

Scottish Churches
Housing Action



no room for homelessness!

SCOTTISH COUNCIL FOR
SINGLE HOMELESS

Press Notice - by e-mail

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**For the attention of:
News Editor/social affairs**

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Making the most of starter packs

A new guide showing the environmental benefits of work to tackle homelessness was published today. *Making the Most of Starter Packs* is an update for Starter Pack schemes – projects across Scotland which get household essentials such as crockery and bed linen to people moving out of homelessness. It demonstrates that as well as solving a social crisis, these projects help save the planet, by recycling goods that would otherwise be junked.

The supplement – updating a guide published three years ago – shows that the average project diverts 26 tonnes a year from landfill. And it points out that some schemes get £150 per tonne, so it's a potential source of income to hard-pressed voluntary projects.

Scottish Churches Housing Action's Alastair Cameron says, "This guide comes out of a conference which brought together schemes from all over Scotland. These are all small projects, and rely mainly on volunteers. So maximising income is essential. This work shows how linking in with local councils' waste strategies makes sense financially, since schemes are doing this recycling anyway."

Matt Elton of Scottish Council for Single Homeless adds, "Starter packs are win, win, win. People who are moving on from homelessness win, because they get a really good start in their new place. Volunteers from the local community win, because this is a really meaningful and satisfying way of making a practical difference to those in need in the local area. And, as outlined in this new guide, by diverting unwanted goods from landfill the environment wins too."

Figures from The Scottish Government show that over 56,000 households sought help from local councils last year because of homelessness, comprising almost 95,000 individuals, 31% of whom are children.

The guide is being sent to every Starter Pack scheme in Scotland, and can be downloaded from:

http://www.scsh.org.uk/information/features/starter_packs/index.htm

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Notes to editor see over.../

Notes to Editor:

1. Scottish Churches Housing Action is the ecumenical body working on behalf of the Christian churches to combat homelessness in Scotland. It lobbies for political change and supports local church projects to help homeless people.
2. Scottish Council for Single Homeless is a membership organisation which promotes the best opportunities for homeless people and those at risk of homelessness in Scotland.
3. The Scottish Government publishes an annual report on homelessness, *Operation of the Homeless Persons legislation in Scotland*. The latest edition is available at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/10/30092316/0>



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