



INTERNATIONAL

# **BUILDING A VILLAGE COMMUNITY TO BREAK THE CYCLE OF HOMELESSNESS**



# EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE A SAFE PLACE TO CALL HOME

This is an opportunity to support, fund or partner with pioneering projects that sustainably break the cycle of homelessness in your city.

Building on Social Bite's impact on reducing homelessness in Scotland, and the global movement created by the World's Big Sleep Out, Josh Littlejohn MBE is seeking support for three transformational initiatives to help bring an end to homelessness in your community.

The Social Bite Village

## BACKGROUND

Josh Littlejohn MBE is one of the world's leading social entrepreneurs and campaigners. His work on the homelessness issue began when he co-founded Social Bite, a small chain of sandwich shops that began **offering jobs and free food to people affected by homelessness** in Scotland. It shot to fame when **George Clooney** visited the café in Edinburgh in 2015, followed by the likes of Leonardo Di Caprio, Harry and Meghan and **The Duchess of Cambridge**. Social Bite now employs 72 people (1/3 of whom have been affected by homelessness) and 100 volunteers across seven shops, a restaurant and a corporate catering business. They give out over 140,000 items of food each year and connect 550 vulnerable people each week with food, support and opportunities.

**The charity's fundraising efforts have led to two ground-breaking initiatives in line with its mission to eradicate homelessness in the country:**

### THE SOCIAL BITE VILLAGE

an innovative accommodation project for homeless people in Edinburgh. It comprises of 11 prefabricated wooden houses with gardens and a community hub, built on vacant land. The Village offers a home to vulnerable homeless people for 12-18 months, during which time they are provided with extensive support in a community environment where residents learn new skills and get their life back on track.

### SCOTLAND'S HOUSING FIRST PROGRAMME

bringing 830 street sleepers off the streets of Edinburgh and stimulating significant political action which led the national government to invest a further £6.5m.

Last year, alongside Will Smith and Dame Helen Mirren, Josh launched the World's Big Sleep Out, a global campaign staging fundraising events at iconic venues in 50 cities including Times Square and Trafalgar Square. On 7th December 2019, 60,000 people across the world slept out in unison for the **the world's largest display of solidarity and support** for homeless and displaced people and raised over \$10m.

In recognition for his work as a powerful driver of change around homelessness, Josh has received an MBE from the Queen (which he dedicated to the homeless and marginalized), five honorary doctorates, a 2019 Pride of Britain Award and the Robert Burns Humanitarian Award 2020.



# THE ISSUE

That homelessness still exists in the UK in 2020 is something that many people would agree is morally unacceptable and a great failing of our society. We are a wealthy country and yet there are significant numbers of people who are shut out from having a safe place to live and are consequently excluded from having the normal and happy life that so many of us take for granted. This is one of the great and visible social ills of our time.

The key driver of homelessness is poverty and those most likely to become homeless are those with the weakest safety net, but other factors include life events (such as job loss, relationship breakdown, death of a loved one, ill health and no longer being able to afford the rent), social, political and economic causes (e.g. cost, unavailability or poor quality of housing), or a failing in the system (not having anywhere to go when leaving care, the army, prison or domestic violence).

Being homeless makes it in turn harder to resolve these issues, causing further isolation, strain on mental health, substance misuse, unemployability and exposure to violence. Homeless people are over nine times more likely to take their own life.

Homelessness was prioritised for the first time in its history by the Member States at the 2020 UN Commission for Social Development, building on the **Sustainable Development Goal** that by 2030, every homeless person will have access to adequate, safe and affordable housing.

## IN THE UK:

**5,000 PEOPLE**  
are sleeping rough on a single night.  
London alone sees 9,000 rough  
sleepers a year.

**TWO HOMELESS  
PEOPLE**  
die on the streets every day.

**43 YEARS**  
is the average life expectancy  
of a rough sleeper

**125,000 CHILDREN**  
wake up homeless each day in inadequate  
temporary accommodation.

## WHAT'S NOT WORKING

In recent years, the main response to homelessness in Great Britain has been to group people together in unsupported shared temporary accommodation before permanent accommodation is provided when a person is deemed 'tenancy ready'.

These chaotic shared environments are particularly ineffective at preparing people with complex needs for independent living and this issue is compounded by people being trapped in these unsuitable settings for extended periods. People receive little or no support, must vacate temporary accommodation during the day,

have access to limited cooking facilities and are surrounded by unsafe and chaotic behaviour. When vulnerable people finally move into their settled accommodation, they frequently struggle to manage this transition and end up homeless again.

Many people experiencing homelessness see working as the best path to a better life, but experience many barriers to employment and struggle to hold down a job without a stable roof over their head.

# THE SOLUTION

We need your support to roll out three transformational initiatives which have been proven to achieve sustainable, long-term results- a blueprint for addressing homelessness. Through social enterprise cafes, a village and a Housing First project, the overall ambition is to create a full circle solution to the issue of homelessness – from housing support to employment. In doing so we hope to alter the course of some of the UK's most vulnerable people for the better – swapping a destiny of poverty and exclusion for one of compassionate support and inclusion.

## PARTNER WITH US

Be part of sustainable solutions that fast-track ending homelessness in your city and benefit the community.

- Employee, customer and client engagement with highly tangible, local and rewarding outcomes
- Advisory committee of Chairs, CEOs and senior management from sector-leading organisations
- Suitable for corporate donations, employee and customer campaigns and Charity of the Year
- Regular meetings and progress reports



# THE VILLAGE



## CASE FOR SUPPORT

The wide use of bed and breakfast facilities as emergency temporary accommodation for people experiencing homelessness is both a costly and ineffective use of its resources.

People receive no support, have limited cooking facilities and are often surrounded by people with active substance misuse issues and/or displaying chaotic behaviour. When people move on from B&Bs to their settled accommodation, they are often poorly equipped to manage this transition and, in many cases, end up homeless again. Despite the high cost, the accommodation does not deliver positive, long-term outcomes for people affected by homelessness and does little to prevent repeat homelessness, which costs the Council even bigger sums in the future. It creates a false economy by diverting much needed resources into a temporary accommodation housing market and away from preventing and tackling homelessness in a more strategic way.

The Village represents a brilliant opportunity for local areas to invest in and learn from a radically different alternative, by building a community that provides high quality living space as well as a supportive and structured environment from which people can escape homelessness and build a better life for themselves.

# CONCEPT

The Village is an innovative, highly supported community for up to 20 people affected by homelessness. The purpose of the Village is to offer the right support, living environment and opportunities for someone from a situation of homelessness to build an independent life.

The Village is made up of 10 'NestHouses' – each shared by two residents plus an additional unit for staff. There is also a large, central Community Hub, which is the focus of community life – where residents can cook, eat and socialise together. The Hub is also the base for training and support activities.

Residents, who come from living in temporary/emergency accommodation, will live at the Village for approximately 12-18 months. This is a quality living space that demonstrates to the residents that they are valued and worthy of a safe, warm and comfortable home. Over this time, they will contribute to the life of the community, learn a range of new skills and engage in work and voluntary placements.

We then help transition residents into permanent accommodation with support to make it sustainable. As each person moves on, a new resident will join to be supported and mentored by their fellow community members.



Inside a NestHouse

## HOW IT IS RUN

The Village is designed to be an active and highly supportive community, run by highly skilled and experienced staff alongside a team of volunteers who are a consistent and supportive presence on site.

The project is managed as a partnership between:

- Social Bite, which acts as the landlord and oversees the project.
- A partner support charity, who provide senior key workers to give high quality care to community members on site (*in Edinburgh this is the Cyrenians*).
- A Housing Association, which provides a Housing Officer to manage each resident's occupancy as well as facilities management ensuring the buildings and site are maintained to the highest standard (*in Edinburgh, this is Hillcrest Homes*).



The Community Hub

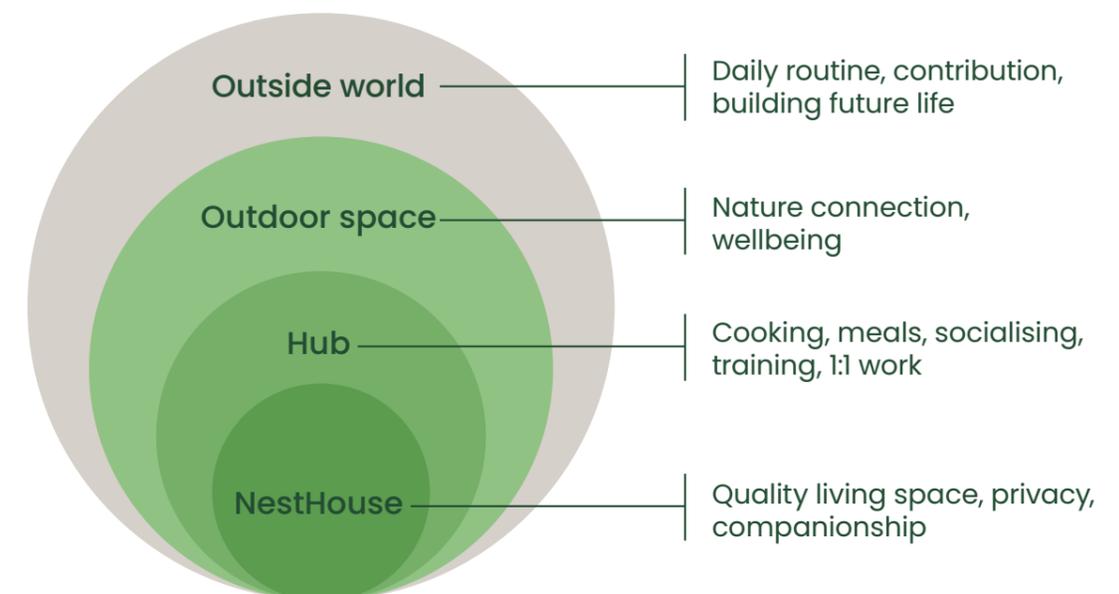
## SERVICE OBJECTIVES

1. Supporting residents to overcome the issues which have contributed to their homeless experience and to build an independent life away from homelessness
2. Promoting the development of independent living skills that will enable tenancy sustainment in the longer term and avoid repeat homelessness
3. Helping residents sustain the accommodation by engaging with housing support and participating in community life
4. Promote capacity for positive engagement in the community and active citizenship

## WHAT LIVING IN THE VILLAGE INVOLVES

- › Intensive 1:1 work
- › Role modelling of healthy routines and behaviours
- › Cocreation of community and peer support
- › Community meals
- › Community chores / rota
- › Encouragement with active citizenship, supporting into employment, education, volunteering, training
- › Support with engagement in wider community, services, social networks and facilities such as health care and libraries
- › Practical support from budgeting to menu planning
- › A health and wellbeing programme complete with fitness, yoga and mindfulness sessions
- › Communal activities that promote social inclusion and skills-building including cooking, crafting and gardening

## THE VILLAGE MODEL



# TRANSITIONING TO INDEPENDENT LIVING

On leaving the Village, Community members are supported to make the transition into their own accommodation by their Key Worker who will help them work out what option is best for them and will keep in regular contact once they have made this switch.

**“I was sitting begging for money around the corner from the Rose St café when a woman approached me and told me about how to access free food at Social Bite. This led to my stay at the Village, where I was given the skills to manage my own tenancy. My time living there was essential, because the move has been less daunting. Now I am managing my own place. I’m happy to work full time now that I am settled. It’s early days but I have everything I need for my home. I have friendships at the Village, some like me have moved on to their own social housing. I am now also going to come back to volunteer at Social Bite, now I am settled and have spare time.”**

**Former Resident**



# PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

This is an opportunity for a corporate partner, or collaboration of partners, to lead on the creation of a new Village in a chosen city of need. Funding and gifts in kind will cover every stage from the research and development phase to find the most suitable land or premises, through to planning and risk assessments, the construction or refurbishment of the accommodation and introduction of the first residents. Benefits include:

- Rewarding hands-on employee volunteering opportunities, from painting and decorating to building gardens and delivering community wellbeing and skills-building activities
- Naming rights
- Gift/services in kind and skills-sharing opportunities in line with your core business
- Highly tangible outcome with opportunity for engagement visits
- Stand-out CSR contribution with immediate impact and long-term legacy
- Powerful case studies for internal and external comms

## BUDGET

Programme Activities	2020	2021	2022	Total
<b>Development Phase and Securing Land</b> Funding for key personnel and resources to: research and secure site for village: working with local government to identify vacant land, establishing project team including project director, architect, engineer, groundworks partner and materials procurement. Establish pre-fabricated house-builder. Establish charity partner to operate locally.	£75,000			£75,000
<b>Funding Village Build</b> Put into production eleven 2 bedroom pre-fabricated houses and a central community hub. Establish pro-bono support in services and materials to subsidise costs of the project.		£1,000,000		£1,000,000
<b>On-site Support Costs</b> This covers the costs required to provide a full support structure for residents. This would only be provided for one year until fully incorporated by the local government.			£150,000	£150,000
<b>Social Bite Contribution – 15%</b> This covers a contribution to Social Bite Scotland for ongoing consultancy and support of new village.	£11,250	£150,000	£22,500	£183,750
<b>Total</b>	£86,250	£1,150,000	£172,500	£1,408,750

# **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT**

[josh.littlejohn@social-bite.co.uk](mailto:josh.littlejohn@social-bite.co.uk)

or

[sara.rees@social-bite.co.uk](mailto:sara.rees@social-bite.co.uk)

