

Annual Report 2016



Open Door Accommodation Project



Supported Accommodation



Supported Flats

Contents

Mission Statement

Chair Person's Report

Crossword

Emergency Hostel

Supported Flats

Cooking skills

Open Door Escape

Student/Volunteer Coordinator

Comments

Facts and Figures

Contact Details



We are regulated by The Care inspectorate and our inspection reports can be reviewed at www.scswis.com

Registered Charity SC008533

Company Number 340356



The project operates and exists as an enabling and empowering organisation with an approach to our work which is innovative and multi-disciplinary.

We acknowledge the views of our stakeholders and young people in the skilled and effective delivery of safe, secure accommodation and support to homeless young people in West Lothian aged between 16 and 25 years old.



Chairperson Report – Frank Anderson

Firstly, I would like to congratulate our organisation on reaching its 30th year of operations. I have mixed emotions regarding this, on one hand, it is fantastic that we have continued to provide a much-needed service to the many young people in West Lothian but, on the other hand, I am quite sad that we still have to provide such a service. The issue of homelessness appears to be continuing to grow and affects our youth as much as everywhere else in Scotland. I am sure that the founders of the Speakeasy project, operating from a portacabin, never foreseen that we would reach this milestone. There may not be as many 'rough sleepers' as there were when they started but it has only 'gone underground' with the advent of 'sofa surfers'. We will be organising an event next year, to celebrate our 30th birthday, and also to bring together stakeholders to look at what more we can be doing to further reduce youth homelessness. More details will be circulated nearer the time.

The year has flown in and I have to say it has been a very eventful one. It seems like only yesterday, maybe it was, that I was writing last year's report.

I would like to thank everyone for the tremendous work that has been done over the past year. This was a very trying time for Open Door with a further tendering process to go through for the Craigshill Accommodation Project. It involved a lot of very detailed information collection, collating and forecasting about what we provide, as a service, and how we would take the organisation forward. This is a very intensive process and consumes a lot of our managers' time and effort. Unlike big national organisations, we have to absorb this as well as continue to provide our service to our young people. We were also about to lose our Director, Rob, who was moving on to another charitable organisation. We were, on this occasion, successful, and have secured our funding for the Accommodation Project for the next 3 years.

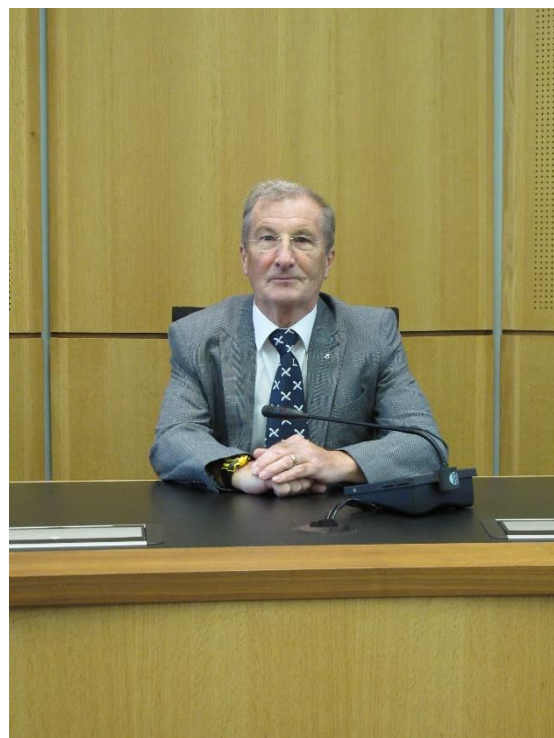
We are continuing to go from strength to strength, despite the current and projected economic climate. We are still providing a valuable service for our young people and the current economic situation could exacerbate the homelessness position within West Lothian. **Homelessness is, and unfortunately will probably continue to be, a significant problem.** Open Door still faces the challenge of having to review our activities and achieve

efficiencies in order to grow. We are planning for the future and having to look at how we can develop a new accommodation facility.

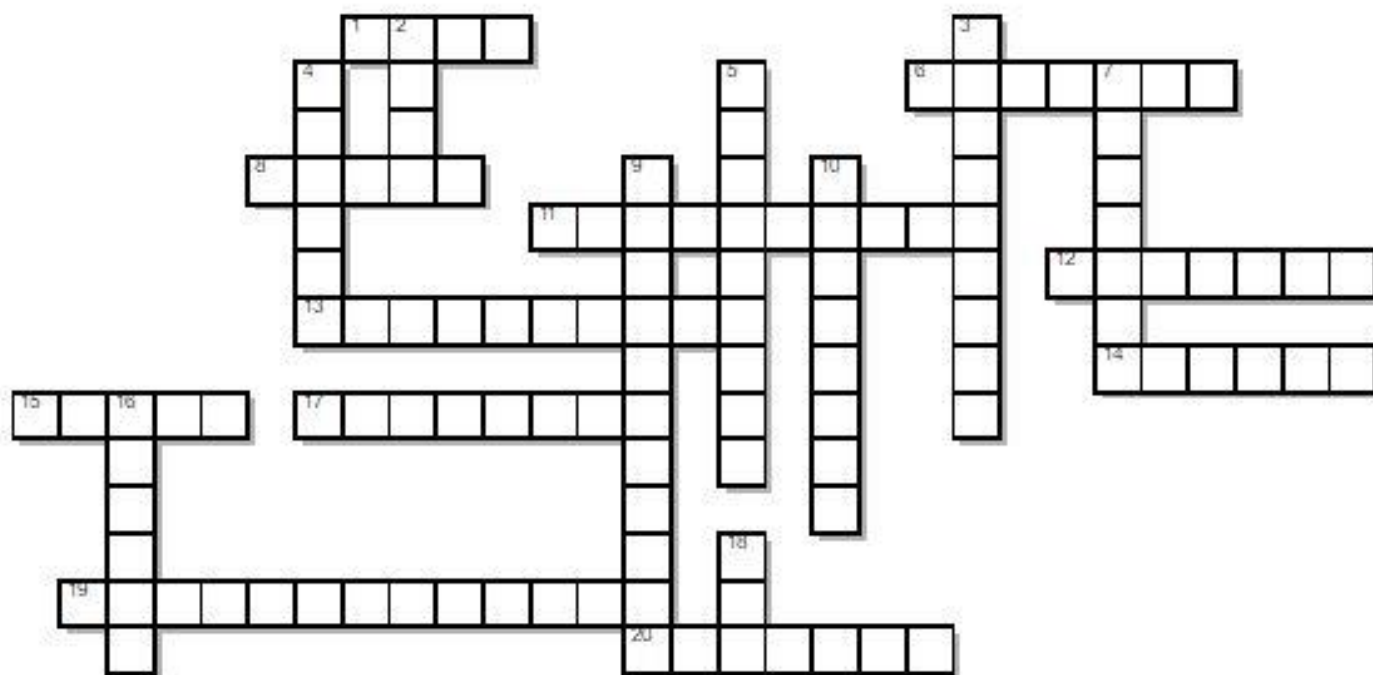
Everything we do is for our young people and what they think is incredibly important to us, which is why the results from the annual satisfaction survey matter so much. As always there is room for improvement and we are continuing to work on improving our services for the future.

I, on behalf of the Board, would like to thank ALL the staff for their forbearance during this past year, which has involved the sharing of the burden of preparing our tender and the inevitable disruption that this causes. I congratulate each one of them for what has been a very successful year for the organisation. I personally would also like to thank our Board members, who have played a pivotal role in taking Open Door forward. I know that with us all working together we can continue to see Open Door progress and help to tackle the Youth Homelessness issues in West Lothian. I would also like to welcome Claire, our recently appointed Director and I know the Board look forward to working with her.

I would like to express my thanks to our funders West Lothian Council for their continued support and contribution towards our work.



Big Fat Open Door Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 This one is not ajar
- 6 Bear the weight of
- 8 James Simpson who invented chloroform
- 11 Self belief
- 12 Advisory group
- 13 Paid work
- 14 Tricks of the trade
- 15 Things to strive for in these gaols
- 17 Publicly recommend
- 19 Living quarters
- 20 Possession of property

DOWN

- 2 Not closed
- 3 Phillip Hammond does this
- 4 Human beings
- 5 Negotiation to resolve differences
- 7 You have choices with these potions
- 9 Not Trump or Clinton
- 10 Living in a place
- 16 Guidance
- 18 Playful amusement

Emergency Hostel



The past year has been a particularly difficult one when our hostel which has been set up and ran by Open Door since 1987 went out to tender. Fortunately we were able to secure this contract for the next 3 years. The new contract will create some challenges ahead in how the service will be delivered, staffing structure and length of stay. The next year will be challenging but also gives us the opportunity to move forward and continue to focus on the needs of young people experiencing homelessness in West Lothian. The support from young people and those who have used the hostel over the years getting in touch to comment on their positive experiences has been greatly appreciated and has gone a long way to boost the morale of staff during such a difficult period.

I totally loved my stay at Open Door and have no complaints at all. All staff and residents treated me with so much respect. I learned a lot and would highly recommend the hostel to any young person dealing with homelessness.Jordan

Ina's Diner was set up by project workers and our cook Ina due to the increasing numbers of young people coming through our service with very little cooking skills or food knowledge. This has been an enjoyable experience for young people and at their suggestion has been expanded to include those who have moved on to our Supported Flats Service. The topics for our group work sessions this year have been resident led and we have provided sessions on topics such as, dangers of legal highs, smoking cessation, tenancy sustainment, food hygiene, housing issues and budgeting.

In addition we have a regular drop in with the optician, dentist and the Moving into Health team.

Staff were always really good. They tried to help us. I was always happy and enjoyed my stay. I met lots of new people and got along with everyone..... Chantelle

Residents have been involved in a number of volunteering roles and in raising awareness of housing issues for young people through participation in a Housing Options Scotland survey. It is heartening to see the resilience and motivation from these young people, not only working to improve their own situation but to try and make a difference for others.





Fund raising money was used to take young people to the Virgin Money Street of Light in Edinburgh. The street of light was an installation of illuminated arches with more than 60,000 lights that lit-up Edinburgh's Royal Mile as part of the Christmas celebrations. The young people who went to the event thoroughly loved the experience and as a bonus they

also got to pay a visit to the German Christmas market and winter wonderland. The festive celebrations didn't end there however for hostel residents, as the year was rounded off by the now annual and much anticipated visit to the Irn Bru Carnival in Glasgow.



I really like it here. The support is really good in Open Door. I have so many nice things to say I cannot include it all. It has helped me to become more independent.....Chelsey x

Supported Flats



It has been another productive year in the Supported Flats. In keeping with the introduction of the 'Universal Credit' element of the Welfare Reform Act, staff have attended information sessions on the roll out and changes, to ensure they have a clear understanding of the impact that it will have on the young people that are supported by ODAP. Staff took this learning and facilitated group work sessions to inform the young people of what they can expect when they begin their claims. This created excellent discussions regarding budgeting and how they think they would manage getting all their money paid in a lump sum every month. Thankfully when it was launched it was announced that any young person who was homeless would not be expected to start Universal Credits, but it is hoped that the ground work has been done to help them manage their money when they do secure their own tenancies.

We were fortunate to secure some money through fund raising. Following discussions with the young people we decided to use this money to buy arts and crafts materials. The young people made trinket boxes and Christmas cards for their friends and families. This activity was greatly enjoyed by all involved.

We also worked closely with West Lothian Needy who invited us to their event where people could drop off gifts. These gifts were given out to the young people to ensure that they had



presents to open on Christmas day. We also used the money to take the young people to Edinburgh for the Virgin Light show. This was a great cultural day for them, we visited the Christmas Market and then went to the light show which had entertainment provided by the Police Scotland Choir. The young people greatly enjoyed the festivities.

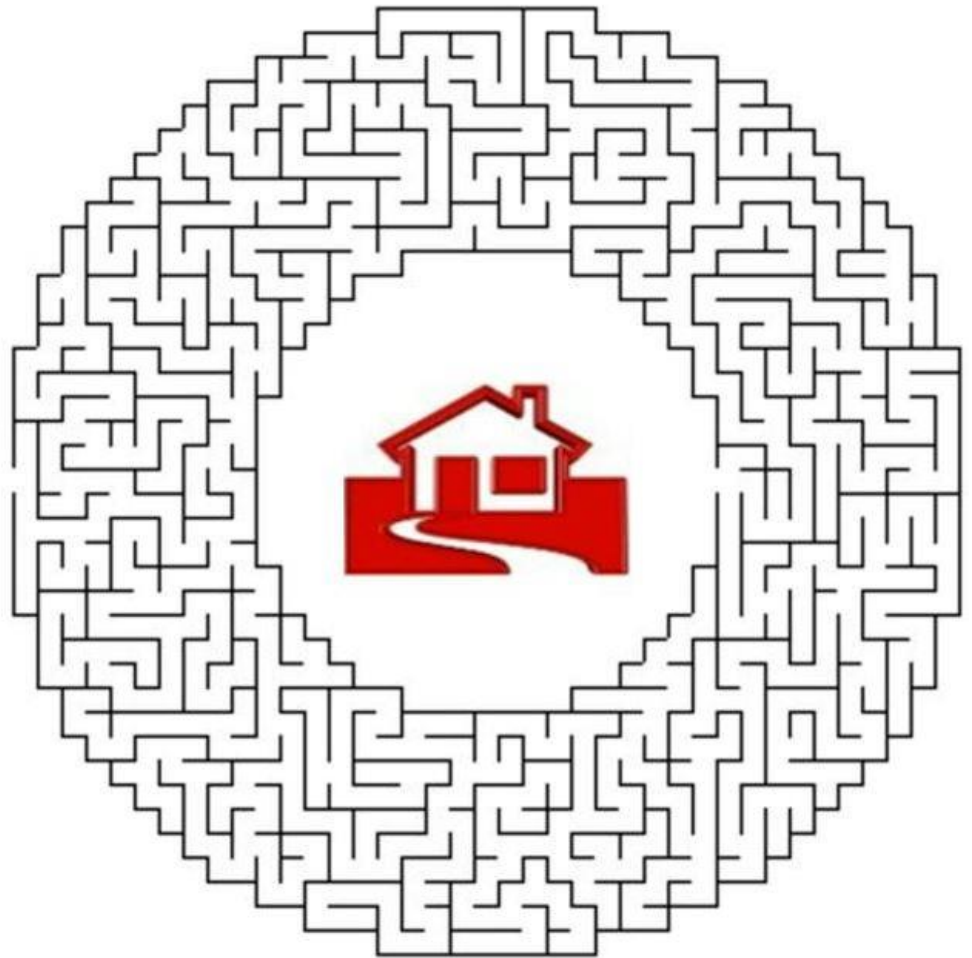


One of our targeted Outcomes for the year was to ensure that each young person who left the supported flats could cook at least two meals from scratch. This was achieved by most of the young people by the time they left the service. Those that did not achieve this were young people that returned home or went on to live with friends. We also wanted to make sure that each young person was totally involved in the development of their support plan, using a genuinely co-production model. We did this by incorporating service user participation and inviting each young person to type up their own support plan on Better Futures. They felt that they had been empowered to plan their own futures, and were particularly motivated by seeing the graph that was produced which illustrated how far they had progressed from one review to the next.



The Great Open Door Escape

Homelessness



Try to navigate your way from homelessness to the safety of Open Door. Be careful the path is tricky and there are many barriers along the way.

It's no laughing matter



If a turtle doesn't have a shell, is he homeless or naked?



Student/ Volunteer Coordinator

Funding from the Robertson Trust has enabled the Student/Volunteer coordinator to engage with universities and practice teachers in order to provide good quality student places to Social Work students. Building links with other not for profit organisations to create volunteering opportunities for the young people we work with and to develop volunteering opportunities within the organisation as a route to improving skills and confidence for those finding difficulty gaining employment.

The funding allocated to this role is now coming to an end. This has been a valuable service which has enabled us to pilot new projects and services many of which we will continue to offer and develop further.

Our peer education and group work programmes have been well received and have benefitted the young people who took part, volunteers who helped run the services and those in the community who gained increased awareness and understanding of homeless issues facing young people in West Lothian today. We will now continue to build on these



services by identifying partner agencies to fund and support this. In the past year 19 young people took part in volunteer opportunities with peer education, Beech Brae, River Kids and Open Door with 11 people volunteering on more than one occasion. Young people also took part in a research survey with Housing Options Scotland. 3 young people achieved their 50-hour saltire award.

Volunteer and student placements have been effective in helping us to offer additional group work sessions and give those starting out in a career in the sector an opportunity to gain valuable skills/experience.

We have received volunteer support from a number of local businesses and individuals in areas such as consultancy, fund raising and food provision. With the current financial climate, this support has been invaluable in enabling us to provide a good standard of support and accommodation to young people using our services.



Student placements will continue to be offered and the links we have built with universities and practice teachers sustained. We provided 3 social work placements, one HNC

placement and 2 observational placements during the year, feedback from all students has been extremely positive often giving them an insight into the issues faced by the third sector.

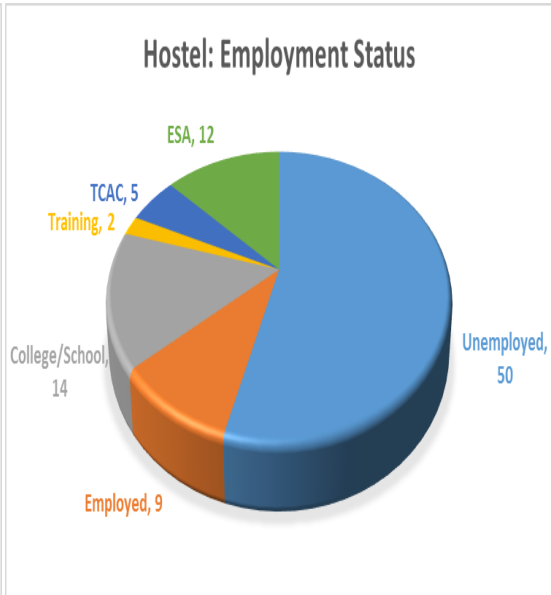
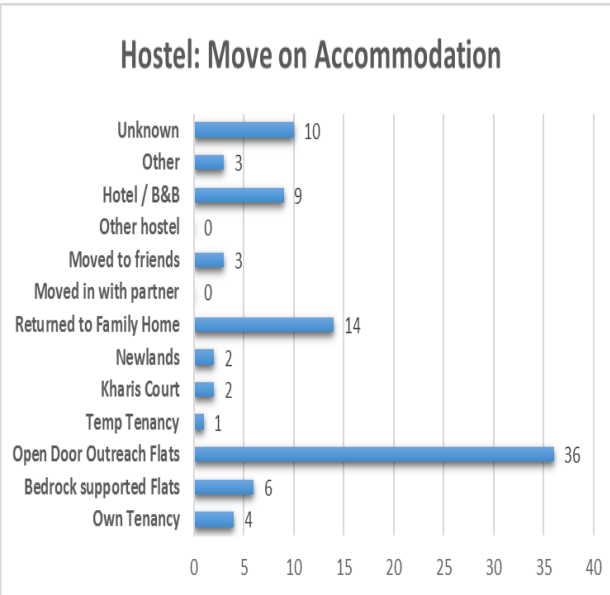
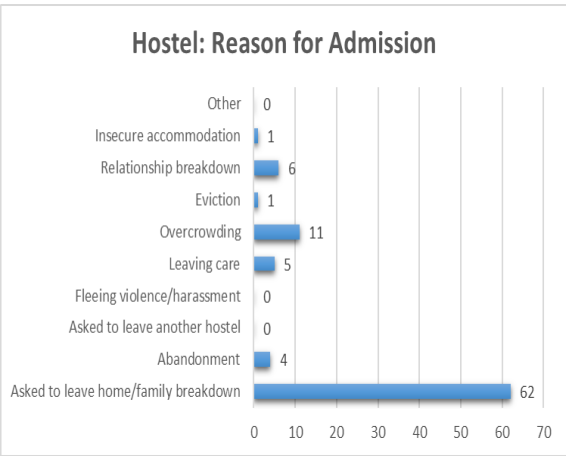
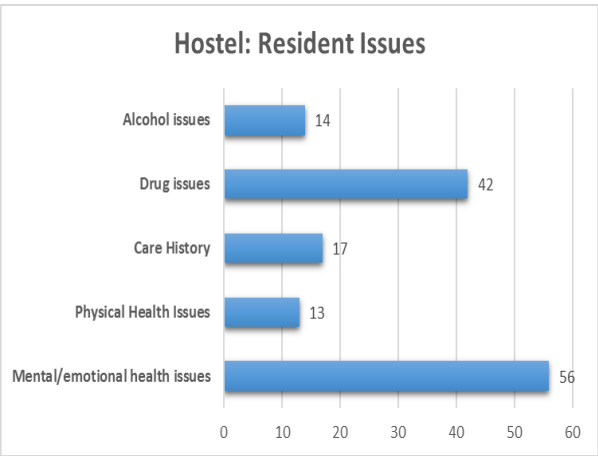
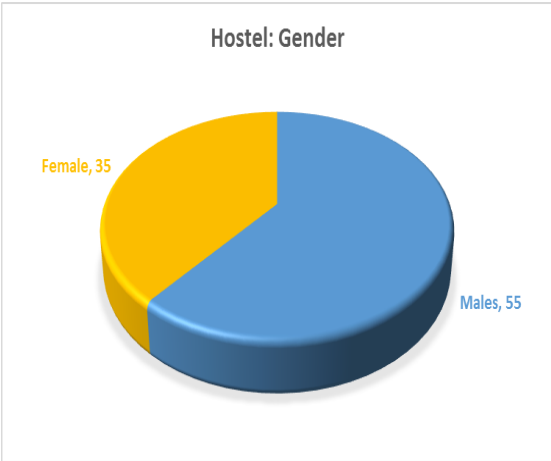
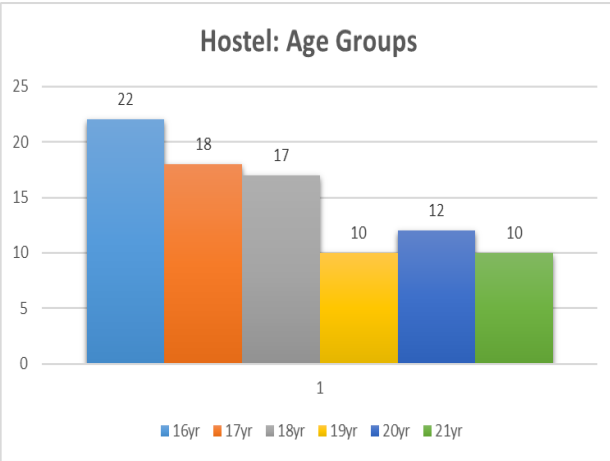
“my placement at Open Door was a real eye opener and very worthwhile experience. I got to understand some of the challenges that came up for young people facing homelessness. I came to the realisation that this would really broaden my scope to improve my skills set.” – Toyin (observational Student)

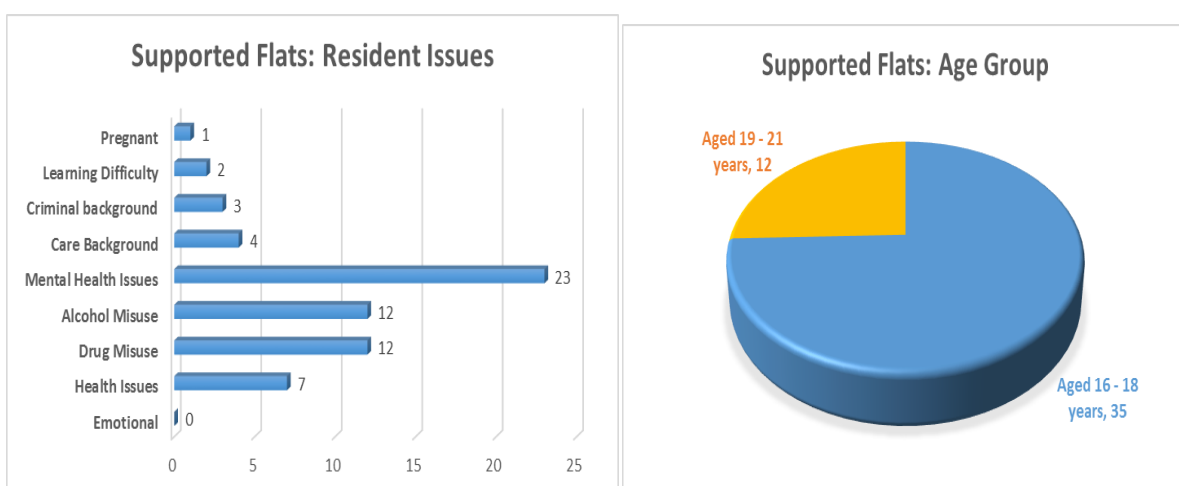
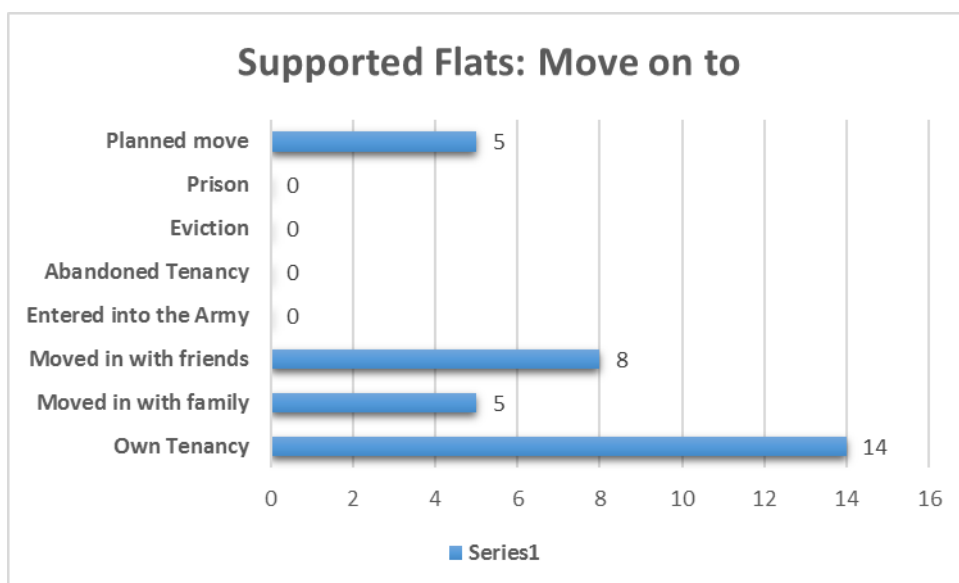
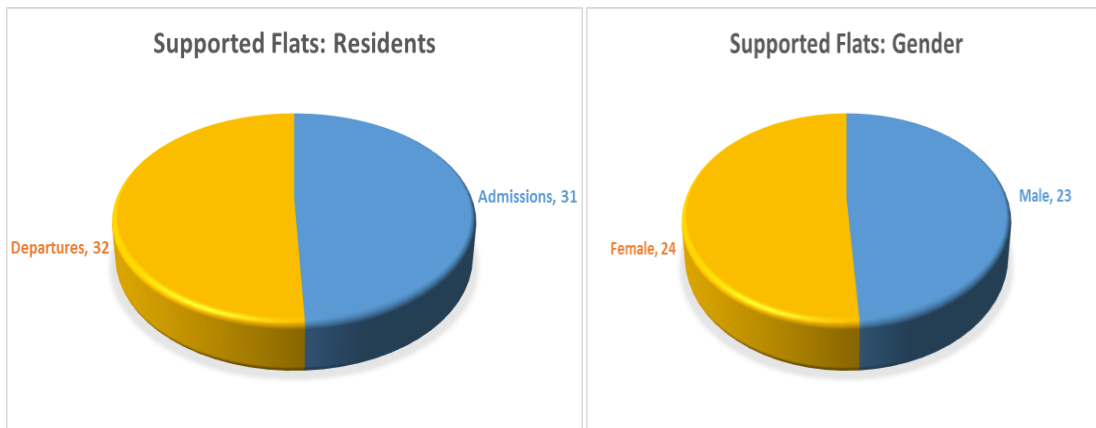
“Staff were always very helpful whenever I had queries. They were very inclusive and made me feel part of the team for which I was very appreciative. I felt my link worker and PT ensured I had an appropriate caseload to be getting on with, and struck a good balance. My views were respected and my link worker was flexible and open to my suggestions, often offering helpful ideas to supplement mine. Overall I felt I learned a lot that I can take onto my next placement “. **Paul Mclean (social work Student)**

The support from the Robertson Trust in funding this role has enabled us to offer additional services and support to the young people in Open Door. Our future vision is to identify funding to develop this further to offer our group work and Volunteer opportunities to all those engaged with young people services throughout West Lothian.



Facts and Figures





Contact Details

Head Office

Open Door Accommodation Project

52 North Bridge Street

Bathgate

West Lothian

EH48 4PP

Telephone General Enquiries

01506 676357

Telephone Supported Flats

01506 653677

Email: admin@odap.org.uk

Website: www.odap.org.uk



Hostel

Open Door Accommodation Project

7-12 Adelaide Street

Craigshill, Livingston

West Lothian

EH54 5HG

Telephone

01506 430221

