homelessness B&B adding up to £17,155 per person per year.

By housing 20 homeless people, the Social Bite Village will save the council almost £200,000 a year. Josh Littlejohn one of the co-founders of Social Bite said: "I'm not for a minute saying that Social Bite alone will eradicate homelessness or anywhere close to that. But we can create a blueprint. Working alongside other homelessness charities, we can help end the vicious cycle of homelessness for the individuals that we work with."

A sleep-out involving business leaders will take place on December 15 in Edinburgh to kick-start the campaign to raise the £500,000 needed to set up the project.

Donations can be made [here](#).

Construction costs for each house is expected to be around £30,000. Councillor Gavin Barrie, chair, EDI Group, said: "EDI actively explores temporary worthwhile uses for our land prior to development. The proposals put forward by Social Bite will have a meaningful and positive impact on those using the Social Bite Village.

Ben Macpherson MSP (Edinburgh Northern and Leith) said: "I hope that the village helps spur greater interest and development in the Granton waterfront area which has huge potential.

"The Social Bite Village can be a catalyst for wider change and stimulate other community initiatives, local investment and creative projects in North Edinburgh and beyond, and I welcome that."