



Last year the residents of Gilmour's Close, Grassmarket moved to more suitable accommodation for their needs. They are now in self-sufficient flats which are worlds apart from the previous hostel set up. Read the view of a member of staff and a resident to hear their different experiences and the effect the move has had.

## "Everything will be Alright When we Move"

The title is stolen from an almost daily quote, first heard in 1996, for a (now retired and much respected) colleague in Grassmarket. Jim Anderson is no longer with us at Mayfield Road but lives on in the memories of the staff who worked at Grassmarket and the tenants' who brought fond memories of Jim with them. Many expressed the need to bring him back. As if hanging on to a familiar face would guide them in the direction of a new 'resettlement' philosophy, a direction more in line with a proactive approach to reintegration from established/traditional hostels into the broader community. As the poem goes, 'its best to hold on tight to nurse/ for fear of finding something worse.

I trust Jim doesn't visualise himself as some matronly figure ("size 12", he insists) entrenched in old ways. If anything he was active in the complex explanations involved prior to the change over from 'residency' to 'tenancy'. A concept that evaded some (including staff initially) and requires occasional revisiting.

Intervening in the 'hostel culture' our recognised client group have encountered over the years is no easy task. Explaining that people are now responsible for electricity and gas bills, council tax demands, as well as shopping and myriad other details involved in maintaining a tenancy, tended to confuse them. All the financial details they had never had to deal with, or had simply handed over to a member of staff, were now their responsibility. Staffs' task is now to enable clients to best deal with utility companies and various outside agencies. Occasionally the temptation to 'take over and do things for people' is most irresistible. And then, as staff, we must remind ourselves of the philosophy of this unique resettlement project.

This has been a retraining exercise for staff as well as tenants. Forcing oneself to stand back, allowing people to make (less than diplomatic) phone-calls for instance, is part of a process of understanding for both parties. In fact, the clients' telephone skills seem to be improving as they

absorb the importance of calm, clear communication being the key to many things.

It would be fair to say that communication has been a stumbling block on some occasions and has taken effort on all parts to clarify the working roles of staff as they attempt to shrug-off the standardised 'hostel' mode of practice and adopt a technique of work practice that seems to evolve daily.

The Resettlement Project itself evolved out of a need to fill a gap in housing provision/training and the staff formulated a tentative working ethos to nurture this beginning. A philosophy developed out of open staff discussions and, of course, 'trial and error' practices.

This is Mayfield Road's first anniversary. The honeymoon lasted as long as the BBQ. Like most relationships the concept of 'resettlement' is interesting and challenging. Billy Gracey's finely expressed, 'String in the Tail', conveys the implicit message that those individual stings lie within (our 'self-destruct button') and it is personal choice whether to press it. This stepping stone to independence provides a pause for a countdown.

Intermediary experiences of a 'Resettlement Project' envisages, and allows for, eventual relationships people build (perhaps within themselves) are more lasting and rewarding in the broader world than previously understood. Maybe (just maybe, Jim) everything will eventually be alright now we've moved.

**George Chalmers (Support Worker)**  
March 2007

### The Sting in the Tail

The 22nd of March had arrived, a fateful day that found us on our way from Grassmarket, to pastures new at Mayfield Road. We went by shuttle service, in twos, with clothes, furniture, bag and baggage.

Graeme and George were the 'heavy team' and deserved full marks for a job well done. All the staff did well

## A WORD FROM Wendy

### Bruntsfield

I want to say thanks you to all the service users and staff who have put up with all the disruption at Bruntsfield House during the renewal of the heating system. The new system is nearly fully installed and the work has taken a couple of months more to complete than originally thought. There are only a few loose ends to tie up, or so I am told.

Our service users have been hugely supportive and understanding through all the work and I would like to say a personal thanks to you all. I would also like to say thank you to the staff team have had a lot of disruption to put up with too. In spite of the constant coming and going of various contractors they have remained up-beat and positive. It has been a tough few months for us all..

Congratulations to Paul Welsh on his new position as Assistant Manger at Bruntsfield House. We wish him luck with the post.

An update on Jo in Australia...she is missing everyone and is doing doggy walking in Australia! She sends her love to all the service users and is missing everyone.

Once again a big thanks to everyone from.....Wendy.x

### South Fort Street

I would also like to mention the service users and staff team at South Fort Street. The service has been reviewed and there have been a few changes to the way we staff and manage the project (including my arrival as the new manager). Service users have been hugely supportive in helping us review the project and this will be an ongoing process. The staff team are getting used to me being around and continue to support me in my task of reviewing the service and making some changes.

I would therefore like to thank them for welcoming me into their team and for their motivation and dedication to the project, the service user group, and the project as a whole....its onward and upward guys!

Thanks again  
Wendy

## I'm Down

### Verse 1

This world goes on like a wounded bird  
I've had enough too often heard  
The tears of angels melt the dirty snow  
The children break their hearts to be

And well-wishers feed on agony  
Everyone has a pain to call their own

### Verse 2

Sometimes I have no tears to cry  
As another kind of horror burns my eyes

Then the TV tells me, "there's a sale on shoes"  
So I count my pennies like a banking machine  
As another kind of sadness makes the scene  
Satan's got a hammer, and God thinks I'm a nail

### Chorus

I'm down, old son, I've lost my way  
Can't put off my problems for another day  
How many tomorrows will I destroy today  
I'm down, old son, I've lost my way  
I'm looking in a mirror.

Can't turn away  
I won't live forever, maybe somehow  
I can change

### Verse 3

Don't cry alone, don't weep for me  
There's nothing only I can see  
I'm not so much a traveller as a man without a home  
I don't talk to heaven, I never pray  
There's not much time, too much to say  
No hand on the tiller and my ship is sailing away

By Ron Lee (Oxgangs)



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# WELCOME

Hi everyone. This is the 3rd edition of the Gowrie Newsletter and it's going from strength to strength. If you have anything that you would like to see in the newsletter or any ideas for topics to be covered, just get in touch. Either have a word with your support worker or get in touch at the details below.

Thanks to everyone that has contributed to this edition, there are some great articles. Hopefully there will be lots going on in the summer so we will be able to get a few articles about what you've all been up to for the next edition. There will be lots of BBQs at Dryden Street and South Fort Street so when we all get invites to those we'll be able to get some photos!

Enjoy your newsletter and get in touch with ideas.

Rebecca

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# Developing Dryden Street

Before the summer of 2007, Dryden Street's garden was a drab, empty wasteland where nobody dared venture. At a tenants' meeting, tenants expressed the desire to have somewhere to relax and socialise. They brought forward their ideas and plans for how they felt the garden could be a more enjoyable place to spend time. The manager then took this proposal to Gowrie Care and funds were allocated. After months of hard work, dedication and hilarity from the service users and staff, the garden has been transformed into a sanctuary, encouraging both structured and leisure activities.

One of the best things about the garden is how it has unfolded as the weeks have gone on. Every day has offered something different, whether it's been wrenching up weeds and dandelions or enjoying a delicious and relaxing barbecue. And it's not over yet - with the new greenhouse on the way, the garden is not only a sustainable venture but it is a healthy one, offering opportunities for service users to grow their own organic fruit, veg and herbs all year round. Buckets for rainwater and compost also help make the garden an environmentally friendly enterprise.

For the future, Dryden Street are hoping to have an open day where tenants, their friends & families and local community can come and have an enjoyable day in the garden with a barbecue (and hopefully some good weather!) Everyone has contributed something to the garden, making it a worthwhile project that has created a strong sense of community spirit.

By Babs Melville (Support Worker)

**This is what one of the tenants at Dryden Street thinks about the changes...**

## From ow to wow

When I moved into Dryden Street supported accommodation the 'space' at the rear of the property was not a garden of any description. It was a sorry looking concrete space that seemed to lack any potential. When spring came around I was asked if I wanted to volunteer to help clean up this sorry space. At this time I was quite depressed and lacked all motivation. I reluctantly said yes, but secretly I did not have any interest in helping out at all. We started to 'weed' and clean up the paving which covers most of the ground. This was hard, back breaking work and took several days to complete, but I found myself getting into it in quite a big way.



I also found that having something physical to do was not only helping my mental state but also providing me with a great nights sleep, something that I had previously struggled with.

It was then that Lynne 'green fingers' Rodgers and I started to spend the money that Gowrie Care had generously provided. We, along with other tenants, made regular trips to B&Q to acquire plants, flowers and all manner of garden related equipment to help with our quest: The quest being to provide a safe, green and colourful environment for all residents and staff to enjoy.

Since then we have worked very hard and enjoyed the stage by stage progress that has been made. It has also provided me personally with motivation, interest and almost constant hilarity. I feel

that the garden has helped me through a very difficult period in my life and I feel that it will continue to do so for me and other tenants.

The Dryden Street garden is now a colourful, peaceful and visually calming place for everyone, with regular barbeques and a place to socialise.

I am personally very grateful to all staff for their enthusiasm and help during this period and long may the garden provide happiness for current and future tenants and staff.

Mike Bryce  
Tenant at 2 Dryden street

# A Solo Performance

I've had to do it all my life  
Even with a wife, trouble and strife  
Half my years in a double act  
Always in two minds and that's a fact

The latch key kid when the lock gets changed  
In later years becomes deranged  
Abnormal perception at the hostile reception  
Psychological body language a big deception

The laws of nature are positive ones  
Attracting the negatives more than once  
That mother, sets the stage, in a dramatic way  
She planned the course of my destiny

My view from earth is a starry eyed reflection  
A lunar force for darkened direction  
The sun is warming the planet for fun  
Clouding an issue when the high winds begun

A magnetic personality a spelling fatality  
When it comes to reality, it's my specialty  
Down to earth guy a foxy character  
Layer upon lair let the playwright beware

Put words in my mouth and I will spit them out  
Too much heat in the words, end in drought  
Having dried out I pray for rain  
A forest of roots branch out in my brain

A solo performance is my way out  
Singularly mind gives me some clout  
On a heavenly wavelength this is my basis  
Peace and harmony my only oasis

A time to look at yourself poem  
By John Stobo (Oxgangs)

# Changes Afloat

Since November last year South Fort Street has been going through many beneficial changes and this is continuing to progress in a positive manner both for residents and staff. Since the change to the roster there is now an overlap of a few hours which allows for more staff to be present thus enabling them to accompany residents to agency appointments and also attend Social Activities/ Outings with them. To date residents have so far ventured out on group activities, which are organised on a regular basis approx every second Friday, and to date they have visited North Berwick, the Falkirk Wheel, (Which was sourced by fellow resident W McArthur for all residents) and Dunbar (Good Fish and chips) and next visit is an educational one to Edinburgh Zoo. (once again interest shown by residents) who are fast becoming very pro-active in their own support. Residents have also been taking advantage of the good weather we have been experiencing by holding BBQs, which led us to the state of the Garden, the only thing letting us down, therefore Staff and Residents decided to make an impact in this area as well. The results of which you can see are coming along brilliantly and everyone bearing sustainability in mind at the same time. From early May Lorraine (Asst Manager) along with Staff and Residents set about changing the way the garden looked As you can see both staff and residents have been getting involved and the improvement has been brilliant. We now host many BBQs and Birthdays in our seating



area and admire the view. We will continue to maintain the garden along with the "Gardening Club" to which many residents like to turn their hand. Be it planting, tending flowers, weeding or tending one of the vegetables we are growing. Not to mention the hope of a greenhouse in the not to distant future for residents to raise our own seeds. All in all a goodtime is being had by all. South Fort Street is growing from strength to strength with a good team of staff and a fantastic group of very pro-active residents. Well done to everyone taking part.

## Residents' comments:

J Walls says "I enjoyed helping Lorraine in the Garden it is now 100% better than it was, its now a useful space to get more activities in the garden done" "the unit is a lot better now due to all changes and I'm looking forward to all the planned outings over the summer we get to have a say were to go".

W McArthur says "Now that the good weather is here the residents and staff of South Fort Street can enjoy there newly completed garden and seating area, the

courtyard was transformed by Lorraine "Bob the Builder" Davidson and her assistant Wendy "The Beechgrove Gardener" Morris, and what a team they are! As well as managing South Fort Street, you should see Lorraine in action swinging a sledge hammer! She is truly a woman off many talents.

The courtyard looks great and with new furniture and barbeque, the residents are already making use of the area and enjoying sitting outside in the evenings eating freshly barbequed food and socialising. The place looks great and has brought a different feel about the place, with residents and staff helping in one way or another the job was completed quickly, and all concerned can be proud off there great efforts.

