

Sleep out makes big impact

Students and staff at Edinburgh who joined a mass sleep out to help end homelessness have exceeded their fundraising target.



University participants had hoped to raise £50,000 by taking part in Sleep in the Park in Princes Street Gardens.

The event, which brought together 9,000 people, was organised by Social Bite, a social enterprise that support efforts to eradicate homelessness in Scotland.

New homes

Social Bite is working with the City Council to construct purpose-built houses to provide a safe, supportive living environment for up to 20 homeless people at a time.

By raising more than £50,000, the University is now able to sponsor one of the houses being built at the Social Bite Village in the Granton area of the city.

Overnight event

Sleep in the Park, which took place on Saturday 9 December, featured performances by former Oasis singer Liam Gallagher and Scottish artists Deacon Blue, Frightened Rabbit and Amy MacDonald. It will be hosted by comedian Rob Brydon.

Live Aid organiser Sir Bob Geldof joined the thousands sleeping out, and Monty Python actor John Cleese read those attending a bedtime story.

Social enterprise

Social Bite was co-founded by Edinburgh alumnus Josh Littlejohn, who graduated in 2009 with a degree with Economics and Politics.

Earlier this year, the University awarded Littlejohn an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Science in Social Science for his work with Social Bite.

All the profits from the social enterprise's five sandwich shops across Scotland are given to good causes. A quarter of its staff were formerly homeless.

We are proud to support this worthy initiative. I took part in last year's Sleep out and it was an inspiring experience. I would encourage our students and staff to get involved this year and for us to be ambitious about what we can achieve together.

Professor Sir Timothy O'Shea

Principal and Vice-Chancellor