

LEADING THE WAY FOR YOUTH

**A record of the activities and achievements of
Edinburgh City Youth Café (6VT)**

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2015

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Foreword

This book is the result of meticulous research into the history and current affairs of Edinburgh City Youth Cafe (6VT) by our long serving and dedicated board member Henry Philip. Henry served two years on our steering group and, to date, twenty one years on our Board. We thank him sincerely for his time, efforts and views. It is a valuable gift to all who have been involved in 6VT to have its activities logged in this book and we hope it will not only provide an aid for academics, professionals, politicians and youth workers to reflect on regarding future policy and practice, but will also be an inspiration for professionals to strive to achieve on behalf of the young people they are working for.

As a dedicated champion of 6VT, Henry has captured in this book the journey of 6VT from a new project to a stable and respected Youth Service in Edinburgh.

6VT offers a creative and caring spirit, enabling young people to shape their own destiny and find the key to unleashing their motivational energies to improve the quality of their lives.

Over the years, 6VT has worked with tens of thousands of young people and adults, and the key to our success has been our staff team and volunteers, who have brought with them values and skills that developed an approach to working with young people inspired by patience, understanding, compassion, intuition and sensitivity, combined with listening and managerial skills.

I and the board of 6VT are especially indebted to Henry Philip, not only as the author of this book, but for his years of dedicated service to 6VT.

Mac Wilkinson
Chair, 6VT

This book is dedicated to the memory of Donald Gorrie without whose vision and determination there would have been no 6VT.

Preface

Politicians are falling over themselves these days to confess that they will have to start listening to voters if they are to win back their trust. And yet they continue to pursue top-down policies which control everything from the centre.

The revolt among the electorate is a recent phenomenon. The young people of this country have always suffered from this top-down attitude. Adults have always seen teenagers as a problem and, since time immemorial, politicians and academics have been trying to find a response to the rebelliousness of youth and the social problems that that produces. Theories come and go, but still the same problems persist. Why? Because the theories are all based on the assumption that young people all face the same issues, whereas the teenage years are a time in life when differences are at their greatest. Whether young people come from good homes or dysfunctional families, they are all caught in that confusing no-man's land between childhood where everything is done for them and adulthood where they are trying to find themselves in an increasingly complicated and bewildering world.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that some of our young people vent their frustrations by indulging in anti-social behaviour. What they are all seeking, in their own personal way, is support and understanding to help them through this difficult period in their lives. The last thing they want is to be told what to do because they will react immediately against any form of stereotyping.

Over the past twenty-one years, 6VT has attracted thousands of young people from very different socio-economic, geographical, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, young people who have very different interests and abilities. In fact, in its own small way, 6VT represents a cross-section of society. The one thing all the users of the Café have in common is their desire to meet socially in a safe environment with peers drawn from across the city and beyond, away from the limiting confines of their local communities. They want to do their own thing and not to be judged by adults from an adult standpoint.

The success of 6VT has been based on its willingness to tackle this so-called youth problem from the opposite end. They have accepted this disparity and, instead of treating young people all in the same way, they have concentrated on the needs of each individual as they arise and then looked for opportunities which these provide to involve the young people. Even the smallest involvement can lead to more.

The majority of the users of 6VT cause no trouble at all, but there is always a hard core whose behaviour is really challenging. The staff do not accept this behaviour but constantly confront it and suspend the culprits from using the Café till they meet staff for a one-to-one outwith drop-in hours to discuss the rules of the Café and, above all, to emphasise the importance of showing respect for one another. There are some young people who go through this process time and time again. But they still come back pleading for another chance. Although they may not admit it, they are really pleading for acceptance and for someone to bring some sort of stability to their lives. For some, 6VT is the only stable thing in their lives. They know that the staff really care about them and, no matter how much abuse is thrown at them, no matter how many times they are rebuffed, the staff will never give up on a young person. And, in the end, even the most rebellious usually begin to realise within themselves what the staff are trying to do for them.

The efforts of the staff are not limited to the young people. Realising that breakdown in family life is behind most of the problems, the staff are increasingly working with the parents, who often need more support than their offspring, and trying to bring parent and teenager more closely together. It is a never-ending task, but 6VT has shown that this is a very effective way of tackling the problem of supporting young people at risk — preventative care rather than mopping up the mess when it is too late.

The reader may be wondering what the point is of recording in such detail what may look like an accumulation of unrelated events, many of which seem unimportant. But it is in this detail that one can identify the success of 6VT.

Its whole philosophy has been based on the assumption that you start with the young person and develop outwards, rather than try to make them all conform to a “one size fits all” pattern. You start with their individual needs at that moment, and adapt the approach as these needs change. The staff have not been hidebound by overall theories. They have worked with individuals and reacted to even the smallest opportunity to get the young people involved. Only a handful may become involved at any one time, but the overall picture is that, through persistence, almost all of them eventually become involved in something.

This volume may not satisfy the rigours of academic inspection, nor is it intended to be developed as a new course in youth work. Anyone who wishes to replicate the success of 6VT will not be able to do so by attending such a course. In the end, it all boils down to the attitude of those who are working with our young people. Are they on the side of society or of the young people? It illustrates a completely different approach to youth work, where the starting point is not a theory but the needs and aspirations of each individual young person. It recognises that individuals are all different and any attempt to find a global solution will soon lose credibility. Every youngster is special to the 6VT staff, no matter how irritating they are at times.

Such an approach is far from easy and it can be messy at times. It can also be expensive in staff time, but it is very cost-effective in terms of the expense that is not incurred every time a young person who is at risk of getting into deeper trouble does not have to be taken into care, which is a very expensive option. The reduction in human cost is incalculable, not only for the present, but also in terms of future generations because it can at least start to stem the tide of an ever-growing number of families and young people who require expensive support from childcare and adult services.

So, as you read this book, please do not dismiss it as a ragbag of unrelated material from which no clear academic picture emerges. Ultimately, “Leading the Way for Youth” is a tribute to the inspirational leadership of Dot Horne and to the flexibility, ingenuity and dedication of the staff and volunteers who support her. They never seem to be fazed by any set back but just soldier on, always willing to go the extra mile to help the young folk and their families. But they would be the first to admit that their job would have been even more difficult without the support they have received over the past twenty years, financially and in kind, from many hundreds of individuals and organisations. It has been truly a community success.

The facts in the book speak for themselves, the opinions expressed are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Board of 6VT.

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Chapter 1: In the Beginning (1991-1994)

Edinburgh City Youth Cafe was the brainchild of Donald Gorrie, MP for Edinburgh West, who was at that time a Lothian Regional Councillor, representing Corstorphine. Donald had many strings to his political bow, but one which was particularly dear to him was making provision for young people. He was conscious that, although most authorities paid for youth clubs for younger children, it was most unusual for them to make provision for the upper teenage group. The only entertainment, therefore, for this group was either hanging about the streets or going to the bars and nightclubs in the city centre, which introduced them to enjoying themselves in an alcohol-related environment among much older people. The situation usually became even worse over the summer months between June and October because virtually all local youth clubs closed then to reduce their costs.

By 1990, there was considerable concern nationally about teenage drinking, and Councillor Gorrie was particularly active in promoting the idea of alcohol-free cafes for young people but, as the country had just gone into the 1990-92 recession, progress was difficult since money was tight.

In that year, however, North Berwick Dry Bar Association was founded against a background of teenage drinking in the town. Its aim was to provide a safe, alcohol-free environment in which young people could meet socially. East Lothian District Council had agreed to lease the Sun Lounge at North Berwick harbour, but the Association was finding it difficult to raise the funds that would be required to convert the premises and meet the running costs.

In May 1991, Councillor Gorrie proposed to Lothian Regional Council that efforts should be made to refurbish the basement of Riddle's Court, which led out on to Victoria Terrace, so that it could be used as a "dry bar" for young people or a community arts centre and cafe. He went further and suggested that the adjoining Baden Powell House should get similar treatment and be added to these new facilities. His motion fell.

Undeterred, he carried out a survey of senior pupils in the local Craigmount High School towards the end of 1991. The main finding of that survey was that the young people would welcome a club where they could enjoy the company of people of their own age without having to go out drinking. They did not want a club in Corstorphine; it had to be in the city centre where they could meet their peers from other parts of the city.

That survey was followed by another in three other high schools in West Edinburgh (Forrester, St Augustine's and Tynecastle), and all four surveys indicated that location was vital. Those who lived in Gorgie indicated they would not go to Corstorphine, and vice versa, whereas there was a high level of interest in the idea of a city centre youth café. For example, 78% of the sample of 871 senior pupils said they would go to a café in the city centre compared with only 8% if it was based in Leith Walk. Equally, the nature of the premises was deemed significant, with 80% saying that the café had to be on a par with commercial premises. Something like a church hall, shared with other groups, would not be acceptable.

On Saturday, 7 November 1991, a group went out into Princes Street between 7.45 pm and 8.45 pm with 36 questionnaires to gather the views of a random sample of the many young people they encountered there. 72% of them were in the 15-18 age band, 31% came from the Leith area (i.e. a different part of the city from the school surveys) and, surprisingly, 53% came from out of town. 81% said they came into town every Saturday night, and 61% of them went home between 10 pm and midnight. 97% of those interviewed said they would use a city-centre facility over weekend evenings.

Donald's next move was to propose to the Education and Social Work Departments on 25 February 1992 that the Lothian Association of Youth Clubs (LAYC), Lothian Youth Forum and Edinburgh Streetwork Project should take the lead in forming a steering group with other interested groups such as the churches, boys' clubs, scouts and guides with a view to establishing a new charitable body (possibly called Rendezvous) to run a series of youth cafes across the Region. The premises should be set out, not as a bar, but as a café which served soft drinks, coffee and tea with a range of real food, rather than just crisps and sweets. The young people themselves should be actively involved in the management. To test the idea, funding was requested to run a pilot project somewhere in the city centre for one year, with a review at the end of the pilot to gauge the viability of the main proposal.

However, when appeals for official support were initially sent out, the replies were not terribly enthusiastic. The Management Committee of the Streetwork Project said that it did not wish to be associated with the Youth Café Project. There was rather lukewarm support from the Head of the Community Involvement Department of Lothian and Borders Police, who pointed out that research by the Portman Group showed that a number of similar projects had been initiated in other parts of the country but there was a high failure rate as long-term projects, which they attributed to difficulties concerning funding, staffing and patronage. The ambivalent response from the Social Work Department said that it would be inadvisable to "try to be all things to all people", but at the same time the project should not target too specific a group such as homeless young people already on the streets.

Despite these dispiriting responses, the Social Work Department came up with a suggestion early in 1992 that Tokyo Joe's in Home Street (Tollcross) was currently available and might provide a suitable venue. On the first floor, it had a large room already fitted out as a café, a separate area suitable for discos, another smaller room which could be used for discussion groups, and adequate toilet provision. On the second floor, there was a lot of accommodation for staff. The decoration and furnishings were in good order. There were major drawbacks, however. All the electrics would have to be renewed and heating would have to be provided. Although there was a fire escape, the stairway up to the first floor might be a potential fire trap and, as it was situated on the first floor, it was far from ideal for disabled people.

By November 1992, the Community Education Service and Social Work Department were both indicating their support in principle following further discussions behind the scenes.

At this stage, what Council officials were aiming at was quite ambitious in one respect, but not very ambitious in another. For example, openings were planned from 5 to 11 or 11.30 on every evening of the week (except Sunday) with a two-hour opening at lunchtime on weekdays. Creating an attractive venue which would keep young people off the streets was clearly a priority, as was the provision of lunches and entertainment, in the form of discos where professional DJs and stewards would be employed. However, the manager's role would be largely confined to maintaining good standards and not too much seemed to be expected on the advice and counselling front.

Nevertheless, official noises were sufficiently encouraging for a Steering Group to be set up in April 1992, which consisted of five senior pupils — David Henderson and Steven More (who attended Craigmount High School), Corry McQueenie (the Royal High School), Justin Robertson (Stewart's Melville College) and Matthew Wight (the Queen Victoria School in Dunblane), together with six adults who were also interested in the project. The adults were Ian Boardman (Lothian Association of Youth Clubs), Pat McMenamain (LAYC), Councillor Donald Gorrie, Dorothy Horne (Lothian Youth Forum), Hamish Murphy (Wester Hailes Youth Project) and Henry Philip (Edinburgh Presbytery).

During its second year, the Steering Group was joined by Linda Dunnett (Edinburgh Presbytery), David Stewart (who had become the Hon. Treasurer) and some officials who worked either for the Council or agencies associated with the Council — Douglas Jeffrey (Community Education), David Lowe (Safer Edinburgh Project), Eileen McGonigal (Property Services and Health & Safety Officer for Riddle's Court), Jon Slater (Safer Edinburgh Project), Jim Kelly (Property Services) and Alistair Fraser (Community Education). The following young people also joined the Steering Group: Susan Duffy, Catherine Fraser, Lisa McDonald, Susie Phee and Nick Adam. A Young Persons Group was set up, guided by Dorothy Horne.

A visit was paid during the holiday week in October 1992 to the Dry Dock Bar in Eyemouth. This provided some useful information about how that organisation got started and about the positive youth work developments that had taken place during its first two years of operation. The visit also confirmed that the space required did not have to be large, but it had to be set out in a way that appealed to young people and lent itself to a cafe-type approach.

The Steering Group concluded that it was clear from the surveys and other investigations that a youth cafe facility in the city centre would attract substantial interest from young people. Such a safe environment, free from commercial pressures, could provide a venue where young people could meet socially. Within that, youth workers could play a key role in creating an atmosphere that allowed for relationships to develop so that the social and personal development of young people could be enhanced. It was noted that national research by Hendry, Shucksmith, Lere and Glendinning entitled *"Young People's Leisure and Lifestyles"* supported this contention: *"Young people were asked what they wanted adults to do for them and 90% responded by saying they were bored, combined with a request for 'places for the likes of us to go'."* It was also in keeping with many of the recommendations in the HMI report *"Youth Work in Scotland"*.

The young people, led by Steven More, a pupil at Craigmount High, decided to put pressure on the local authority, Lothian Regional Council. They harried Keith Geddes, leader of the Council, and then in October 1992 sent a deputation to the Council to make their case. They described how they came into the town centre to meet friends from different parts of the city, but there was nothing to do except hang around the streets, feeling vulnerable and at risk of intimidation and violence from other young people and adults. They said that the idea of a city-centre café appealed to them as a place where they could meet their friends in safety. They asked the councillors to support the café project in principle. They did, and the young people had made a particular impression on Keith Geddes.

In November 1992, the Steering Group prepared a Youth Café Project Proposal. Requisites included a café/bar area, games area, ample seating and a possible area for dancing. They then set about drawing up the broad principles on which the club would be established, namely, that it would be for 15 to 20-year-olds, it would be alcohol free, it would be in a safe environment in the city centre, and the young people would have a big say in how it was run. These aims and objectives were later set out in more detail following a residential in March 1994.

There was still the problem of finding suitable premises, however. Other places were looked at following the visits to Tokyo Joe's, but none was suitable, partly because of health and safety considerations, and partly because of their location in undesirable surroundings.

In December 1992, the storeroom at 6 Victoria Terrace, which Councillor Gorrie had identified in May 1991 as having considerable potential, became the prime target, but it would require thousands of pounds to make it ready for use since it had been very badly neglected and was a place where a lot of

unused junk had been dumped. Although the address was Victoria Terrace, it was, in fact, the basement of Riddle's Court, whose address was the Lawnmarket.

The store was a real mess but, after the junk had been cleared away, it left two reasonably-sized rooms plus some nooks and crannies. After examining the building, the Region's structural engineers reported that the property was sound, but the internal walls would have to be retained intact, thus frustrating plans to open up the internal doorways. The whole building would need to be rewired, but that would not be too expensive, and the new plumbing systems could link directly into the existing drainage network. The Region set aside £50,000 for the refurbishment from the Social Policy Committee and £15,000 as a revenue grant from the Community Education Committee. It also included £30,000 as a revenue grant in its budget for 1993-4.

Because the building was listed, Lothian and Edinburgh Enterprise Ltd (LEEL) also became involved. The existing windows were rotten and would require to be completely replaced. Major changes to the windows and doors would require planning consent. LEEL worked closely with the Café and, besides approving an acceptable external design, in June 1994 they actually made a loan of £2,750 towards the cost of replacing the windows.

In February 1993, Lothian Youth Forum organised a Young Persons Conference "Wild and Wicked but Wanting Something Done". At this conference, the young people quizzed a panel of politicians and officials and asked them for cash to get the project started. Within days, the major grant of £50,000 was made by Lothian Regional Council, which also agreed to lease the premises at a nominal rent of £1 per annum. That grant unlocked the door to grants from other funders. Up to then, appeals to potential funders had met with the response to get back in touch with them once the project had some money behind it.

On 15 March 1993, Councillor Gorrie, as Convener of the Steering Group, sent a letter outlining the plans for the Café to the West Bow Residents Association, whose members lived in West Bow, Victoria Street, Upper Bow and Johnston Terrace. A month later, he received a reply which expressed regret that they had not been consulted earlier. They were not happy with the proposal since they had had to call in the police in the past when young people caused a nuisance while hanging about outside a club in Johnston Terrace. They also expressed concerns about noise and lots of graffiti on buildings in Victoria Terrace.

In March also, a shopkeeper in Victoria Street complained about potential shoplifting and noise whenever anyone walked across the floor of the store above. He also frequently had problems of dampness coming through from above. Councillor Gorrie agreed that the traditional Edinburgh deafening of cinders between floor and ceiling would be inadequate, but an additional wooden floor was to be laid on top of the existing one to reduce noise. As regards shoplifting, the Café would open in the evening when the complainant's shop would be closed.

In April 1993, Eileen McGonigal, an Edinburgh Art College student of architecture working her placement year at Lothian Regional Council, became so interested in the project that she was appointed Project Architect and produced an imaginative design that converted a virtually derelict building into an attractive suite of rooms which was exactly what the young people wanted. She skilfully made use of every square inch of floor space and incorporated toilets (from the existing Gents toilet of Riddle's Court), a disabled toilet, a shower, a coffee bar, and a small office dug into the rock. The connecting stair to Riddle's Court was to be sealed off, thus separating the two buildings — an essential feature as far as the Steering Group was concerned — and used as storage space.

In addition to its financial support, the Region also confirmed in August 1993 that it would provide up to 288 hours of part-time youth work until at least February 1994. Also, Council officials became heavily involved in ensuring that all specifications were up to standard. It was agreed that, besides leasing the property at a peppercorn rent, the Café would pay for blanket insurance cover amounting to £134 pa.

The Region's faith in the project was crucial in persuading other bodies to provide the rest of the funding required. In addition to Lothian Region's revenue grant of £15,000 (£30,000 in a full year), donations were being sought from Edinburgh District Council, the Church of Scotland, John Watson Trust, the TSB Foundation, and Children in Need. By June 1993, sufficient funds were guaranteed to encourage the Steering Committee to decide in October 1993 to advertise for a Project Youth Worker and a part-time Secretary. At this stage, it was hoped the Café would open by November 1993.

The West Bow Residents Association and Grassmarket Residents Association had both written in May 1993 seeking a meeting to discuss their concerns. They were invited to a meeting on 2 August in Riddle's Court to explain the purpose of the Café and to allay any concerns they might have. Letters were also sent later to keep them up to date.

An inaugural public meeting, attended by 33 people, was held in the Regional Chambers on 10 August 1993 to adopt the constitution and formally establish the organisation. Local residents again raised concerns about noise levels and the possibility of increased disturbances. So that their concerns would not be ignored, a place on the Management Committee was reserved for local residents. After adopting the constitution, the meeting appointed the following to the interim Management Committee:

Chairperson	Councillor Donald Gorrie
Vice-Chairperson	Steven More (young person)
Secretary	Justin Robertson (young person)
Hon. Treasurer	David Stewart
Youth Treasurer	David Henderson)
Full Members	Susan Duffy)
	Catherine Fraser) all young people
	Corry McQueenie)
	Matthew Wight)
	Danny Wilson)
	Residents Association member (confirmed on 14 December as Rev Alison Fuller)

The Steering Committee ceased to exist and its members joined the Management Committee, which represented a wide range of interested parties. In September, Community Education and Safer Edinburgh both agreed to send representatives to the Committee.

A regular check was kept on finances to ensure that the best use was made of the limited cash available. Investigation revealed that the project could legally avoid paying VAT on the refurbishment work by repaying the Region's £50,000 grant and allowing the Region to provide services up to that amount. That work would be zero-rated, but VAT would have to be paid on any additional work, and £2,300 interest had eventually to be paid for this "loan". Six companies tendered for the work, which was still at the planning stage, and the lowest was £57,862 from G Sharkey and Sons. The Council immediately increased its capital grant to that amount (reported on 14 December 1993). The refurbishment began on 18 April 1994, and the final cost, after the inclusion of various fees and services, came to over £80,000.

Following the adoption of the Constitution, an application for charitable status was sent on 11 August to the Inland Revenue. It responded on 21 October to the effect that, to qualify for charitable status, a lengthy rewording of Clause 3 (The Objects of the Association) would be required. An Extraordinary General Meeting was convened on 14 December 1993 in the LAYC offices to make these changes to the Constitution (Appendix 5), and the Cafe was then, in a letter from the Inland Revenue dated 23 December 1993, registered as a charity supported by Lothian Regional Council.

During this time, several suggestions were made for the name of the Café, e.g. Half-way House, No.6, OUT, Café Vivendo. "Vivendo" came from an inscription on a nearby wall. It meant literally "by living", i.e. "learn from life". This was especially favoured by the adults on the Steering Group, but it did not appeal to the young members. By the end of the year, the consensus choice was 6VT, and Justin Robertson started working on logo designs. On 2 February 1994, he produced eight from which the present design was chosen.

In addition to the considerable assistance which Lothian Regional Council provided in terms of finance and expert support, several other charities made donations which helped the Café to establish itself. By September 1993, just under £60,000 was in the account, with a further £16,000 awarded in principle. In December 1993, there was a financial boost from Europe in the form of a grant in ECUs (European Currency Unit, which became the Euro on 1 January 1999). However, no financial institution would cash the cheque, and the European Commission agreed to issue another cheque in a more helpful form.

The final major task of the Management Committee) was to appoint a Cafe Coordinator who would oversee the whole project. The post was advertised in October 1993; there were twelve applications, and six of these were short-listed. True to the Café's founding principles, the young people were fully involved in this appointment. From a strong leet, they appointed Danny Bradley in November 1993. He was from Lancaster and had a wealth of youth work experience.

Danny took up post on 10 January 1994, and he began submitting a range of grant aid trust applications for particular items of equipment or practice, and he also set about recruiting staff from a temporary base at the offices of LAYC in Boroughloch Lane (rented for £25 per month). The posts advertised were: a part-time Project Worker (24 hours per week), a part-time Youth Worker (12 hours p/w), a part-time Administrator (18 hours p/w), a Catering Co-ordinator (24 hours p/w), and a Catering Assistant (10 hours p/w). It was estimated that the total salary costs, including that of the full-time Cafe Project Coordinator, would amount to just over £50,000 per annum. Repairs and other general running costs would come to around £8,000. Salary payment arrangements were set up through the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations.

On 21 February 1994, Councillor Gorrie sent out a letters to local residents and traders, updating them on progress. He acknowledged that rowdy groups of young people had previously caused problems in the city centre and asked that any incidents should be brought to the notice of the Café Coordinator. There was a strong Management Committee, with the Regional Council, youth organisations, churches, local residents associations and Safer Edinburgh all backing it strongly. Young people made up half the Committee. The residents were offered a place on the Management Committee.

So far so good but, also in February, it was reported that the planning application for the refurbishment had still not been approved. One of the main sticking points was the physical separation of 6VT from Riddle's Court because that would involve the Council in creating new Gents toilets in Riddle's Court to

replace those in the basement, which would now be exclusively 6 Victoria Terrace. It was March before approval came through. Building work began on 18 April 1994.

Another sticking point was the status of Victoria Terrace. The Highways Department maintained that it was a private street and therefore a repair required to a defective railing was the responsibility of the property owners. For the same reason, they rejected Councillor Gorrie's proposal that a ramp be created where Victoria Terrace joined George IV Bridge since there was no disabled access to the Terrace. As a compromise, the Highways Department removed a bollard from Fisher's Close, which was technically acceptable but provided a rather tortuous route from the Lawnmarket to Victoria Terrace.

From 13-15 April 1994, the Young People's Sub-group (together with some adults from the Management Committee) attended a residential course in Borwick Hall, Carnforth, to finalise job descriptions for youth workers and to discuss such things as opening hours and menus. Following this, the Group also recommended that the Cafe adopt the following policies: Principles and Practice (Appendix 1), Confidentiality (Appendix 2), Drug Use (Appendix 3) and Equal Opportunities (Appendix 4). They felt that wider consultation was required before making a decision on Smoking. These papers were approved by the Management Committee on 21 April.

On 30 June, it was agreed that the coffee/bar room would be a "smoking allowed area" and the other room would be "smoke free". There would be a further consultation of users later in the year, and the issue would be reviewed in November.

Also on 30 June, the Treasurer produced Budgets for 1994-5 and 1995-6, which showed projected deficits of £12,152 and £17,073 respectively. The Revenue Grant from Lothian Regional Council for 1994-5 would be £28,295. It was clear that more funding was urgently required.

Open days were arranged for 21-22 July 1994, from 10 am to 10 pm, for interested parties to view the premises and hear more about the project. Some 500 attended, including youth workers, agencies, supporters, Councillors from Edinburgh District Council and Lothian Region, MPs, neighbours and young people.

The Cafe (now popularly known as 6VT) eventually opened its doors to users for the first time on Monday, 25 July 1994. Its opening hours were: Mondays and Wednesdays 6 pm to 10.30 pm; and Fridays and Saturdays from 6 pm to 11 pm. It was also open at other times for counselling and pre-arranged workshops. Young people came from across the city, many of them saying that they learned about the project because of the *Herald and Post's* front page article.

It was up and running but it hadn't been easy, as can be seen from the above account. There are always so many obstacles which any new project has to surmount. However, the cause of 6VT was won by the dogged determination of Donald Gorrie, supported by the more youthful and energetic enthusiasm of three people in particular — Ian Boardman (who played a crucial administration and negotiating role), Dot Horne (who looked after and supported the young leaders) and Steve More (who was the leader of the young people) — which ensured the willing collaboration of many other people.

Not many voluntary organisations can boast that they benefited from such rigorous planning when they were being set up, or from the dedicated support of so many interested adults and young people. The Committee met roughly every month for the best part of two years, and the young people themselves

made a really valuable contribution not only to the internal design of the building, to its name and logo (6VT) but also to determining the ethos of the Café and its style of operation. The advice which came from a wide range of officials was also invaluable because they took a personal interest in the project instead of just treating it as another task expected of them as Council officials. It was, in short, a textbook example of the importance of thorough planning and cooperation. Of course, there was no shortage of cynics who predicted that 6VT would be yet another 9-day wonder.

Chapter 2: The First Year of Operation (1994-1995)

Although the Café was open, having sufficient finance to run it was still a concern. Raising other revenue, in addition to the grant, was essential. Only a fortnight after the drop-in evenings started, therefore, the Café was opened outwith drop-in hours to serve vegetarian meals to the general public for the four weeks of the Edinburgh Fringe and Festival. It opened seven days a week from 9 am to 5 pm. On Tuesday, Thursdays and Sundays, when there was no drop-in, it also was open in the evenings. Since there was no guarantee that this Festival Café would be a financial success, John Williamson and his team who ran it agreed to do so on a voluntary basis, on the understanding that they would be paid only if it made a reasonable profit.

There had been very little time to publicise this new venture and initially it had to rely on passing trade. However, the *Independent* newspaper and *The Big Issue* both included it in a list of eating places during the Festival, and the comedian Scott Capurro mentioned it in the final week of his Fringe show. An opportunity was also given to young artists, performers and traders to display and offer items for sale. By and large, however, the existence of the Café was passed on through word of mouth by those who had enjoyed its reasonably priced food and pleasant atmosphere. Indeed, some groups returned each day after they discovered its existence.

The initial stock was bought with a float of £220 from the Management Committee. Over the four weeks, there was a profit of £1,700.20 which was donated to the Association's funds. Most of this came from the sale of food, but £20 came from the sale of artwork, £70 from stallholders, £145 from fundraising at the Mound, and £362 from Scott Capurro. The staff were paid (£3,535 in total) and, over the four-week period, the drop-in cafe gained £120 in stock. At the close, 6VT also benefited from another £200 of stock and equipment that had been purchased. In addition to the financial success, the Festival Café provided an opportunity to publicise the aims and objectives of 6VT.

The survey predictions that a youth café in the city centre would be popular proved correct. In the first seven weeks of 6VT's existence, some 1,200 visits were paid by young people, some of whom began coming on a regular basis. These numbers grew and the first Annual Report, issued in October 1994, was able to claim that in its first few months the Café was making contact with an average of over 50 young people each evening. The Coordinator reported on 15 September (roughly seven weeks after opening) that relationships between users were good, with one noticeable exception — a fairly large group of males who kept themselves to themselves and could be intimidating to other users. However, Steven More (the young person who was Vice Chairman) was organising regular meetings of users to find out their views on the running of the Café and that was helping users to get to know one another. The Coordinator's main concern was a general shortage of staff on some nights, especially when staff were off sick. There was also a particular problem in terms of Lothian Region's policy of forcing all part-time workers to take a month's break every year.

Although the Constitution made provision for charging a membership fee, the Management Committee, strongly influenced by the young people, decided not to charge a fee. The aim was to produce a relaxed atmosphere by permitting users to drop in and out as they pleased during the evening, and this applied also to the many workshops which were organised. Cafe users just "dropped in" when they wanted to without having to pre-book places on the workshops. Early workshops included reflexology, football, anti-racism, juggling/circus, a karate demonstration, watching videos, quizzes, an open forum with Lothian and Borders Police, personal safety courses, graffiti art, DJ workshops, Operation Raleigh and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Some of the personal statements and comments which users put on

Video Box were quite moving. There was also a workshop run by Ffyona Campbell, who had walked 20,000 miles “round the world” in various stages over eleven years to raise £180,000 for charity.

The young people made considerable use of the advice and information provided by the staff. Most enquiries were in the areas of housing and benefits — particularly from 16 and 17-year-olds. Information on drugs and substances was also a high priority for young people and, early on, the Cafe became involved in Lothian Health Board’s C-card Scheme which provided free condoms to young people in Edinburgh and the Lothians. A major part of the Café’s agenda was to supply appropriate, good quality written information for young people, and the staff produced leaflets on such things as emergency accommodation for young people and personal safety. The young people themselves were involved in discussing the content and design of the leaflets.

With the exception of financial matters where they had to keep a tight rein on spending, the adult members of the Management Committee tried to allow the users to make as many decisions as possible. For example, each month, the users met to decide on the programme of activities for the coming month; and there was one important issue on which the views of the users prevailed over those of the older members of the Management Committee. In the early days of the Steering Group, it was noticeable that none of the adults smoked, but five of the six young people did. Following workshops in which the dangers of smoking were discussed, it was suggested by the adults that smoking should be banned from the Café. It will be recalled that, at the Management Committee on 30 June 1994, a compromise had been agreed that the back room would be made a No Smoking area. When the policy was reviewed in January 1995, the users presented a petition with 55 signatures requesting that smoking be permitted in both rooms on the grounds that there were so many smokers that no one was using the no-smoking area. Realising that non-smokers preferred to expose themselves to the dangers of smoke rather than be separated from their friends, the Management Committee reluctantly agreed to accede to their request. That arrangement continued until March 2006 when the Scottish Parliament’s No Smoking legislation banned smoking in public places. The smokers then simply moved out on to the Terrace. At the time of writing this history, not so many young people smoke, but there are still too many, despite frequent workshops on the dangers of smoking.

Even at this early stage, the Café did not limit its activities to the drop-in sessions. Its “*Investment in Young People*” programme offered schools half-day or one-day courses on a wide range of personal, social and health issues, including Drugs and Substances, Environmental Issues, Housing and Homelessness, Leisure Opportunities, Alcohol, Sex Education, Prejudice and Discrimination, Conflict and Aggression, Developing Education, HIV/AIDS, Relationships, Preparing for Leaving School, and Interview and Self-Presentation Skills.

To raise revenue, outside organisations were invited to rent the premises for their own training courses and meetings. Besides providing the necessary equipment (TV, VCR, overhead projector, projector screen, photocopying facilities, whiteboards and flipchart easels), catering could be provided, ranging from tea/coffee and biscuits to full lunches.

Also on the positive side, the Coordinator and his staff began to build up a network of contacts which would benefit the Café. In particular, they developed the contact which had already been made with the Presbytery of Edinburgh. In the mid-90s, since it was concerned about its ageing population and a lack of interest among young people, the Church of Scotland was trying hard to persuade congregations to invest in projects for young people. One or two congregations actually appointed their own youth workers, but very few were wealthy enough to do this. Staff from the Cafe, therefore, went to the Presbytery and suggested that one way in which the Church could make a valuable contribution would

be to pay for someone to spend time at the Cafe working with the young people. The aim was, not to preach Christianity at young people, but to become involved with them and show that the Church was interested in them as individuals. The Convener of the Presbytery Education Committee (Rev John Carrie) strongly supported this plan and Presbytery agreed to the proposal.

The first Presbytery worker, Linda Dunnett, did so well that, in the following year, Presbytery was persuaded to increase its involvement to three nights per week, again with the strong support of its Education Committee and Convener (now Rev Bill Armitage). Initially, the Convener had to put in a bid annually for this funding, but such good reports were reaching the Presbytery that it eventually incorporated this funding in its annual budget. That held good until 2010 when the Presbytery worker resigned in order to take up training as a social worker. This unfortunately coincided with a period when Presbytery had decided to review all the grants it was making, and a decision was taken to discontinue the placement in the Cafe. On reflection, this decision was not surprising since the Presbytery Education Committee no longer existed and active contact between the Cafe and Presbytery was limited to Presbytery involvement in any new appointment. Although the Management Committee was disappointed at the decision, it minuted its appreciation of the excellent contribution which the Presbytery workers had made to the life of the Café.

At the Café's first Annual Meeting in October 1994, the following were elected to the Management Committee:

Chair	Councillor Donald Gorrie
Vice Chair	Steven More (young person)
Secretary	Justin Robertson (young person)
Treasurer	Gerry Mulvenna
Youth Treasurer	David Henderson (young person)
LAYC rep	Ian Boardman
Director of Education rep	Douglas Jeffrey
District Council rep	Cllr Robert Cairns
Lothian Youth Forum rep	Dorothy Horne
Edinburgh Presbytery rep	Henry Philip
Residents Associations rep	vacant
Young people	Nick Adam Jeanette Froude Allison Paulin Stacy Flockhart Mikey Hutchison Kerry Boyle
Co-options	Cllr Keith Geddes Eileen McGonigal (Property Services) David Lowe (Planning Department) Alistair Fraser (Community Education)

There were now fewer officials involved, but places were reserved for key players to be represented. The young people still filled roughly 50% of the places, but it was beginning to be noticeable that the attendance of some of them was becoming irregular, since they found the formal committee work boring.

In November 1994, after less than a year in the post, the Cafe Coordinator had to take compassionate leave to deal with a family crisis back home in Lancashire. His sister had become seriously ill, and Danny was the only family person who could look after her children. Given his commitment to the Café since his appointment, the Management Committee agreed unanimously to give him leave of absence, initially to the end of December, but later this was extended by four months' unpaid leave to the end of May. Dorothy (Dot) Horne was employed for 20 hours per week, on a month to month contract, to carry out some of his duties, and another part-timer worker was appointed. Alistair Fraser also arranged for the authority to provide an extra 100 hours of sessional staffing, which proved vital to maintaining the services to the young people.

Despite these arrangements, however, staff cover in the evenings was precarious, since there was no cover when staff were absent through sickness, and the Region had a rule that part-time staff had to take a one-month break at the end of each contract. It was therefore agreed to reduce the number of evening openings from four to three by discontinuing the Saturday session, and one of the afternoon sessions was dropped because demand had been much less than expected. Since the family crisis had not been resolved by the end of April 1995, Danny resigned and the post was re-advertised.

In November 1994, a sub-committee of four produced the "First Review of the Work of 6VT", covering the first fourteen weeks from 25 July to 26 October. To produce this very detailed document, the group trawled through the night reports prepared by staff at the end of each drop-in session, talked to members of staff and volunteers, attended a staff meeting, sat in on a users' meeting and worked as volunteers during a drop-in session.

The Review contained facts, comments and recommendations. The average attendance was 25 on Mondays, 36 on Wednesdays, 55 on Fridays and 60 on Saturdays, and there were usually slightly more females than males. The average age was just under 17. The Café was in regular contact with 22 outside agencies and intermittently in contact with another eleven. Staffing was sometimes a problem. On 15 of the 49 evenings covered by the survey, the aim of having two paid staff on duty was not achieved, and an adult presence had to rely on either the catering staff or one of the unpaid volunteers. On six occasions, someone had to deputise for absent catering staff. There were 29 unpaid volunteers altogether, and several of them helped on more than one evening in the week. A key element in sustaining the voluntary effort was the support and training they received. Their monthly meetings enabled staff to debate problems, achieve consistency in the handling of these and formulate future policy. The young people were very much involved in managing the activities of the Café, and it was truly remarkable how many of the older group were still around. They could have been forgiven if they had given up since it had taken so long for 6VT to finally materialise and they were now approaching the upper age limit. The cafeteria was achieving the aims of providing affordable food and making a reasonable profit, but there was need for a more business-like approach to the bookkeeping. In particular, there should be separate entries for the drop-in catering and the provision of buffets to outside organisations so that a true picture of the running costs could be available. A new method of recording the day-to-day transactions was introduced in November because of discrepancies between the takings and the till receipts, and a six-monthly stock check was recommended. Although admitting that there had been undesirable incidents, these had been remarkably few and they never got out of hand because those on duty had dealt with them promptly and sensibly. Staff were told that they should immediately call in the police for more serious incidents. It was to everyone's credit that relations were so good considering that the young people were drawn from so many different parts of the Region and from so many different backgrounds, some well-off and some deprived, some still at school, some working and some unemployed. Also, there were no signs of damage or graffiti, which showed how much

the young people appreciated the attractive premises that had been provided. There were still some problems to be solved, not least dealing with those who tried to circumvent the no-alcohol rule (drugs were not a problem), reducing the number of smokers and cutting down on unacceptable language (including sexist remarks and innuendo). Nevertheless, the staff and volunteers had to be congratulated on always being willing to go the extra mile and creating the sort of healthy and relaxed atmosphere which the Constitution aimed at. Finally, Lothian Region was thanked for the level of support it was giving, both financial and otherwise, and the positive interest shown by the community police was welcomed. Local residents had now appointed Tony Dixon to represent them on the Management Committee, and it was hoped that this would lead to more positive relations. The relaxed and friendly atmosphere of the Café and the fact that staff were non-judgemental were powerful influences on the present success.

In summary, the first months of operation had not been easy. The Coordinator and his assistants were experienced youth workers who had lots of ideas to motivate users, and they recruited staff with similar experience. None of them, however, had faced the challenges posed by the upper teenage group. They strictly imposed the rules about no alcohol on the premises, but they and the volunteers were less comfortable about dealing with users who had been drinking before they came to the Café. They also seemed reluctant at times to challenge the unacceptable behaviour of some users. The main failing of the staff was that, on the one hand, they tried to impose the rules as laid down in the constitution somewhat rigidly, and yet, realising that they were occasionally not succeeding in this, they sometimes allowed the rules to be bent in such a way that standards were not being convincingly adhered to.

The situation was not helped by the fact that most of the staff worked only one shift of two or three hours each week. Nightly Diaries were introduced in which staff passed on to one another issues which should be followed up by the next team. This helped to some extent, but it did not overcome the difficulties caused by lack of continuity and inconsistency in their completion. The Diaries also had to be read with caution since they concentrated on problems rather than on the things that had gone well so that they could give a distorted impression.

Also, by actively involving users in the running of the Café in accordance with the Café's charter, the Coordinator and his staff were faced with a group of teenagers whose leaders had very definite ideas about what they wanted. At times, therefore, there was a certain tension between the staff and the users. Fortunately, the young leaders were well motivated and had high standards themselves, so things never got out of hand. However, it was a difficult situation which could have gone wrong if a less well motivated group had become leaders.

Nonetheless, Danny Bradley and his staff deserved credit for getting the Café off to a solid start, despite the difficult tasks they faced in setting up a completely new type of organisation for large numbers of young people, aged mainly 15 to 17, who were drawn from a wide range of different backgrounds. That so many young people could mix so well and continue to keep coming to the Cafe was down to the dedication and innovative ideas which the staff used to motivate them.

By the beginning of 1995, however, the honeymoon period was well and truly over as the novelty of the new organisation began to wear off. The number of users still remained very high, but 6VT was finding it hard to stay afloat financially. The Region still gave it a grant, but revenue was well short of the necessary expenditure, and there was much less hands-on support from the Region's officials. Attendance at Management Committee meetings also dropped dramatically by almost 50%.

Difficulties were compounded by the fact that the running of the Café was left in the hands of a part-time Coordinator (20 hours per week) who had another job to attend to and couldn't make changes because she was only Acting Coordinator. Also, she and the Treasurer were not receiving good back-up from the administrator. After a period of sick leave lasting several months filled by a temporary replacement, the administrator eventually resigned at the end of 1996.

In January 1995, the Café faced a serious situation when it was reported that volunteer workers had twice been physically assaulted by a small group of users. The attacks were taken very seriously. The police were called in and charges were pressed against the culprits. A major policy decision was taken that any users who abused staff physically or verbally, or seriously broke the rules, would be automatically suspended and would not be allowed back until they had met with staff outside drop-in times to discuss their actions and had undertaken to behave in future.

Another problem that Dot Horne had to deal with in her temporary capacity was a series of concerns, dating back to the opening of the Café, raised by the Grassmarket Residents Association regarding noise, graffiti, broken bottles in Fishmarket Close and intrusion on to the Terrace. Councillor Geddes undertook to ask the co-operation of residents in reporting specific incidents immediately to the Café and, on the advice of Chief Superintendent Kerr, it was agreed that, in the first instance, staff should meet personally with the individual residents to handle these issues. This tactic began to work. The more often contact was made with the complainants, the clearer it became that most complaints were coming from people who lived, not close to the Café, but at the foot of Victoria Street or in Johnston Terrace. In fact, they had been the original objectors to the creation of the Café since they did not like the idea of having teenagers meet so close to their homes. The complaints gradually stopped. Tony Dixon (representative on the Management Committee from the Grassmarket Residents Association) was very helpful in liaising with the group and he was able to report on 27 April 1995 that he had had no complaints over the previous month. At the same time, the local policeman confirmed that no complaints had been made to the police over the past three months.

However, on 18 April 1995, using ammunition from some residents who would not give up, Tom Ponton, the Conservative Councillor for Dean Ward who was also a publican, began a campaign against the Café. On that date, the *Evening News* printed an article under the headline "Drunks mar launch of booze-free café". When a review of the Café's operation came before the Council's Social Policy sub-committee, Councillor Ponton claimed that the project was a complete waste of public money. He alleged that the Café had had to replace tumblers after drunken yobs threatened violence at its opening, and its first months were marred by ugly incidents and complaints from nearby residents about noise, rowdiness, threatening behaviour, bad language, sexual remarks and youths turning up drunk. He also claimed that new financial controls were introduced because takings did not match till receipts. In actual fact, when a stock-taking exercise was carried out on 7 March, it was discovered that, although there was too much wastage of food, the cause of the "deficit" was the carrying of too much stock. The Café facilities were actually generating a profit of 19%.

In response to Councillor Ponton, Dot Horne, the Acting Coordinator, said that, considering the number of young people attending the Café, the problems in the first few months had been far fewer than some people had predicted. Young people came along at first not knowing what was acceptable behaviour, but they now realised that, if they wanted to get drunk, they would have to go somewhere else.

On 19 April, the *Daily Record* repeated the allegations, and Councillor Ponton went further in stating that he now understood that the Café was having a big problem with drugs. "If this was a real pub, it would have had its licence taken away by now."

Councillor Ponton's intervention actually backfired on him. The young people were furious. They sent a deputation to the full Council meeting, and many of them wrote letters to the *Evening News*, challenging the Councillor to visit the Café and see for himself that his allegations were ill-founded. He didn't. His campaign attracted no support, but it did affect attendance for a time as some parents would not allow their offspring to come to 6VT because of the allegations. Although Councillor Nolan for the Council recognised that the Café had had some teething problems, it commended the Café on its pioneering work and confirmed its revenue grant of £30,000. One close neighbour phoned to register support for the Café, and people from the Quaker Meeting House (the Café's immediate neighbours) visited the Café to voice their support. In the end, the *Evening News* carried an article supportive of the Café. The *Daily Record* also carried out an inquiry, and on 31 October 1995 it printed a special feature highlighting how the Café had turned around the life of one youngster. Just a year before, Sean Finlay had been labelled a "teeny terror". Now he was working with the police to keep other teenagers out of trouble. Interestingly, Councillor Ponton was fined £200 in 2002 for allowing under-age youngsters to consume alcohol in one of his public houses!

The Café was still flourishing as far as use by young people was concerned. On 25 May 1995, Dot and three young people addressed a Scottish Crime Concern Conference in the Carlton Highland Hotel. Their contribution went down very well, and they received a letter of thanks from the Chief Executive of Crime Concern thanking them for their "outstanding and moving contribution". Young people from the Café were also lead players at a Youth at Risk Conference in July.

Things were going so well as far as the young people were concerned that a youth member on the Management Committee requested at the end of April that the Saturday sessions be reopened. This had to be rejected because it was not certain that the staffing could be funded. It was agreed, however, that Saturday evenings might be used for special events such as the forthcoming girls' Wakeover, where they slept in the Café from 8 pm to 8 am.

It was financial problems that presented the biggest threat to the future of the Café. For the period from July 1993 to March 1994, the accounts showed a surplus of £36,487, but most of this was reserved for the refurbishment and the purchase of equipment. Besides its capital grant of £50,000, Lothian Region had contributed £9,790 for other purposes, and over £54.5K had been received from other trusts. Appendix 6 shows how successful the initial fund-raising effort was but, of course, most of these were one-off donations which helped to establish a basic fund but would probably not be repeated in future years.

During its first year, the Café was greatly indebted to the Treasurer, Gerry Mulvenna, for the amount of work he put in to ensure that the Café did not go bankrupt, even to the extent that he noticed that the detailed figures on one invoice for kitchen equipment added up to £636 less than the total claimed!. He transformed the Café's financial controls and, at every meeting, he gave the Management Committee a detailed explanation, not only of actual income and expenditure, but also a projection for the future. In June 1994, just before the Café opened for business, Gerry had estimated that there would be a deficit of over £12,000 for the financial year 1994-95. A clampdown was ordered on expenditure that wasn't absolutely essential and, thanks to this careful budgeting and the generation of £15,688 in additional income (money from trusts, the Festival Café, profit from the drop-in coffee bar, letting of rooms and providing buffets to outside organisations), the Café was able to move into the new financial year with a small surplus of £3,364.

However, by June 1995, Gerry was estimating that the Café would somehow have to raise £21,400 itself to balance the books in the coming year, as the Region's revenue grant covered only 58% of expenditure. It had been expected that the revenue grant from the Council for 1995-96 would be £38,000, but this was cut in April 1995 to £30,743. The Region also clawed back £945 which had been underspent on the Coordinator's salary.

Realising how useful the First Review had been in monitoring the early weeks of the Café, the sub-committee undertook a similar review of the first full year. The main points made in this "First Annual Review" emphasised the value of regular monitoring of programmes and procedures by both paid staff and unpaid volunteers (now over three dozen in number), and the active involvement of the users themselves. Tribute was paid to the efforts of all three groups in ensuring that the project was kept going during the difficult months when the Coordinator was on compassionate leave. That, in itself, was a tribute to his success in establishing positive relationships among the various groups, and this had lessened the effect of his absence. Nevertheless, the training of staff and volunteers had suffered and, with fewer openings, overall attendances had inevitably reduced. Weekly attendances now ranged from 75 to 150 (instead of 150 to 250) and, for some unknown reason which the Review Group recommended should be investigated, the ratio of females to males was now roughly 2 to 1.

Despite the drawbacks, however, there were some positive developments. A small but significant number of disabled users were now attending the Cafe, although the absence of a ramp at George IV Bridge was a disincentive. There was an increase in the already impressive range of workshops during the drop-in evenings to include poster painting, tile painting, glazing, jewellery making, candle making, first aid; and there were also more evening workshops outwith normal Cafe hours for which users had to make a booking. These included Dealing with Confrontation and Violence, Safer Sex for Girls, HIV/Aids, Personal Presentation, and using educational board games to make users more knowledgeable about a range of social issues. Users also made a promotional video for the Café, which was highly commended by those who had seen it. When there was no structured programme, staff and volunteers would chat informally with users on such things as leisure opportunities, employment, consumer issues, credit and debt, housing and welfare benefits and agencies dealing with homelessness. Staff were involved eleven times in securing emergency accommodation for young people in crisis. Uptake of Lothian Health Board's C Card (especially by young women) was greater in the Café than in most other outlets because young people found it more discreet and less public than other outlets.

There were also regular discos, dances with live bands, karaoke evenings, a Christmas party, an American evening, an Italian evening, an Australian Night barbecue, a Connect-4 competition, minibus trips to various parts of Edinburgh and beyond, and participation in a South-East Edinburgh 5-a side football competition.

The number of regular contacts with outside agencies had increased by ten, and intermittent contacts by seventeen. The Café's growing reputation had attracted visits from bodies interested in setting up similar projects in various parts of the city and the Lothians, and from places as far away as Cowdenbeath, Dunfermline, Alva, Bellshill, Coatbridge, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee (twice), Falkirk, Perth, Maryhill, Clydebank, Clackmannan, Sunderland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Nor was interest confined to the United Kingdom. Representatives had come from a large number of overseas countries specifically to examine the work of the Café, including Germany, Holland, Spain, Finland, Norway, Poland, Eire, USA, Israel and Russia. As a result of these international contacts, two of the Café's volunteer workers had visited Munich, and a small group of users had taken up opportunities to participate in international youth activities.

Financially, the Café had finished its first year in the black, but at a cost. If the Café was really to develop a progressive programme, the clampdown on spending could not continue. Not only was there not enough money to purchase equipment but, more importantly, a better level of staffing would be required if the Café was to develop its services rather than just be a sort of “child minder”. On some evenings, there might be three members of staff on duty, but on many others only two. With such a poor staff/user ratio, it was highly unlikely that the Café’s vision could be realised.

Overall, however, the Annual Review had no hesitation in claiming that, in its first full year, 6VT had already overtaken most of the ambitious aims and objectives laid out in its Constitution. Despite having had to face some challenging situations, 6VT had now firmly established itself as a going concern which was providing an invaluable service for young people drawn from all over the city and beyond. Of crucial importance to the Café’s success had been the response of the young people to the challenge of ownership. Even after a year, the furniture and property looked almost new, with no damage and no graffiti. 6VT was *their* Café in every sense of the word.

Chapter 3: A New Start (1995-1997)

The interviews to select the new Coordinator were held on 6 June 1995, and the interviewing panel again included representation from the users. The successful candidate was Dorothy (Dot) Horne, who had been one of the lead players in promoting the idea of a youth café for older teenagers even before the Steering Group was formed. She had a wide experience of working with youth groups, school groups and church groups, and she had been one of the regular volunteers at 6VT up to that point. She was currently the Acting Coordinator during Danny's absence, while still holding down a part-time post as part-time coordinator for Lothian Youth Forum — a charitable voluntary youth organisation which provided a service targeted at 15-25 year olds from all over Lothian and offered young people a structure whereby they could genuinely participate in developing projects and educational opportunities.

Although she did not take up the full-time post until July, Dot was now in a position to make changes. Her appointment proved to be a turning point in the life of the Café. She was aggressively proactive in using her local knowledge of youth work facilities to greatly increase the network of agencies with which the Café worked. She also set about raising the profile of the Café by producing a new range of publicity materials. In May, for example, the users began producing a very chatty quarterly newsletter and, wherever possible, she used the users themselves when invitations were received to provide speakers at conferences.

By this time, the original group of users who had driven forward the Youth Café concept had moved on and a new cohort of young people was attending the drop-in and bringing new ideas to it. Above all, the staff were encouraged to enforce standards of behaviour and mutual respect between staff and users, but in such a way that relations between the staff and users were much more relaxed. The users were still involved in decision making, but they knew where the lines were that they were not allowed to cross. The main sanction for unacceptable behaviour became suspension from the Café till the perpetrator had had a one-to-one meeting out of hours with a member of staff in which the expected standard of behaviour was clearly spelled out. In a sense, therefore, the rules were more strictly enforced but in a way that was acceptable to the users and, when suspended, they kept pleading to be allowed back.

On 15 June 1995, proposals were produced for another Festival Café to run for three weeks from 10 am to 4.30 pm. The two catering staff would share the load and be paid. They would train volunteers from the users, who would be paid expenses as well as receiving valuable work experience. Learning from the previous year's experience, the caterers proposed to simplify the menu. They said that the Café had had inadequate facilities to deliver an over-elaborate menu in 1994, so that customers had to wait too long to be served. They proposed, therefore to offer a "quick-snack" menu, with the only hot dish being soup of the day. Initial stock would be purchased using a loan of £250 from the Café. They hoped to serve around 100 people per day, charging £2 for a coffee and a snack. They were confident that this would generate over £2,000 profit. The final report to the Management Committee proved disappointing, however. The costings had been accurate but a profit of only £500 was made because the expected number of customers did not appear. After a good first week, the numbers dwindled in the second week, and there were hardly any customers in the third week. A positive outcome, however, was the useful work experience the young assistants gained, and the written reference they received listing their achievements and the duties they had carried out.

Most importantly, Dot set about building a new team of workers and a staff review was carried out. Initially, Community Education had allocated 36 hours to create two part-time posts (one of 24 hours per week, the other of 12 hours). As indicated at the end of Chapter 2, this meant that there was a staffing crisis every time someone was on holiday or off sick, and there was too great a reliance on the good will

of volunteers. In July 1995, a review of staffing was carried out to make more effective use of the 36 hours, and the two posts were split into five smaller posts. This created more secure staffing levels than were available in the first six months of the project. The new staff also brought with them a wealth of new ideas, skills and visions.

Typical of the confidence that exuded from 6VT, Councillor Gorrie wrote on 8 August 1995 to the Property Services Department asking if the Council would consider giving the Cafe the use of Baden Powell House, which was located next to the Café. He said it would probably be surplus to requirements following the reorganisation of local government and would help 6VT extend its range of youth activities. The vision was to create an Educational, Cultural and Recreational Centre for young people living in and visiting the Capital. However, a visit to Baden Powell House revealed that it was used as a Crisis Centre for Lothian and, since it was filled with specialised equipment, it was unlikely to become available, even after the Reorganisation.

In October, Dot wrote to Councillor Paul Nolan, Convener of the Region's Social Policy Sub-committee, asking for a grant of £4,000 from the Regeneration Fund to set up a Homeless Prevention Project which would run workshops in schools and for the 16+ age group on the theme "Leaving Home Positively." The workshops would concentrate on making young people aware of housing options and on giving them the basic skills required to help them survive when living alone. The Region agreed to give 6VT the £4,000 to pilot the project.

At the AGM on 25 October 1995, the accounts for the year to 31 March 1995 showed that there was an excess of Expenditure over Income of £7,766, despite active fund-raising efforts and continuing reliance on the work of volunteers, including the services of Mr D Gibson, who gave his services as Auditor for a greatly reduced fee. The Chairman and Treasurer both emphasised that the Cafe could not expand its services without more financial backing from the authorities.

A review of the first six months for 1995-96 had shown that there was already a deficit of £793. The early payment of the revenue grant instalment from the Council had seen the Cafe through its immediate cash flow problems, but that was only delaying the crisis point. Gerry, the Treasurer, therefore carried out a much more detailed investigation in November 1995. He concluded that income could be marginally improved through checking on how much stock was wasted and revising the charges for Room Hire, the Coffee Bar and Buffets, but increased income from Trusts was unlikely since they tended not to make grants for running costs, which was where the Cafe's fundamental problem lay. Savings in expenditure had gone as far as they could without damaging the service. Gerry's main recommendation, therefore, was that the Region be asked to increase the level of grant by between £6,500 and £7,500 to bring it more into line with the true running costs. The grant had been based on an estimate of running costs which had been made before the Cafe was opened. The Region was asked to increase the revenue grant to £40,000 for 1996-97.

The minute of the Management Group on 28 November 1995 noted that a new crowd of young people was coming to the Café, many of whom had spent their time creating problems in the city centre. Although their presence had been intimidating to the regular users and to some staff and volunteers, they had not actually created any problems in the Cafe and relations were improving. This was the first appearance of a pattern which developed every so often when the staff were faced with the challenge of "breaking in" a new batch of users who were unused to the rules of 6VT.

In November, 6VT hosted a major Drugs Conference of plenary sessions and workshops in the Cafe and the neighbouring Friends Meeting House. Also, in the build up to World Aids Day, school groups were

visiting the Cafe for Aids Awareness workshops and to see an exhibition of HIV/Aids information. A request by the users to be allowed to sell chewing gum was approved, but their request to be allowed to sell cigarettes was rejected, and the users were asked to find out more about the legal and moral implications of selling tobacco. At the Management Group meeting in January 1996, it was reported that the users had decided not to allow smoking within the Cafe, although they recognised that private groups which rented the premises could decide their own smoking policies.

In recognition of the innovative work which the Cafe was now embarking on, Lothian Health asked 6VT to pilot a generic youth counselling project aimed at defeating depression among young people. A grant of £4,000 would pay for a professional counsellor (10 hours per week) for five months. 6VT would manage the project and it would be evaluated at the end by Lothian Health. This project was the first such contract which 6VT was asked to perform for an outside agency. Negotiations took some time and it was 22 April 1996 before the project actually started. In the end, the total cost came to £5,770 and Lothian Health funded the full cost.

Encouraged by the success of this project, Dot consulted with the Baseline Project in Morecambe which had recently set up a similar counselling project, and a three-year project was prepared and submitted to the Lottery Fund. This was followed up by some of the users going on a residential to Carnforth during the Easter holidays. Included in this was a visit to the Baseline Project and a gorge walk. It was confirmed in June that the Lottery application had not been successful.

Following on the work done in November, over sixty young people from city schools including Donaldson's, Kingsinch, Pilrig and Greysmill special schools, and Balerno, Forrester and Craigmount high schools, visited the Cafe during World Aids Week in January 1996. Cafe users helped deliver the HIV sessions, and HIV Awareness sessions were also made available during normal 6VT drop-in sessions. Unfortunately, some of the young people from Greysmill School were unable to attend because they were unable to get their electric wheelchairs on to the Terrace since there was no ramp. However, Cafe staff went later to the school to deliver the material.

A budget Monitoring Report for the nine months from April to December 1995 showed that the finances were slowly improving. Outgoings were £8,213 less than the budget projection of £41,477, but the position was also eased by £8,135 of additional income generated between October and the following January. £3,050 of this had come as grants from trusts and private industry, but Lothian Region had reinstated £985 which had wrongly been deducted from the Revenue Grant, besides awarding £4,000 from the Regeneration Fund for the Youth Counselling Project. Also, the Cafe's meagre funds had generated £100 in bank interest. All of these helped to avert another funding crisis, and the Treasurer was able to predict that 6VT would have £4,388 available to spend in February and March. Although the Rateable Value of the Cafe was £9,750, Mandatory Relief of 80% and Discretionary Relief of 20% meant that no rates were payable. The Church of Scotland also helped by awarding £2,100 to purchase specific items of equipment to train young people in interview techniques, such as a video and a 4-track tape recorder. That encouraged the staff to prepare a resource pack for young people seeking employment, and the young people used the equipment to update the promotional video they had prepared in the previous year.

Overall, the finances were in better shape than they had ever been, but the Director of Education's representative warned that it was possible that Council grants would be cut by 10%, which would change things dramatically. The Treasurer warned that even a 7½% cut would result in a deficit of around £4,000, and the only remaining area of saving that amount of money was in staffing. Matters were complicated by the local government reorganisation when Lothian Region and the new City of Edinburgh Council

worked in tandem for a year. The cut eventually amounted to 3%, but there was a very positive statement about 6VT in the Education Committee report, which said that the Café could make an approach later towards running costs.

In February 1996, eleven girls enjoyed a sleepover in the Cafe. When the boys heard about it, they asked if they also could have a sleepover and they used it (in March) to start tiling their toilets.

In March, the Management Committee launched a publicity campaign to attract more money for room hires and, as part of various fund-raising ideas, there was a raffle and the possibility of 6VT and LAYC organising a Sportsman's Dinner. At the same time, plans were made to run another Festival Cafe. Having studied the reports for the previous three years, it was agreed to appoint one of the Cafe youth workers to organise it, to open a week before the Festival (which would catch the opening of the Fringe) and not to open in the third week. Profits would be split, with 70% going to the Cafe and 30% to the organiser. It was reported on 5 September 1996, that, because of good organisation and hard work, the 1996 Festival Cafe was the most successful ever and had raised £2,864 for 6VT.

At the end of the financial year on 31 March 1996, the Cafe's finances seemed quite healthy with a balance of £12,600. But £4,500 of this was committed to the Counselling project. The budget that was prepared for 1996-97 showed that it required a minimum of £46,500 to run 6VT, with staffing costs amounting to £36,000 (77%); but these figures were based on the year 1995-96 when expenditure had been cut to a minimum, very little was spent on user activities, and none of the £6,000 was set aside to cover the depreciation of the £30,000 of vital equipment which the Cafe had. The quality of the service could not be maintained indefinitely under such a policy.

Three options were discussed with the Users Group to bridge the funding gap. Reducing staffing levels was unrealistic because they were already very low, with three youth workers available on a good night, and only two on other nights. Increased fund raising was unlikely when there was already so much self-help of this kind going on (e.g. a race night, a raffle and a street collection, besides the income raised from room rentals and providing buffets to some of these). Nor was reducing the opening hours an option, since youth worker hours would have to be reduced by 20 hours per week to achieve the savings required. Since none of these options was acceptable (although a slight reduction in opening hours was made), it was agreed that a further approach be made to the new City of Edinburgh Education Committee. The existing grant accounted for 64% of the Cafe's running costs, trusts and private industry provided 17%, and fund-raising by the Cafe and the users produced 19%.

One or two new issues emerged from the Second Annual Review which was produced in July 1996. Probably the most important was an increase in the hassle which the staff were now facing. This may have been due to the influx of a new cohort of users, including some "hard" men and women who tended to intimidate other users. Experience with them, however, was not all negative. A surprising development was the number of phone calls to the Cafe from remand prisoners awaiting trial. Why did they phone the Cafe rather than their homes? Possibly because they appreciated the personal interest which the staff had taken in them. Another explanation of the additional hassle could have been a general tightening of acceptable standards of behaviour.

All age-restricted groups tend to be affected by the "wave syndrome", namely, that there is a preponderance of members of a particular age who keep the organisation strong for several years but suddenly create a huge vacuum when they all leave together. This syndrome was particularly noticeable for the Cafe in 1996. It was also affected by the usual pattern when attendances rise and fall at particular times of the year. For example, attendances had risen prior to Christmas, with weekly attendances of

between 75 and 165, but they had dropped off in the early part of the new year. By March they were rising again and, by April, between 40 and 60 were attending each night. By May, it was again relatively quiet by 6VT standards with attendances ranging from 65 to 125 per week.

Almost all of the original cohort of users were now too old to retain membership, and their departure had left a vacuum which would have to be filled by a determined recruitment drive in schools at the start of the new school year. It was also agreed to lower the minimum age to 15, although it was recognised that the wider age gap could create other problems such as older teenagers acting in a superior manner towards the younger members and not wishing to associate with these “children” in activities such as discos. It seemed that Friday night was probably the best night for concentrating on younger users since that was the night on which older teenagers were allowed to go into town.

The range of activities and workshops was as wide as ever: domestic violence, personal presentation, HIV/Aids, drugs, smoking, alcohol abuse, condom awareness, sexism, anti-racism, homelessness, art, screen-printing, origami, mask-making, face-painting, disk jockey skills, budget shopping and cooking, candle-making, hairdressing, mock interviews, and problem solving. Various board games (some of an educational nature) were used regularly, and there were quizzes, bingo, karaoke, discos, live entertainment, videos, a magic show, and a Chinese Night. Besides the residential and the sleepovers already mentioned, there were outside visits to the theatre, stock-car racing, Megabowl, Rocky Horror and the Tall Ships at Leith. The users’ Cafe Action Group had a hand in planning these programmes, besides raising issues with the Management Group.

It was hardly surprising that 6VT continued to attract the attention of other youth groups and the media. *The Scotsman*, the *Daily Record* and *The Times* published articles about the Cafe, and STV and the BBC had short news items about it. The press and television frequently approached 6VT to sound out the views of young people on current issues. Youth workers came from various parts of Scotland and England and there was one who came from Austria. Also, individual young visitors came from Spain, Italy, Iceland, Germany and America.

A survey of the users at this time revealed that they came from seventeen different EH post codes, including five outwith Edinburgh. Indeed, one of the attractions of 6VT was its central location and therefore its ability to enable young people to meet peers from different areas.

The increasing emphasis which Dot placed on good marketing and attractive promotional material was beginning to pay dividends. Also noticeable was her desire not to limit the Café’s activities to 6 Victoria Terrace. For the first time, a simple but very clear Annual Report was presented to the AGM on 6 October 1996. It contained a front-page article in which the Vice-Chair, who was about to leave 6VT because of age, expressed how much the Cafe had done for her; an account of the activities of the year; and a very clear statement by the Treasurer of how the finances had now turned the corner thanks to prudent governance and generous support from Lothian Region. For the very first time, it had been possible to set aside over £6,000 for depreciation of equipment. Thirty-one people attended the AGM, which was followed by Hallowe’en Activities.

Dot’s ambitions seemed to know no bounds. At the Management Committee meeting on 4 December 1996, she proposed that the Cafe should set up a youth exchange trip between the Cafe and a small town in Northern Russia called Pestova. Dot, Fiona Horne, Kathryn McDiarmid and Susie Phee (from the staff) and Nick Adams (the young person who acted as Secretary) had forged links with this town whilst volunteering for a Scottish Humanitarian Aid Charity called St Andrew Aid Relief; and Dot, Fiona and Kathryn had discussed the trip with key people there when they visited the town in October.

The trip would take place from 16 to 27 June 1997, and the group size would be limited to fourteen due to restrictions in accommodation. Everyone involved would have to participate fully in the fund-raising and preparation. The Management Committee gave their enthusiastic backing to what they saw as an innovative and challenging project. At the next meeting in January 1997, Dot reported that the group had been identified — nine young people and four adult volunteers in addition to herself — and a planning group had started fund-raising and pricing the cost of containers to hold the workshop materials and a small amount of humanitarian aid, including clothes, medicines, food and educational aids. In March, the Cafe was able to lend £1,000 to the venture in anticipation that money would be raised by collections at football grounds, by a raffle and also a race night — all of which would take place after the trip. There were also sponsored fasts, and one girl, whose attendance at school had been erratic to say the least, raised money through a sponsored attendance at school. There was support in kind from the local police who provided a van to take the party to the airport, and Ali Brabner, one of the community policemen who frequently dropped into the Café, was one of the four adults in the group.

The Russian Embassy was not very helpful and it was some time before correspondence got through from Pestova. A lot of paperwork had to be completed to satisfy Customs, and there was a mix-up over visas which the Russian Consul had to resolve personally.

After the trip, Leanne Liddell who had kept a daily diary, made a presentation to the September meeting of the Management Committee. Despite many difficulties, the 20ft container of humanitarian aid, which had been dispatched in May, did get through unscathed to its destination. The contents were distributed to the four schools in the town, and to its hospital and two orphanages. The Russians found the workshops (on HIV, pregnancy, smoking, and alcohol and drug abuse) beneficial and enjoyable, and great friendships developed between team members. Dot added that this was her fourth visit to Russia, and this had been by far the most harmonised and smooth running trip. Planning from start to finish had taken only six months. To bring some of the Russians back to Edinburgh would take less time because no humanitarian aid would have to be organised.

In September 1998, it was reported that the Cafe hoped to host a group of two adults and three young people in November 1999, plus a further ten from the town if they could self-fund their travel. Nick Adams would explore possibilities while he was in Russia for a month with St Andrew Aid Relief. In the end, only a small group of adults came, with all their expenses paid by the Scottish Trust St Andrew Aid Relief. Another spin-off was that Kathryn McDiarmid, one of the adult leaders, was so enthused by the experience that she resigned her post in the Cafe to go to University to study Russian. The project had been innovative, challenging and exciting.

In March 1997, it was reported that Lancaster University had applied for placements at the Cafe for its social work students from April to July. It was agreed to offer them one placement.

At the end of the financial year on 31 March 1997, the Cafe carried forward £8,585 but, at the same time, it was reported that the grant from the Council would be reduced to £29,660. The Summer Cafe raised almost £3,000. However, this was marred by the theft of £1,040, although £1,000 was recovered through a successful insurance claim. It was also reported that Margaret McLean, who had been doing administrative work in a temporary capacity during the absence of the Administrator since October 1996, had been appointed Cafe Administrator for 15 hours per week. In November, the Treasurer said that she was coping well with the accounts and her accuracy meant that he had to spend less time on them.

There was good cooperation with the police. In 1996, Dot and two Cafe users were involved in a pilot training programme for police constables and sergeants in "B" Division on how to handle young people and this was followed by a visit from the Israeli Police Force who were on a study visit to Lothian and Borders Police. The Chief Constable regarded the pilot as such a success that, in November 1997, the programme was rolled out into a Youth Awareness Programme for the whole of Lothian and Borders Police. It went on for a long time with the final officer completing his training early in 1999, by running a Legal Rights workshop for the older users and a Drugs workshop for the Rugrats — a special afternoon club for S1 pupils introduced in October 1998.

At the AGM on 21 November 1997, the Treasurer reported that this had been the first year in which the Cafe had got thorough without a crisis. It had even been able to replace some equipment and set aside a sum for the depreciation of equipment. Income from trusts had increased as had the income from room hires and buffets.

All of this good news was tempered by the fact that the Cafe was about to lose two of its stalwarts. Gerry Mulvenna, who had done so much to turn the Cafe's finances round, said that he would have to give up because of pressure of work. However, he was persuaded to stay on as nominal Treasurer, with the new Administrator undertaking the actual bookkeeping. The other enforced change was that of Chair. In the May elections in 1997, Councillor Gorrie was elected MP for Edinburgh West. It would therefore be impossible for him to remain as Chair since most of his week would be spent in London, but it was unanimously agreed that he should become the Cafe's Hon. President.

There was so much confidence at this time that the Cafe decided to produce its first glossy and to charge £5 for it! It was several months in the making, but its publication in mid-1997 coincided fortuitously with the departure of its founding spirit, Donald Gorrie. It was called "The Story So Far" and it traced the Cafe's 5-year history from the setting up of the Steering Committee in 1992. Besides describing the activities of 6VT and including short snippets in which users affirmed what the Cafe had done for them personally, it highlighted how far 6VT had progressed in achieving the aims on which it was founded. Among the statements of commendation was one from Elizabeth Maginnis, Chair of the Education Committee:

"It pleases us to work in partnership with the Youth Cafe as it provides a high-quality innovative service to young people who are at the age where many start to drift from traditional services. The Cafe supports our young people facing the challenges that lie ahead of them."

Donald could be well pleased with what had been achieved. To mark their appreciation of the time, inspiration and commitment he had given to the Cafe, the users gave him several small gifts at the 1997 AGM, including a cyber pet which they hoped he would care for. The AGM concluded with a disco and buffet.

Chapter 4: Mac Takes Over (1997-1999)

At the fourth AGM in 1997, Mac Wilkinson was elected Chair of Edinburgh Youth Cafes Association. In accepting the nomination, he said he had been a youth worker prior to becoming Manager of Youth Services, and he finished up as Head of City Strategic Services under Lothian Region, before taking early retirement when the reorganisation of local authorities took place in 1997. He said his aim would be to assist young people to stand up for equal opportunities and the right to a quality life. His arrival resulted in a new surge of activities.

Mac's first Management meeting on 14 January 1998 was devoted largely to catching up on what had happened since the AGM, but new ideas had also emerged. Attendance figures were up, and a new system was to be introduced for discos, whereby users would have to come to the Cafe beforehand to collect their tickets. Entry would still be free, but the new system would give staff an opportunity to chat individually to known or potential drinkers about the conditions of using the Cafe. The disco had later to be cancelled because of insufficient ticket sales.

Since the AGM, there had been a range of activities. For the Xmas Bash, all users had brought some food for the buffet, and the staff had staged a Panto which was about excessive drinking. There had been a live broadcast from 6VT in which young people from the Cafe commented on a girl being caught on CCTV drunk on the streets of Perth. Cafe users also took part in a press launch on a new anti-drink campaign by the Health Education Board for Scotland, which was covered by the press, STV, BBC and Live TV news bulletins. Four Cafe users took part in an Edinburgh Live debate on crime held in Telford College. David Sole, who had captained the Scottish rugby side which won the Grand Slam in 1990, used the Cafe to film the Prince's Trust Action 2000 slot with Cafe users involved in 6VT activities, and Chief Constable Roy Cameron of Lothian and Borders Police launched the Police Youth Awareness project from the Cafe, in which Cafe users were involved in 3-day programmes helping the police to learn more effective ways of working with young people.

All of this helped to raise the profile of 6VT, and it was agreed that "6VT" marketing materials should be purchased to act as a backdrop which viewers of TV programmes could see. Users also wore T-shirts with the 6VT logo when taking part in conferences. At the same time, the Cafe needed to be decorated to freshen it up, and Dot was pleased to report that two young men who attended the Cafe had already painted the meeting room.

In February, Mac and Dot attended a seminar on a new grant scheme which Lloyds TSB had set up. It invited organisations to apply for money to buy in consultant time to help them undertake key areas of project development such as evaluation, financial management and IT development. The Cafe decided to submit an application — the first of many successfully made to this new Lloyds TSB Foundation. The application was for £1,000 of consultancy help. (See page 26 for the outcome.)

In February also, Lothian Health gave the Cafe the loan of a computer, provided an internet server and paid the phone bill for 12 hours of access to the internet. Although this particular server was slow, for the very first time staff and users had access to quality information on a variety of topics and, when the money for free access ran out in March, the users' representatives asked that a means be found to continue it, even if users had to pay for use.

Whithaugh Park near Newcastleton in the Borders was booked for a summer residential from 6 to 10 July, and a scale of payments was worked out depending on ability to pay:

Employed young people	£80
Low income/on benefit	£50
School pupils	£40

There would be fund-raising activities to provide support for those who had difficulty in meeting these payments, including a Saturday night disco which cost £2. Dot had also written to a variety of trusts seeking support. If any money was forthcoming, some of it would be used to provide activities for those who could not afford to go on the residential. In September, the Pilkington Trust gave £1,500. The residential was attended by 21 users and staffed by Dot, PC Charlie Everitt (who was given special permission by his Chief Superintendent to attend) and Nick Adams, a very involved young volunteer.

Activities during the week included abseiling, canoeing, gorge walking, swimming, a BBQ, a trip to the beach (in the rain) and a day at Morecambe Funfair, followed by a visit to the Morecambe Youth Cafe. It was so enjoyable that the young people asked if they could have another residential experience. Paying for it, however, had been difficult for most of them.

One solution might be to accept an invitation from the Army Youth Team based at Castlelaw which would provide similar activities free of charge. This raised a problem for the Management Committee, since there was concern about exposing young people to potential recruitment propaganda, although the Army Team claimed they had a “no recruitment” policy. A boy and a girl attended an activity day at Redford Barracks organised by the Royal Scots and the police, and they enjoyed themselves so much that that they appealed to the Committee to take up the Army offer. So, it was reluctantly agreed to allow the venture to go ahead for a group of Keysteps participants (see Chapter 5), provided the Cafe staff alerted the young people to the reality of army life and to the pressure they might be put under to join up. The Army residential went very well. At the close, the Army Team asked if the Army Recruitment Team could talk to the young people, but this was refused by the Cafe staff as this had not been part of the original agreement. This decision was accepted by the Army Team who said that that they had been most impressed by the behaviour of the 6VT group during the week.

At the end of February 1998, the Lottery Fund announced that the Keysteps application had been successful and, by May, Steven More and Bridget Kelly had been appointed to run it. (See Chapter 5 for fuller details.)

In May 1998, Lloyds TSB Foundation initially agreed to make a grant of roughly £1,000 for a consultant (Felum O’Leary) to review the impact of the services provided by 6VT, including the use of computers in assessing data. This review would also look at 6VT’s finances and provide advice on how its funding might be more secure. In June, the grant was greatly increased to £12,300. Consultancy work would last 44 days in total at a cost of £11,000 and Felum would have Mike Harland to help him as a secondary consultant and Phil Beattie as financial consultant. (Chapter 6 is devoted to this 124 page review which was called “Completing the Circle” and took almost a year to complete.)

The Cafe was very busy in the early months of 1998 — far busier than it had been at the same time in 1997. In February 1998, a survey revealed that 90% of users were coming from disadvantaged circumstances.

The staff continued to raise valuable income through catering. For example, in March 1998, they provided two outside buffets — one in the Merchants’ Hall for 150 people and another in the Assembly Rooms for 50 guests. The Edinburgh School of English also looked to the Cafe to provide lunches for its

language students. There were fears in May that renovation works on the Terrace might mean that there could be no Summer Cafe as there was no access from George IV Bridge or Fisher's Close. The staff were undeterred, however, and went ahead with their plans. In the end, the building works lasted only a few months and the Summer Cafe was able to go ahead and raised £2,600 for the Cafe — rather less than had been hoped for but understandable since there were fewer customers than in previous years because of the building works.

In 1998 an application was made to the Council for £4,280 to run 6VT's first Vacation programme. The target population was those who were in care, physically or mentally disadvantaged, living with lone parents, victims of crime, low academic achievers, young people identified by the police as being on the periphery of offending as well as ex-offenders. All of these young people were potentially at greater risk over the summer holiday period due to lack of supervision and available services. It was an ambitious programme which included swimming, ice skating, off-road biking, a tour of Mary King's Close, six minibus trips and picnics, and a 5-day residential. There is no record of the amount awarded, but it was far less than the amount applied for. It did go ahead, however, and was helped by a donation of £150 from Edinburgh Presbytery to buy meals for the youngsters.

The summer months of 1998 were relatively quiet at the drop-in so, in an effort to counter fluctuating attendance and ensure a steady stream of younger people accessing 6VT when they became old enough, it was agreed to start a programme exclusively for First Year pupils from 1 pm to 4 pm on Fridays. This Rugsrats programme began on 2 October 1998. An average of twenty-five attended each week. On one afternoon, the Rugsrats were conducted round the new Scottish Parliament building by a police officer who had participated in 6VT's Youth Awareness Programme. During the visit, they spent about quarter of an hour with George Reid, the Presiding Officer, discussing youth work and the Scottish Parliament. They were also filmed for Russian TV. The Lloyds TSB Report "Completing the Circle" commented at length on the Rugsrats programme. (See Chapter 6.)

Community Education had planned to carry out a review of the Cafe's activities at this time as part of its remit to justify the use of public funds. However, it agreed to postpone it because of the TSB review

Following the resignation of Gerry Mulvenna, Jon Dye became Treasurer at the AGM on 25 November 1998 and immediately started designing a new spreadsheet. In February 1999, finances were sufficiently healthy to improve the amenity of the Cafe by installing an alarm system and purchasing new blinds for the windows. Self-help efforts continued. The staff raised £701 at a Fantasy Casino Night, and the young people brought in £70 from a fund-raising disco. It was agreed that the users should decide how to spend this money.

Self help continued apace and, in the financial year 1998-99, the hire of rooms and equipment and proceeds from the coffee bar and buffets came to just under £7,500 — a significant contribution to 6VT's survival.

At this stage of the Cafe's history, it fell to Dot to prepare all the applications for funding. In 1998-99, she succeeded in getting donations from the following trusts and companies:

The National Lottery Board for Scotland funded Keysteps;
Price Waterhouse Coopers gave £250 towards job search work in 6VT;
Maisie Wallace Fund paid for 100 free meals for homeless young people;
Edinburgh Presbytery continued to pay for the services of a part-time youth worker;
Prince's Trust M-Power paid for a project (Bullying Uncovered) which is described later in this chapter;

Robert Horne Paper Company donated 10 reams of quality paper worth approximately £80 for 6VT's programmes;

and there were unrestricted donations from: JK Young Endowment Fund; Rolling Stone Gallery; Arnold Clark; Odeon Cinema (Wester Hailes); Megabowl; Festival Theatre; the Angle Club; and there was even a donation of £3.71 from a Summer Cafe customer who handed over the change from his meal.

Abbey National Charitable Trust donated £500 towards the cost of installing a shower. The remaining £1400 for this installation was funded from the proceeds of the Festival Cafe which, in 1999, raised £4,177.19 thanks to a tremendous effort from many staff and users. The users decided to spend some of this money on buying audio equipment that was required to keep the disco operating.

So much was happening at 6VT that, in February 1999, another effort was made to secure the lease of Baden Powell House. The Scottish Parliament had taken it over as office accommodation during its temporary location in the Church of Scotland Assembly Hall, but it would leave in two years' time when it moved into the new Parliament buildings at Holyrood. Again, nothing came of the request.

At the beginning of 1999, a young Swedish man called Jarmo Lahnamaa approached Steven More, who had spent some time in Sweden as a student, about getting a long-term placement at 6VT through the European Voluntary Service programme. With the grant of just under £1000 from EVS, it should be possible for 6VT to pay his accommodation, living costs and travel for one year and have almost £100 left over for administration. His placement began on 20 April, and 6VT gained a full-time youth worker for a year. This placement went very well, but there was disappointment over the poor support from the British Council. Also, Jarmo said he had been led to believe that he would receive higher living allowances than he actually received, and the Cafe in the end had to subsidise these costs. Dot revealed that she had a list of twenty other young people from across Europe who wanted a similar experience at 6VT.

Another crisis emerged in the summer of 1999. Although CEC maintained its revenue grant to the Cafe at £29,660, the Cafe was hit by cuts in the Council's allocation of part-time youth work hours, which meant that the Cafe was forced to reduce staffing quotas and to restrict the opening hours for the drop-in. It was reported on 12 July 1999 that Community Education had overspent its budget, and an immediate cut of 9% was imposed on its part-time staff. The effect was even greater, however, because the cut was backdated to April, resulting in a 10% reduction. The Cafe protested that it had never overspent its budget and it was unfair to penalise it for other people's transgressions — but to no avail. Because some of those seconded to the Cafe would not be paid by the Council in July, the Management Committee agreed to make up any shortfall suffered by these individuals since they had already worked their hours for that month. Discussions with the Council did secure a minor concession — because of new Government legislation, it would no longer be necessary for part-time staff to take a 4-week break before starting a new contract.

On 8 September 1999, the Management Committee received another shock. They were told that a Cafe user had been caught trying to sell anti-depressant tablets. On the positive side, however, the police investigation which followed revealed that only two of the sixty young people in attendance had bought tablets, and several users had cooperated in making sure that the person responsible was caught.

A survey at this time revealed that approximately two hundred different individuals attended 6VT each month, mainly from the Edinburgh area, and demands on staff to provide individual advice, information and support continued to grow.

The first staff development day was held in the Cafe on Saturday, 16 June 1999. All the Cafe staff attended and, because it was overtime, they were paid £30.

The AGM by now was like no other AGM. The formal business (adoption of the accounts and election of office-bearers for the following year) was quickly disposed of, and then the users took over with a programme of entertainment — a good indication of how much 6VT was achieving its aim of getting the users to share in the running of the Cafe.

Caristiona (Ony) McLeod typified that confidence and keenness. At the end of February 1998, Ony had made an impressive presentation to the Management Committee about a project she was planning to start at 6VT with the help of ten other users. It was called "*Bullying Uncovered*" and had arisen from the dissatisfaction of the young people over how bullying was being dealt with in general. They said that they planned to produce a magazine written by young people for young people on issues relating to bullying, and would include interviews with police and youth workers, as well as the personal stories of users. They applied for funding to the M-Power Millennium Commission, which was run by the Prince's Trust.

The application process moved very slowly. However, the Committee was so impressed by Ony's passion for the project that, rather than allow her enthusiasm to wane while waiting for a response to her funding request, it encouraged her to go ahead on the understanding that it would subsidise the project, if necessary, from Cafe funds. The state of the finances was such that it could now confidently make such a promise.

The Community Safety Unit in March 1998 awarded £3,100 to purchase computer equipment to produce *Bullying Uncovered*, and £1,000 for staff and running costs. The press picked up on this award and gave the project a great deal of coverage. A Cafe user also took part in a live TV debate with Councillor Williamson, Convener of the Education Committee. This coverage prompted phone calls to the Cafe from parents and children all over Scotland, describing their own experiences and seeking support.

In September 1998, the Millennium Commission awarded a grant of £8,500, using money from the National Lottery. Ten young people had formed a committee which started work on the publication at the start of the new school term, but it was March 1999 before the first issue of *Bullying Uncovered* was published. The Millennium Commission had a press launch which resulted in positive coverage in the *Evening News*, *The Herald*, *The Times*, the *Herald and Post* and STV. It was also posted on the internet.

Issue No.1 was an 8-page glossy, and it was most professional in appearance, with eye-catching photographs for which Cafe volunteers had posed. It stated that its aim was to publish an issue every two months. "*We want to tackle bullying head on. We want it to stop. By sharing ideas and advice in BU, we hope to give people the confidence to stand up and challenge the behaviour. We want to make bullies more aware of the damage they do.*"

The content was chatty and very readable. There were short contributions from young people of various ages showing how they had been affected by bullying, and there was even a letter from a 57-year-old woman who had terrorised classmates almost half a century earlier. She thought that there were two reasons why she had done it. One was that she was jealous of others whose parents cared for them, and the second was that, since she was bullied at home, she decided "*not to take any sh** from anyone outside the home. I know better now.*" It was also full of sensible advice from young people who had been bullied themselves, and it even contained jokes and puzzles, for which there was a small prize. The

main message was not to suffer in silence but to share the problems with others, be they parents, grannies, teachers, friends, Childline or the workers at 6VT.

2000 copies of Issue 1 were printed at a cost of £278, and these were sent out free of charge to all Edinburgh schools, youth projects and children's units. The group also made a half-hour documentary for BBC television.

In addition to the ten members of the editorial team, fifty individuals had played a part in one way or another as a result of the project being based in 6VT.

Following its publication, the following letter was received from Prince Charles:

"I was impressed not only by the content, but also by the high standards of production. Some of the stories were particularly harrowing and I have no doubt that bullying in schools is causing a great deal of distress to many children. 'BU' must be a great support to them and I wish it every success. This comes with my best wishes to yourself and all the young people in the group.

Yours most sincerely

Charles"

There were other letters of support from the Prime Minister's secretary and Cherie Booth, wife of the Prime Minister, as well as massive coverage in the media. Chris Smith, the Minister for Culture & Leisure also invited the BU team to a private meeting where he discussed issues with them for about thirty minutes.

In the autumn of 1999, the BU team was filmed for a Gaelic TV programme on bullying, and approximately fifteen Cafe users took part in a programme for BBC Choice.

All of this encouraged the team to keep going and Issue No 2 appeared two months later. It consisted of only four A4 pages but was full of personal letters from young people who had been bullied in different ways, together with advice on how to stand up to bullies. There was also an article from "Andy", who described himself as "a guest of the Queen", advising young people not to make the same mistakes as he had made. Prison was not a pleasant place.

The back page was devoted to a long article by "Nathan" who had suffered bullying of a different kind. He and "Amy" had got together when her boyfriend "Craig" had gone off on holiday to Spain. Amy who had up to then been utterly dominated by Craig, even to the extent of not being allowed to speak to other boys, became happy and outgoing; but, as soon as Craig returned, she withdrew into her shell again through fear, and another girl who fancied Craig started spreading gossip which landed Nathan in trouble. The articles are interesting in that they show that the young people themselves appreciated the complexities involved — what turns people into bullies, why certain youngsters are bullied, the different forms of bullying, that bottling up what is happening will only make matters worse, and the importance of peer pressure on the bullies.

There was no further mention of *Bullying Uncovered* in the Cafe's documents until October 2000, when Jenny Wingate, the Millennium Awards Manager, wrote from the Prince's Trust to ask how the project was progressing. In her letter, she said that she had received a report in April 2000 which stated that a

third *Bullying Uncovered* had been issued, that a fourth was underway and that it was planned to complete the project by the end of the year.

In her reply, Dot admitted that enthusiasm for the project had gone down, and that there was still a balance of £3,381.99, some of which would be used to produce rulers, pencils and A4 folders with BU anti-bullying messages, and to continue the helplines. This was agreed and the remaining money was refunded to M-Power.

During 1999, as part of the Cafe's Respect agenda in which the users of 6VT were constantly encouraged to practise mutual respect — respect for one another and respect between staff and users — a group of young men aged 14-16 was invited to take part in a pilot programme of group work based on the Zero Tolerance of Violence Against Women campaign. Six young men took part in the six sessions and deemed it such a success that they said that this sort of programme should become a priority for 6VT and should also be extended to take in a wider age group.

On the front page of the Annual Report for 1999, a 15 year old male wrote: *"I have been coming to 6VT for 7 months not just the general cafe but also the young men's group which is tackling Zero Tolerance of violence against women. I had an excellent time on the residential which involved hill walking, rock climbing and team building in and around the Pentland Hills. It was really great as is 6VT. The staff are always there for me and have helped me with many things including family problems and they helped me get into college. I come here three nights a week and would come more if it were open. Please help our cafe coz we all love it."*

What better note to finish on as the Cafe approached the new millennium?

Chapter 5 – Keysteps (Stages 1 and 2)

At the Management meeting on 5 March 1997, Dot reported that the new City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) had approached the Cafe to see if it would manage a personal safety course for vulnerable young tenants which it wanted to run as part of its Community Safety partnership.

The Council's Housing Department estimated that, at that time, 70% of the 16 and 17 year olds who were housed (i.e. approximately 440) were failing in their tenancies within six months. The "*Leading the Way*" document which 6VT published in 2004, summed up the problem as it existed in 1997 as follows:

"In the early days, the majority of Keysteps clients walking through our doors were bringing multiple complex problems and traumatic life stories with them, desperate to be listened to and supported. The norm then was that young people seeking help would find themselves being sent not only from A to B, but from B to Z (in no particular order) and back again. Fortunately, being based in the Youth Café, we never felt the need to follow these departmental manuals of madness. We were able to respond to every person as an individual, without having to wait hours for someone to approve a request. We could do some very basic, but meaningful, things such as giving a person a bus fare, warmth, security, food, clothes, etc. Then together we could enter the frustrating and challenging hours, and sometimes days, of negotiations for hostel places, benefits, assessments, etc. The last three to four years have seen vast improvements. We now have a more co-ordinated multi-agency service responding to the issues of Edinburgh's young homeless."

There was a press launch for the proposed course on 14 March 1997 which was chaired very well by a young person called Stacey Flockhart, who was Vice-Chair of 6VT. The main speakers were Councillor Lesley Hinds and David Sole, former Scottish Rugby captain, from the Prince's Trust. There was good media coverage on STV News and Edinburgh Live TV, and a great deal of interest from outside organisations.

The 1997 pilot course was run in partnership with the Council's Community Safety Unit, the Prince's Trust and the Police Service. It was staffed by Dot and a student on placement and was designed to work with homeless young people, vulnerable young tenants and young people preparing to live independently. Workshops were based on the successful model of the "Women in Fear of Crime" courses which were run by the police and included such things as Managing Your Tenancy (safety concerns, economical ways of heating water and keeping homes warm, tenancy worries, and handling conflicts with neighbours) and a visit to St Leonards police station where participants were able to discuss concerns about their personal safety and learn a range of self defence moves. There was a session on first aid run by St Andrews Ambulance Service, while the Fire Brigade discussed the horrors of fire and the main causes of house fires (bad wiring, chip pans, smoking in bed, etc) and the importance of having smoke alarms. The police gave each participant a personal alarm, a security pen to mark equipment and a range of leaflets on security; and the Milton Road B&Q gave them tool-kits. At the end of the course, the participants met together for a pizza meal at Mammias in the Grassmarket.

The pilot course was so successful, that 6VT decided to prepare a more ambitious Keysteps proposal for submission to the National Lottery Board. The main aim would be to provide additional support to homeless young people, vulnerable young tenants and young people preparing to live independently in order to prevent them from walking out of a tenancy through lack of support.

All Lottery applications are subjected to a very rigorous scrutiny, involving several briefing sessions with the applicants. This takes time, and it was the end of February 1998 before the announcement came that the Lottery had approved a grant of £101,000 over three years for the Keysteps proposal. To meet the requirements of the grant, 6VT would have to run a minimum of six personal safety courses each year for sixty young tenants, as well as follow-up events for previous course participants, as requested. Three of the courses would be held outwith the Cafe. The courses would be aimed at vulnerable young tenants, mainly aged 16-21, including three main groups of young people — those who were about to leave or had left care, those who had no family support, and those living in supported accommodation. Each course would run for 6 to 10 weeks, and would include personal safety talks, a visit to a police station, self-defence, first aid, accident prevention, managing tenancies, safe DIY (with special emphasis on electrics), a group social event, and input from the Fire Brigade and other relevant agencies.

The proposed breakdown of expenditure was:

£19,752	Salaries (including five hours per week towards supervision by the Coordinator)
£700	Office equipment (including new telephones and a filing cabinet)
£2,000	Crisis loan equipment to lend to tenants until they bought their own (e.g. microwaves, sleeping bags, heaters, kettles, high chairs and DIY items)
£1,000	Course equipment, including a camera, a portable ghetto blaster, a portable TV and video, two mobile phones, pagers, and resuscitation equipment.
£730	Freelance workers to carry out specialised courses such as first aid and DIY.
£1,000	General running expenses (cleaning, phone bills, stamps, etc)
£2,000	Information leaflets, photographs and educational materials
£1,520	Staff, management and volunteer training
£300	Travel (staff, volunteers and course participants)
£600	Rent
£400	Recruitment costs
£1,000	Follow-up events as required by needs of participants
£4,000	Course delivery (calculated at 60 people @ £66), to pay for starter kits, as in the pilot where kits included such things as DIY tools, first aid and personal alarms.

The Café opened a separate bank account for Keysteps transactions, but the Lottery refused to pay the money directly into that account. Following the Café's new staffing practices, the Keysteps staff were also used as general 6VT workers providing one-to-one advice on housing matters to Keysteps and other Cafe users.

After the announcement, job specifications had to be prepared, advertisements placed and interviews held, so that it was May 1998 before Steven More was appointed as Coordinator of the project (25 hours per week), with Bridget (Biddy) Kelly as the Project Assistant (10 hours per week).

In his last two years at school, Steve had been one of the young people who helped to drive forward the creation of 6VT, and he became the first Vice-Chairman of 6VT's Management Committee. On leaving school, he went to Lancaster University from which he emerged with an Honours degree in Community and Youth Studies in July 1998. Biddy was currently the part-time coordinator of the Dry Bar in North Berwick (see page 1).

Steve and Biddy began work on 1 July 1998 and set about designing a course which would provide 1-to-1 advice and support to young people who had just moved into their own accommodation. Two open days

were held on 21 and 22 July, and from those who attended a steering group was set up consisting of representatives from Lothian and Borders Police, Community Safety, the Rock Trust, HEAT (Health, Efficiency, Access, Treatment) and 6VT.

The first course was planned to start in Oxfangs in July 1998. However, not enough young people turned up on the first day, since the young people seemed to be reluctant to go to the neighbourhood centre. It became clear to Steve and Bidy that they would have to do outreach work in the community to build up contacts with young people. In the meantime, however, they supported individual young people who came to them with housing issues. Referrals came from the young people themselves, from young people introducing their friends and from the Social Work Department and other voluntary organisations. As was usual Cafe practice, a young person was given the task of explaining to the AGM how much she was benefiting from this support.

The first main Keysteps course began on Thursday evenings in December 1998 with fifteen participants, followed by another in January 1999 attended by seven young tenants. On 9 February, a successful networking day brought together the referring agencies. This was followed by a conference hosted by Standard Life in March at which staff gave a presentation on the work of Keysteps to Young People's Projects and various business representatives.

Early on, Keysteps set up a scheme whereby organisations, which were working with homeless young people or with vulnerable 16 and 17 year olds who were housed, could give them a free food voucher which they could redeem at the Youth Cafe for a hot meal. Organisations were then invoiced on a "pay as it's used" basis. The Cafe was particularly grateful to the Maisie Wallace Fund, which paid for 100 free meals for homeless young people. The scheme did not attract much interest initially but, by Easter 1999, Barnardo's 16+ and Edinburgh Streetwork Project (ESP) had joined the scheme on a pay as you use basis.

There was greater uptake of the Crisis Loan Equipment scheme under which some of its most needy clients could get the loan of items such as sleeping bags, microwaves, warm clothes and starter packs provided by the Freestart Charity. In April 1999, the Management Committee was told that, as a result of its good relationship with the Young People's Housing Officers, the Cafe had been able to retrieve equipment from a flat that young people had been forced to abandon because the block had been taken over by drug dealers.

The first two Keysteps courses were held in the Cafe, but the third course went into the high flats in Gracemount, where there were ten participants. The Keysteps staff were well supported by workers from the Council's Young People's Support Unit, and an action group was formed consisting of Council workers, Keystones, ESP and the police. In July 1999, the young residents of Gracemount formed their own support group called GYRO (Gracemount Young Residents Organisation) which met weekly with *ad hoc* support from 6VT staff and the housing officer.

In its first year (July 1998-June 1999), Keysteps delivered five courses, a Stepping Out course and a one-week residential from 17-21 May 1999 at Castlelaw Youth Army Base, attended by fourteen young people. In all, it worked with ninety-nine individuals, of whom twenty-two were homeless, six were young people leaving care, fifty had their own tenancy, twenty-one were preparing to leave home, eight were lone parents, and all ninety-nine were on low incomes. All of the young people felt that they had benefited immensely from the experience. They had all learned new skills, valuable information and strategies for making their tenancies a success. Having access to the support of the Cafe and its staff was particularly

useful. For their part, the staff spoke highly of the support they had received from the CEC Housing Department, Lothian and Borders Police, and the Keystones Project.

The following comments came from two young tenants: *"The whole course gets down to the real life dangers of having your own tenancy. It has made me more aware of what might happen"* and *"I've learned that getting a flat and keeping it is quite hard but, with lots of hard work, it can be fun if managed properly."*

There was a 13% underspend in the first year. The project was allowed to carry over some of this into the second year, but the Lottery Assessor refused to repay the Cafe for subsidising equipment for the early stages of Keysteps. He was adamant that none of the grant money should be used for equipment which could later be used by the Cafe. However, the Cafe was able to charge the project for the considerable amount of time which Dot had devoted to it. In the end, £3,610 was underspent and returned to the Lottery.

The first two months of the second year were spent preparing a report on the first year and assessing what changes should be made in future courses. There were also invitations to conferences to publicise the innovative work of Keysteps. For example, in September 1999, Biddy and two young people from the Gracemount course gave a presentation at a conference run by Community Learning Scotland.

Over the next year and a half, the Keysteps team continued to run courses along the same lines but also experimented with new ideas. On 18 April 2001, for example, there was a follow-up course in which participants made items for their homes. The range of contacts was gradually extended to such places as Wellington Special School in Penicuik and Howdenhall and St Katherine's Secure Units.

The success of Keysteps was down largely to three things: although planned in great detail, the leaders were always willing to adapt their approach to meet new situations; it gave hands-on support to the participants in their own flats, rather than just giving them lectures on good housekeeping; and it benefited from a great deal of inter-agency support, especially from the City of Edinburgh Housing Department and Lothian and Borders Police.

Keysteps was going so well that, six months before the grant was due to end in June 2001, it was decided to submit a second application to the Lottery Board, now called the Community Fund, even though it was realised that it would be most unusual for the Lottery to fund the same project twice. The Lottery Assessor carried out a long and rigorous review, and approval came just as the Cafe was about to issue P45s to the Keysteps staff, redundancy notices having already been issued. The new funding of around £35,000 per annum would take the project up to June 2004, and it enabled the Cafe to increase the staff hours to one full-time worker and one part-time post of 25 hours per week. The fact that the Lottery did approve a second grant was testament to the quality of the course.

Steve More decided to terminate his work with Keysteps in order to concentrate on a new course called Turnaround, dealing with young offenders. Bridget (Biddy) Kelly, who had been Steve's assistant, took over as the full-time project director, helped by Lorraine Goodwin for 25 hours per week.

The new programme officially started on 3 September 2001. It was on the same lines as the original project. The overall aim was to help young people (aged 15 to 24) make a success of independent living, by learning basic skills, such as how to cook on a limited budget and generally manage finances. Staff also supported young people at an individual level on housing related matters. Specific target groups included young parents, vulnerable young women, lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender young people, ethnic

groups, and young offenders who were being settled back into the community after custody. A major focus was on personal safety issues. It delivered advice, information and support to individuals, while providing emergency free food and clothes to those in need. It also encouraged young people to access personal development opportunities.

Saughton Prison had currently around two hundred young remand prisoners and it was very keen for the Keysteps staff to provide individual support for some of these young people before they were released. One possible project would be the preparation of a video dealing with life in hostels. It was suggested that Keysteps could work jointly with Stonewall and SACRO. The Management Committee was pleased with this proposal since it fitted in well with the Council's housing policy. However, there was concern about the ability of the Cafe, with its present accommodation, to cope with so many young people, especially since it was envisaged that some elements of the work would be mainstreamed.

The first of the new series of courses began in October 2001 with eleven young people (including one from the secure accommodation at Howdenhall). In addition to the two paid workers, there were two young volunteer helpers who had been specially trained by the project.

In 2002, past course participants made a video which took a look at some of the emergency hostel accommodation on offer in Edinburgh. The original idea had been that Bob Forsythe, who was doing research for the Scottish Council for the Single Homeless, would front this project. He recruited four young people from the Keysteps project to do research on homelessness, for which the young people received a SCOTVEC module. However, early in 2002, this video project (called "Young People Speak Out") was placed in jeopardy since the grant had been cut from £32,000 to £5,000. However, the Keysteps team decided to continue the work on their own. First of all, they and some Keysteps participants visited all the hostels in Edinburgh and compiled an up-to-date directory of the hostels (with relevant information). Then, with the guidance and assistance of Young People Speak Out, they produced the video "Hostels for Us" about existing hostel accommodation which could be used to show future members of the Keysteps course that living in a hostel was not as bad as some people claimed. It was launched at a special event in the Cafe on 9 October 2002, when Irene McGuigan MSP was the guest speaker.

In 2002, the Keysteps remit was extended to enable it to work with anyone in the targeted group who lived in Lothian Region. During this time, Bidy Kelly, the project leader, attended multi-agency meetings on homelessness and young people once a month. She also delivered personal safety training courses for other agencies, including Girls' Club CYP (Clubs for Young People), Fairbridge, the Stonewall Youth Club and the Underground (Rock Trust).

The Keysteps staff continued to realise the importance of team building. Eleven of the twelve young people who began the course in February 2002 completed the course and, to celebrate this, they were taken out for a meal at China China where they were all presented with certificates.

Social considerations, however, sometimes had a negative effect. It had been hoped that a Keysteps course could be set up in Pilton, with the additional possibility of setting up a young tenants group there. However, this fell through since only two young people came in the first week, and only one in the second week. It appeared that territorial issues (Pilton, Granton and Muirhouse) made it difficult to arrange courses in local areas.

In April 2002, East Lothian Council contracted the Cafe staff to run a dependency course for young people who had been given tenancies but were causing social problems. Steve and Bidy ran this three-day course

which used a mixture of Keysteps and Turnaround (see chapter 8) materials. The Cafe received £1,500 for the three days. Initially, the course was run from the Café, but consideration was being given to running future courses in East Lothian.

In June 2002, following a suggestion from Wendy Henderson (Housing Department), the Cafe made its first application for Transitional Housing Benefit. In return for providing practical support, the Cafe could receive £28 per hour. This provided an invaluable contribution to the Cafe's core funding. By January 2003, under this scheme, Keysteps was acting as an agent for the Council in supporting young people settle into new tenancies. The Council paid a fee from the Transitional Housing Benefit fund for each young person whom Keysteps took on, and this resulted in more adults being involved in working with young tenants.

At Christmas 2002, the housing charity Shelter awarded 6VT a grant of £600 which enabled it to bring together vulnerably housed young people to participate in some of the City's festive events. For the young people who took part, this helped relieve some of the isolation and loneliness that those separated from family networks face. 6VT Cafe users also got involved in the Christmas spirit. Every year, they contributed to a collection of food that was distributed to young people in need. Over the year, the Cafe also received a great deal of support from Lothian and Borders Police and from Move On, a national project aimed at helping adults to brush up their skills and gain the National Certificate in Adult Literacy or Numeracy.

By April 2003, the Transitional Housing Benefit had become the Supporting Young People Fund, which was designed to help young Council tenants who were on housing benefit. The Cafe had just signed a three-year contract worth £43,510 per annum to help 12 young people per week. Since it was certain that the Lottery would not fund Keysteps a third time, the Management Committee decided to "bank" this money to keep Keysteps going after August 2004 when the Lottery grant ended. After all, under the new contract the Cafe staff would be doing exactly what they had been doing in the Keysteps courses. It would also be possible to claim administration expenses under the new scheme, something which the Lottery grant did not permit.

Keysteps staff were now sitting on the Homelessness Strategy working group and the Housing Education working group. In conjunction with Move On, Keysteps was also about to start working in four Edinburgh high schools, piloting lessons on Housing Education.

The 2003 Annual Report stated that the demand for the Keysteps service was even greater than when it started. Since November 2002, eighty-eight young people had participated in Keysteps courses, and another fifty-two had attended courses held at various locations across the city. Also, fifty-one young people had taken part in follow-up events. Keysteps was now part of the Edinburgh Council's Supporting People package and it had provided this service to thirteen individuals, as well as continuing to support and advise young people who came directly to the Café. By now, a large number of young people outside the project were dropping into the Cafe to get advice on seeking tenancies and preparing themselves for the move.

It will be clear from these last few paragraphs that, when the Lottery funding ended in 2004, the fully fledged Keysteps course was no longer sustainable. The story is taken up again in Chapter 13 which outlines how the Cafe had to make frequent modifications to keep the original idea alive.

Chapter 6: “Completing the Circle” (1998-1999)

This very detailed report on the work of Edinburgh Youth Cafes Association was commissioned by 6VT in June 1998, was funded by Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland, was carried out in the second half of 1998, and was presented to the Management Committee of the Cafe in May 1999.

The work was carried out by Felum O’Leary and Mike Harland. Its aims were:

- (a) to assess how successful the Cafe was in achieving its objectives;
- (b) to identify its strengths and areas where improvement could be achieved;
- (c) to propose ways in which the Management Committee could monitor and evaluate performance; and
- (d) to provide evidence which might persuade key stakeholders to continue supporting the Cafe financially.

The researchers gathered their information in a number of ways: through questionnaires; by personally interviewing staff, users, parents of users, key members of the Management Committee, agency stakeholders and other interested parties; by collecting and comparing factual and anecdotal evidence; by examining statistical records kept by the Cafe; by carrying out two Census and user surveys; and by observing the operation of the Cafe at first hand.

It was a long, rambling document consisting of one hundred and twenty four A4 sheets of descriptive, sometimes repetitive, narrative. It was packed with raw data and, although it contained a lot of useful information, it bore the hallmark of having been hastily thrown together without rigorous editing, and so it was sometimes difficult to separate the wheat from the chaff. To bring more focus to it, a summary document of 26 sheets was produced by the Cafe itself containing recommendations and other useful information.

Unlike most youth projects which tended to open only in term times, the Cafe was open on three evenings per weeks, 52 weeks per year. Average attendances at the drop-in sessions were compared in two separate months:

Average attendance in June 1998	33 (14 males, 19 females)
Average attendance in February 1999	46 (21 males. 25 females)

As far as cost to the users, entry criteria, transport and parental opposition were concerned, there were no significant barriers to attendance. Once they started using the Cafe, the vast majority used it regularly and frequently — about twice a week on average.

An examination of home circumstances revealed that half of the users were living with two parents, slightly less than half with one parent, and 6% were in temporary accommodation. Overall, at least three-quarters of the Cafe users at the time of the census lived in areas officially designated as areas of multiple deprivation. Slightly less than one third posed significant risk to themselves or to others (using CEC’s definition of “vulnerable young people”). Some staff were concerned that the preponderance of vulnerable young people might distort the mix of personal and social characteristics.

The Cafe came out of the report very well in that most of its aims and objectives were being realised largely because of the quality of the contribution made by the staff generally and the Coordinator in particular. The researchers had no doubt that the key ingredient in the Cafe’s success was the staff. There was a culture of mutual respect between staff and users, and a shared belief that 6VT was a joint enterprise of staff and young people. What the users appreciated most about staff was that they

treated them “as adults”, “as normal human beings”, “as grown ups”, and not as “ignorant children”, and they understood what made young people tick.

Users thought it was an immensely valuable service. They relaxed and enjoyed themselves with their peers and concerned adults in safety and comfort at affordable prices. They got away from home and off the streets of their own neighbourhood in a ‘cool’ city centre venue. The Cafe programme filled an important gap in the lives of many of the young people. Their parents agreed with them. They believed that the Cafe Programme was a valuable resource both for their children and themselves, and it provided services to standards which met their expectations as parents.

Since the Council was the Cafe’s main funder, its views were particularly important. Shortly after it came into existence, the Education Committee of the new City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) replaced the existing “*Youth Strategy*” with a policy document called “*Working Together*” in which it sought to persuade different agencies for young people to work together in a more coordinated way. In measuring 6VT against this document, O’Leary and Harland concluded:

“6VT can justifiably claim that it pursues the principles and policy objectives of “Working Together” in everything it does..... It is less clear from the documentation we have seen whether the unique contribution being made by 6VT is fully recognised and exploited at policy level; notably, the nature of the service, its focus on transition from school/family to independent living and its city centre location.” To protect the future of 6VT, the Management Committee should ensure that it was able to demonstrate that it was providing best value.

Much of the credit for what staff were achieving was down to the example set by the Coordinator, notably, her leadership qualities, her dedication, and her management and networking skills. However, the Management Committee was not giving her the support she needed. Her workload was excessive. She was already working between 50 and 60 hours a week to compensate for weaknesses in the performance of the Management Committee.

These were not the only criticisms of the Management Committee. The main criticism was that it was not providing clear policy decisions and not monitoring or evaluating what was happening. *“We think that 6VT’s policy needs to catch up with its practice and there is scope for action to improve practice.”* There was no systematic approach to staff development. Staff needed time to stand back from the ‘hurly burly’ of day-to-day work to reflect on the wider picture. And there was *“a risk that that they would become pre-occupied with fighting fires, at the expense of preventing them.”*

The staff were not completing the nightly diaries as well as they should, especially the section covering Advice and Information. They were, therefore, seriously under-reporting the amount of personal support they were giving to users. It was essential that staff should develop the discipline of accurately recording what was going on during sessions and any follow-up action taken, so that lessons could be learned for improving performance and programme content. Overall, the staff were preoccupied with delivering the service, gave little attention to recording that and even less to sharing information and learning from experience.

This was not entirely the fault of the staff. The Management Committee needed to give a clear lead on how important they thought this sort of reporting was. They needed to give staff time to do it, and they should apply to the City of Edinburgh Council for an increase in core funding to achieve this! Having a preponderance of part-time staff brought the advantage of having a wide range of appropriate adult role models, but it could disrupt continuity. Because sessional staff were employed by the Community Education Department, the Coordinator had technically no operational control over them or their development. The arrangement worked only because of the good relations between the part-timers and the Coordinator. There was no time allowance for recording, team meetings, staff training, or staff

supervision and appraisal. Nor was there any cover for sickness, holidays or the requirement that part-time staff had to absent themselves from the project for one month annually. These staffing arrangements should be terminated!

The researchers returned several times to the theme of lack of evidence and how it resulted in 6VT not being able to demonstrate how successful it was nor why it was successful. While recognising that a balance had to be struck between doing the job and collecting information, it concluded that the Management Committee was too dependent on oral feedback from staff and project visits for the information it needed to oversee performance or plan ahead. The staff were not given indicators to help them monitor the effect of the work of 6VT on its users. As a result, the Annual Reviews were not sufficiently grounded in evidence to underpin strategic and business planning or to convince stakeholders that 6VT was a worthwhile project which added value to existing youth work provision.

As an illustration of what proper planning should involve, the RUGRATS programme for S1 pupils, which had been started in October 1998 shortly before the evaluation began, came in for detailed consideration. The researchers were not overly impressed by it. There was almost nothing in print about how the RUGRATS programme came into being, about the design of the programme or what it sought to achieve, how its success would be measured, or what the implications were for 6VT and its stakeholders of stepping outside the Cafe Constitution in this way.

While recognising that it was a reasonable experiment to try to avoid the peaks and troughs in attendance at the evening drop-in sessions, the report raised some serious objections to it. The immature behaviour of the pupils, in particular, seemed to worry the researchers. Using two volunteers from the older group of users seemed a good way of bridging the generational gap and also offered the volunteers real opportunities for developing their own personal and social development; but, although the guidance they were given through a 'Code of Conduct' and the "on the job" support from staff were both helpful, there was a need for a more thorough selection, induction and supervision procedures. One of the volunteers, for example, found it difficult to draw the line between being a leader and a user.

Although concluding that the experiment should be continued, the report strongly recommended that RUGRATS should be kept strictly separate from the main drop-in programme, mainly because the needs of upper teenagers were not the same as those of 12-13 year olds. In their view and in the view of the stakeholders, the core drop-in for the 15-20 year olds must remain the top priority.

There were other issues which had to be resolved. What should happen to the first RUGRATS intake at the end of the year? Should they be dropped for the next few years till they were old enough to join the main drop-in? If they continued and were joined by a new intake of S1 pupils, could 6VT continue to cope with this potentially large number of youngsters? The numbers of RUGRATS had to be kept down to manageable proportions so that the Cafe could concentrate on the needs of the older group. The RUGRATS programme highlighted another major issue for the Management Committee. If it were to keep on top of unacceptable behaviour, could 6VT continue its policy of never shutting the door on any users? The project could not meet the needs of all adolescents. Should 6VT continue its "open door" policy or concentrate on priority groups such as the most vulnerable?

Nine pages of the report were devoted to the RUGRATS, but there was only a passing mention of three other recently begun projects — Keysteps, Bullying Uncovered and the Study Support Group — which were dismissed as being indicative of 6VT's "vitality, flexibility and imagination." There was no evaluation at all of these last two, and, although one page was devoted to Keysteps, most of that simply quoted a report by the workers in charge. Based on that, they concluded that "early indications were that the project was filling a real gap in provision and was being well received by the young people." It was also proving to be an important source for recruiting more vulnerable people to the Cafe Programme: twelve members of Keysteps had started using the drop-in on a regular basis. The

omission of an evaluation of these projects was a major disappointment to the Management Committee, and one wondered if the Rugsrats project merited such close attention.

An attempt was made to cover these sparse comments, however, with the following generalisation:

“6VT is now providing a more diverse range of services for a wider target population than it was even a year ago: much of it occurred during the period of our investigation. In our judgement, these developments represent a natural progression in the development of 6VT and form a coherent package of services which both exploit the strengths of its core service and help to sustain it. This has been done without straying beyond the parameters of youth work practice and is a major achievement. However, it appears to us that, although well planned and implemented at operational level, these developments have been largely pragmatic, responsive and piecemeal. We found little evidence in the minutes of the MC or elsewhere that they formed part of a coherent strategic plan, developed and controlled by the MC. We are convinced from our discussions with the representatives of stakeholder agencies who are also members of the MC that the minutes of MC meetings do not do justice to the enormous efforts they have invested in making this project a success. Even so, all these respondents accepted that the MC was not devoting enough time and attention to service planning and review and was too reliant on the Coordinator for that purpose.”

A SWOT analysis might be used but, whatever method was used, it had to be systematic. *“The Management Committee must first take stock of where 6VT is now and take control of its future direction in order to (a) consolidate gains achieved so far, and (b) set clear and achievable goals for future development.”* The Association’s constitution, policies and vision for the future should all be reviewed as a basis for formulating strategic and business plans.

The way the Management Committee recorded and controlled its finances also came in for criticism. Its current accounting systems could not provide a clear and accurate picture of how far 6VT’s income was allocated and managed among the various services it was providing. The researchers recommended that each of 6VT’s services should be a “cost centre” within the accounts, and they should show the basis on which the central overhead costs were allocated between these cost centres. For example, they could try to identify what proportion of the Coordinator’s time was allocated between the different services.

They concluded that the current funding levels were not sufficient to meet all the requirements of best practice and would have to be enhanced, because the current levels of contact and patterns of use were stretching the capacity of staff to the full. Were the Councillors sufficiently knowledgeable about 6VT? On the evidence of the investigation, 6VT was attracting its target group of young people in sufficient numbers to more than justify current levels of investment. The Council should therefore be approached for more funding. At the same time, they advised that the Cafe should not rely too much on Council funding.

This summary of the report cannot possibly make mention of all the points it raised. What it has tried to do is to convey the main messages it contained in a way that the report itself failed to do. Despite the many criticisms listed above, the overwhelming view of all stakeholders was that, even at that early stage in the Cafe’s attempts to extend its range of services, 6VT was a success story that was uniquely different from other youth services.

However, at the time, there was a general feeling within the staff and Management Committee that it was not a particularly helpful report, especially considering how much it cost — £12,300 in total, including £11,000 for 44 days’ consultancy fees. It was possible to detect two hands in the writing: that of Felum O’Leary who had a social science background, and that of Mike Harland who had no background of working with young people and examined 6VT through a textbook analysis of its

governance and procedures. It lacked rigorous editing and failed to bring these two elements together in a satisfactory way, so that there was a tension between the reporting of how 6VT handled young people and their problems and criticisms based on general theory which was somewhat removed from the economic reality of the times. Although the researchers had spent almost a year in and around the Cafe, they had failed to realise what made it tick. It was also disappointing that so little attention had been given to the physical appearance of the report — 124 typed pages, some back to back, others single-sided — rather than a professionally produced glossy document, which would have made it look more impressive.

The researchers were right in stating that almost all developments originated from the Coordinator rather than from policy decisions made by the Management Committee. What they didn't seem to realise was that that was the source of 6VT's success. They realised that *"one mark of a successful project is its ability to adapt its services to meet changing needs and unmet needs, while remaining true to its core function"* and they admitted that they found ample evidence that 6VT was doing precisely that in projects such as Keysteps and Rugrats. However, they failed to realise that this happened in 6VT because initiatives were led by the Coordinator, who had her finger on the pulse of young people's needs, rather than relying on a committee to initiate projects, which would have been the kiss of death to them. The crucial thing was that the Management Committee encouraged the Coordinator to try new initiatives and gave her the benefit of its advice and support. Where it failed was to provide evidence of the effectiveness of this pragmatic approach.

Although the report criticised the Management Committee for poor governance, it made no mention of the fact that it had just nursed 6VT through several years of financial insecurity, and the Cafe was only now beginning to be on a firm financial footing.

Much of the report's unhelpfulness was due to two conflicting strands that were never brought together into a balanced account — with conclusions and recommendations swamped by a welter of raw data which should have been consigned to appendices. On the one hand, 6VT received an almost perfect report card for its dealings with the users and their mutual relationships, while, on the other hand, the message seemed to be that the Management Committee was completely out of touch. The negative aspects of the report were based almost entirely on the lack of hard evidence to demonstrate a success story that the researchers clearly experienced at first hand. Overall, the space devoted to the positives was probably greater than that devoted to the negatives, but the latter kept putting a damper on the former.

What the researchers did not seem to appreciate was that 6VT was successful because it was turning traditional practice on its head. Instead of a committee of experts telling practitioners what should be done, 6VT's activities were initiated by the workers on the ground, and the Management Committee became enablers rather than initiators. The report paid tribute to the wide range of activities which the workers arranged for the drop-in sessions, but they did not mention that the workers never hesitated to abandon an activity if it was not really involving the users. It was this willingness to work to the needs and wishes of the users which made 6VT unique. It was truly starting at the grass roots and reacting to situations as they occurred. Despite the strong criticisms of lack of documentary evidence, the living proof of success was the large number of young people who kept using the Cafe because it was filling a gap in their lives.

In other words, the researchers were judging 6VT by the traditional rules of target setting, and this was what disappointed those involved with the Cafe so much. They felt the researchers had missed the point. At the same time, they were giving a clear hint to the Management Committee that, if 6VT was to expand its activities beyond the drop-in sessions, it had to play by the rules of the funding bodies which tended to rely on ticking certain boxes.

Looking back now fifteen years later, the report did contain a lot of helpful advice which has been put into practice in the intervening period. But it was not the sort of help that was required at that early stage in the Cafe's development. The researchers were right in stating that the Councillors knew very little about 6VT, and from that point on every opportunity was taken to publicise the Cafe's achievements. They were right, too, about the lack of evidence to illustrate the Cafe's success, and there is now much greater emphasis on having written documentation available to back up funding applications. However, 6VT has still not capitalised on the most powerful evidence of all — the building up of a large database of case studies which illustrates how 6VT has affected the lives of its users.

Chapter 7: Into the New Millennium (2000-2001)

The City of Edinburgh Council Quality Services had originally planned to carry out a review of the work of 6VT in the latter half of 1998, but it agreed to postpone that work because it would have clashed with the in-depth study being carried out by the Lloyds TSB Foundation into the relationship between policy and practice in the Cafe. That study was completed in May 1999, and Quality Services decided to concentrate its review on four aspects of the TSB recommendations (Strategy and Planning; Monitoring and Evaluation; Target Setting; Partnership) rather than carry out a full review itself. It published its report in March 2000. It was very short — only four and a half A4 pages, plus a very short summary of the Lloyds TSB Report.

The Review concluded that short-term planning in the Cafe was very good. Staff had a clear understanding of what was expected of them. The young people had a strong sense of ownership of the project, and they knew what structures were in place to let them influence the programme.

Long-term planning, however, was described as only “fair”. The Management Committee had no long-term strategy for dealing with the increasingly complex range of issues presented by the users. Responsibility for planning rested largely with the Coordinator, because the Committee felt that funding was not sufficiently secure to allow them to plan ahead with certainty. Its main aim was to raise sufficient income to ensure that development was not simply budget-led. The young people were happy with the day-to-day programme but were unsure how they could contribute to long-term planning. However, they were not unhappy with this situation since they felt that the project responded readily to their changing needs.

Overall, monitoring and evaluation were “good.” Following the TSB report, the staff were now keeping good records of their work with individual users, although they did not provide much evidence of how users’ behaviour was being affected. On the other hand, all of the users who were interviewed could describe how they personally benefited from attending the Cafe — an untapped source of evidence of how well the Cafe was doing. In one sense, the consistently high attendance rates provided evidence of the Cafe’s success, but attendance figures on their own did not do justice to the impact 6VT was having on individual users.

It was unclear whether the project could continue to develop within existing resources. The Management Committee should therefore either seek further funding or set realistic targets and priorities within the constraints of existing resources. It should develop a three-year plan that paid attention to the strategic role that 6VT could play in fulfilling the policy objectives of the City of Edinburgh Council. It had already built up a wide and effective network of contacts with other organisations and agencies, but it should take care not to be led off course simply to meet the wishes of particular funders.

The Review concluded that 6VT was providing a unique and valuable service to the young people of Edinburgh. Its work was innovative, and 6VT should begin to look on itself as a major player in the field of services for young people. The local authority should help in the preparation of a Development Plan and an Action Plan, and should keep staff informed about training opportunities. However, following the Review, no help was provided by the Quality Assurance Service in preparing the Development Plan.

One of the questions raised by the “Completing the Circle” report was the extent to which councillors were aware of the work carried out by 6VT. At that time, the Church of Scotland and other religious bodies were entitled by law to be represented at any Council meeting at which educational matters were discussed. As one of these religious representatives, Henry Philip used every opportunity to draw

to the attention of councillors the potential of 6VT in tackling youth issues. That tactic paid dividends, and very soon councillors were boasting about “their” 6VT projects.

Certainly, the Council’s officers were well aware of 6VT’s potential, since they turned more and more to the Cafe to help them with tasks placed upon them by the Scottish Executive. In fact, the range of activities at 6VT became quite phenomenal, as is well illustrated by the rest of this chapter which is devoted to the events covered in the first two years of the new millennium.

6VT became involved in so many projects that it is going to be difficult to maintain a chronological narrative without it becoming a mere list of projects, some short-term, some lasting several years. From now on, therefore, the chapters will be a mixture of events as they happened and mini-chapters following through short projects from beginning to end. Major projects will be brought together in separate chapters, in the same way as Keysteps.

Conflict and Aggression Course

In December 2000, Dot and Bidy raised £500 for the Cafe by running a course (based on Keysteps) which focused on young people and dealt with such issues as aggression in general, break-away techniques and personal safety. It had been advertised through the Cafe’s usual network and attracted fourteen people from a variety of projects. The cost of £35 per head included a meal. The course was so successful that they were asked to repeat it.

Zero Tolerance

In January 2001, the Cafe was asked if it could adapt the Keysteps programme and deliver a course on domestic violence, which had recently been redefined. The aim was to raise awareness rather than provide actual support to victims, and it was hoped that promoting respect for ourselves and for others would help to prevent violence.

Jackie Baillie MSP launched the official campaign in Broughton High School on 31 January. There was then another launch in Glasgow, followed by a nation-wide campaign.

6VT ran two separate courses — one involving eight males, the other eight females, all aged under 16 — each lasting eight weeks. Four Café workers (Dot, Steve, Bidy and Jackie Phillips) were involved. No administrative fee had been included in the costings, but the project paid for the youth workers (who were already involved in other Cafe work) and for the bus fares of young people.

The courses began on 9 March. Although aimed at those who were almost 16, the male course included a 14-year-old who was seriously involved in crime in his local area but who was getting out of his depth and being targeted by older criminals. Another young fellow, called Brian, addressed the Management Committee on 30 May and said how much he had enjoyed the course and how much he had learned from it.

The initial courses were followed by another shortened version in May, and they were all evaluated by the Scottish Executive which was trying to develop a policy on how to deal with youth crime. This took time, and it was January 2005 before the Scottish Executive made an announcement on tagging which would operate as a separate project, in liaison with Turnaround (see Chapter 8).

City Youth Initiative

Also in January 2001, Café representatives were invited to Gayfield Police Station to meet with the police, Lothian Region Transport, Social Work and security people from McDonald's and Burger King to

discuss the growing concern over the amount of violence from groups of young people in the city centre, particularly at weekends. There was also concern that some young people were at risk.

From 19th January following that meeting, a city-centre squad of seven police officers from the Gayfield, St Leonard's and the City Centre police stations operated in the city centre, specifically to deal with youth problems, between 6 pm and 11 pm on Friday and Saturday evenings. 11 pm was chosen as the cut-off point since there were very few young people in the city centre after 11 pm. The Cafe was asked to provide two youth workers to accompany the police, not as extra police, but to help the police build up better relations with young people and also to help those at risk. These two youth workers were funded by contributions from Community Education and the Safer Edinburgh Scheme.

The Management Committee approved the initiative on the understanding that a certain protocol would be established to clarify the expectations of each side: the two workers would work with the police and under no circumstances be left to operate independently of the police; they would not be treated as additional witnesses to crimes committed; they would have clothing which clearly identified them as different from the police; there would be a debriefing at the end of each night and a record sheet would be produced. It was hoped that contact with the young people might encourage some of them to attend the Cafe drop-in sessions, although it was recognised that this might create problems for the Café. To offset that possibility, the police supplied a priority phone number which could be contacted on Fridays and Saturdays to bring the police to the Cafe before any serious disturbance arose.

The initiative went really well. The Cafe youth workers and the police worked separately but called each other into discussions once contact had been made with a group of young people. It was then suggested to the young people that they should visit the Cafe instead of hanging around the streets. Most of them had never heard of the Cafe. The initiative proved to be one of the most effective recruitment drives that the Cafe ever carried out, as there were instant results when many of the young people went straight to the Cafe after meeting workers in the city centre. In the first five weeks of the project, 642 contacts were made. More than 70 of these came to the Cafe, and most of them returned after the initial visit.

Better relationships were also developed with the police, and there was a noticeable difference in how some of the police were approaching young people. Four community policemen began to make a point of spending time in the Cafe, chatting with users. One popular initiative was an offer by the police to mark mobile phones with UV pens to help cut down on the theft of phones. Lothian Region Transport co-operated by making Café leaflets available on their buses. Burger King noted that there had been no fights since the initiative started.

The initiative ended in April 2001 after twelve weeks, since the police had insufficient resources to sustain it indefinitely. An evaluation of the initiative was carried out by the police, including a survey among young people, which sought their views on the initiative and on the police generally. 130 young people completed the survey. From this, it was noted that many of the young people came from outwith Edinburgh (including the Lothians, Fife and Glasgow). The overall conclusion was that the initiative had been successful. It had been promoted well by the police and Lothian Region Transport. The general impression of the police was that it had been a valuable learning exercise for them. Youth unruliness in Princes Street was now under control, violence had been reduced, and it had been possible to identify certain troublemakers and enter into dialogue with them. The police officers involved had come from different areas, and they were now pressing to have similar initiatives in their own areas.

The cost to Community Education of seconding the additional youth workers over the twelve weeks of the project was £2,200 — not a large sum when one bears in mind the fact that dealing with a single youth crime cost around £2,100 at that time! As a "Thank you" for the Cafe's support, Gayfield Police Station also gave £300 to help the Cafe's staff training budget.

Although the city-wide initiative had ended, some police divisions were clearly keen to set up initiatives in their own areas, using their own budgets. One of these was the Central Division, but it was unable to do anything until after the Festival since police resources were always seriously stretched then. However, a group was set up to look at the possibility of a repeat in the autumn. Money was also set aside centrally to pay for a team of four officers who could be called in to help deal with youth disorder problems over the summer. This raised a problem for the Cafe. Could it afford to be involved in a future City Youth Initiative?

As far as the Cafe was concerned, there had been many positive features, including attracting young people to the Cafe. Over 1,000 contacts had been made in the streets and, as a result, more than 100 new people had visited the Cafe. Numbers attending the drop-in sessions had increased (859 over the 26 openings in May and June, and almost 1,000 in August and September), but there were now a number of undesirables hanging around the Cafe, and not a few of those who came into the drop-in sessions brought with them serious problems which were very demanding of staff time. Some of them had had to be refused admission because they had been drinking. They then hung around on the Terrace, and their presence resulted in some regular users not attending.

The network of the Cafe's client base was now clearly much wider than what had been envisaged when the Cafe was set up, and the question was how the Cafe could sustain the new level of contact with a greatly changed clientele. For example, some agencies were now latching on to the Cafe for help since there was no other facility available to help their clients. Included among these was an increasing number of young people with learning difficulties whose standard of behaviour was poorer than that of most other users. Most users were very tolerant of this but, inevitably, some were asking why it should be tolerated. How far should inclusiveness go? And how could a completely open door policy be reconciled with different standards of behaviour? As far as one-to-one counselling was concerned, those who were not presenting problems were in danger of being neglected. The new situation could not be faced without employing more staff and giving them adequate training.

To deal with these new problems, police constables initially dropped in frequently to the Cafe to chat to users, and a priority phone link was made available to the Cafe. Unfortunately, by the end of April the phone link had been discontinued, and the police had virtually stopped dropping in socially for a chat with the users.

Danish Students

January 2001 also saw the start of an on-going arrangement with a college in Denmark under which students were given six-month placements in the Cafe as part of their 3½ year course in pedagogy back home, which combined nursing, teaching and social work training. They spent three nights per week in the Cafe at the drop-in sessions and were also involved in Keysteps.

Boilerhouse Theatre Company

For four weeks at the start of 2001, Boilerhouse Productions ran workshops with girls from 6VT to explore the issues facing teenage girls in their daily lives. Their stories were then made into a production which was staged at the Traverse Theatre in November 2001.

Hall of Fame

In February 2001, a Hall of Fame was started in the corridor at 6VT, consisting of photographs and facts about users and the policemen who were now calling in regularly at the Cafe to chat with users.

Meeting with Councillor Donald Anderson

On 6 April 2001, Councillor Anderson, Leader of the City Council, agreed to meet Dot and Henry Philip. This was a useful meeting since it alerted him to the increasing number of vulnerable young people with considerable problems, Social Work type cases, whom the Cafe was having to deal with and the poor support which the Social Work Department was giving. Not only was there no financial or other support from the Social Work Department, but on some occasions, particularly at the weekend, they appeared to refuse to undertake statutory responsibilities in finding accommodation for at risk young people: "Don't phone us. Phone the police." To illustrate the point, Dot had prepared a list of typical case studies, which shocked the Councillor.

Dot pointed out that some young people who were reluctant to speak to the usual authorities seemed willing to share their problems with the staff of 6VT, and she took the opportunity to float the idea of using the Cafe as a one-stop centre, combined with a half-way house refuge for homeless young people. Baden Powell House, which was adjacent to 6VT and would soon be vacated by the Scottish Parliament when it moved to Holyrood, would be invaluable in achieving such a goal. It had rooms on three floors which could be used for 6VT activities and interviews, and there was a very large room on the top floor which could have been used as a conference centre. Dot later wrote to Councillor Anderson outlining how 6VT could use these facilities.

Difficulties in securing support from the Social Work Department came to a head on the Friday evening following this meeting. A 13-year-old girl arrived at the Cafe drunk and hysterical. She had run away from her mother who was on drugs. Social Work refused to act, and eventually four Cafe staff took the girl home between 11 pm and midnight. The girl continued to attend the Cafe where she felt that there were people who cared for her. Since Social Work refused to take on her case, it was decided that Dot should speak with the girl and persuade her to be referred to the Children's Hearings system in the hope that a caring home might be found for her. She was found secure accommodation in Perth, but she later absconded and was found sleeping rough in Edinburgh. When Social Workers were unable to persuade her to return to Perth, they asked the help of Cafe staff to accompany her there. Between February and July, Dot personally spent eighty hours on this girl.

That incident coincided with several incidents that happened in quick succession on the same evening — an attempted suicide, the mugging of a neighbour by some youths who were hanging around the Terrace, and the violent reaction of a boy who arrived drunk and claimed to be on ecstasy, heroin and anti-depressants. The fact that so many serious incidents happened on the same night was most unusual, but individual incidents of this kind were not unusual, and the remarkable thing was the way the staff took them in their stride. They were always willing to face up to the problem and go the extra mile to find a solution that would look after the welfare of the young person. But they did find it frustrating that they did not always receive support from the statutory authorities.

Integrated Plan for Youth Support Provision

These incidents encouraged Dot to prepare a case for the creation of an integrated plan to support young people who were at risk. There were huge gaps in provision, and young people regularly fell through these gaps. 6VT had already stepped in with *ad hoc* projects which plugged some of the gaps, but only temporarily. What was needed was an integrated plan rather than a series of piecemeal projects. This should be paid for by Social Work, the police and the corporate services, as well as Education.

To support this case with concrete details, Dot prepared a profile of Cafe users. Only those who agreed to give their names and addresses were included. There were 181 users from all over the City, as well as ten from other parts of Lothian; 23 schools were represented; four users were attending an FE college, 24 were in employment and 41 were unemployed. Ages ranged from 13 to 22, with the biggest number aged around 16. Of the 181, 48 were receiving personal support from Cafe staff, and over 50

had Social Work involvement in their lives. These statistics convinced the Management Committee that they should press for a service level agreement with the Social Work Department.

Arts Access Project

In March 2001, Audience Business asked 6VT to help them with a social inclusion project which they ran for the rest of the year. They signed up ten Cafe users who would not normally have access to theatre performances, and the aim was to introduce these young people to “the arts” and explore perceived and actual barriers that prevented them from accessing the arts. There was a series of workshops to help the young people gain confidence and feel comfortable in the wide range of arts environments that Edinburgh had on offer, such as visits to the King’s Theatre, the Lyceum or the Festival Theatre. These workshops also taught them how to review their experiences critically. Audience Business funded all the associated costs including tickets, bus fares and refreshments. The views of the young people were collated via video, photography and focus groups, and a final report was compiled. It was hoped that these experiences might encourage some of the young people to join a theatre workshop, although that was not the main aim of the project.

Video Animation Project

Six young people spent three full days creating their own animation video. They designed the models, wrote the storyboard and then completed the video work. The young people put in long hours to meet the deadlines required. According to one of the participants: “This project was challenging but brilliant.”

EYSIP Dance Base Workshops

Although initially reluctant to participate, several young people soon turned into budding Billy Elliots as a Dance Base social inclusion worker put them through their paces and taught them a few breakdancing routines. Male users were particularly excited. They were then invited to attend a workshop at Dance Base and, after being assured that wearing tights was not required as part of the dress code, they were quick to sign up. This was the start of the strong breakdancing tradition for which 6VT has become famous, and of which much more will be written in later chapters.

Staff Residential Weekend

When the staff held a training session in March 2000, some staff had had to wait behind to run the drop-in session on the Friday night. To avoid that problem for the residential held from 30 March to 1 April 2001, the Management Committee agreed that the Friday drop-in session could be transferred to the Thursday night. In addition to normal staff training, staff discussed the Development Plan and devised a new information system, very similar to that used by the Social Work Department, in which staff kept details of all one-to-one sessions that they had with users.

Turnaround (See Chapter 8)

In addition to being involved with other agencies in projects aimed at dealing with anti-social behaviour among young people, the Cafe in April 2001 began a major project of its own called Turnaround. Since it lasted several years, an entire chapter is devoted to it, with only major events listed in the main narrative. As indicated above, Steven More left the Keysteps project after its first three years to turn his attention to planning and running this innovative project, which was funded from April 2001 to January 2002 to the tune of £30,000 by the Scottish Executive and Edinburgh Youth Social Inclusion Partnership (EYSIP). It also had the full backing of the police.

It was aimed at 14-16 year olds who were presently involved in relatively minor crimes (mainly, shoplifting, burglary and stealing from cars), and it attempted to persuade them to turn away from crime before it became a way of life for them.

Training voyage

The Sail Training Association offered the Cafe twelve places on a ten-day training voyage from Aberdeen to Newcastle in July 2001 in a brand new tall ship. This course, for young people aged 16-25, would normally have cost participants around £1,000, but the Association was willing to pay at least 75% of that for young people from 6VT. The Cafe helped them raise the necessary £250. Some of the places were offered to other local organisations, including the Pentland Project.

Homework Club

This group met on Wednesdays from 4 pm to 6 pm and regularly attracted twelve young people mainly from S4. Although the staff on duty couldn't provide the knowledge and expertise of a trained teacher, the Homework Club provided these young people with the support, motivation, space and equipment which might not be available to them at home, and they could often help each other over difficulties.

Keysteps

As described in Chapter 5, the second stage of the Lottery-funded courses began in June 2001.

Royal Visit

On 13 June 2001, Prince Charles, Prince Andrew, President and Mrs Mbeki of South Africa, and the Lord Provost visited the Cafe. Members of Bathgate Prince's Trust Volunteers prepared a meal using organic Scottish food for around 20 young people, including some Cafe users who were wearing 6VT tee-shirts. The visit was very relaxed and enjoyable for the young people. They chatted with the VIPs about the work of the Cafe, football and Prince William, who at that time was rumoured to have dated Britney Spears. They even asked Prince Charles if he would mind bringing his boys on any future visit to the Cafe. Brian (one of the Cafe users) presented pictures he had painted of the visit to Prince Charles and President Mbeki. Earlier in the year, Brian had received a Prince's Trust Action Grant to buy art materials to enable him to develop his talents. The Palace was delighted with their reception and wrote letters of thanks to the Cafe and to Brian. Narcissus Florist of Broughton Street donated beautiful table displays for the occasion.

Another positive outcome was that, prior to this visit, the Cafe was given a spruce up. The front room was decorated professionally, and the inner room by a Prince's Trust group from Bathgate.

The Summer Cafe

The Summer Cafe opened on 28 July 2001 and, although it was open for a week less than the previous year, it made a profit of £4,835 for Cafe funds. On the three Saturdays of the Tattoo, it stayed open until 11 pm. This year, it provided paid employment for twelve Cafe users, who also benefited from having gone through interviews and training before the work experience. A representative from Action for Employment (an agency which received commission from the Scottish Executive for getting young people into jobs) said he was most impressed by the young Cafe workers. He saw the Cafe as an excellent base for his Agency's work, and to promote this he offered to place a volunteer in the Cafe to work with users. This would have been welcomed but for the fact that there was no space in the Cafe for this new work to take place, as the Careers Service was already renting the Cafe on 2½ days each week.

Summer Activities — “GO4IT”

6VT received a grant of £800 from the Council and devised several projects of summer activities in July 2001. “Stranded with Big Sister” (a take-off from Big Brother and Survivor) involved ten 15-16 year olds and two Cafe staff camping overnight in the Pentlands and carrying out team challenges. Cafe users started with a strict and sparse kit list, and items such as mobile phones, cigarettes and make-up were all banned, and food, shelter, transport and little “luxuries” such as toilet rolls were all part of the game plan. Rules were strictly enforced by Big Sister (Dot)!

Another activity involved five staff taking 46 young people on a day trip to Strathclyde Country Park — a rare opportunity to bring a large number of Cafe users together for an enjoyable day.

Thirteen young folk and two staff went on a residential at Lowport Centre, near Linlithgow, while another group went canyoning and cliff jumping into the River Garry in Perthshire. Jumps started at 15 feet and went up and up till they reached 48 feet.

The following, which was written by a user following these summer activities, shows how thrilled the young people were by the experiences and also illustrates the easy and friendly relationship between the users and staff:

They tell us not to take drugs because they're dangerous.

They take us up an 800 ft hill in a howling gale and make us walk 11 miles.

They tell us not to drink because you can lose control of yourself.

They take us up a 48 ft cliff, take us to the edge and tell us to jump.

They tell us not to take risks with our sexual health.

They take us to a disused railway tunnel where we can't see our hands in front of our faces and we tremble together in terror. Who knows who is lurking in the shadows?

They tell us to take responsibility and control of our lives.

They get us up at 7 am for a morning walk, waist high in freezing cold water and “encourage” us to crawl through underwater tunnels.

They tell us to respect and trust others whilst always making informed choices.

They tell us it's called “youth participation”, “it's character building”, “it's lifelong learning”.

I'm telling you, those 6VT youth workers are stark raving mad!

Residential for Users

When asked how they wanted the profits of the EGO discos to be spent, the users replied that the Cafe had all the material things they needed. The main thing they wanted from the Cafe was the input from the staff and their fellowship. However, Donna Summers, one of the users on the Management Committee, proposed that the user members on the Committee should be allowed to go for a team-building residential weekend the following January. She pointed out how important it was that users be given proper training in how to help manage the Cafe. She had ascertained the cost and the availability of places at Loch Tay Lodges. The Committee welcomed the proposal and went further in suggesting that this should be the first in a series of training weekends. The residential went ahead over

the weekend 11-13 January 2002 with six young people and two staff. The main aim was team building. The young people were set challenging tasks of a physical and management nature, as a result of which they learned a lot about how the Cafe was organised and how its finances were handled. They also discussed what the priorities of the Cafe should be, besides getting to know one another much better than was possible at the drop-in sessions.

The Management Committee welcomed this development and also a proposal that the residentials should count towards Youth Achievement Awards under which young people would set themselves challenges and receive recognition for what they had achieved. It was hoped that a series of residentials could be arranged as part of a year of personal development for the young members of the Management Committee, but it should also include others who were actively helping the Cafe. There was no decision on whether the users should be asked to raise some of the cost of the residential as one of their challenges, since it was feared that this might exclude some users.

Gala Dinner

In January 2001, Wendy Henderson, a member of the Management Committee, said that she had experience of running dinners to raise funds and would be willing to run one for Cafe funds. The Management Committee welcomed the proposal and, over several months Wendy, Dot and Jon Dye, the Treasurer, worked hard on its organisation. Politicians, local officials, voluntary sector representatives, the Church of Scotland, and the Management Committee itself were all targeted, and businesses were asked to sponsor whole tables. One of the first to do this was the Chief Constable.

The event took place in the Carlton Highland Hotel on Saturday, 6 October 2001, and it was attended by almost 200 people, representing an amazing mix of individuals and organisations. For their £30 tickets, guests received a drink on arrival, a 3-course meal and wine on each table, and there was entertainment from a live Ceilidh band. It was hoped initially that a celebrity might be the main speaker, but this idea was eventually rejected because of the huge fees they were demanding. Takings were augmented by a raffle, and the evening made a profit of £1,600 for Cafe funds. Possibly just as important, however, the event raised the profile of the Cafe through the speeches and the literature describing the innovative work of the Cafe which was on each table.

Donaldson's School for the Deaf

Towards the end of 2001, young people from Donaldson's School for the Deaf began attending the Cafe regularly, and they began teaching signing to the other users. They were made so welcome that they invited Cafe users to their own Christmas Party on 18 December.

Users acting as publicists for the Cafe

When another organisation asked the Café to make a presentation of the work of 6VT, it has always been Café policy to have users as the main presenters.

During this period, three Cafe users took part in a Channel 4 programme called "Wise up!" which dealt with the difficulties faced by young people living alone and by those who were evicted. Allan May, one of the users, became a member of the recently formed Youth Parliament and used that position to publicise the work of 6VT. Two Cafe users attended the EYSIP conference in London, with expenses paid by EYSIP. Cafe users featured in a video called "Scotland Against Drugs" which was presented by the Scottish Executive.

Attendance at Management Committee meetings

The average attendance was still around twelve per meeting. The range of adult expertise was high, but few of the users lasted more than one or two meetings because they found the business boring. That did not mean that the young people were leaving all the work to the adults. Apart from the few minutes laid aside for approving the accounts and appointing the new Management Committee, the users ran the AGM, partly through entertaining those present, but also through short presentations by individuals on the difference 6VT was making to their lives.

In October 2001, there was a “changing loos” competition between the girls and the boys to redecorate their respective toilets. The girls were quickly off their mark in designing and decorating their new-look “powder room”. The boys took a little longer and concentrated on the bare necessities.

And there were always one or two like Donna Summers, mentioned above, who did get seriously involved in the business side of the Cafe.

Finances

The financial situation was now much more healthy. The Treasurer reported a balance of £10,800 in July 2001 after spending £1,500 on new disco lights and £500 on a new coffee machine. However, a new dishwasher was required since the Sheraton had taken back the dishwasher which it had loaned for the Summer Cafe. It was also clear that, with so much going on in the Cafe, something would have to be done to reduce Dot’s load.

With the income from the Summer Cafe, deposits for the Gala Dinner, a donation of £500 from St Giles’ Cathedral and the recent revenue instalment from the Council, the balance had risen to over £14,000 in September. Regular renting of the Cafe by the Careers Service was also bringing in a valuable £800 per month. After paying the bills for the Gala Dinner, the balance dropped to £12,322 in October, which the Treasurer pointed out was roughly the cost of running the drop-in sessions for one month. By December, the balance had risen to £18,308 which showed how much the funds could fluctuate month by month. Not included as cash income was the continuing support from Edinburgh Presbytery which paid for the services of a youth worker on two nights per week.

Budget for Part-time Workers

Despite the healthy state of the finances, there was a worrying development in October 2001 when Dot received a letter from Community Education claiming that it was subsidising the staffing of the Cafe to the tune of £12,500 pa. Dot and Henry, who had been on the Management Committee since the opening of the Cafe, challenged this statement, claiming that, from the very beginning, Community Education had measured its staffing contribution in terms of hours, not cash. The £12,500 which the Council was allowing for staffing costs fell far short of what it had contracted with the Cafe youth workers. Contracts had already been issued for the months up to December and, since the Community Education decision was back-dated to April 2001, the impact on the final three months of the financial year would be even greater and would effectively mean a cut of around one third in the Cafe staffing.

Representations were made to Community Education, and the outcome was that, due to an underspend elsewhere, Community Education agreed that the level of staffing seconded to the Cafe would be maintained until the end of the financial year in March 2002. However, although technically the Cafe was correct in its challenge over hours rather than cash, the Council representative on the Management

Committee pointed out that the Council had actually first allocated a sum of money and then translated that money into staff hours.

This incident brought home to the Management Committee the importance of calculating the overall level of staffing required to run the Cafe. It was also pointed out that, although the Cafe provided services for several Council departments (Social Work, Health Board, Housing and Police, as well as Community Education), only Community Education contributed financially to the running of the Cafe. Since new funding from these sources was most unlikely, it was clear that the Cafe must start to look for new sources of funding. Encouragingly, several new sources of funding had recently become available, mainly from the Scottish Executive (e.g. Children's Challenge Fund, Youth Crime Review, Lothian Transition Project, and Literacy), and the Cafe was successful in getting on to the mailing list which advertised the launch of such funds.

Company Limited by Guarantee

Since the Cafe was now handling quite large sums of money, the Management Committee began in September 2001 to consider whether it should become a Company Limited by Guarantee with charitable status. Such a move would protect members of the Management Committee, since each of them would be personally liable for only £1 if anything went badly wrong. However, there was much more to such a move than that, as company directors had other legal obligations. A small sub-committee was set up to prepare a paper and make recommendations to the December meeting. In the end, having studied all the pros and cons, it was decided not to take the matter further.

Supporters who made donations in cash or kind during 2000-2001

During 2001, the Cafe continued to receive support in cash or in kind from a wide range of friends:

City of Edinburgh Council, the Community Fund, the Scottish Executive, the Scottish Parliament Social Committee, Edinburgh Youth Social Inclusion Project, EGO Nightclub, Carrickknowe Parish Church, St Giles' Cathedral, Charities Aid Foundation, The Action Group, Lothian Health, World Aids Day Fund, The Audience Business, Deep Sea World, Clarkston Jewellers, Narcissus Florist, Sheraton Hotel, Dobbies Garden Centre, Knockhill Racing, Slaters Menswear, Cheynes Hairdresser, Charlie Millers, The Nail Factory, Edinburgh Flotarium, Scottish Whisky Heritage Centre, Royal Scot Hotel, Freespirits Outdoor Adventure Centre, Historic Scotland, King's Theatre, Fopp Records and Edinburgh Presbytery.

In the beginning



Cllr Keith Geddes with the youth steering group & Donald Gorrie with the plans for 6 Victoria Terrace.



Donald Gorrie with Steve More and Justin Robertson of the youth steering group overseeing the renovations of 6VT.



Cllr Keith Geddes presenting Steve More and Dave Henderson of the Youth Steering group with a cheque for the renovations.



6VT opens to Edinburgh's young people in July 1994— The Café was officially opened by Lord Provost Norman Irons.

Visitors to 6VT Youth Cafe



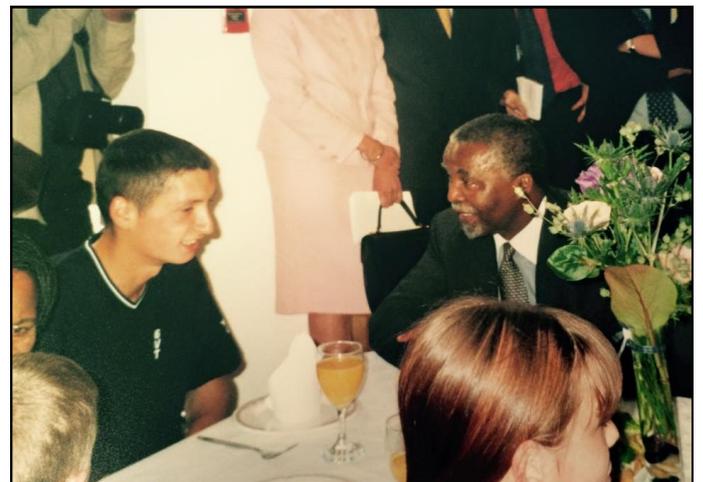
Prince Andrew



Paddy Ashdown & Donald Gorrie



Prince Charles



President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa

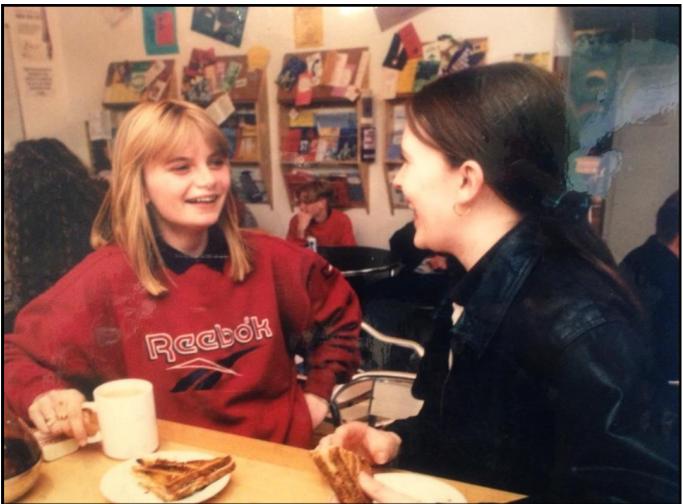


Prince Edward



Robin Harper MP

6VT Youth Café The Early Years



Visitors to 6VT Youth Cafe



Kenny McAskill MSP – Former Scottish Justice Minister
Jim Sweeney — Chief Executive Youthlink Scotland



Aileen Campbell MSP Scottish Minister for Children and
Young people



Theo Stevenson - Actor, Akai Osei—Actor & Dancer



Jim Murphy former leader of the Labour party in Scotland



Michael Stewart - Footballer



David Sole - Scottish Rugby Union Captain

Chapter 8: Turnaround (Out of Offending) Launched

In January 2001, 6VT submitted an application to Edinburgh Youth Social Inclusion Partnership to provide a diversion programme for around thirty moderate offenders aged 14 to 16, over two courses — the first running from April to June, the second from September to November, thus avoiding school holidays. The young people would meet on one day per week in the Cafe, from 10 am to 3.30 pm over a ten-week period, during which they would participate in group work and activities and would also receive individual attention from staff.

There were two main aims. The first was to try to turn the participants away from offending by working closely with them and helping them to identify for themselves why they were offending (be it through family problems, alcohol/drugs misuse, poor educational and employment opportunities, low self-esteem, etc) and how their offending affected themselves, their families and society generally. The second aim was to inform policy makers and key agencies about the views and experiences of the Turnaround participants and the effect the course had had on them.

The project would be in the hands of two workers (one employed for 30 hours per week, the other for 15 hours), and there would be a review at the end to see if the project had worked. The total cost would be £30,000 (including a fee for administration costs). The submission was successful, and Steven More, who had run the Keysteps project, was appointed to the full-time post and Gillian Burnside to the part-time post.

The total cost was later revised to £30,475. Edinburgh Youth Social Inclusion Partnership contributed £20,000 of this, and the Youth Crime Review Fund (operated by the Social Work Department) provided the remaining £10,475. The costs included the provision of bus tokens, refreshments and lunches. The project had the full backing of the police, and particularly Inspector Phil O’Kane and PC Kenny McLellan, the Juvenile Liaison Officer of “C” Division, who worked hard to spread the word about Turnaround. It was aimed at 14 to 16-year-olds who were currently involved in relatively minor crime (mainly shoplifting, burglary and stealing from cars), and it attempted to persuade them to turn away from crime before it became a way of life for them. The course was voluntary. Both the young people and their parents had to agree to participate.

Eighteen referrals in all were made by schools (Wester Hailes Education Centre, Cairn Park Special School, Gracemount High School, Firrhill High School, Tynecastle High School, Balerno High School, St Augustine’s High School), by Social Work (Oxgangs Path Social Work Centre and Drylaw Young People’s Residential Centre), and by juvenile liaison officers. Two were self-referrals by young people themselves. From these eighteen, fifteen were selected (12 boys and 3 girls), and the Turnaround staff then made contact with the referrers, the parents and the young people to give them more details of what the project was about. Not all of those selected took part, due to either parental refusal, failure to get the consent of the young person or lack of interest from the young person, and in one or two cases wrong contact details.

The first course began on Monday, 23 April 2001. Eleven of the fifteen turned up on the first day and ten on the second Monday. The number dropped to five on 5 May, but even this level of attendance was quite remarkable since it was a public holiday and all the young people were at that time excluded from school. The number had risen to eight on the 17th. To make involvement easier and less threatening, as well as to build a team spirit, the main group was split up into smaller home teams, each of which had an adult leader with whom a closer relationship could be forged. The morning sessions were spent on ice-breaking games and team building. There was a mixture of group work, one-to-one support and personal development opportunities.

The course dealt with general youth issues and such things as coping with anger, the consequences of crime, the effect on victims, drug awareness, sexual health, building self-confidence, developing social skills, legal rights and responsibilities, and the judicial systems. Very full records were kept both of the activities and of the reactions and progress of individual participants. Each week, there was a "Feelings" workshop, covering such emotions as happiness, shame, rejection, intimidation, selfishness, love, insecurity and disappointment. The thinking behind this was that research showed that, when young people commit a crime, the last thing in their minds is the consequences of their actions for themselves and other people. Using the Big Brother Video Diary technique was very popular with the young people. They were given five minutes at the end of each week to voice their opinions and provide the staff with feedback, and this helped them to express their thoughts and feelings. During the last 30 minutes of the day, each participant was given an opportunity to have a one-to-one meeting with a member of staff in which they could discuss what was going on in his/her life. Each participant was also allocated a £30 development grant which they could spend on a pastime, hobby or activity that they would like to try out, e.g. swimming lessons, roller-blading, dance class, snow-boarding.

At lunchtime, there was a guest who talked about various aspects of crime and the services available to young people. These speakers included the Cafe Coordinator, a community police officer, an MSP, an ex-offender, a professional footballer, a youth worker, a social worker, a juvenile liaison officer, a journalist and a worker from Victim Support.

One outing which made a big impact on the young people was a visit to the Young Offenders Institution at Polmont where they were shown the cells, the wings, and the recreational and work facilities, before meeting the Governor, warders and one or two inmates with whom they discussed life inside. Initially, some of the young people were inclined to display bravado regarding the thought of spending time in jail (e.g. one of them said that the living conditions in jail were more attractive than what he had experienced in Edinburgh's hostels). They only began to show some fear when they heard the stories of intimidation and saw the prisoners being lined up to be returned to their cells.

The final week of the course dealt with handling fear. This they did through an outdoor adventure programme which included canyoning, gorge walking, jumping from cliffs into the River Garry, abseiling down a waterfall and quad biking.

In preparing his final report on the qualitative and quantitative effectiveness of the first course, Steven More collected reactions from various agencies (e.g. the police, the Social Work Department and the Housing Department) as well as from the young people themselves and their families. Reactions were very favourable indeed. Re-offending had virtually ceased. In fact, with one exception, the young people were not currently involved in crime.

The positive effects on individuals had been such that the Children's Hearing had decided to take no further action against some young people and, in one case, the Housing Department had removed its threat to evict a family because of the anti-social behaviour of a young member of the family. The Reporters to the Children's Hearings stated that the content of the programme was the best they had seen in years, dealing as it did with such issues as anger management, emotional education, the consequences of crime, opportunity for community involvement and support in obtaining employment.

One possible downside was the recognition that increasing the scope of the project was limited by the present accommodation in the Cafe.

Great attention was paid to thorough recording. On a sheet similar to the Nightly Diaries kept for the Cafe drop-in sessions, comments were recorded about the successes and failures of each day's programme, and future action that was required. There was also an individual file for each participant in which staff recorded all contacts made with them, commented on their level of participation,

recorded any advice or support given or requested, and stored any individual work carried out by the young person during the course. Information was also input to a computer system bought from the Edinburgh Youth Social Inclusion Partnership called MARS (Monitoring Action Research System). While respecting the importance of confidentiality, this system was useful in identifying trends relating to youth crime, while also helping to track the progress of the individuals who took part in the Turnaround courses. Contact with the young people did not end at the conclusion of the course. It was maintained where required or requested.

The second course began in September and ran through to the end of November. It involved fifteen 14 to 16-year-old offenders and continued to use the joint funding of EYSIP and the Scottish Youth Crime Review. The first course had concentrated mainly on young people from Edinburgh West because of the proactive work of the police juvenile liaison officer stationed there. The second course was able to get a more even geographical spread, possibly because there were now three juvenile liaison officers promoting the project, and possibly because there were more referrals coming through Social Work following the success of the first course.

The second course followed roughly the same lines as the first, although the staff were always willing to make adaptations as new information and situations arose. One notable feature was that the take-up rate for individual support and development was much higher in course 2. Staff were also greatly encouraged as reports came in from various sources on improvements which were noticeable in the young people.

The report which brought the results of the two courses together made the following comments. In the end, 26 of the 30 selected took up a place. One of the girls selected withdrew early on because she was unhappy about being in a male-dominated group situation. One parent did not wish her child to mix with other offenders. The other two did not reach the course because their contact details on the referral forms were inaccurate. Three of four from secure units absconded in the first week.

Details of the 26 participants:

All 26 were known to the police for offending.

There were 24 boys and 2 girls.

24 were aged 14-16; 2 were aged 12-13.

All 26 were living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

25 were white and one was of mixed race.

11 were currently being looked after by the local authority, or had been at some point in their lives.

20 had experienced school exclusion or were on part-time timetables at school.

17 were involved in the Children's Hearings system.

3 of the young people's families were facing eviction by the Housing Department because of the anti-social behaviour of the young people.

Before the courses began, participants had been charged with or were participating in a wide range of criminal activities, including theft, auto crime, racial crime, assaults, breaking and entering, arson, attempted murder, fraud, carrying an offensive weapon, vandalism, breach of the peace, resisting arrest, malicious phone calls and drug possession.

The police and the Reporter to the Children's Hearings were very enthusiastic about the project. For example, on 31 October, the Management Committee learned that the Reporter had made it known that no action was now to be taken against four young people who had previously been involved in antisocial behaviour – a most unusual development. At the same time, the police reported that only one young person from the first course and none currently on the second course had been involved in trouble with the police.

The same positive message came from the young people themselves. They felt that people cared about them and were taking an interest in them, leading them to the conclusion: "If other people cared about me, maybe I should be thinking about what I am doing." They told staff that they were not participating in criminal activity during the course, or had reduced involvement significantly. Some of them, however, said they found it difficult to stop completely, for two main reasons — they had gained a reputation which they could not shake off, and some peers and the wider community wanted to settle old scores. Involving them in something away from the community in which they were in trouble was important. Those who made the greatest progress were those who left their peer group to make regular use of 6VT's three drop-in sessions where they formed completely new friendships. At the end of 2001, staff were still in touch with nine of the 11 members of the first course and with all of those on the second course. Two had requested and were receiving continuing support. Many of them were now attending the three drop-in sessions at the Cafe, while others were occasional users. Two, in addition to their participation in Turnaround, had taken part in a 6-week pilot programme run by 6VT aimed at preventing domestic violence, and two others had been on the Cafe's Keysteps course on independent living.

Contact was also maintained on a weekly basis with the participants who were currently residing in St Katherine's and Howdenhall Secure Units through youth work delivered there by Cafe staff. These projects had mixed fortunes. The young people in St Katherine's entered enthusiastically into the activities and, for once, this gave the staff there an opportunity to work in a positive atmosphere with the young people. The course at Howdenhall was less successful since the staff did not become involved and tended to give the Cafe staff poor support through inconsistent administration and communication.

When the funding application was submitted, it was thought that one full-time and one part-time member of staff would be able to deliver the programme. It turned out differently in practice. Two Danish students who were receiving training in the Cafe were heavily involved in the first course, and another one in the second course. The Cafe Coordinator also gave time to assist in the delivery of some sessions. Without that additional help, it would not have been possible to run such an intensive programme and build up the productive relationships with the participants through the one-to-one support.

The final cost of the two courses was £34,758. The report "Young People and Crime in Scotland" produced by the Prince's Trust in 1997 had established that each youth crime cost services £2,100. A crude comparison would suggest that the prevention of even seventeen crimes by these young people who had each been responsible for multiple misdemeanours in the past would have resulted in a saving of money. But the turnaround in the general attitude and behaviour of the participants suggested that much more money would undoubtedly be saved in future. For example, when the first course started, the families of three participants were facing eviction, the cost of which would have been considerable — court costs, actual eviction costs, rehousing costs for the now homeless families, and the cost of a social worker dealing with the family for an extended period. As a result of the improvement in behaviour, the Housing Department decided not to go ahead with any of the evictions.

Overall, therefore, the Turnaround programme had been excellent value for money.

Support from almost everywhere was very positive but, in January 2002, one of the boys who had completed the Turnaround project received a poor reception when he made a presentation to police recruits who were on a training course at Fettes Avenue. These recruits displayed the brash and cynical attitude that one might expect of raw recruits.

Following the publication of the final report in January 2002, a ceremony was held in the Filmhouse to mark the end of the project. It was hosted by Terry Hand, one of the users on the Management

Committee. Forty people attended, including Iain Gray MSP, Sarah Boyack MSP and a high proportion of parents. All the young people who completed the course received a presentation depending on their level of performance — either a gold ring, a silver bracelet, a bronze necklace or a certificate. A video showed what the young people thought of the course. Jack McConnell, the First Minister, had mentioned the project in a speech on the previous Wednesday, and Iain Gray MSP said that he hoped it would fit into the Executive's future plans.

Chapter 9: And Still it Grew (2001-2004)

At the start of 2002, the Cafe was running two major projects, in addition to its ongoing drop-in sessions, but the years 2002-2004 saw a tremendous increase in the number of other activities.

Keysteps

A detailed account of the Keysteps programme up to 2004, i.e. while it was funded by the Lottery, has already been given in Chapter 5. What happened beyond that is dealt with later in Chapter 13.

Turnaround (2002-2004)

At the end of 2001, the future of the other main project, Turnaround, was still uncertain. Following the end of the courses run in 2001, letters of support had come from Social Work, the Children's Panel, the police and parents, and the feedback from the young people had also been very positive. Even while the final report was being prepared, further referrals were coming in from service organisations which were keen for another course to be run since no other organisation was providing this sort of course. It was agreed that Community Education should be asked to convene a multi-agency meeting with a view to securing funding from various sources.

6VT hoped to run a third Turnaround course from March to June 2002, drawing young people from across the city rather than the one area. £12,850 was currently available for this (including £10,000 from Youth Crime Award and £2,850 carried forward from the original courses). However the total amount required was £14,337. If no money could be secured from another source (e.g. the police, Education, Social Work or Housing), the Cafe agreed to subsidise it from its own funds in order to give the organisers time to prepare an application to the Lottery Fund. However, on 13 March 2002, it was reported that the project had been awarded another £10,000 from the Youth Crime Review, and another instalment of £15,000 was received in April. This ensured that the project had sufficient funds to keep it going to the end of 2002.

Seventeen appropriate referrals had already been lodged, and this was reduced to twelve for a ten-week course which began in the Cafe on 25 March 2002. It was apparent, however, that poor communication within schools and within the Social Work Department still seemed to be hindering uptake. The course did not go well, mainly because the social workers had simply placed the young people on the course without discussing it with them. Attendance was bad or, at best, reluctant. The new Danish students, Ann and Rikke, were involved in this work as part of their training.

As soon as that course finished, another started on 27th May as there was already a demand for it. That allowed it to finish just before the summer holidays. The group on that course also proved to be very challenging, possibly because it included more girls than usual.

By now, quite a few organisations were looking for the sort of one-to-one support offered by Turnaround, since it was already clear that the majority of participants had either ceased to offend or had vastly reduced their involvement in trouble. Many had begun to attend school again or had gone into employment or full-time further education.

Funding was secure until December 2002, and it was hoped that the Youth Crime Group would provide more funding to March 2003 and beyond, since it had just been given a very large increase in its own funding. Ideally, the Cafe was looking for three years of funding, but no one had ever worked out the real cost of Turnaround. It had begun as a trial EYSIP project and had been subsidised financially by

the use of the unpaid seconded Danish students. At the end of 2002, however, there were no students attached to the Cafe, and so other Cafe workers were having to subsidise the work. This was good experience for them, but it was not a satisfactory state of affairs.

The Cafe, therefore, began to press for funding which would include a realistic cost not only for staffing, but also for tracking participants after they had left the course. The Youth Crime Reference Group had made enquiries about how much it would cost to keep the course going beyond March 2003. It was also known that the Scottish Executive was interested and that Jack McConnell, the First Minister, was keen to visit the Cafe to see it in action. There was also the strong possibility that Turnaround would become part of mainstream expenditure after the Council set its budget in February.

Most Turnaround courses went well but, every so often, an awkward one emerged. One such group was that which met in the early part of 2003. It was drawn from across the city and the group was younger and more immature than usual, containing as it did some 13-year-olds. They presented such challenging behaviour that they had to be confined to the Cafe at lunchtime rather than given free time.

By contrast, the course held in June 2003 proved particularly responsive, and some of the participants were attending the drop-in sessions at the Cafe in a most acceptable way. One was even helping with the coffee bar.

Winning the support of the Council received a major boost in March 2003 when Lyndsey Ritchie, one of the users on the Management Committee, expressed her views on youth crime during an excellent presentation to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel of the Council. She was accompanied there by Dot, a boy who had attended a Turnaround course and the boy's mother. The mother made a particularly telling contribution.

On 9 April 2003, the Cafe learned that Turnaround was to receive £35,000 in grant up to the end of March 2004, which would secure staff contracts until then. This was later extended to a £35,000 grant for three years. With such guaranteed funding, the Management Committee decided to use its own funds to make up the part-time post to a full-time one.

The staff did not restrict themselves to working with the young participants. They took every opportunity to sell the idea to outside agencies. In June, for example, Charlie Everitt, who had originally joined the Management Committee as the local community policeman but asked if he could continue when he moved to another post, was full of praise for the good publicity work which Steve More (the project leader) had done when making a presentation to agencies which had referred young people. He said that the agency representatives had spoken highly of the positive impact the course was making on the young people.

In August 2003, it was reported that Steve would be leaving at the end of October to do some travelling. Dot pointed out that, although Turnaround had funding of £35,000 for three years, this sum provided for only salaries and minimal running costs. She and other Cafe staff were still having to supplement the work of Turnaround. She was, therefore, rather pessimistic about being able to recruit a leader of quality because of the insecure status of the post.

It was agreed, however, that this project had achieved such excellent results that it should be protected at all costs. An approach was made to the Council's Youth Crime Reduction Coordinator to see if the grant could be reviewed and increased in the second and third years. One argument in

support of this was the fact that the Cafe staff were spending a lot of time working with the parents of those on the courses, but there was no allowance for this in the grant.

This raised another issue — the large number of requests for support that were coming from parents, particularly parents of the 14 to 16 year age group. The Scottish Executive had expressed its intention to introduce parenting orders and that was almost certain to increase the need for such work. However, it was acknowledged that these orders would be compulsory and might be at variance with genuine requests for help. Dot and the Cafe staff began to quantify this need and to list the sorts of skills that were required. They also surveyed users about their attitudes to parental involvement.

It took several months for the Coordinator post to be filled. Tommy Thomson, an ex-police officer who had been working with the Prince's Trust, took over Turnaround in January 2004. He did a good job but didn't last long as he left in the summer to rejoin the police in a full-time civilian job. His replacement was Rory McPherson, appointed in August 2004.

In March 2004, a woman from the Scottish Executive came to the Cafe researching the views of young people about electronic tagging. They were quite positive about it, much to the disappointment of the researcher who seemed to have formed a pre-planned outcome which anticipated a negative response.

In September 2004, 6VT was approached by the Crime Reduction Coordinator, who was greatly impressed by the success of Turnaround, to see if it would become one of the agencies providing support to young people involved in the tagging project which the Scottish Executive planned to introduce as an alternative to locking up young offenders in secure units. There were certain criteria which the young offenders had to meet before being eligible for tagging. For example, they had to agree to be tagged, and the Cafe would have to provide each of them with personal support for 30 hours beyond the time spent in school. The scheme would certainly be better for parents in that they would not have to deal with the whole range of agencies that presently descended upon them.

Three MSPs from the Scottish Parliament's Justice Committee visited the Cafe in October 2004 to see Turnaround in action. It was planned to begin the project on 17 December but, as is quite common with major projects, the start was delayed until January 2005. It marked a significant step forward as far as the Cafe was concerned in that this would be the first mainstream funding it would receive direct from the Scottish Executive. The whole matter of dealing with young offenders was just about to take off in a new direction.

Action 4 Change

In March 2002, Lothian Health Board approached the Cafe to see if it would run a three-year "Action for Change" project on its behalf. The aim was to establish a brief rolling intervention programme of courses for socially excluded 12 to 24-year-olds, which would work towards addressing health improvement issues. Besides being given education on healthy eating, alcohol, smoking, drugs, physical fitness and general health, the young people would be introduced to things that they might not otherwise be able to afford, such as access to leisure centres.

Using funding from the Health Improvement Fund, Lothian Health awarded the Cafe £130,364 for the three-year programme, and this was sufficient to employ two members of staff — one full-time (35½ hours per week) and one part-time (20 hours per week). The Health Board insisted that the work should be done by youth workers rather than health workers. Mia Jacobson, who had worked for the Prince's Trust in Glasgow, was appointed to the full time post, and the part-time post went to Amy

Tait, who had had experience of a variety of community education projects in Edinburgh. Besides running the Action4Change courses, these two were also responsible for ensuring that health issues were dealt with during the normal drop-in times at the Cafe, for updating all health information in the Cafe, and for keeping other Cafe staff up to date on new developments and the availability of health training opportunities.

It had been hoped to start the first A4C course in July, but it was August before Mia and Amy were in post and, by the time they had received training and written the course materials, it was November before the first course took place. To get agencies interested in the project, there was a launch on 4 October, which was attended by over 20 people. This number included some agencies with which the Cafe had not been associated in the past. By now, an evaluator had visited the Cafe and the Health Board was fully involved.

The courses took place in the Cafe for three hours on Tuesday nights, and it was anticipated that over the three years, 150 individuals would take part in approximately 18 courses of six weeks' duration on one evening per week. Some of the work was done in groups, but each individual was entitled to one hour per week on a one-to-one basis.

In the first week, there was a Rickter Scale assessment, teambuilding and programme planning. The Rickter scale measures people's opinions, e.g. how satisfied they are with things such as school, family, money, stress, alcohol intake, etc. It then helps them identify where they would like to improve situations by setting desired goals along with an action plan to achieve these goals. This information is input into the computer and uses future reviews to trace the person's development.

The programme for the remaining five weeks was:

Week 2: Healthy Eating)	
Week 3: Smoking)	Each of these sessions was followed by
Week 4: Substance Misuse)	a group issue discussion.
Week 5: Physical Health)	
Week 6: Physical Activities,)	e.g. rock climbing or a visit to a fitness centre.

There was another Rikter assessment at the end of the sixth week.

The course which began on 20 January 2003 concentrated on young people who were just over 16, but it was not as successful as the one that began on 24 February which had older participants and slightly more females than males.

Following the usual Cafe policy of asking users to speak for themselves, the Management Committee invited one of the February group, called Andrew, to tell them about Action4Change. He said he was thoroughly enjoying the course, which covered drugs, sexual matters and a whole range of youth problems. He felt much more confident now about asking questions and sharing personal experiences. The group had recently visited Crew 2000, and they had been going regularly to Meadowbank where Edinburgh Leisure had arranged for them to have membership tickets for only £8 per annum.

As part of its task of promoting healthy eating through the normal drop-in session, A4C distributed free fruit to users in September and October 2002. The experiment went down well with users.

Early in 2003, Action4Change provided a course for APEX, a rehabilitation project for offenders in East Lothian, and they also did some work at Broughton High School, as well as linking up with the Cafe's other projects Turnaround and Keysteps and running a course for previous participants.

Despite their earlier disappointment of working with a younger group, the staff aimed the June course at giving under 16-year-olds better health choices. This went well, and Andrew told the Management Committee of the benefits he had gained from attending the course. He also said that there were plans to form a Graduate Club for those who had attended the A4C courses.

On 8 October 2003, the Management Committee asked the Action4Change staff to report on their work of the previous year. The task fell to Amy. Since the previous November, there had been five 6-week courses. The proportion of females to males had been roughly 70/30. The needs of the young people were assessed through a mixture of group work and one-to-one sessions. Topics had covered drugs, sexual matters and a range of problems which most young people encounter. Since it was a "needs-led" project, self-referrals were best, and good contacts had been made through the Cafe drop-in and Keysteps. An important aspect of the work was that support was offered in follow-up sessions, when young people returned to ask further questions (the Graduate Club). A major difficulty was getting the young people to turn up, as many of them were exhausted by being out "all the hours of the night". It was part of the leaders' contract that they also made themselves available to those who attended the drop-in Café. Over the year it had become clear that there was a big gap in facilities offered to young parents. The amount of cash available was proving satisfactory, and funding was guaranteed until July 2005.

Amy said that the leaders were greatly in demand outside the Cafe and this was outstripping their availability. In the previous session, they had attended Drummond Community High School for one period per week, but they found this inadequate to cover all the information pupils required. So, they agreed to repeat the course only on condition that the time allocation was increased to two periods a week. Firrhill High School had asked them to run a 200-hour course, but this had had to be turned down, partly due to lack of time and partly because there was very little involvement and feedback from the School. They had attended Tynecastle High School for one or two sessions, and had taken a small group for day-sessions on health needs at Woods Youth Centre. East Lothian Council had employed them to run a course, and it was interesting that one of the young people on that course had recently attended an EGO disco run by the Cafe. The leaders did not accept an invitation from the Canongate Project to conduct a course there, but they did make presentations to the Royal Edinburgh psychiatric nurses and to practitioners involved in EYSIP projects.

After making her presentation to the Management Committee, Amy left to join previous clients at the "Birthday Bash" which was being held that night to celebrate the first anniversary of A4C.

The course which started after the October break in 2003 was held on Wednesdays from 4.30 to 6 pm. The theme was sexual health, but it was extended to deal also with such things as values, relationships and behaviour. Later courses were targeted on different groups. For example, the one in February 2004 had eight mums and ten babies. This Mums group was a great success, and they had a day out at Portobello on 26 April 2004 to conclude the course. Although A4C was a huge success in schools (e.g. a stop smoking group in Balerno in 2004), it did not make much impact within the Cafe itself, possibly because it was too much like school work. The Graduate Club continued, however. For example, it met for an hour on 8 October 2004 to discuss mental health issues and, on that occasion, a crèche was provided to make things easier for young parents.

Quarterly and annual reports were made to Lothian Health, and James Barbour, the Chief Executive of Lothian Health, also paid a personal visit to the project in October 2004 to observe it at first hand. The leaders took the opportunity to emphasise to him how great the demand was for the A4C courses. However, on 19 January 2005, Dot reported that, despite its previous statements of satisfaction with the achievements of Action4Change, the Health Board had intimated shortly before Christmas that it would not be renewing the funding of the project. The Health Board felt they could develop the work themselves, together with the necessary training, and they hoped that the Cafe would continue to give users informal help as situations arose during the drop-in evenings. Unfortunately, the Cafe did not have a copyright of the course materials. The staff had to be made redundant. Mia secured a part-time post elsewhere, but she continued to spend 10 hours per week for a few weeks to complete her reports and other paperwork connected with A4C.

Residentials for Users

A residential was organised for under-16 year olds at Farr Cottage (Backpackers Hostel) Carnforth over the weekend 7-9 April 2002 led by Dot and Lorraine. Six males and six females attended, ages ranging from 13 to 16. The age differences caused problems on the first night but, once that had been sorted out, the group gelled well together. Since the aim was to get some of the younger Café users involved, there was a concentration on venture activities rather than on getting them to understand how the Cafe was managed as had been the case in the residential held in January 2002.

There were three main activities: white water rafting, abseiling and cliff-jumping. They were also given Scottish history lessons with a difference. The group had to share the accommodation with backpackers from all over the world, which proved to be an invaluable learning experience for all. At the end of the residential, the man in charge of the centre made a point of congratulating the young people on their attitude and behaviour, and he gave the group a discount on the accommodation. The white water rafting company were so pleased with the group that they also gave a discount. The total cost per person for the weekend should have been £130, but that was reduced to £115. The young people were asked to pay only £20. Lothian Health donated £500, and the remaining £640 was paid out of Cafe funds.

Another residential was held at Whithaugh Park near Langholm from 1 to 13 April 2003 for users serving on the Management Committee. In the evenings, they discussed the Cafe profile and the responsibilities of the Management Committee. During the day, they took part in gorge walking and other outward bound activities.

In February 2004, the users said they wanted a 3-day residential to mark the 10th anniversary of 6VT. It took place from Monday 28th to Wednesday 30th June. The whole of Wiston Lodge near Bigger was booked, to take up to 55 users (including some Alternatives), staff and volunteers. The young folk were taken out of school for this educational conference on "*Anti-social behaviour and young people*" which was designed to prevent anti-social behaviour over the summer holidays. They were introduced to a variety of new experiences and opportunities that would be available over the summer. Two policemen (one from Penicuik and the Juvenile Liaison Officer at St Leonard's) joined the group as volunteers. Prior to this, a representative from the Scottish Executive had visited the Cafe to discuss the tagging proposals with users, and there had been positive reactions from the young people, including some young offenders who said they would prefer tagging to being locked up. There was a huge initial interest in this residential and it looked as if the number of applications would far exceed the number of places, but by June the number of actual applications was disappointing because of the cost. All the places were eventually taken up, but only because the Cafe subsidised the residential financially.

Staff Residentials

A staff residential was held at Carpath from 19-21 April 2002. As in 2001, the staff agreed to open the Cafe for the drop-in on the Thursday night to enable all staff to attend on the Friday. It was typical of the dedication of the staff that all fourteen of them agreed to give up their weekend. However, two had to call off at the last minute, one because of a family bereavement, the other because of a family problem.

Discussions on this occasion centred largely on how best to achieve consistency in the handling of situations. With so many employed on a part-time basis, it was not possible for all of them to be *au fait* with all the projects in which the Cafe was now involved. There was a “flat” management structure, with no middle managers, so that all projects depended only on Dot for supervision. The opportunity was therefore taken to update all staff on all the current projects. More important, however, was the discussion which followed on the desire that staff had for training. This was written up for inclusion in the Development Plan. During this residential, for example, Fiona Horne passed on to staff some of the things she had learned on a positive discipline course she was currently attending.

Another staff residential at Wiston Lodge from 16-18 April 2004 concentrated on team building activities. There was yet another from 8-10 April 2005 when discussion focused on the new ISMS plans.

There was a particular need for training at this time. Previously, there had been an overarching training scheme in Edinburgh (ACT — A Consortium Training) under which youth workers could build up a number of “credits” (modules) into a career portfolio. The Council had dropped this scheme and set up a working party to devise a new scheme, but it was uncertain when this would happen. The Management Committee therefore decided that it had a responsibility to try to meet staff requests for training in specific areas of youth work, so that they could build up a portfolio that might be accredited later. The present finances could afford no more than one residential per year, but other combined meetings might be held at other times of the year, with staff being paid for attendance. It was recognised that such training would benefit both the Cafe and the individual.

The Alternatives (The Cockburn Street Kidz)

In March 2002, there was first mention of problems caused by a group of young people who were congregating at the foot of Cockburn Street on Friday afternoons when secondary schools were closed for in-service training. They considered it a good place to meet as it was close to the railway station and bus routes. Although the young people were not doing any harm, the traders said they were driving away their customers by simply congregating there every afternoon after school. The young people complained that they had had eggs thrown at them, water poured over them and had actually been physically assaulted by some of the traders.

Public meetings of traders, residents, young people, police and politicians were held and an inter-agency group was formed. The police and Community Education approached the Cafe for help, and the young people were invited to the Cafe on Friday, 22 March 2002 to see if that might be a better place for them to congregate.

Over the following three weeks, 6VT workers also did streetwork among the young people, and between 70 and 100 of them began coming to the Cafe every Friday afternoon in April. They were very well behaved; they were, in fact, very decent young people who were just not interested in the

facilities normally provided for teenagers. The experiment was clearly very successful, but it was tying up three workers, the catering worker and a volunteer, and the Cafe couldn't afford to subsidise it from its own funds, so Community Education was asked if it could help.

By June 2002, Friday afternoons were attracting 130 young people, and this was putting considerable strain on staffing, involving five or six workers for 2½ hours each week. Community Education offered to fund 50% of the costs provided another organisation such as the police would fund the rest. The Management Committee did not see why the police should be expected to fund this project when they weren't expected to pay for other forms of community work for young people. It also emphasised to the Council that it was not asking for the Cafe's normal work to be subsidised. The Cafe was doing the Council a favour by making provision for the Friday afternoon group, but it could not do this indefinitely. The police were reporting that they were now receiving no complaints at all of the type with which they had previously been inundated.

Community Education eventually produced £7,000 to fund the Friday afternoon sessions (12.30 to 4 pm) from the beginning of September 2002. Between 50 and 60 were now attending regularly. This money was later increased to £16,000 so that there could also be a Saturday afternoon opening from the beginning of November. In April 2003, the funding was extended to September and, in August 2003, Community Education extended its guarantee of up to £7,500 of funding to 31 March 2004.

At the end of 2002, the group (consisting of Goths, Sweaties and Moshers) agreed to rename themselves "The Alternatives", and the Saturday afternoon hours were changed from 12.30-4pm to 2-6pm to enable them to go straight from the Cafe to the Mission nightclub, although there was concern about a lot of under-age drinking there. This seemed to suit them better and there was a significant increase in numbers.

It was recognised that the group was unlikely to become fully integrated with the main group of Cafe users because its culture was so different both in the way they dressed and in their taste in music. However, integration began to happen gradually. It started with one boy agreeing to join the Management Committee in October 2002. By February 2003, several were coming to the drop-in sessions and enjoying the regular activities there. In April 2003, two of them went on the Users' Residential, and this happened again at the big residential in June 2004.

Attendances continued to be high and, at the start of 2004, there were around 40 on Friday evenings and over 80 on Saturday afternoons. Attendances were still good in the autumn of 2005 and another grant of £7,250 was received. The Alternatives were so pleased with the arrangements that they made a video of their activities. On the negative side, staff noted in March 2004 an increase in the use of magic mushrooms (a psychedelic drug not banned in the UK till the early part of 2005).

At the request of the Alternatives, a special disco was arranged for them at the EGO nightclub in November 2004, but only 60 turned up and the Cafe lost £100 on the event. A second disco fared no better and it was agreed to discontinue the outside venue in the meantime and to try to build up interest through discos in the Cafe.

In the early months of 2005, reports indicated that there were now no problems in Cockburn Street, although some Goths were now hanging around the railway station. Numbers attending the Café, though down slightly, were still quite high. However, by the summer, attendances on Friday afternoons often did not reach double figures, and so the Friday afternoon sessions were discontinued in July. Attendances on Saturday afternoons continued to be reasonable for several months, but they too fell away in 2006, and the whole project was stopped at the end of June.

Festival Fireworks Night

At the Fireworks Night in 2001 young people had caused a lot of trouble mainly through drunken behaviour. On 31 August 2002, therefore, the police employed six workers from the Cafe to assist in promoting the safety of the young people attending the event. They moved about among the young people, telling them that they were welcome but urging them to behave themselves and not get drunk. They worked in pairs and had a direct link to the Police Joint Action Control Centre to alert the police about any youngsters who were drunk or any who seemed vulnerable. This was a ground-breaking development in that the police recognised that this approach was much more acceptable to the young people than hard-hitting action by the police themselves. The workers were well received by the young people and staff distributed 200 copies of 6VT's activity programme. The total cost of the exercise was a mere £300.

Streetwork

At the beginning of 2003, there was a resurgence of unruly behaviour in Princes Street. The trouble was coming mainly from a small hard core who had previously caused trouble at Winter Wonderland. The police asked the Cafe to help them in the same way as they had done eighteen months earlier under the City Youth Initiative. Although working with the police, the staff worked separately and wore tabards clearly marked "Youth Workers" so that they could operate as neutrals. Things returned to normal following two weekends of involvement by Cafe staff.

Complaints about unruly behaviour were not confined to the city centre, however. From the summer of 2003 through to the following summer, 6VT received several requests from the police and neighbourhood groups to come and help them handle complaints in different areas.

The first of these was in July 2003 when two staff did one night of streetwork in the Stockbridge area as a goodwill gesture, and no payment was received. The police, however, did pay the Cafe for help on Fireworks Night. Again, staff were there as befrienders of young people and not in a policing capacity. In October 2003, a twelve-week programme began in the Saughton area to mediate between the needs of the young people and the wider community. Over Christmas 2003, staff were again asked to help at Winter Wonderland. Four nights were also spent in Penicuik where the police had been dealing with forty to fifty youth disorder calls each evening at the weekend. In March/April 2004, Cafe staff spent two nights per week spread over eight weeks in Leith. In May and June, they were in Portobello and, again in June, they spent several weeks in the Hutchison area, and also again in Saughton. In July 2004, a staff hut was set up in Princes Street Gardens to work with young people there over the summer. It was located at the Carousel end of the Gardens since it was felt that security at the other end could not be guaranteed. All of this was funded by Community Safety.

The 6VT workers focused on the short term but it was hoped that, by working alongside the local Problem Solving Partnerships (a wing of Community Education) and passing on recommendations to them, they would give the PSPs the ability to deal with the problem themselves. They chatted to local people, shopkeepers and young people and, in virtually every case, they could not identify any serious problems. Quite often, complaints were coming from a small group of mainly elderly people who became anxious when young people gathered in groups in their neighbourhood. Even though the young people were not doing anything wrong, their mere presence, often noisy, caused concern and made people afraid to leave their homes. What the Cafe staff tended to find was friendship groups of young people hanging around the streets because there were no appropriate facilities for them in the area.

However, the fact that the 6VT staff did not encounter any anti-social behaviour did not mean that the fears of the local people were groundless, as members of the Management Committee could testify from their own experience. There were incidents where local people were assaulted, and one could never be sure when or where one of these might occur.

The streetwork also identified other issues. In Hutchison, young people were asking adults to buy alcohol for them. The report sent to the Leith Steering Group indicated that no real drink or drugs problems were identified, but there had been a strong appeal from young people for a drop-in facility in the Kirkgate. At the hut in Princes Street Gardens there were no signs of youth disorder, but it was noted that there were strange men wandering in the Gardens apparently looking for young people. The experience at the Hut was very quiet compared with the Cafe drop-in, but the staff made 180 contacts, including several enquiries from parents.

The main message which emerged from the streetwork was that all the areas visited were completely lacking in appropriate facilities for young people.

Several good things came out of the streetwork. In almost every case, it resulted in a reduction of complaints, but there was very little feedback on what was done with the recommendations, except that it was known that in Penicuik new facilities were made available and the 40-50 complaints were reduced to one following 6VT intervention. In general, it seemed that the situation was defused by simply alerting the young people to the fact that the police were targeting anti-social behaviour, and by bringing them and some of the residents together.

In 2004, it was noted with pleasure that Lothian Buses had donated money for free bus trips, and the Odeon cinema in Wester Hailes had gifted a hundred free cinema tickets. There was a meeting of young people in the Saughton area on 4 May, and a disco was held at the Busy Bee in Broomhouse to mark the end of the streetwork project in that area. Busy Bee proved excellent hosts and the sixty-five young people who attended had a great time and were very well-behaved. It was noted, however, that no one from either the Problem Solving Partnership or Community Education had attended.

Staff had used the previous City Youth Initiative to recruit young people for the Café. They did not do this when doing streetwork as the numbers in the Cafe were already stretching resources to the full. There was concern that the Cafe's resources might be overstretched by the streetwork requests, but Dot said that the staff welcomed them since they gave staff the opportunity to build up expertise in this sort of work. It also helped the Cafe retain staff more easily by providing extra hours of employment to add to their part-time work at the Cafe.

Discussion in the Management Committee then centred on the need for training in teenage youth work. The success of the Cafe depended on the attitudes of the staff more than anything else, and this was not something that could be learned by others simply attending a course. Officialdom possibly placed too much emphasis on paper qualifications and not enough on practical experience in a testing environment. The Management Committee began to consider offering training courses based on practical experience within the Cafe, and learning the 6VT way of handling young people by working with existing 6VT staff.

During 2003, Community Justice National Training Organisation Edinburgh had secured funding to assist four Cafe staff take Scottish Vocational Qualifications — two of them were taking the course on working with victims, survivors and witnesses, the other two on the offending behaviour course. This was a welcome addition to staff training.

Ego Discos

Although there were some positive outcomes for neighbourhoods from the streetwork, in most cases the young people had to find their own solutions in their quest for excitement. Discussions with young people during streetwork had revealed that, at that time, nightclubs provided them with one acceptable answer.

In the summer of 2001, 6VT had taken part in the GO4IT activities organised by other organisations. One of these was an alcohol-free disco organised by Pilmeny Youth Project in the Ego Nightclub in Picardy Place. This was so successful that the Cafe users asked 6VT to organise its own discos there.

6VT discos had previously been run in the Cafe, with around 80 crammed into the two rooms and others spilling over on to the Terrace. The EGO discos began in October 2001 and, from then on, there was one each month replacing the Friday drop-in session.

These larger discos proved hugely popular because, according to the young people, they felt like a “real” nightclub. They regularly attracted between 250 and 350 and raised huge sums of money which were used to purchase new equipment for the Café. The staff of 6VT were responsible for the behaviour inside the nightclub and for ensuring the discos remained alcohol-free, but they received a great deal of support from the police who ensured that those who were refused admission because they had been drinking did not cause trouble outside. Some users who had attended a commercial disco (Revolution) commented on how safe they felt at EGO compared with the Revolution disco where there had been fights inside and outside the hall. Whereas at EGO discos there were staff at the door, at the bar and in the dancing area, there were no staff in the dancing area at the commercial disco.

We know from the records that the October disco raised over £500 for Cafe funds, and 50 had to be turned away from the November disco because there were already 380 inside. It raised £1,000 for Cafe funds. Numbers were limited to 300 for the final disco of the year on 21 December 2001, and it was an all-ticket affair. Besides making overall control easier, this had the advantage of forcing the young people to visit the Cafe to collect their tickets and, in some cases, parents made contact with the Cafe to collect tickets for their offspring. The downside was that staff had to be on the look-out for forgeries.

In April 2002, there was almost a disaster when the usual DJ pulled out at the last minute, but Fiona Horne stepped in and did such a good job that she became the permanent DJ. £200 of CDs had to be bought to ensure that there was a good selection of music. Another purchase was a sophisticated projector costing £1,350, which greatly extended the work the Cafe was able to undertake.

In June 2003, some parents complained to the Chairman of the Education Committee because the Cafe was preventing younger kids from attending the EGO discos as older teenagers were not happy about having “these children” around. While accepting that younger children probably deserved such a disco, the Cafe had only limited resources and it was very labour intensive with all 14 staff in attendance. However, at the request of the Chairman of the Education Committee, a one-off disco was arranged for the younger group on 19 September, and Community Education agreed to underwrite the event up to £350. This was so successful that another was arranged for S1-2 pupils in October and was attended by 212. Behaviour was excellent and there were very complimentary comments from parents. Another welcome feature was the fact that eight or nine older Cafe users

helped to supervise these discos so that some staff could be released to run the normal drop-in at the Cafe on the same night.

The Ego discos continued to flourish and, from September 2003, 6VT was running two events per month — one for pupils in S1-S2, the other for S3 and above. The presence of older volunteers from the Café continued to be a really encouraging feature of the S1-2 discos. There was also a very nice gesture from the police who were on duty at the disco. They gave the staff a lift back to the Café at the end.

In September 2004, when the Ego Nightclub began to run its own disco for young people on Saturday nights, it was decided to rename the 6VT discos “Fusion Discos” to give them a separate identity. The Management Committee was concerned that some parents might think that the commercial Saturday disco was also sponsored by the Café and might expect the same high standard of supervision as the discos run by 6VT on Fridays.

In the run-up to the launch of the Club Zone+ charter in October 2004, all under-18 nightclubs began to struggle for numbers, and it had become noticeable that the older age group was tending to desert 6VT’s EGO discos as well, partly because so many younger children were attending, but also because of the strict “no drink” code. Adverse press publicity also played a big part in the drop in numbers because it worried parents so that they urged their offspring not to go to them. The September disco made only a small profit and the October one a slight loss. Fusion tried to market itself in such a way as to attract the older users back but numbers continued to drop and the Ego discos were discontinued in December 2004. Two special Fusion discos for the Alternatives at the start of 2005 also failed to attract much support and were dropped in March.

Club Zone+

There were six commercial nightclubs catering for the under-18s at this time, but there was little or no supervision at them and constant trouble, according to the young people who attended the monthly Cafe-run Ego disco. Three were mentioned at the Management Committee in February 2003 — The Honeycomb in Niddrie Street, The Venue in Calton Road and the “dark and dingy” Mission which the Alternatives attended. There was no check on under-age drinking and, since tickets were not sold beforehand, there was no check on who was gaining access. The Cafe’s disco at the EGO Nightclub was the only one which was strictly supervised and which had asked for, and received, active police support.

There were also police reports of rowdy bus-loads of young people coming into the city centre, often fuelled by drunkenness. In the early months of 2004, the police began to target these buses and again they turned to 6VT for assistance. When a bus driver called for help, the police dealt with the troublemakers and poured the contents of the cans and bottles into the gutter. 6VT’s job was to support the young people not involved. Sometimes they would call the parents of the culprits to explain that they had been found with alcohol and ask the parents to come and pick them up.

On 19 February 2004, a meeting was called of all these nightclub promoters to warn them that they must do more to curtail youth disturbances, control under-age drinking and generally improve safety. The Discos run by 6VT at the EGO Nightclub were held up as a model which others should follow. The Cafe staff had the necessary skills and, above all, they realised that success depended on dialogue and building good relationships and mutual trust with the young people.

Dot and Fiona Horne began working closely with the nightclubs and, by April, they had visited all six of them. Surprisingly, they found that things were not as bad as the picture painted by the 6VT users. Sometimes the standard of behaviour was very good and there was no sign of alcohol, but overall there was no consistent control. The police, 6VT and the night club promoters continued to work together to draw up a set of guidelines and there was a useful initiative by Gayfield police station called "Operations Adhere" dealing with youth nightclubs. This work received wide media publicity. In May, for example, STV devoted two half-hour programmes to it.

On the whole, Dot felt that the youth nightclubs did not deserve the adverse publicity they had received. Indeed, when the BBC sent a crew at the end of July 2004 to make a "Real Stories" programme about youth rowdiness at nightclubs, they got so little footage that was sensational enough for the programme that they re-scheduled it to a town in England.

The under-18 clubs closed at 9.30 pm so that the nightclubs could cater for their adult customers. Many 6VT users would come along to the Café after that. Numbers did drop following the closer scrutiny of the under-18 nightclubs, but in August the six clubs were still catering for 3,000 to 4,000 young people each weekend.

The guidelines were ultimately formed into a Charter called Club Zone+ which was officially launched on 28 October 2004. All six under-18 nightclubs signed up to the Charter, and they all had to operate to the same standards or lose their licence. Door staff had to be registered and licensed with the local authority, and a qualified first-aider had to be available. Staff had to go through Disclosure Scotland checks. There was zero tolerance on the use of drugs and alcohol, and breathalysers, metal detectors and video cameras were used. Young people had to show their ID, and no one over 18 was admitted because of child protection laws. If any were refused entry because they had been drinking, their parents were phoned to come and collect them for their own safety. The police also were actively involved in monitoring the clubs, and staff were able to radio the police to come and deal with the worst offenders. Forty young people attended the launch of the Charter which received good press coverage and created a lot of interest.

Community Safety guaranteed another £10,000 so that a personalised version of the Charter could go out to all secondary schools. In it, emphasis was laid on how to have a safe and enjoyable night out. The young people were advised to be dropped off and collected by parents or to stick with their friends. Although clubbing clothes looked good, they could leave young people vulnerable out in the street, so they should cover up when travelling to and from the club. *"Can you run in your fashion shoes? If not, bring a spare pair."*

On 20 April 2005, Dot reported that Community Safety had nominated the Cafe for an anti-social behaviour award in recognition of its work in connection with Club Zone+.

Cooperation with the police

Ever since 6VT was founded, it had received strong support from the police. The cooperation was most evident in such activities as Turnaround, the streetwork and the nightclubs, but it was the personal attention given by senior police officers which really stood out. For example, the Chief Constable, Paddy Tomkins, was so concerned about having to call off a visit in December 2004 due to illness that he sent a long hand-written note of apology to Dot.

It wasn't all give on the part of the police. They often asked for the Café's help. In April 2002, Dot and Cat Kennedy Allen (a user member of the Management Committee) took part in a multi-agency

training day for police. Their talk about youth issues went down well and got the audience thinking, but there was doubt about how it would impact on the shift policemen who were worried about where the time would come from to carry out the ideas.

There was also support from individual officers such as the voluntary attendance of the two men who attended the users residential in June 2004, and the challenge Big Screen Pro Football match between the community police and the users in January 2003 which the users won. The computer package had been donated by one of the policemen.

Of course, things didn't always go according to plan. Normally the Cafe staff were very skilled in defusing situations before they got out of hand, and they seldom called for police assistance. Normally, when they did phone, they got help, but there were two occasions in the first four years of the Millennium when the Cafe staff felt let down. In each case, a complaint from the Cafe resulted in action by the police service to improve communications.

In November 2000, a gang arrived from Niddrie to beat up one of the users. The operator who answered the first 999 call was not very helpful, insisting there was no such street as Victoria Terrace. Chambers Street police did not respond at all and St Leonard's took 30 minutes. Following this, the police supplied a priority phone number which could be called on Fridays or Saturdays if a serious disturbance arose.

On 24 May 2004, a 19-year-old who was suspended from the drop-in for unacceptable behaviour persisted in trying to gain access. He arrived with two others, all of them extremely drunk, and he forced his way into the Cafe to attack one of the users. Staff got him back on the Terrace with difficulty, but the group refused to go away. The staff therefore dialled 999 at 9pm explaining that young people were being threatened. They dialled again at 9.15, but still no police response. After a third 999 call, the police eventually arrived at 9.30, but even then they decided to wait for back-up when they saw the size of the group and their physical size. When back-up arrived, they merely questioned the youths and sent them on their way. The Cafe subsequently heard that the 19 year old was arrested later that night for another incident in the High Street. The staff told the PCs that they felt badly let down and that they had given out the wrong message to the culprits, virtually encouraging them to go on causing trouble at the Cafe. The excuse of the PCs was that they were instructed by Control to collect a video from Espionage in Victoria Street before going to 6VT. The Management Committee made an official complaint that there had been failure on two levels: communication and policing.

Out of this failure, however, there was again a positive result. Chief Superintendent Fiona Taylor met Dot to apologise for this unusual lapse in police support, and after that the police made amends by increasing the attention they gave to 6VT. Good relations were soon restored. The 2001 Annual Report had summed up that relationship well as follows:

“Working with the police is something we have plenty of experience with here at 6VT, with the majority of contacts being positive. Focusing on the positive, we have worked together on a variety of projects over the years. “B” Division officers deliver workshops to our vulnerable young tenants. Officers attend and co-deliver workshops during Cafe drop-in times. They also make time for informal blether and brews with the young people.

“6VT Management Group has a “B” Division officer active on the Committee. The Turnaround project was set up with advice, guidance and support from Fettes and Juvenile Liaison Officers from across the

city. 6VT staff attended the recently established "Young People in Perspective" police advisory group which was set up to develop youth initiatives in "B" Division.

"Police officers in and out of uniform are a common and accepted feature of 6VT. Young people, many of whom have had run-ins with the law, enjoy the positive contact that is created in the informal environment of 6VT. Cafe users have learned useful skills that they have been able to transfer when they have come to police attention while out and about, which has resulted in a more positive experience being had by all. In return, police officers are getting the opportunity to learn how to communicate more effectively with young people and are gaining a greater understanding of issues influencing young people today. One young person using the cafe stated that she would like to be a police officer; when asked why and what area of policing she might be interested in, her response was: 'I want to work as a drugs cop, an abuse cop or a youth café cop.' Another young person, fairly new to the Cafe, arrived one night and enquired, 'What time do the police officers start work at 6VT, as I need to ask them a question?' 6VT will continue to attempt to foster positive relations between police and young people. (Who says you can't put square pegs in round holes? It's the sort of little challenges that keep the job interesting!)"

Summer Cafe

In 2002, the Summer Cafe was run for the four weeks of the Fringe/Festival and, besides raising valuable funds for the Cafe, it gave a small group of users the opportunity to gain genuine work experience and training. The young people were taught the responsibilities and standards required when in employment. They had to apply for the position, go through an interview process, undergo relevant training and maintain a high standard of service delivery to customers. They had to show commitment through prompt time-keeping and attendance. Several of them later secured employment as a result of the skills they gained.

In 2003, twenty users applied to work at the Summer Cafe. Thirteen of them were chosen following much more rigorous interviewing and training. This time, they were given a wage. Before the Festival Cafe opened, the staff saved the Cafe a lot of money by washing down the walls and skirting boards, and generally sprucing the place up. The profit was £5,600 and the young people had received excellent work experience. At the end the whole team had a "Thank You" night out at the Hard Rock Cafe.

The success of the Summer Cafe had always depended on the considerable amount of their own time that a team of Cafe staff were willing to give. In 2004, due to youth work commitments throughout the summer and also the large numbers using the Cafe, it was decided not to run a Summer Cafe. The decision was taken reluctantly because the young people would lose valuable work experience, but it did take a lot of pressure off the staff.

Raft Race

In July 2002, 6VT organised a fund-raising Raft Race along a six-mile stretch of the River Tay. Fifteen teams took part from PricewaterhouseCoopers, "B" Police Division Edinburgh, Holyrood Hotel, Edinburgh Housing Department, Adult Guidance, Pilton Youth and Children's Project and other interested individuals. The 6VT team had the distinction of coming last on this occasion but, besides raising over £1,000 for Cafe funds, the staff found it to be a valuable networking day.

VACATION STATION

In 2002, for the second year running, 6VT was awarded a Go4It grant from the Council to provide summer activities for Cafe users. The £740 was used on the usual variety of activities, including cliff jumping, “stranded with Big Sister” (Dot!) and a day trip to M&Ds (Strathclyde Theme Park). It was a great success with 100 young people taking part.

In 2003, the summer programme received a grant of £1,000. Highlights included visits to the zoo, Mary King’s Close, ice skating, skiing, Fringe shows, stranded with Big Sister, and a double-decker day out to Strathclyde Theme Park. The Cafe also received a £2,000 grant for a Scottish Executive community safety initiative.

Towards the end of 2004, the summer programme was threatened by a Council decision that school catchment areas and Local Development areas would be used for the future allocation of monies. The problem facing the Cafe was that it was located in the centre of town and, although it drew users from all over the city, there was no way in which the Cafe could access any of the funds given to the areas from which the users were drawn.

The AGM

Up to 2001, the AGM had been held in the Cafe, but this resulted in the audience being restricted to those immediately involved in the use or management of the Cafe. In 2002, it was decided that it was time for 6VT to be more proactive in promoting the achievements of 6VT by inviting representatives of outside agencies. The 2002 AGM, therefore, was moved to the hall of St Columba’s by the Castle. It was attended by 135 people, and it was pleasing to note how many outside agencies and parents attended in addition to Management and users. It was an exciting and interesting evening, largely a fun night with formal business limited to a minimum. The users provided the entertainment, and there was a video illustrating the work of the Cafe over the previous year.

A particularly successful feature was the gold, silver and bronze awards made by Chief Inspector O’Kane to the young people who had attended Turnaround courses in the past year. It was good for them to receive public recognition for what they had achieved, and good also for the regular users to meet them. In making the presentations, Chief Inspector O’Kane commented on the big reduction in the number of youth offences committed as a result of Turnaround.

Everyone was invited back to the Cafe for a buffet, and the staff closed the meeting with their usual “chaos”, spraying the unsuspecting audience with silly string. The feedback from guests was very positive. The above format has been adopted for every AGM since then, and the whole event is always compèred by one of the users.

At the 2003 AGM, the film maker, Richard Johnson, presented the certificates to those who had completed the Turnaround course. He later sent free tickets for his film “Sixteen Years of Alcohol.” The seven users who took up the offer were very impressed. At the 2004 AGM, the Church was even more kind than usual. They left crisps and juice, and also gave a £50 donation to Café funds.

Management Structure

In October 2002, the Management Committee began to review the management structure of the Cafe again. Dot was still the only full-time worker, and it was agreed that another full-timer should be appointed to reduce some of Dot’s administrative load. Related to that was the amount of money the Council was putting into the Cafe. When the Cafe opened eight years earlier, the revenue grant from the Council was £30,000. In 2002, it had increased to only £32,000, despite all the extra work which

6VT was carrying out for several Council agencies. Compared with some other projects, the per capita cost to the Council was extremely low, and the Management Committee felt it was time that the goodwill towards the Cafe was turned into hard cash. Community Education was urged once more to bring a multi-agency group together to seek funding from agencies which were benefiting from the work of 6VT but were contributing nothing towards its costs. Although it was gratifying to note that so many people were asking 6VT to undertake work for them, they had to realise that this carried a cost.

Staff Regrading and Upgrading

Because the Cafe was by now involved in so many projects in addition to the original task of running the drop-in, a complete review of senior staff salaries was carried out at the beginning of 2003. The Coordinator and Administrator posts were both moved up a point in the scale, and the latter became a full-time post. Consideration also began to be given to appointing someone to act as Depute in Dot's absence. The total cost of these changes was £1,090 in 2002-3 and £9,650 in the full year 2003-4.

Breakdancing

Since the Dance Base workshops in 2001, breakdancing had become very popular with a group of young men aged 16-18. During every drop-in session, they worked tirelessly in the back room, practising on a square of lino because the old floor was beginning to disintegrate.

Five of them were really good. In February 2003, for example, a group of them completed the 30 hours required to gain the Queen's Badge under the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme, and they created considerable interest in their dancing by performing at a number of community performances, including the Edinburgh (multicultural) Mela Festival. In 2003, five of them — Brian O'Neil, Bilal Oussellam, Simon Porter, Felipe Sanchez and Pablo Shahbazi — decided to organise themselves into a formal group, popularly known as the B-Boys, and apply to Chase for a grant to help them develop their talents.

Chase had been set up under the Millennium Award Scheme and was a consortium made up of The Scottish Community Foundation, Fairbridge in Scotland and the Prince's Trust. It aimed at providing 300 socially excluded young people (14-25 year olds) living in Scotland with an opportunity to realise their dreams and aspirations and benefit both themselves and their communities through small lottery grants.

The B-Boys asked for only £3,621 to support their training and travel, and to buy safety helmets, knee and wrist protectors, HiFi, mentor support and their all-important square of lino, but they secured a grant of £6,000 which was to run for six months, from November 2003 to April 2004. Besides working with a trainer to develop their own skills, they taught younger children (12-16 year olds) basic breakdance skills under the supervision of a trained instructor over a 6-week period. One member of the group wrote, *"I have benefited from breakdancing. My health has improved from exercise, it has channelled my aggression in a creative way and helped me develop as a person, and I want to share that."*

The B-Boys were attracting large numbers of young people from Musselburgh, Penicuik, Broxburn and South Queensferry, as well as from all over Edinburgh. But there were times when this caused problems because they tended to hog the use of the back room, to the exclusion of other drop-in activities.

When Prince Edward visited the Cafe on 12 January 2004 in connection with the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme, the B-Boys performed for him. On 12 March 2004, they put on a display on the Calton Hill, after which the Chase representative said that their presentation was the best she had ever seen.

In June 2004, the B-Boys were invited to take part in a Youth Cultural Exchange in Madrid. It lasted ten days and involved them in basketball and other sports as well as breakdancing. The boys were accompanied by staff and they proved to be excellent ambassadors. Their final show took place before an audience of 500 in an open-air theatre, and they even met the Mayor of Madrid. Five other countries took part (Spain, Austria, Germany, Norway and Bulgaria), and the event was such a success that the competitors were keen to visit Edinburgh for the 2005 event.

At times, the B-Boys seemed to think that the back room belonged to them and were reluctant to give it up for other activities. At other times they took their piece of lino onto the Terrace to ease the accommodation problem. And, during the Festival, they even took it onto the High Street where they entertained large crowds of tourists. On one occasion, they raised £7.45 which they handed over to the Café. They also performed at the Edinburgh Youth Council at the Hub in December 2005.

The Drop-in

In the early part of 2001, Dot began working on a profile of those users who agreed to provide their names and addresses. She presented a paper in July which revealed the following. The profile included 181 names from all over the city, plus 10 from other parts of Lothian. Twenty-three schools were represented; four users were in further education; 24 were in employment; and 41 were unemployed. Ages ranged from 13 to 22, with the biggest number aged around 16. Of the 181, forty-eight were receiving personal support from the Cafe staff. One of these was a 13-year-old who had received insufficient support from the Social Work Department. She was placed in secure accommodation in Perth, but she absconded in June and the police found her sleeping rough in Edinburgh. Social workers could not persuade her to return to Perth and they asked for the help of the Cafe staff to accompany her there. The Cafe Coordinator had personally spent 18 hours since February on this girl. At least fifty of the 181 had Social Work involvement in their lives. These statistics prompted the Management Committee to conclude that the Cafe should try to get a service level agreement with the Social Work Department.

It was quite common for absconders from units to come to the Café for help because they felt that they were coming to people who cared for them. The Café was a really caring place — users as well as staff. For example, the support given in 2004 to a boy who was left homeless when his mother was murdered by her boyfriend was unbelievable. And the Café pulled out all the stops later that year to get two young people out of violent homes into their own accommodation.

The nightly summary for April 2004 highlighted the sort of serious social cases which Cafe staff were regularly being called on to handle. All staff were to be commended for this work, but Dot deserved particular praise for the support she had given to troubled young people. For a time, a number of young mothers were bringing their babies to the Café. It was recognised that these single mothers needed some social contacts, but they were told not to keep the babies out too late and a time limit was set for them to leave. Nevertheless, there was still concern that the babies were being passed around so many of the users.

While all of the other activities were going on, the drop-in remained the main activity at 6VT. In the years following the Millennium, young people were remarkably clubbable. Monthly attendances in

2000 and the early part of 2001 were around 400, but they rose in the last four months of 2001 to a monthly average of 650.

Numbers rocketed in 2002-2004 and even the arrival of the shows on the Meadows in June had little effect. In the early part of 2002, nightly attendances were around 60. They dropped a little over the summer months because of the many attractions in town, but they rocketed from September to over 70 per night, with monthly averages of 950. What was particularly pleasing was the number of young people who had initially visited the Cafe merely to buy EGO tickets but were now attending on other nights. This said a great deal for the welcoming attitude of regular users.

The same pattern continued into 2003 when the monthly average was 860 at the drop-in sessions, with around 70 per opening. When the Alternatives and the EGO discos were included, an amazing 14,225 contacts were made in 2003. These numbers did not include the two special discos for S1-S2 pupils, nor the main projects Keysteps, Turnaround and A4C. Nor did they include those who hoped to sneak in but were turned away because they had been drinking.

An all-time high was reached on Monday, 21 June 2004, when a hundred and seven young people visited at some time during the evening: sixty-five regular users were joined by forty-two Polish visitors. It was well into 2005, before numbers settled back to a level that was still high but more manageable. (See "Appendix 8: Attendances" for more details.)

The B-Boys' breakdancing culture was also attracting many admiring female users and a large number from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. A few users from the Blind School and Donaldson's School for the Deaf also integrated well. Young people were coming from as far away as Musselburgh, Penicuik, Bonnyrigg and South Queensferry. More of the Alternatives also were attending the drop-in, and over the summer there were visits from quite a few young people from overseas. For example, in April 2005, ten young people and three workers from Connecticut came to the drop-in after being told about 6VT by their hotel. They judged a dancing competition between boys and girls and enjoyed themselves so much that they left a donation of £25.

The average over the whole of 2004 was 870 per month, and over the whole year there were 10,435 contacts through the drop-in.

Lyndsey Ritchie, who served conscientiously as a user representative on the Management Committee over several years, said that the users were divided about the Breakers. Some thought the music was boring, others didn't. She said that there was no doubt that the B-Boys had brought a lot of new people to the Cafe, and regular users did not seem to resent the fact that the B-Boys were hogging the back room for much of the evening. About a fifth of the new people were from ethnic minorities. This diversity of cultural backgrounds was not causing any problems. In fact, her assessment was that it was pleasing to note how people of different cultures and backgrounds were mixing so well together. New users, in particular, were commenting on the complete absence of racism and on how non-judgemental the staff were.

During these years, society generally was concerned about the prevalence of under-age drinking. With numbers so high, the staff had therefore to be even more vigilant, and breathalysers and metal detectors began to be used. Staff also had to be on the lookout for users who had smoked cannabis before coming to the Cafe.

In 2004, a group of users at 6VT made a video called "Nae Messin'" which illustrated the consequences of binge drinking and excessive drinking generally. It generated a lot of interest among other users.

There were also workshops on Domestic Violence, Personal Presentation, Body Part Awareness, Sexual Health and Puberty. A sign of how well the various strands of 6VT were integrated was that some regular users of the drop-in joined the Turnaround participants on their visit to Polmont Young Offenders Institution in June 2004.

The users did not resent the measures taken to deal with those who tried to break the rules. They discussed the problem of those who arrived after drinking alcohol at a meeting early in 2003. The majority of them decided that, on the first occasion, anyone who turned up under the influence should get a warning and be sent home. On the second occurrence, they should be banned for a week. If they appeared during the ban, it should be extended.

The issue of whether persistent offenders should be permanently banned from the Cafe was discussed also at the Management Committee. Dot responded that, although staff frequently extended exclusions because they were not convinced that there would be any improvement in behaviour, they had never resorted to a permanent ban and they would be reluctant to take such a step. The excluder was always interviewed outwith Cafe times, and staying well away from the Cafe was usually a condition of being re-admitted. The Management Committee accepted this but said that threatening behaviour which deterred users from coming to the Cafe merited more drastic action. The re-allocation of the Cafe to the city centre police unit in Chambers Street in 2004 resulted in visits by officers who were more familiar with the workings of the Cafe and who knew that the staff did not call for police support unless there was a serious incident.

The problems were not confined to the Cafe itself, however. At this time, concern was expressed about the number of undesirables who were hanging around the Terrace. This was unfortunately keeping some users away, and occasionally staff had to escort users to the bus stop to ensure that they got away safely. The installation of CCTV was considered, but the police said that a fixed camera would be a waste of time and money. Instead, Charlie Everitt, the police representative on the Management Committee, arranged for plain-clothes operations officers to be around on drop-in nights because the local uniformed police could not guarantee to respond quickly enough. Staff also began to wear ID badges so that adult intruders could be easily identified, and the back room door was locked to stop access.

There were two serious incidents in the autumn of 2005. In August, one of the Café volunteers who had just been paid for working in the Summer Café had £60 stolen from her handbag. The police caught the thief, but the money was never recovered. At the end of September, two BNP supporters, aged about 30, threw the boogie box from the Terrace down into Victoria Street and then attacked one of the black users. Fiona Horne, who went to the user's aid, received two blows to the head and others had minor injuries. The police were called but their attitude was negative. There was a lot of distress among the users and staff, and strong disapproval of the police response. Better police support again followed an official complaint.

During these years, a succession of Danish students helped at the drop-in while on 6-month placements as part of their training — Ula and Christina (January- June 2001); Ann and Rikke (February to July 2002); Heidi and Line (February to July 2003); Maggie and Sophia (July 2003 to January 2004); Kim and Michael (August 2004 to January 2005).

There was also the continuing support of a succession of youth workers paid for by Edinburgh Presbytery, although there were sometimes lengthy gaps while new appointments were made. These workers were Linda Dunnett (who was on the original Steering Group), Lisa Clarke, John Sanderson, Clive Parnell, George Sim, Joe Brogan and Kirsty Gillies. Following that, because there was no one

suitable, there was a long gap till Alison Lamont was appointed in April 2005. The secondments were initially for one evening per week, but later increased to two.

In September 2004, Joe, who was partially-sighted, unfortunately had to resign because otherwise he would have lost his disability benefit. This was really unfortunate because, in his short time in the Cafe, he integrated well with the users and had started to teach signing to some of them and had sparked off general interest in the difficulties faced by blind people.

In April 2003, the Cafe received an appeal from a girl who had started a youth project in Budapest which she called Turnaround because she had heard of 6VT's success. The Management Committee agreed to adopt the project and, in June 2003, the girl began working in the Cafe to learn more about the Café's Turnaround programme.

Throughout this period, the Quakers, the Café's immediate neighbours, were very kind. They held functions most months and, when there was food left over, platters were always sent through to the Café, a gesture which was greatly appreciated by the young people.

User Attitudes

Hardly a night passed without some disgruntled users niggling away at other users or presenting challenging attitudes towards the staff. Mostly they backed down when they had had time to cool off following a quiet word from a staff member. Sometimes they completely lost the place and had to be sent packing because they refused to cool down; but it wasn't long before they returned with an apology, pleading to be allowed back into the fold. That only happened, however, if they met a member of staff at a time away from the drop-in for a one-to-one in which certain conditions were laid down. This pattern might happen over and over again, but in time most of them showed some improvement and realised the importance of showing one another respect. And quite a few came back years later to thank the staff for what they had done for them.

Throughout the Café's existence, groups of users went on numerous outside trips to conferences, adventure centres, theatres and so on. Almost without exception, the young people were complimented on their behaviour during these visits. On only one occasion in the first ten years did a user let the Café down — on the Tall Ships trip in July 2004. It was another six years before the Café was let down again, this time by three users who misbehaved during a performance in the Lyceum and had to be sent back to the Café. The rest redeemed the Café's reputation during the rest of the play.

Young people are often accused of being selfish and caring only for themselves. Café users often showed that that was too much of a generalisation. For example, in December 2002, users brought a lot of food parcels to their Christmas disco for distribution to young tenants. They continued to do this each Christmas, and in 2005 they also brought in second-hand clothes to be given out. They were very proud of the Café as a building and, in October 2003, users decorated the back wall. At the beginning of 2006, users helped to repair the front door, cupboards and chairs. In December 2004, they raised a lot of money for the Tsunami off Indonesia. One boy handed over a £5 note. After watching Children in Need towards the end of 2005, the users started raising money through a sponsored silence and raffle and by baking cakes, while one boy raised £52 for the Café by doing a sponsored cycle to Falkirk.

Finances

In March 2002, the Treasurer reported that the finances were healthier than they had ever been. They had increased mainly because of the profit from the EGO discos and rental paid by the Careers Service to hold its meetings in the Cafe.

In addition to the video camera and the new disco lights purchased in 2001, several other useful items of equipment were bought over this period using the profits from the EGO discos — DVDs, films and play-station games; metal detectors; a scooter; a drugs suitcase and beer goggles, which simulated the effects of drunkenness. Some of the more expensive purchases included a laptop, a projector for the computer project, a powerpoint program and a big screen. A new video camera was also purchased for £2,500 to make movies and not for general filming for which the old camera was still available.

The funds stood at £24,115 in June 2002, and the Cafe began looking at the possibility of buying a minibus, which would greatly enhance the activities of 6VT because it was often difficult to hire one at short notice. A new bus would cost around £22,000, while a second hand one would cost in the region of £12,000 and, in each case, there would be additional costs such as road licence, insurance and garaging. Leasing might be equally costly. Although the Cafe funds were very healthy, this was largely due to the income from the EGO discos and there was no guarantee that these would continue indefinitely. The Lottery might make a grant, but only if the bus had disabled access and was available to other charitable organisations. An approach was made to LAYC about possible joint ownership, and other organisations were consulted. In the end, a second-hand 7-seater people carrier was purchased for £3,000. It was put to good use over the next five years but had to be scrapped eventually because repairs were too expensive.

In October 2002, the Cafe had £29,915 in the bank, and the EGO discos were still bringing in about £1,000 per month. However, several major repairs required attention, including the replacement of the two front doors and the woodwork in the disabled toilet, which was rotten. A new door was also required to soundproof the inner room. A new sound system for the inner room, bought from the Ego profits, was greatly welcomed by the users.

At the AGM in December 2002, the Treasurer reported that the Income in the previous year had been £81,466 and the Expenditure £66,323. The revenue grant from the Council was £32,640 and £14,618 had been raised from various trusts, donations, room hires and buffets. The biggest item of expenditure was staff salaries, which amounted to £36,255, but there had been other major items of expenditure, including £1,500 for a new lighting system and £1,100 for a new dish washer. At the same time he warned that around £12,000 in rent would be lost when the Careers Service ceased to hold its meetings in the Café, while the new office in the Upper Bow would cost around £8,000 pa.

Dot pointed out that the allowance from Community Education for part-time staffing at the Cafe was still about £2,500 short of the wages actually paid to the staff because the sum given to the Cafe by the Council was based on the middle range of pay instead of the actual wage the staff received.

It was agreed in January 2003 to set aside £5,000 as a “Building Fund” to pay for the major repairs that would have to be made in the coming months. Dot also reminded the Committee that Cafe staff were not well paid and that was one of the reasons why she was encouraging involvement in projects such as streetwork to top up staff salaries and bring them to as near full-time equivalent as possible. The Treasurer studied all the financial commitments and concluded that the salary improvements (costing around £30,000) were just achievable.

In February 2003, some users enjoyed a singing workshop run by Polly so much that the Management Committee agreed to their request to employ her to run a 12-week intensive course for them, starting in September and again using EGO money. She charged £30 per hour, and the classes were held outwith normal drop-in times.

By June 2004, £48,000 was available in unallocated funds and it was possible to purchase new Play Station games, a new HiFi system and new CDs for the disco.

In the middle of 2004, there were two set-backs. Although the Council's contribution to staffing had been increased earlier in the year to meet the growing demands on the Cafe, it was later cut by 10%. The Cafe also had to find a new Treasurer because Jon Dye, who had taken over from Gerry Mulvenna in 1998, resigned. Gordon Banks, who had recently joined the Management Committee, agreed to become acting Treasurer till another could be found. The book-keeping side was still being handled by Margaret McLean, the Cafe Administrator. Gordon began checking on whether the Cafe's insurance cover was adequate and also looking again at the question of 6VT becoming a company limited by guarantee. He also kept asking if the Cafe was charging enough for its services, considering the value that staff expertise was adding. For example, it received a fee of only £100 for training a Moray House student for 12 weeks from 1 April 2003.

Recognition by outside bodies.

The work of 6VT continued to attract many visitors, but these visits were beginning to take up too much staff time. In April and May 2003 alone, for example, there were fifteen such visits, including the BBC, Young Scot, the police and the Reporter to the Children's Hearings. In June, therefore, it was agreed that visits should be restricted to one morning a month.

Outside bodies gave support in a number of ways:

In 2003, the Council gave a hundred free tickets for users to attend an MTV event in Princes Street Gardens.

In February 2003, the Traverse Theatre supplied free tickets for a play about the Holocaust. The users found it hard going, but they were praised for their behaviour when they could so easily have upset other people by their restless behaviour.

Also in February, Hibernian FC sent free tickets for users and five adults under their "Kicks for Kids" programme. Some parents agreed to accompany users to the games so that not too many staff were lost from the Cafe.

In April 2003, eight young people signed up for a drama workshop sponsored by Audience Business. They attended one show per month and then produced an evaluation of it. The aim was to arouse interest in the theatre. They were given £3 to buy sweets and £2 for their bus fares, and they enjoyed the experience, much to their surprise.

In June 2003, Youth Action Teams of special IT staff worked alongside Cafe workers to help young people access housing options.

There was a major coup on 17 June 2003 when the Cafe secured the services of the Scary Man who was from the USA and was speaking to youth groups across the country. His theme was to challenge attitudes towards such things as racism and bullying. Normally, he charged a fee of between £700

and £1,000, but he came to the Cafe free of charge. The visit went extremely well. He avoided talk of faith and God and concentrated on attitudes to people — love, hate, anger, prejudice. He was so impressed by 6VT that he returned a few days later, again without charging a fee. He also promised to return when he was next in Edinburgh. The profile of the Cafe was hugely raised as a result of this visit and the posting on his website. There was mention on the Gary Robertson Show on Radio Scotland. The film director Richard Johnson asked if he could do some filming of the work of 6VT, and he also agreed to present the awards to the graduates of Turnaround at the AGM

In March 2004, Dot and three Café users attended a conference in the Scottish Parliament where they questioned a panel of politicians and youth strategy experts. The young people were not impressed by the answers they got, and said so.

In April 2005, the Chief Constable of Lothian and Borders Police, like so many others before him, chose the Café as the most appropriate place from which to launch the new Youth Strategy Initiative.

10th Anniversary Celebrations

6VT marked its 10th Anniversary in three ways. On 30 July 2004, the users held a special birthday party in the Cafe. It was beautifully decorated and there was a sumptuous meal. At the end, helium balloons were released with messages tied to them. On 3 November, there was a fun event in the Police Club to which people associated with 6VT in the past and present were invited. This was arranged by Sergeant Charlie Bootland who had worked closely with Café youth workers in streetwork.

The Cafe also published a small but impressive glossy booklet called *“Leading the Way, 6VT Youth Cafe 1994-2004”* which it sent to all its supporters and stakeholders. This brochure contained short articles of various kinds which traced the history of the Cafe and the continuing success of the drop-in, as well as describing in some detail the Café’s other main projects such as Keysteps, Turnaround and Action4Change. There were also other shorter accounts of how 6VT cooperated with the police and other agencies, of the streetwork carried out with the police to look after young people and their communities, its summer activity programmes, and ways in which it obtained funding for all its activities, not forgetting the thousands of pounds raised by staff through the Festival Cafe.

The main theme running throughout the brochure was the emphasis the Cafe placed on looking after the welfare of the great range of young people it encountered and its desire to help them deal with their problems. It summarised how it achieved these aims in the following words which were spread across the front cover: *“dynamic, innovative, motivational, unique, successful, inclusive, inspirational, devoted, informative, respect.”*

The following story in the brochure typifies the sort of care 6VT had given, and continued to give, week in and week out to individual young people who faced terrible social problems: *“Rick was 21 years old when he took the opportunity to flee from a violent relationship. He walked to Edinburgh over a period of five days and nights. Exhausted, frightened, dirty and hungry he arrived at 6VT. His only possessions were the clothes he was wearing. Rick’s parents were very well-to-do but disowned him when he was seventeen after he revealed to them that he was gay. Rick was not streetwise, which added to his vulnerability. So, 6VT located him in a backpacker hostel. He quickly got a job and rented a flat. In 1997 his mother met up with him in Edinburgh and he stayed here for four years before moving abroad to work with an airline.”*

To sum up

This has been a very long chapter, but it was necessary to illustrate what a hive of activity and what a powerful influence on youth provision 6VT had suddenly but unobtrusively become. It was about to get even more involved.

Chapter 10: Accommodation Problems

It will be recalled that, as early as May 1991, Councillor Gorrie had suggested to the then Lothian Regional Council that Baden Powell House which was adjacent to the Cafe in Victoria Terrace should be refurbished to provide larger premises for the proposed youth cafe. He returned to that theme several times in later years after the Cafe was set up.

The limited accommodation at 6 Victoria Terrace had almost prevented the Cafe from undertaking the A4C project (see Chapter 9) as there were very few times in the day when the Cafe was not in use. The Careers Service was renting the Cafe for 2½ days per week, and that was bringing in £10,000 pa for the Cafe funds. The loss of even some of that money had to be balanced against what could be earned from a new project. There was also a shortage of areas for the staff to carry out their administrative duties and for one-to-one work with users.

In June 2002, the Cafe started looking at the possibility of renting a small office in the Upper Bow which had recently been vacated by a taxi firm. It was owned by the Boys' Brigade and they were keen that it should, if possible, be let to a charitable organisation. They instructed their lawyers in July 2002 to draw up a lease, but legal formalities dragged on because of poor communication between the two sets of solicitors and the officials of the Boys' Brigade. It was well into 2003 before the lawyers got their act together and a five-year lease was agreed, beginning on 1 June 2003. The rent was fixed at £4,000 pa, payable quarterly, and this cost was shared by the various Cafe projects.

A survey had revealed that the property was not in good condition: the floor might have to be replaced and it would have to be rewired as well as redecorated to make it habitable — all of which might cost up to £5,000. However, the staff were so frustrated by lack of space that, as soon as the verbal agreement was reached, the insurance paid and a licence to enter the building received, they decided to move in and do some of the work themselves. They now had a working area which could comfortably house eight staff at any one time, and the ten daytime staff had a base from which they could operate.

The lease was eventually signed at the start of 2004, but the paperwork delay still continued until April 2005, by which time, back rent amounted to £8,000. The lawyers' bills reached the Cafe in March 2006. The Boys' Brigade lawyers claimed £2,469, while the Cafe's lawyers charged only £927 for doing basically the same job. Fortunately, money had been set aside for these sudden demands.

The staff were delighted with their new premises, but there was still the problem of lack of space in the Cafe itself. So, the Management Committee began again to lobby Councillors on the possibility of acquiring Baden Powell House. Hopes were raised when Councillor Anderson, Leader of the Council, visited the drop-in and was most impressed. The users also kept up the pressure by emphasising the achievements of the Cafe to Councillor Aitken, Chair of the Education Committee, when he met them in the Cafe in September 2002, following which on 11 September Cllr Aitken had written to the Cafe saying he was *"committed to trying to make this work."* A detailed written case was also sent to Councillors Anderson and Aitken in which Dot set out her vision for the use of Baden Powell House and its importance for the future development of the Cafe's activities. At this time, there were so many agencies handling youth "problems" that young people were finding it difficult to access them and get the support they needed. What was required was a one-stop-shop where all this support could be brought together under one roof.

On 17 October 2002, the CEC Executive had before it a report dealing with the Rationalisation of Office Accommodation which summarised the vision of 6VT for the use of Baden Powell House and went on to state that it would take £0.5m to refurbish it. Neither the Cafe nor the Council had that sort of money, nor would it represent best value. Later in the month, information reached the Cafe that a valuation of £320,000 had been put on the property and that the National Library was interested in buying it and

the adjacent block of offices on George IV Bridge. And that is exactly what happened. The offering price was too good to reject.

To compensate for this disappointment, the Council offered the Cafe larger premises in South Bridge if it was willing to relocate. In the end, it was agreed that South Bridge was not the best of places in which to locate a youth cafe. One of the attractions of 6VT was the openness of the Terrace on to which users could spill from the Cafe, and this would not be possible on a busy thoroughfare. There were also concerns about young people having to mix with people hanging around pubs and fast food outlets. The users agreed with these arguments and said they would be unhappy about moving from the neutral venue in Victoria Terrace into an area which they felt was far from neutral. They would also lose the name "6VT" which meant a lot to them, and they would have to start anew to build up an attitude of ownership.

In November 2002, the Council came forward with a suggestion which appeared really promising. The Registration Office, which was located at No. 2 India Buildings in Victoria Street would be vacated when the Registration Office moved to the old Midlothian Building on George IV Bridge.

At first sight, it looked ideal. It was straight across from 6VT, and it had a lot of office space as well as rooms in which seminars and youth functions could be held. In fact, it could be very suitable for the multi-agency one-stop shop which Dot visualised to deal with the many needs of young people.

There were difficulties, however. The Council was probably looking for a purchase price of around £240,000, and in its present state much of the building would not meet fire and health & safety regulations and the necessary provision for disabled people.

Using a previous EYSIP grant which had not been used, 6VT secured the services of an architect called Richard Atkins, and he produced interesting detailed drawings which would meet the needs of the proposed new centre for youth. However, the alterations might cost as much as £750,000. There would also be annual running costs of between £80,000 and £100,000, although some of this could probably have been met by renting out parts of the building to other agencies which were expressing strong interest. The Council made professional advice available to the Cafe to help it assess the viability of taking on such a commitment in addition to continuing the drop-in work at 6VT.

A business plan was prepared, and informal soundings began of potential partners such as Community Education, Lothian Association of Youth Clubs (LAYC), Lothian Health and the Housing Department. Enquiries were also made about possible sources of grant for the purchase of the building and the necessary alterations. This was not necessarily an impossible task since, at that time, there was a considerable amount of money available for this sort of project. However, the Council wanted an answer by 10 April, which was its last meeting before the Council elections in May. The Management Committee resisted this pressure on the grounds that it was unreasonable for the Cafe to make such a momentous decision so quickly. If the Authority really thought that the idea was worth pursuing, it should agree to continue the matter until a considered decision could be reached. The Authority should realise that, if the proposal reached maturity, it would be at the cutting edge of youth work developments in Scotland, if not in the whole of the UK.

Arrangements were made for the Committee and the users to see the property for themselves. A special meeting of the Management Committee was convened to discuss only this matter, and the users discussed it at a residential weekend. It was made clear to the Authority that the Cafe would be interested only if the project was used to provide extra facilities for young people. It would not be interested if other departments wanted it simply for extra office space.

When it met in March 2003, the CEC Executive agreed to give the Cafe the option of buying 2 India Buildings which was valued at £220,000, although it thought that it might get £240,000 from another

buyer. It also accepted that it was unrealistic to expect the Cafe to prepare a business plan by 30 April, and the deadline was extended to 30 June. Even that might prove unrealistic, but the new date did give the project more time to identify potential partners and possible sources of funding.

At the same time, however, the Property Services Department of the Council was keen to sell the property as soon as possible and for as high a price as possible to raise enough money for the Council to build its new headquarters at Waverley Court. The architect looking at the viability of India Buildings had recently received an email to the effect that an unsolicited and unconditional offer of £325,000 had been received and, as the Council was required to sell the property at market value, the consortium would have to increase its offer. There was no way that the Cafe could match that. This unsolicited offer was played down later in a letter from Councillor Aitken (dated 29 April 2003) in which he stated: *"I know that there have been stories around about an unsolicited bid but we have made it very clear that best value is not simply a financial matter and that the consortium of LAYC and 6VT provides excellent value too."*

By April 2003, the architect had carried out a thorough survey of the property and had produced imaginative plans which would allow all three floors to be used, partly as office space and partly for various youth activities, seminars and services. He now estimated that the cost of the refurbishment would be in the region of £524,000 (plus £91,700 VAT), but it was possible that the project might qualify for VAT zero rating on some of the work.

He had also prepared an Outline Business Plan, a Fund-Raising Strategy paper, and a Profit and Loss paper based on 85% occupancy. The papers were assessed by an independent consultant (Andrew Coutts of Standard Life), again at no expense to the Cafe. He commented that *"the documentation was excellent and the plans came over as well researched and well thought out."* However, he was not impressed by the suggested sources of funding, and suggested that there were other Trusts which could produce much larger sums. For example, it was noted that the European Youth Initiative Fund, amounting to around £400 million, was vastly underspent. Coutts was also nervous about the projected occupancy rates when there had been, as yet, no commitment from other agencies. He suggested that the Council should second someone as Project Development Manager to take these matters forward.

On 12 June 2003, it was agreed to set up a steering group consisting of Community Education, LAYC and 6VT, with 6VT taking the lead. Contact would also be made with other potential stakeholders, such as Lothian Health. At a later seminar on 24 September, attended by several agencies, there was general enthusiasm for the proposal. As one delegate put it, *"This proposal pressed all the right buttons."*

There was no doubt also that the politicians and the Director of Education were keen for the One-stop shop to go ahead and so put youth work and support on the map in Edinburgh, and they also accepted that 6VT was the ideal body to take the lead, since they accepted what 6VT said in its 2003 Annual Report about its achievements:

"6VT has gained a positive and respected reputation among young people as a place where they can access a range of services under one roof. Delivering practical, emotional and social support are all part of our daily youth work. Based on our experience at 6VT, it is our intention to drive the development of an Edinburgh Youth Centre that is a focal point for coordinated, integrated and holistic services for young people. People see this as a genuine opportunity for Edinburgh to create a flagship project where departmental and government concepts and strategies become operational. It is envisaged that 6VT will be a promoter and 'feeder' to the Centre."

As an interim measure, it was suggested that 6VT, preferably in collaboration with LAYC, should take the initiative in calling appropriate agencies together, but the Management Committee responded that neither 6VT nor LAYC had the resources to set up the consortium and undertake the heavy load of

approaching trusts for funding. The Education Department agreed to second someone to undertake this work.

Throughout these negotiations, the Management Committee made it clear to the Council that its expression of interest in India Buildings in no way affected the continued existence of the Cafe at 6 Victoria Terrace and, whatever happened regarding India Buildings, 6VT would continue its present activities as a drop-in cafe. This was agreed and recorded in the CEC Executive minutes of 14 November 2002.

Although it was becoming clear that the whole project was spiralling beyond the reaches of the Cafe, it told the Authority that it was willing to continue negotiations in the hope that the vision of a Single Children's Service might materialise, but only on certain conditions, and neither 6VT nor LAYC was willing to jeopardise the future of their organisations to achieve this.

At the Management Committee meeting in August 2003, the Chairman outlined the following steps that had to be taken if the project was to go ahead:

1. A steering group should be formed, involving the Cafe, LAYC, Community Education and other partners, if possible.
2. The Cafe should try to identify private sector partners, and the chairman said he had identified a firm of solicitors based in Glasgow which specialised in setting up and supporting charitable organisations. Help from private sector property experts would also be needed as India Buildings was a heritage site.

A brief was prepared, and Community Education gave £8,000 to pay for a consultant (David Simmers from Aberdeen) to prepare a report and business plan on the feasibility of initiating the one-stop project for young people. Initially, he was set a deadline of mid-October for completing the task so that it could go on the November agenda of the CEC Executive but, because of illness and the short timescale available to him, a further extension was agreed for the final decision by the Executive.

Simmer's report was available in the first week of November 2003. He made twenty-eight specific recommendations. Based on meetings he had had with potential partners, he concluded that the project was viable, that it was a good fit with the policies of the Scottish Executive and City of Edinburgh Council, and that there should be no difficulty in finding grant support. There were clear advantages for the Council and the project if the property was leased at peppercorn rent rather than sold to the Consortium. He suggested a management structure that involved councillors, 6VT, LAYC, and other agencies, with a guaranteed place for 6VT (as the lead agency) for five years.

The Property Services Department was still pressing for an early decision, and the Director of Education wanted still more information from the Cafe. The major question appeared to be whether the Consortium should purchase the building or have it leased to them by the Council at a peppercorn rent.

In January 2004, it was agreed to approach Declan Jones of the Social Enterprise Institute at Heriot Watt University to draw together the main strands of the Simmers Report, show how the property would be used, and produce updated costings which would include the provision of a music centre. His report was sent to the Director of Education on 16 February.

On 18 February, the Management Committee was told that the Director of Education wanted still more information because the Executive wanted yet another paper describing how the 3-storey building would be used and how the Consortium would be formed. Three reports to that effect had already been submitted and it was difficult to see how much more could be done. 6VT felt it was in a Catch 22 situation. It was impossible to get a firm commitment from potential partners until the Executive made

a firm statement of support, even in principle, for the project, gave its response to the recommendation that 2 India Buildings be leased rather than sold to the Consortium, and agreed to allow time following that for the Consortium to produce more detailed plans.

Armed with advice from Adkins, Coutts, Simmers and Jones, the Management Committee had determined the terms on which it would be willing to continue pursuing the India Buildings Project:

- (a) The Consortium would establish a company limited by guarantee with a Board which would operate separately from 6VT and the other partners.
- (b) The building would be leased at a peppercorn rent rather than sold to the company, so that its fund raising would be limited to approximately £750,000 for the refurbishment of the property.
- (c) There would be a 20-year lease.
- (d) The newly-formed company would have two years in which to secure the necessary funding and decide whether or not to proceed with the project.
- (e) The first step would be the appointment of a project coordinator whose task it would be to deal with legal and fund-raising issues.

There was a further set-back in April 2004 when it was reported that Community Education was not able to provide service support at that moment, although it would return to the Consortium when the project was up and running. There was also an indication that LAYC might be losing interest in the project.

On 2 June, there was nothing further to report except that LAYC confirmed that it was still committed to the project provided it had no adverse effect on the normal work of LAYC, and this remained the position of 6VT as well.

The whole project was eventually killed off on 4 August when the Management Committee was told that a report had gone to the CEC Executive recommending that the India Buildings project should not go ahead in its present form. India Buildings was not ideal for the concept of a Youth Centre, and there was concern that a project of this magnitude could impact adversely on the work of 6VT. However, it was claimed that the idea was not dead. It would be taken forward by the Youth Services Team, and a sum of around £10,000 had been allocated to the setting up of a quality city centre youth provision.

This was a big disappointment to the Management Committee after all the energy and effort that had gone into promoting the idea. There was a distinct feeling that the Authority was trying to let the Management Committee down gently instead of just simply terminating the discussions. It therefore responded by stating that, if the authority was serious about improving youth provision in Edinburgh, the idea had to be pursued actively, otherwise the new centre would become little more than office space.

In January 2005, Dot received a phone call from someone (not the leader) in the Youth Services Team suggesting that the time was now ripe for 6VT to take the lead in progressing the project. Dot replied that she did not think that 6VT would be willing to do this, since the project had departed so much from the original proposal. The Management Committee homologated Dot's response, but said that it would be willing to give advice.

There is still no Youth Centre in Edinburgh. No 2 India Buildings was eventually sold to a developer but it has not been refurbished, although it is used as a venue during the Festival.

The same dusty fate befell “Dialogue Youth”, a major initiative published by the Scottish Executive in February 2003, in which the thirty-two local authorities in Scotland were urged to promote cross-departmental and joint agency approaches to the development and delivery of services to young people.

Chapter 11: Company Limited by Guarantee

The collapse of the India Buildings initiative came almost as a relief because the proposals and negotiations had become so complicated. However, it did not restrict 6VT's ambitions to help young people, and particularly those who were disadvantaged or at risk.

The India Buildings negotiations and the rapidly expanding financial liabilities, which it would face if things went wrong, forced the Management Committee to look again at the issue of the status of the Cafe and, in September 2004, it was agreed that consideration should be given to its becoming a Company Limited by Guarantee. Gordon Banks undertook the investigation and complicated negotiations which this involved, and he approached Oswalds, a long-established local firm which specialised in helping businesses to comply with Companies House requirements.

On 2 March 2005, Gordon placed before the Committee a draft Memorandum which had been prepared by Oswalds. It was agreed that 6 Victoria Terrace should be used as the registered office address. The cost of becoming a Company Limited by Guarantee would be £1,000 in the first year, and £350 (plus VAT) annually thereafter.

Edinburgh City Youth Cafe was incorporated on 18 August 2005 as a Company Limited by Guarantee (Company number 289110). There was no share capital, and creditors could charge only £1 against each member's personal account if the Cafe became insolvent. There were three Directors — Mac Wilkinson (Chairman), Gordon Banks and Henry Philip — who also acted as Trustees. Oswalds held the company seal and acted as Company Secretary until 23 October 2009, when the seal was handed over to Margaret McLean, who took over as Company Secretary. In the first year, also, two sets of accounts had to be produced, the first running from 1 April to 31 August and the second starting on 1st September. Thereafter, the Cafe was given permission to revert to a financial year ending on 31 March, which was the date most funding bodies preferred.

The Management Committee was now referred to as the Board which, in addition to the three Directors, included other members who had expressed interest in promoting the aims of the Cafe and had been approved by the Directors. No hard and fast decision was made about the relationship between the Directors and the other members. Clearly, there were some issues which the Directors had to handle on their own, but the exact nature of these would emerge as the Board came to grips with its new status. There was complete agreement on two points: the committee structure should not be over-elaborate and it was vital that a means should be devised whereby the users would be involved in the decision making, which was one of the founding principles of the Cafe.

In the first half of 2003-04, user attendance at the Management Committee had been really good, but in the second half it had dropped to virtually zero. Changing the time of the meetings made no difference. In January 2006, it was decided to set up a Youth Forum which would consist of twelve young people elected annually by the Cafe users. Their responsibilities would include the planning of events, youth recruitment, youth issues, facilitating users groups, welcoming new users and encouraging participation in the activities of the Cafe. They would also elect two of their number aged over 18 to represent them on the Board. [Only people over 18 could have a vote on the Board.] In addition, the Forum was entitled to send a delegation to the Board on any issue on which they had strong feelings. To ensure good liaison between the Forum and the Board, it was desirable that a member of the Board should attend the meetings of the Forum.

This initiative was not a complete success. The user places on the Board were not filled, since the young people were not interested in attending Board meetings. However, it was made clear to them that, although they did not attend regularly, their representatives could attend the Board meetings, as and when they wished. They were expected to report Board business to the Youth Forum. Users meetings

also continued informally to discuss with the Cafe staff day-to-day issues that arose and to make suggestions for the Drop-in programme.

The first meeting of the reconstituted Board took place on 24 January 2006.

Chapter 12: Dealing with Young People at Risk (2004-10)

Under the Crime and Disorder 1998 Act, antisocial behaviour orders (ASBOs) could be imposed on people over 16. In 2004, the Scottish Parliament passed the Antisocial Behaviour (Scotland) Act under which ASBOs could be imposed on under-16s and Movement Restriction Conditions (MRC) could be placed on a young person as part of a supervision requirement imposed by a Children's Hearing if the child met certain criteria. Under the MRCs, the young person could be required to wear an electronic tag instead of being sent to a secure unit. However, recognising that MRCs on their own would be unlikely to change the behaviour and social circumstances of the young person, the Act also laid down that MRCs had to be accompanied by meaningful intensive support — both social and educational.

The City of Edinburgh was one of seven local authorities asked to pilot an Intensive Support and Monitoring Service (ISMS), before the system was rolled out nationally in 2007. On 19 January 2005, the Management Committee learned that 6VT was to be part of the Edinburgh scheme. There were three key elements in the ISM Service which 6VT offered:

- (a) Family Liaison, which provided support and guidance to the parents of the young people and which was especially helpful for parents who were unwilling to work with traditional services.
- (b) Step Down, which provided individual support each year to 30 young people who were coming off tagging orders. There was also a small group programme once per week for six weeks, which encouraged the clients to make use of relevant youth services such as the drop-in facility at the Cafe.
- (c) Safe Zone, which promoted 6VT as a safe zone for any young person who breached the tagging order. Staff had to liaise with appropriate bodies to try to get the young person back on course.

The security firm Reliance controlled the physical tagging. The Cafe was told that the total contract would amount to £92,218 in the first year, and rise to £93,982 in the third year. There was a meeting early in February 2005 to discuss service delivery, after which a service agreement with specific targets was drawn up. The Management Committee also decided that, since it was hoped that some of the clients would make use of the drop-in facility at the Cafe, there would be an induction course for all Cafe staff to help them work with this new type of user.

On 2 March 2005, Dot reported that she had recently attended a meeting from which a very confused picture had emerged. The ISMS scheme would start in April 2005, and all structures had to be in place by then, even though there would almost certainly be no young people who had been tagged. (It was, in fact, 2007 before the first MRC was handed out.) The Reporters to the Children's Hearings hadn't even had their training as yet. The clear message from the meeting, however, was that the Cafe had to appoint staff immediately. If it didn't, the funds would not be forthcoming. Funding was guaranteed until March 2006 but, if "customers" were not coming through after that, the funding would be cut. It was a highly unsatisfactory situation for most employers, but less so for the Cafe since staff could be used on other 6VT activities.

It was agreed that the Cafe should start recruiting as soon as the confirmation letter was received from the City of Edinburgh Council, which was acting as the main agency. Two new full-time project staff would be appointed, and existing Cafe staff would provide an additional five hours. The posts would be advertised through the network of Youth Justice workers and, as usual, the interviewing panel would include a Cafe user. Although unhappy at the prospect of appointing staff when there were no clients who had been tagged, the Management Committee salved its conscience with the thought that Turnaround type of material could be used to support parents of young people who were involved with the Youth Justice Services.

The ISMS project started on 1 April 2005 but, although the law said that there should be provision for tagging, there would obviously be no young clients on that date. Arrangements, therefore, were still confusing. The Cafe's position was not helped when a junior official confused two costed proposals from the Cafe, and the local authority, which was the main contractor acting on behalf of the Scottish Executive, submitted a £52,000 proposal instead of the proper £92,000 one. The scope of the Cafe's project had therefore to be reduced. However, it still undertook to provide a parental support monitoring service for the families of twelve tagged youngsters during the first year, and to act as a safe zone for youngsters who breached their tagging orders. On being asked what the Cafe would do in the event of, say, a youngster arriving late at night, Dot replied that INCLUDEM (a dedicated crisis and support service) had a 24-hour standby service to deal with such a situation.

The £52,000 contract was for one year (paid quarterly retrospectively) and that would pay for one full-time and one part-time worker. It would not stop at the end of the first year but would be reviewed at the end of year 2. Parenting orders were part of the same exercise, and it was likely that more money would be forthcoming as the scheme was extended. Despite this uncertain and unsatisfactory situation, the Management Committee agreed that it wanted to be involved in what was obviously going to become a huge enterprise.

As far as the young people were concerned, "Intensive Support Monitoring Service" was too much of a mouthful, so they asked if they could call it NiteZone, signifying that 6VT provided the evening element of the programme.

In May 2005, The Chief Constable used the Café to launch the new Youth Strategy Initiative, but by June, no young person had been referred through ISMS, although the Turnaround parental support scheme was going ahead and there were some young people who had been referred by Housing Support. 6VT had not received any money for the simple reason that the Council had not received any money from the Scottish Executive. The cost to the Cafe already amounted to around £8,000 (i.e. about £2,000 per month). It was agreed that this state of affairs could not be allowed to go on for much longer.

On 7 September 2005, the Management Committee noted that, although the Cafe had employed a full-time worker from April to September on the instructions of the Council, not a single penny had been received. When several phone calls had failed to improve things, it was agreed to contact senior Council officials and, if that failed to resolve the matter, to take the matter to the elected councillors.

The Council, however, was also in a difficult position. The failure of the Scottish Executive to provide a clear policy on what was to happen about tagging came on top of the problems created by the major restructuring that the Council was undertaking to meet growing demands on its services at a time when money was becoming tight.

The grant money eventually came through to the Council on 27 October, but none of that had reached the Cafe by the Management meeting on 9 November. In order to pay the ISMS staff, money had to be taken from the Turnaround account. It was reckoned that the Council now owed the Cafe around £25,000 for the ISMS, and the Turnaround account was in deficit through having to fund part of this shortfall. The Cafe was still solvent, but it was made clear to the Council that 6VT was not willing to subsidise the ISM Service for much longer. The Council representative on the Management Committee said that, following a restructuring of Council services, the Education, Children and Families Department now dealt with all services for young people, and he was confident that the grant would soon be paid.

It was still not clear what was to happen about tagging.

The cheque for the overdue money eventually came through late in December, seven months after it was due; and it was for £56,000. The Management Committee had learned that the Council had now received money from the Scottish Executive to cover its ISMS commitments up to 2007. However, the

Cafe had not been told what would happen to its programme beyond March 2006. The future of the ISMS would affect two members of staff. Likewise, although the Council had guaranteed money for Turnaround up to the end of March 2006, the two members of staff running it had not been told whether or not their contracts would be extended beyond that date. In all, four members of staff and 60 vulnerable young people were affected.

The ISMS and Turnaround were funded through the Council as separate programmes, but their work was linked in practice through the way staff were employed. The contracts with the Council did not stipulate named members of staff, only the number of hours that Cafe staff would devote to each programme. Since it was Cafe policy to give all staff as wide a range of experience as possible, the staff for the ISMS and Turnaround often worked in both programmes.

By March 2006, ISMS management appointments within the Council were still being made and, until they were complete, there could be no definite decision about the future involvement of 6VT in the ISMS. However, its funding was extended to June. Since the whole idea was a new one, 6VT concentrated its parental support initially on the parents of Turnaround participants. The parents could get help and advice either over the phone or by visiting the Cafe for a face-to-face meeting with staff. At the end of the year, a Parents Pamper Night was held to give them some time-out and allow them to get rid of some of the stress that the festive season always brings. The Council also agreed to continue the funding of Turnaround.

In April, a new manager was appointed to the ISMS project, and things began to move forward slowly. Prior to this, no one seemed to have been managing the tagging scheme. It was noted that 50% of the budget was being spent on eight persistent offenders. Since 6VT was the only sub-contractor that was doing youth work, the Head of Youth Justice saw a bigger role for it and gave it a contract to do group work aimed at prevention. A first assessment of 6VT's work on ISMS took place on 27 September 2006.

At its meeting on 5 October 2006, the Management Committee (which was now called the Board, following its reconstitution as a Company Limited by Guarantee) had a lengthy discussion about the merits of the ISMS and the future role of the Cafe in projects such as this. It was generally agreed that the original concept had been badly thought out and badly handled. The Scottish Executive had set up the scheme without realising what public expectations were, and a major failing continued to be that the young person had to agree to be tagged, otherwise his/her human rights would be contravened.

However, Dot persuaded the Board that the support now planned would be beneficial for those who received it, even though the public expectation was still not in line with what would actually happen. The ISMS would not deal with the small groups of troublemakers who made life a misery for communities, and the public still did not accept that giving intensive support to young people at risk was just as important as working with young offenders already in the system. The long-term results of keeping young people in secure accommodation were not good. Dot maintained that the City was not doing enough early intervention work. She said that it was disgraceful that there was so little support for young people at risk, and this was evidenced by the worrying cases which the Cafe was dealing with through the drop-in on a regular basis. It was difficult to quantify the effect of early intervention. How could you prove how many young people would have become offenders if they had not received the early support which the 6VT was providing? Much more needed to be done for the younger siblings of youngsters who were already offending. Bringing them into new peer groups away from their existing environment was important, as was exposing them to more positive influences.

Dot was given authority to continue the parental support aspect of the 6VT's ISMS work and also to participate in a new consortium to work on a new pilot. But this was such an important matter for the future of the Cafe, not least regarding the effect it would have on staffing, that it was agreed to call a special meeting to discuss the issues involved.

By October, a consortium had been established, consisting of Children and Families, INCLUDEM, Hype Project Edinburgh and 6VT. This Consortium technically provided a 24 hour service seven days a week fifty two weeks in the year. It did not close for holidays. The administration was carried out at Hill Street, which was the headquarters of Youth Justice.

In January 2007, the old Castlebrae School in the Craigmillar Business Park became the base for the young people and was re-named the Brae Social and Educational Centre. The young people attending the Brae were all at risk and were welfare cases rather than offenders. Most of the work with the young people was carried out by a multi-agency team at the Brae at this stage, but some took place at the Café. After working during the day at the Brae, the young people came along to the Cafe for a meal, before getting down to evening activities.

Gill Burnside, the worker in charge of Turnaround, was seconded from the Cafe to liaise with the Brae, an office junior was appointed to do the administrative work, and Lorraine Goodwin took over the Turnaround post. Dot was also heavily involved at operational and strategic level. 6VT's role in the ISMS so far had been to provide parental support. That continued, but the work was extended to include educational workshops for young people plus a 6-week assessment that had to take place before a young person could be tagged. The criteria for this assessment included such things as: Was the young person suitable for tagging? Was he/she likely to benefit from it? Did he/she agree to be tagged? Did the parents agree? The system was not limited to offenders, but included anyone who presented a risk to him/herself or others. 6VT was now an integral part of the service, and funding (£56,000) was in place until March 2007, after which there was a three-month review to July.

By March 2007, involvement in the ISMS was really taking off, and it was clear that it could lead to even greater involvement if the scheme was continued beyond 2008. It was disappointing to note, however, that the aims of the politicians seemed to be limited to counting the number of young people who were tagged. They did not seem to realise the preventive value of the scheme. 6VT was finding that parents were engaging with them much more. However, Gill and Dot were having to invest much more time than anticipated.

Meanwhile, Turnaround was still proving to be very successful, with attendances of almost 100% for course meetings and the one-to-one sessions. The police were reporting that few of the participants were re-offending, and more referrals were now being made by Youth Justice. The present grant for Turnaround was £36,000, which was only fractionally more than it had been when it was started in 2001, and it did not cover such things as management support, office space and telephone calls. The Council indicated that it planned to increase the grant to £62,000 to cover the real cost of the services that were being provided. However, following the change of Administration after the Council elections in May 2007, the funding was reduced and, although this reduced funding was guaranteed up to March 2008, the Board decided that it had no alternative but to cut back on the amount of one-to-one work carried out under Turnaround.

On 3 July 2007, the Board learned that a dispute had arisen between officials of the Scottish Executive and Edinburgh City Council over the aims and conduct of the scheme, and this had resulted in no money coming from the Executive. Edinburgh was threatening to take the Executive to court, but it continued to meet its contractual obligations to the Cafe. People seemed happy with the programme at the Brae, and a few of the young people were now attending the Café's drop-in facility. At the end of the year, the Education, Children and Families Committee gave 6VT an Achievement Award for Partnership Working, and this was endorsed by Standard Life.

At the Board meeting on 6 March 2008, Charlie Everitt presented a paper in which he had analysed re-offending rates in the twelve months after participants ended Turnaround courses. There were seventeen young people in the sample, and the data referred to charges "incurred by the police", i.e. the young persons were charged by the police and a report was sent to the Reporter to the Children's Hearings. This was a more rigorous test of the effectiveness of the courses than the re-offending data

supplied by SCRA (the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration) or the Youth Justice Services, since it considered only police charges that were actually progressed to Hearings.

The results of the survey were most impressive. Prior to the courses, there were 72 police reports on the 17 participants. In the period covered, six of the sample (35%) had committed no offences at all, three (17%) had offended only once, and all except four had offended fewer than four times — a complete transformation for 74% of the participants. At the other end of the scale, only three had offended more than five times.

At the meeting on 6 March 2008, the Board was faced with a big decision on its involvement with young offenders. The Children and Families Department, which was responsible for the ISMS programme, already knew its funding for 2008-09, but the Cafe had received no indication about the funding it would receive for the ISMS or Turnaround. There had been hints that the Council were so impressed by 6VT's ISMS work that its involvement could be extended, but there was nothing definite.

The Board was, therefore, considering whether to stick with the ISM Service or to submit an application to the new Inspiring Scotland Fund which was set up to deal with young people who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETS) — now renamed More Choices More Chances because the term NEETS was considered to be demeaning. 6VT had already passed the first Interview stage, and the deadline for the actual application was 31 March 2008. If the application was successful, a pot of £10 million would be available over the next nine years. However, the Cafe would have to choose between staying with the ISMS or going after the new fund. It couldn't do both without affecting its core drop-in activities. Extra staff could probably be found, but the present accommodation could not cope with both projects. The Council might make part of Riddle's Court available, but the Patrick Geddes Society was trying to raise £1 million to purchase it in order to create a base for a Historic Society.

The Board decided that the ISMS programme was the more likely to provide a secure future. As a first step, the Council extended 6VT's ISMS contract to the end of June 2008 and promised to make an announcement then about the future of the ISM Service.

Gill Burnside's ISMS contract finished at the end of March 2008, and she returned to the Cafe on a full-time basis to work on Turnaround, although she was still involved in some ISMS work. Her place at the Brae was taken by Josh Davidson, in line with the Cafe policy of extending the experience of as many staff members as possible.

For three months in 2007, 6VT had worked with ISMS partners to design and pilot a new service under which groups of young people were brought together in the Cafe on Tuesday evenings to discuss their behaviour and family relationships and take part in meaningful group activities. The aim was to get the participants to develop new attitudes towards their situations, in the hope that this would reduce the risk of their having to go into care.

As usual, it took some time for the success of this pilot to emerge as concrete proposals but, in August 2008, CEC's Children and Families Department commissioned 6VT to deliver an intensive evening and weekend service for young people who were referred through the Council's Integrated Community Support Service (ICSS). The aim of the ICSS was to help young people aged 11-17, who were at risk of harm to themselves or others, to remain at home instead of going into the care system. It would also assist the transition of those in care back into the community.

The change from ISMS to ICSS was mainly due to the success of the Consortium's pilot, but it was also facilitated by the decision of the Scottish Executive to remove the ring-fencing, which had originally restricted the money to tagging, and open it up to all cases of young people at risk.

It was an encouraging development that, by the middle of 2008, the ISMS young people were gradually becoming involved in the drop-in in addition to their ISMS programme. But it was recognised that helping the young people in isolation from their families was only a partial solution. In December 2008, their families were also invited to the Christmas Party, a further indication of 6VT's policy of involving the whole family.

The Board had been faced with another financial problem in June 2008 when the Council adopted a new policy of making all payments three months in arrears. The Cafe did not have enough funds to support the new proposed NiteZone scheme and its existing commitments over such a long period, and it was argued that it was morally indefensible for the Council to retain money it had already received from the Scottish Government for such a lengthy period before passing it to the Cafe. As a compromise, the Council agreed to make payments only four weeks in arrears rather than three months, and there would be a transition period from July to October to ease in the change.

6VT's role changed enormously under the ICSS. It became a 24 hour/seven days per week/fifty-two weeks per year provider for the Children and Families Department, contributing as a partner agency in the implementation and development of the Edinburgh ICSS programme at both operational and strategic levels. NiteZone was one of a range of intensive support services for children and young people who were presenting a significant risk of harm to themselves or others. 6VT was contracted to help up to sixty young people per year and to deal with up to twenty young people at any one time, with a maximum of 480 hours per week face-to-face work. The service was provided on a one-to-one and group basis and, where required, 6VT had to provide up to 72 hours face-to-face crisis support, including assisting in the provision of respite and time-out on a planned or crisis basis. For example, staff had to remain with young people beyond 10 pm until alternative supports were in place. The provision of regular residential personal development programmes was also a component of the service, and support was given also to families and carers. Staff were involved in assessing the needs and risk of each individual and had to attend case meetings and write up reports on these.

Referrals to NiteZone came through various routes, including the Children's Hearings System, the Multi-agency Screening and Resource Group, and managers of other Children and Families services. NiteZone operated seamlessly alongside existing 6VT services and its key partners, primarily the Children and Families Department.

The participants came straight from school or the Brae at 4 pm and were given their tea before getting down to planned activities until 10 pm (10.30 pm on Fridays). On Tuesday and Thursday evenings, the group undertook a mix of social and educational activities relevant to their lives, and they were encouraged to join the drop-in cafe on the other evenings. Those who were at higher risk or had a history of absconding were taken home at 10 pm either in staff cars or by taxi. Phone calls were made to the parents in the morning and at the end of the day. The emphasis throughout was on health and welfare and on persuading the young people to become involved and work together. Where appropriate, efforts were made to get them to do some homework for school. In the summer of 2008, there was a very successful five-week holiday club for ICSS young people from 10 am to 10 pm each day.

The Family Cafe was not in the original contract, but 6VT had to be available to deliver some sort of service seven days a week, if required, and in October 2008 Dot chose to try the Family Cafe as one of those days. 6VT employed two members of staff on Saturday afternoons from 1 pm to 5 pm, when the parents and siblings were encouraged to attend and have a meal together, as well as taking part in various activities, including family games. To begin with, the Cafe paid their fares, but this had to be stopped because of the drain on 6VT's funds. At that point, the number of those attending dropped considerably. The numbers picked up again three years later when Lothian Buses gave 6VT a generous supply of free bus vouchers to support this sort of work.

To cope with the increased work-load, six full-time staff and five part-time were appointed, and again a user was one of the interviewing panel. The post of Coordinator of NiteZone was difficult to fill initially because the job description had been geared towards someone with social work qualifications and experience. When it was re-advertised and opened up to those with experience in community education, there was a bigger field to choose from and Derek Scally was appointed.

An important aspect of the work of NiteZone was that the staff did not keep themselves to themselves. NiteZone staff worked alongside 6VT's current team of staff and services, so that all staff were involved in all the work of 6VT. Existing staff were given a new one-year contract which gave them a salary increase. They were warned, however, that they would revert to their existing salaries if the NiteZone contract was not renewed.

In October 2008, impressed by the Cafe's NiteZone work, the Council asked if Dot could be seconded to the Brae for two to three days a week for three or four months to establish a new programme there as part of a restructuring, which involved staff and procedure changes. The fact that she was already heavily involved in consultative work both at the Brae and on the management committees of most of the associated services was a major benefit to the whole project. Her secondment would formalise what was already happening, and the Cafe would be paid her salary in return for her services. As this was a daytime provision, Dot would still be able to devote enough time to the Cafe to stay in overall control but, during her absence, Derek Scally and Fiona Horne were in charge. Dot's first aim was to stabilise the behaviour of those referred to the Brae. Education was not neglected, but it was introduced informally and was geared to life skills. The restructuring took longer than was anticipated, and her secondment to the Brae was extended to the end of the financial year in March 2009.

The Council did not plan to assess the effectiveness of NiteZone until towards the end of the first year, and it was likely that the judgement would be based largely on the number of contacts made and other statistics such as whether there was a reduction in the level of absconding and missing person reports. The review, in fact, never took place.

6VT decided to carry out an internal review of its own after only six months and to include, not only statistics, but also a qualitative evaluation of the effect the service was having on the young people themselves. It surveyed NiteZone staff for their comments, asked the 6VT drop-in staff to gauge whether NiteZone was affecting the Café's core activities, and gave the young people and their families the opportunity to state how they rated the programme.

The results of this internal survey, published in February 2009, were very encouraging. Most of the young people said they were enjoying coming to the Cafe, and they were almost unanimous in stating that they felt that the staff understood them and valued them as individuals. One attraction was that they could attend every day, since that took them out of their own environment and kept them out of trouble with the police. Some of them had been reluctant to attend structured one-to-one work supplied by other services since they found them intrusive, but the less formal atmosphere of the Cafe seemed to overcome this difficulty. One participant said that NiteZone had helped her get back into school, and another that he now had confidence to say "No" to his peers when they tried to persuade him to take part in anti-social behaviour. About a dozen of the fifteen on the ICCS programme were integrating well with the regular drop-in users.

Regarding the Family Cafe, some users did not attend because their families were there, but even they saw its value. Others welcomed the opportunity to do things together. The parents gave the Family Cafe almost a 100% rating. They found the staff particularly welcoming, as well as being easy to approach with their problems. It was also good to have a place to go to with the family that was not too expensive. Entertaining the whole family indoors all the time at home over the winter months could be especially difficult. The cost of transporting the family to the Cafe could be a problem, however.

Some who came without their children enjoyed the opportunity to relax and have time to themselves. All of them said they would like the Family Cafe to continue.

Both sets of staff (drop-in and ICSS) discussed issues at a staff conference and agreed that they found the work interesting and rewarding, although it could be challenging because of the changing moods of the participants and their short attention span. There were some concerns over consistency in dealing with behavioural issues, particularly during drop-in sessions when some of the regular users felt too much attention was paid to the ICSS users. Some staff felt that they would welcome more supervision. Partnership with the other services was working well, but there was concern over the vast number of meetings which staff had to attend and the time it could take to gather information from different sources. As a result, it was difficult to bring the whole team together for review and training. There was also pressure on the office in the Upper Bow, which now had to be used by about eighteen staff. Writing up case notes was time-consuming, as were the number of phone calls that had to be made, particularly those which attempted to secure crisis accommodation for young people at risk. The use of emailing was restricted by the fact that only Dot had secure access. The Board at that time expressed concern that the effectiveness of NiteZone was tending to be hindered by compartmentalising the work and satisfying the requirements of tick-box bureaucracy. The family afternoon sessions on Saturday had been particularly successful. However, great care had to be taken to ensure that families which were hostile to one another did not meet up in the Café. Attendance increased to between 18 and 25, following the decision to open it to other Cafe users, parents and carers. There were no problems in finding paid drivers or catering staff.

When asked about the type of young person on the ICSS programme, Dot said that they came mainly from families where the parents could not cope, and the main aim of the programme was to bring some stability and self-discipline into the lives of the young people and prevent them having to go into care. The young people were really pleased about being given a meal at teatime. Because there was no discipline in their lives, some of them tended to go "walkabout". When this happened, it was the responsibility of the police to find them. However, carrying out an initial search, alerting the parents and also the relevant key worker was time-consuming for the Cafe staff. There was no sign so far that the presence of the ICSS was affecting the uptake of ordinary users of the Café.

On 2 June 2009, Derek Scally (in Dot's absence) told the Board that the tendering process for the second year of NiteZone was very far behind and 6VT's existing contract had been extended by six months, taking it to January 2010. Initially, the project had taken place on five days per week, but that was extended to six with the introduction of the Family Afternoon on Saturdays. The aim was to extend it to seven days in July, targeting those who weren't fully engaged for whatever reason. This would probably involve home visits by staff. No additional staff hours would be required for the Sunday extension since staff were employed on the understanding that they were available seven days a week, and they would be given week days off if they worked weekends.

In June 2009, with no Council review in prospect, it was agreed that the Café should carry out its own full-year review when the first year ended in August, with a view to publishing it by the end of the year. Evidence would be sought from a wider range of external users than had been the case with the interim review. ICSS was too young a project to be used to assess its effect on re-offending. However, it was agreed that the police should be asked to pass on any information of incidents involving NiteZone young people and that some sort of record of this should be kept to help future research. Dot said that, without NiteZone, many young people would now be in secure care. The Board recorded its appreciation of the excellent work of staff in dealing with a range of difficult cases and situations.

On 15 September 2009, Dot reported that the number of referrals was increasing. She was still spending part of the week at The Brae because there was no progress in filling the posts there. Progress at the Council end continued to be slow and, even by November, there was no indication of when the Council intended to commence its Review of the ICSS. That resulted in 6VT's contract being extended still

further from January to March 2010, and it was likely that there would be a further extension beyond that. Dot's secondment to the Brae eventually ended in November 2009, having lasted over a year. The Café's finances had benefited to the tune of around £60,000 from all the staff secondments.

Still things dragged on and the sixteen Council posts at the Brae were not advertised until January, so that agency staff had to be used to fill the gaps, with some of the load falling on Cafe staff. It was noted that the salaries offered for most of the posts at the Brae were higher than the scales on which the Cafe salaries were based, and this might cause a problem for the Cafe. Although the Cafe staff were not being lured away because they liked working at the Cafe, the Management Committee recognised that steps would have to be taken to deal with these discrepancies.

The support given through the Family Cafe was producing encouraging results, and ways were being sought to extend this provision because at present there were huge gaps across the city in the way families were being supported. Regarding the effectiveness of the project, it was reported that Hill Street had a lot of information, but they had not produced any statistical data. Many of the young people were higher risk welfare cases rather than offenders. Two things were definitely being achieved: support was keeping many young people from landing up in care, and secure beds were being found more quickly for others for whom care was the only option. The public generally were confused by the large number of different titles under which support was being provided for young people at risk. NightZone was different from all the others in that it provided a 24-hour helpline throughout the year, including weekends and official holidays.

Although certain individuals were causing trouble in the main ICSS programme, it had never been Cafe policy to completely exclude users. They were excluded from the group sessions, but staff worked with them individually. Short-term suspensions, followed by a one-to-one interview usually had the desired effect. Any child with a foothold in the service was the Cafe's responsibility. When the Board discussed this issue in January 2010, Gordon Banks expressed concern over the liabilities of the Cafe and its staff. He was assured that it did not mean that staff were responsible for everything that the users did or did not do, but simply that staff had a duty of care towards users, and duty of care was always interpreted as what could reasonably be expected of professionals in any situation. Gordon pursued the matter, however, and discovered that, although there was Public Liability insurance cover, there was no Professional Indemnity cover. Staff were therefore advised that, if they used their own cars to transport users, they should check that their own car insurance covered this.

Having already had its NiteZone contract extended to March 2010, the Café had it further extended early in 2010 to March 2012. The Service Level Agreement amounted to £580,000 over two years. Under the SLA, the Cafe was expected to provide evidence that it was self-monitoring, and the Council would carry out a final review in September 2011 which would be completed three months before the contract expired. At the end of the contract, the Council had the option of extending the contract for a further three years or putting it out to tender.

Under the new contract, the Cafe undertook to provide each year for up to 60 young people aged 11 to 17 (subject to a maximum of 20 at any one time), with follow-up work for 17 to 21-year-olds as required. Provision included up to 24 hours per week with individuals between the hours of 11 am and 10:30 pm, up to 72 hours of crisis contacts, advocacy of users at Children's Hearings, a residential every three months, and the development of the Family Café. Users' records had to be kept on encrypted memory sticks which could not be removed from the premises.

Either side could terminate the contract on one month's notice. The Cafe became responsible for all Risk Assessments and compliance with Disclosure and Health & Safety Regulations. There was Employer's Liability cover and Public Liability cover for up to £5 million.

One thing the Board was not happy with was the payment for being on call to deal with ICSS crisis interventions, which were numerous and had to be reviewed every twelve weeks. Derek Scally had agreed to be part of the Council's on-call service, but he was paid only £26.87 per night, which was a derisory amount for such an intrusion on his private life — on duty every night for a whole week every four weeks — not to mention the effect these extra duties was having on his daytime NiteZone duties at the Cafe. There was even more concern in May 2010 when the payment was reduced to £14 per night for being on call for seven nights every five weeks.

In September 2010, the Board was told that, although some administrative issues still had to be sorted out, the partnership with the Council was working satisfactorily. However, since staff had not received any guidelines on how they should judge the success or otherwise of NiteZone, they had begun to work out their own guidelines. It was noted that it now cost around £250,000 per annum to keep just one young person in secure accommodation. Clearly, NiteZone was good value for money.

Meanwhile, the restricted Turnaround courses were continuing but, like a bolt out of the blue, the Council suddenly withdrew all Turnaround funding in the budget it passed in February 2010, despite Turnaround's track record in preventing re-offending. The budget proposals were announced only on the morning of the Council meeting and no one noticed that Turnaround was tucked away among a whole raft of other cuts that were to be made.

The Board decided unanimously to inform the Council that the Cafe was not prepared to fund Turnaround from its own resources and, if the Council wished the course to continue, the Council would have to run it. The Board had noted that the number of referrals had been decreasing, but it was not able to identify why this was so. It took particular exception to the claim made by a Council official that the Cafe had lost its Turnaround grant because it had not been attracting the right sort of referrals. This was all the more surprising since the Youth Offending Service had not requested any data from the Cafe for the previous three and a half years, nor had it published numerous statistical data passed to it by the Cafe.

The expertise of the Turnaround staff was not lost to the Cafe as they were used in other activities at 6VT, but the City lost a highly innovative project which those who dealt with young offenders and young people at risk agreed was highly effective in helping their clients keep out of trouble. However, that support came only in the form of comments rather than concrete evidence and, apart from the small-scale exercise carried out in 2008, no effort was ever been made to quantify the success by tracking the behaviour of the young people following the Turnaround courses. It is a common failing among youth workers that they put all their effort into helping the young people and forget that the praise of the moment is soon forgotten with the passage of time unless it is formally recorded.

Unfortunately, there were signs that the same mistake was being made with ICSS/NiteZone. It was an expensive project, and it was likely that, at some stage, that expense would be challenged, especially if there was no concrete evidence to support the case for continuing it.

Chapter 13: Even more diversification (2005-2009)

Although 6VT was becoming increasingly involved in dealing with young people who were at risk to themselves and/or to others, this had no obvious effect on its other work. Numbers attending the drop-in continued to be very high on all three nights, with an average of over 40 per night. There was frequently a queue waiting for the doors to open. On Saturday afternoons, the attendance of the Alternatives varied from 15 to 25.

One noticeable development was the changing character of those attending. Male users now outnumbered females by almost 2 to 1, largely due to the popularity of breakdancing. Another feature was the increasing number of young people from the Black and Ethnic Minority groups (more than 25% on a normal evening), who said that 6VT was one of the few places where they felt safe and made welcome.

In October 2005, 6VT received a grant of £920 to run a project during the national fortnight of action against racism (17-27 October 2005). It ran a variety of workshops under the banner "Show Racism the Red Card". These were designed to raise awareness and challenge racial attitudes, and the sessions were attended by roughly 160 young people. Linked with this was a photography project designed to create positive images of young black people. Recent research had shown that people in Britain, consciously or unconsciously, had negative attitudes towards black people. Over the fortnight, forty Cafe users took a test which illustrated this. They were all surprised by the results — even those from mixed race families.

In January 2006, users began to complete information sheets about themselves to help staff prepare a new data bank. This self-diagnosis, supplemented by staff knowledge, revealed that twenty-two fell into the Black Minority Ethnic category, although some of them had no idea of their ethnic origins. Also the term BME was now largely a misnomer because there was a growing number from Eastern Europe. Around 19% of users fell into the category of Additional Needs, i.e. young people with ages ranging from 14 to 20 who needed additional support from staff, and this raised the question of whether staff were capable of dealing with such a wide range of problems. No specific training was available but a set of guidelines was prepared to help staff. A few users from Donaldson's School for the Deaf and the Royal Blind School were also now well integrated into the drop-in programme, although the latter sometimes found the noise and bustle of the Cafe overwhelming. To deal with this, carers from the Blind School were asked to remain in the Cafe to help where support was required.

Hate Crime

Over the twelve years since 6VT opened, there had been few racial incidents: one in 1995, five in 2003 (almost all of which were instigated by one individual), and two in 2004. This low incidence was attributed to the fact that 6VT offered an environment where young people could be integrated with their peers from different backgrounds and communities. Cultural differences were not a problem. The young people simply wanted to be part of the Edinburgh teenage culture rather than be in segregated groups. The 6VT policy of respect for others was key to this environment.

Towards the end of 2005 and into 2006, however, staff were having to deal with racist attitudes towards migrants in general and, in particular, animosity towards the very large number of Poles in the city. It was also noticeable that, while it was acceptable to be black, negative attitudes were now mainly directed towards Asians, and there was also animosity between different Asian groups. The situation was undoubtedly exacerbated by BNP propaganda. Notwithstanding all their skills, the staff had to work very hard to keep a lid on these attitudes within the Cafe, because they were rife in society generally.

In June 2006, the Cafe was asked to take part in a quick intervention programme which consisted of two half-day sessions with groups of young people on the theme “*Ignorance leads to hate.*” The police put pressure on culprits and their parents to attend.

Following this, the Cafe received £3,600 from the One City Trust to run a six-month pilot in support of the Hate Crime project. The reason for calling it a pilot rather than a new project was that it had been an on-going problem that new projects attracted initial grants but money then dried up. By calling it a pilot, there was potential for 3-year funding from other sources.

At the beginning of 2007, the Cafe received £3,512 of funding from the Scottish Community Foundation to work with young people who were guilty of racist or hate crime. They had to attend two 3-hour sessions in which they were exposed to situations which challenged their behaviour. A policeman was always present. Attendance levels were almost 100% since the juvenile liaison officer insisted on perfect attendance. This initial course was so successful that it was agreed eleven more of these IMPACT courses should be run over a two-year period.

Culture Vibes

In May 2006, the Education, Children and Families Department gave 6VT a grant of £1,000 to prepare a fuller report on the Black and Ethnic Minority groups. Fiona Horne and Laura Ritchie, two youth workers at the Cafe, carried out a survey of Cafe users and, at the end, produced an interesting and informative report called “*Culture Vibes.*”

In May 2006 when the survey took place, there were forty-five registered as BME users out of a total of 225 registered for the whole Cafe. Twenty-two of the forty-five completed the survey, and this information was supplemented by information which had already been gleaned by staff.

Thirteen of the 45 young people surveyed were of African origin, 8 were Black Scottish, 1 was British Caribbean, 1 Chinese, 2 Scottish Indian, 2 Bangladeshi, 10 of mixed background, and 8 White European. The average age was 16-17, and the vast majority were male. Eight said they were Christians, 5 said they were Catholics, 9 Muslims, 1 Sikh, 5 Agnostics, and 17 who professed no religion. Again, some of them had no idea of their ethnic origins.

The staff already knew that some users were from asylum-seeking/refugee families, but it was often difficult for young people to share this information with others, including their peers and staff. However, in the survey, three felt confident enough to state they were from asylum-seeking families. They said that they had experienced a difficult period in their lives, but they wanted to move on and start afresh. They said they could mingle at 6VT with a certain degree of anonymity, whilst still accessing support and services when required.

Of the twenty-two who returned the survey, three young men and one young woman said they had personally experienced a racial attack while at 6VT, but these involved only two incidents, both of which were initiated by passers-by on Victoria Terrace who were not associated with 6VT.

Outwith 6VT, fourteen of the twenty-two had personally experienced some form of racial attack whether verbal or physical — in the street, at school, on the bus, in a shop, and, in one case, by a family member. Eighteen had witnessed racial abuse.

When asked how safe they felt at the Cafe, nineteen of the twenty-two said they felt perfectly safe, and three others gave safety at 6VT a score of 9 out of 10. However, many of them said they felt unsafe when travelling to and from the Cafe.

These responses reinforced the importance 6VT staff constantly gave to treating one another with respect. Eighteen of the twenty-two said that staff and users all treated them as equals within 6VT. The other four had no complaints against staff, but they felt that some users did not treat them as equals.

The majority felt that it might be helpful to have a BME person on the staff, but only three of them felt strongly about this.

When asked why they came to 6VT, many said that they enjoyed the neutral territory of the Cafe's location. Since it was situated in the city centre, they described it as a "no man's land" which was not associated with any territorial groups or gangs. Only one of the forty-five attended any other youth project in Edinburgh.

No glossy hard copy of "*Culture Vibes*" was ever produced, but the whole report was put on the internet.

Cultural Worker

In May 2007, an application was made to the Lloyds TSB Trust to pay for the services of a cultural worker to work with ethnic minority groups. The Trust gave the Cafe a grant of £25,549 spread over three years.

LifeGym

This Motivational Support Service was a spin-off from the Intensive Support and Monitoring Service (ISMS) described in Chapter 12. In February 2007, the Cafe was asked to provide a one-off package for a young person who had come out of residential care but was still a high risk case. She was a month too old to qualify for the ISMS programme. This sort of case would normally have gone to INCLUDEM, but 6VT was asked to take it on because of the quality of service it provided for this type of young person. The girl was given one-to-one support for 10 hours per week at £25 per hour up to August.

The Board felt that this sort of spot purchasing could potentially be a big source of income for the Café, and this proved to be the case. In June 2007, more funding became available from the Edinburgh Council Community Safety Partnership, Youth Link Scotland and Dr Guthrie's Trust, which enabled 6VT to offer the LifeGym service from June 2007- March 2008 to young people aged 15-18 who needed additional help to get into employment, education or training. The young people came from all over the city and its suburbs.

It was part of 6VT policy to monitor the changing needs and aspirations of the users, who came from a wide diversity of social and ethnic backgrounds. The information from this regular monitoring had been reinforced by the findings of the "*Culture Vibes*" report. In April 2007, 27% of the 241 young people who used the Cafe fell into the NEET category (Not in Employment, Education or Training). The Scottish average was 13.2%, while the Edinburgh average was only 9.8%.

Working with a personal development worker, young people were helped to identify their present needs and future aspirations. Through one-to-one support, group work and encountering challenging experiences, the participants were helped to develop their self-confidence, sociability and self-management, as well as their communication skills. For many of them, this involved challenging an attitude that there was no need to work. Specialist software career packages were used to identify the types of job that might suit each young person. The main aim was to improve their employability.

Participants took part in a variety of work experience placements. Eight were included in the party which went to the Columba 1400 Centre in Skye (see later), and thirteen went on residential courses run by the army.

In all, 148 benefited from LifeGym. Anyone attending 6VT who fell into the NEET category was entitled to take part. They included school non-attenders and excludees, young people in care, young offenders or those at risk of offending, those from workless families, those with reduced literacy skills, low academic achievers, young parents or carers, looked-after accommodated young people, and those who did not have English as a first language.

More Choices, More Chances (MCMC)

The term NEETS later fell out of favour on the grounds that it was demeaning for the young people. In February 2008, the Cafe began to use its LyfeGym programme to contribute to MCMC, and there was potential for organising work experience which would gain the young people certificates on college units such as Hygiene, besides giving them a small wage.

Keysteps

The aim of this course was to help young tenants deal with budgeting and independent living. As reported in Chapter 5, Lottery funding for Keysteps ended on 22 September 2004, but there was no doubt that the courses were still required, and so the Cafe continued to subsidise the work while applications were made to other funders. There was enough money to provide one-to-one advice to individuals, but not enough for full courses.

In August 2005, the Cafe submitted a bid to the Housing Department for the provision of counselling and family mediation in the prevention of homelessness among young people. There was particular concern about the eviction of young people by their own families. Nothing came of that application and so, for over a year, the project just ticked over with one-to-one support, funded by the Cafe.

At the start of 2007, however, a £1,000 grant was received to promote healthy eating/living. Also, a Service Level Agreement was signed with Supporting People, which amounted to £25,046 over the financial year 2007-2008. Supporting People continued funding Keysteps beyond that and, in June 2008, the Cafe received funding from Housing Support to provide 100 hours per month, dealing with five to eight individuals at a time. Keysteps kept ticking over in this way for several years.

Mindmatrix

In 2005, with funding of £2,372 from the Council's OOSHLA (Out of School Hours Learning Activities) programme, 6VT's Mindmatrix project used a variety of techniques to help young people overcome difficulties they were having in their studies and sport performance, as well as personal difficulties. The principle on which this project worked was striving to show the young people how positive thoughts can result in positive behaviours.

Kickass Project

In 2005 also, the Keysteps project was invited by Kickass, a London-based youth project, to take part in the Thrifty Squad Project which involved fifteen groups across Britain. Each group was given professional support from a local advertising agency. Don Smith, the Deputy Creative Director of Union Advertising, became the mentor of the 6VT group. His task was to unleash the creative ideas and minds of the young people and help them prepare a presentation to HM Treasury and leading members of the financial sector which would suggest how the financial world should tailor its services to be more inclusive of young people. The presentation also emphasised the importance of the "youth pound" to the economy and included suggestions on how young people could be kept out of debt. Fifteen users from 6VT took part and their entry won third prize. Besides the day trip to London to receive the presentation in 11 Downing Street, they enjoyed a day out at Alton Towers theme park.

Beat4Life

In May 2006, Heart Research UK donated £5,000 to a Cafe project designed to make young people (especially those from less well off families) take an interest in healthy living. The users who participated were given membership cards for leisure centres and priority in queues for activities. The aim was to have 200 members by the end of 2006. Forty of these came from 6VT. To publicise the project the Cafe breakdancers wore tops emblazoned with the Beat4Life logo when participating in a competition in London.

Thrifty Munch

This new project, which started In January 2008, was designed to help 16 to 18-year-olds who were in their first tenancy to prepare healthy meals on a tight budget. Many of this type of young person had literacy difficulties and so, with help from CLAN (the City Literacy and Numeracy project), they produced a very attractive and well illustrated cookbook which was couched in simple language and used photographs taken by the group themselves. Besides learning to cook, they visited the Risk Factory. The project won a national award, and two of the group with two adults visited London to receive it. Over fifty young people from different age groups were catered for. Two further courses followed, with funding from Save the Children and British Gas. Some of the money was used to purchase starter packs. It was reported on 6 March 2008 that additions were still being made to the cookbook. One unexpected outcome for some users was that they discovered that they actually liked fruit!

Duncan Gorrie Good Governance Award

Following the death of his brother Duncan a year earlier, Donald Gorrie set up an award for good governance in memory of Duncan who had given devoted service for the last ten years of his life as Honorary Treasurer of Lothian Association of Youth Clubs. The first award was made to Henry Philip in recognition of his long service to 6VT and the voluntary administrative work he continued to carry out for it. At a reception held in the new Scottish Parliament building on 24 November 2005, he was presented with a painting of Victoria Street overlooked by 6VT.

European Youth Visits

The first of the cultural youth exchanges, with dance as the focus, was funded by the European Youth Programme in Madrid in 2004.

In 2005, the British Council granted £10,863 to enable 6VT to host twenty-eight 16-18 year olds (all breakdancers) from Spain, Bulgaria and Norway for ten days from 27 June to 6 July. They were accommodated in the Backpackers' Hostel in the Canongate. They had their breakfasts in the Cafe, and a caterer provided packed lunches and teas for £6 a head each day. The young people had access to 6VT at times other than the normal opening hours, and a special EGO disco was arranged at the conclusion of the trip.

Since the visit coincided with the G8 Conference at Gleneagles, a variety of workshops explored the theme "*Breakin' the walls of racism*" to raise cultural awareness and tolerance. On the final afternoon of the visit, the different groups treated friends, families and funders to a demonstration of breakdancing in the Massa Night Club in Market Street.

The next stage of the exchanges was to have been in Bulgaria in 2006. Unfortunately, that fell through because the Bulgarian state did not produce the necessary funding.

The British Council was so impressed with the support it had received in 2005 that they invited 6VT to join them at a large dance festival in Lyon in September 2006. This festival was for all sorts of dancers,

although the twelve users whom Dot and Lorraine Goodwin took to France were all breakdancers. They enjoyed the experience but, when they were invited back two years later, there was no great enthusiasm to take up the offer among either the users or the staff.

The British Council also brought a group of young people from France to Edinburgh on an art and culture visit in July 2006. The Cafe was involved in hosting them, but this group did not link up with the drop-in as their interests did not coincide with the usual 6VT activities.

Breakdancers

For several years, a large group of lads had developed breakdancing as a major activity in the Café (see page 76). Their skill level was very high and, besides participating in the international events described above, they won several major national championships. For example, towards the end of 2005, they won first prize in the UK competition for under-16s. In 2006, they came third in a UK competition in London in May and won the UK Under-18 championships in Sheffield in June. Also in that year, their Psycho Style group won the Welsh Open Championship for breakdancing. In 2007, they reached the final of the UK Championships, won the University Championship in Newcastle and came second in a competition in Leeds. Having failed to win in London in 2007, they were honest enough to admit they had themselves to blame because they had taken things too easily.

During the Festival in 2006, they took their piece of lino to the High Street to do some busking. They raised £7.60 which they handed over to the Café. They also performed in a show at the Festival Theatre in May 2007 and at an event in the Film House later that year. At the beginning of 2009, they were unsuccessful in their attempt to appear on X-Factor. In October 2009, they were invited to audition for *Britain's Got Talent*, but they did not get through to the televised programme.

Besides being successful as a group, they did well as individuals. Two breakers won contracts to perform in pubs in Edinburgh and Glasgow. In 2007, one of the B-boys won a main part in the advertisement for the new Rubic Cube, and others received back-up parts. Another appeared in an advert for Highland Spring Water, and yet another was invited to be in a new Robert Carlyle film. In September 2009, the Board heard that a former B-Boy had set up his own dance company and had enrolled many customers from city schools. He was being supported by other Breakers and the Prince's Trust.

By 2008, most of the boys were becoming too old to attend the Cafe as users. However, they still showed willingness to come along to train some younger users.

Major Refurbishments

Breakdancing was clearly a success, but it had its down side. The use of the back room for breakdancing caused considerable damage to the floor, to the extent that it was beginning to break up because of the constant pounding it took. In January 2007, therefore, an application for £30,000 was made to the Scottish Executive for funds to renew the floor. Since only £2,000 was received, however, that work had to be put on hold and the money was spent on refurbishing the outside door and buying a replacement fridge.

By the middle of 2007, the floor was breaking up so badly that it was becoming a major safety hazard and an application for grant was made to the Youth Improvement Fund. That resulted in a grant of £39,506 which was used to replace the floor, install CCTV, replace the outside doors, redecorate the interior, purchase an industrial dishwasher, and generally bring the catering facilities up to the standards required for preparing meals. The Board decided on health and safety grounds that there should be no drop-in sessions during the month of September while the refurbishment was taking place. However, the Turnaround course, the IMPACT course dealing with Hate and other group work continued in the halls of St Columba's by the Castle. Gordon and Halliday replaced the flooring and sub-contracted the

other work. Alex Justice agreed to act as an unpaid clerk of works to ensure that the work was carried out to a satisfactory standard.

The refurbishment was completed on time and within budget. The users were most appreciative of the improvements and, following the reopening in October, attendances at the drop-in rose considerably. On reflection, it was felt that stainless steel panelling, which had been used on both rooms, should have been ordered also for the entrance hall, since there were now collapsible tables located there for use with laptops, and it was more cost-effective in the long term than constant repainting. The installation of CCTV inside and outside the building greatly improved safety for service users and staff. Young people from the ethnic minority groups, in particular, had been subjected to unprovoked attacks from adults on the Terrace. They felt safe inside the Café.

To mark the improvements, an open day was held on 2 October 2007. This proved to be a successful PR exercise for the Cafe, since some thirty-five organisations attended. Unfortunately, publicity in the Evening News and the Herald and Post resulted in several attempted break-ins.

Fall of masonry

In November 2007, the Board was told that there had been a fall of masonry from above 6VT and the Council was asked to deal with it. The Council at first claimed that outside maintenance was the Cafe's responsibility. Examination of the lease, however, revealed that the council was primarily responsible for the exterior of the building, although the Cafe had to make some contribution towards costs. On this occasion, the architect and surveyor called in to examine the building decided that the fall of masonry was not serious enough to warrant any action.

Young people used as consultants and ambassadors

Organisations frequently called for the help of 6VT users when they wanted to sound out young people's attitudes and views.

In April 2005, Lyndsey Ritchie, a user who was Vice-Chairperson of the Management Committee, played the part of a criminal in a video called "*Restorative Warnings*" which was prepared by the police under the Youth Justice Strategy.

In the summer of 2005, an 82 year old woman did a "life swap" with Taz, one of the male users. For a day, each of them followed the lifestyle of the other. They then recounted their experiences on Radio Scotland.

On 22 February 2006, twenty-two users met four cross-party MSPs for a Question and Answer session, which was also attended by the police, journalists and community representatives. The users acquitted themselves well.

In March 2006, several users were recruited and given special training by Trading Standards to help them catch shopkeepers who were selling cigarettes and alcohol to under-age people. They were given £20 vouchers to buy goods, including an attempted purchase of cigarettes and/or alcohol. They had to hand in the cigarettes and alcohol but were allowed to keep the other goods.

On 24 March 2006, fifteen users presented a showcase of the Cafe at a Youth Justice planning event at Carberry Tower.

Again in March, ten young people participated in a "*Political Speed Date*" organised by the Electoral Commission. Seven MSPs and three councillors were allowed three minutes in which to impress the young voters.

In August 2006, three users who had been on the Turnaround course were invited to a Youth Action Team promotion in Gracemount High School in the presence of Cathie Jamieson MSP.

In February 2007, STV came in to get some footage about persistent offending and, in March of that year, two users took part in a play about Nelson Mandela written by a user's dad.

Project Scotland Initiative

In 2005, 6VT made a successful application to the Scottish Executive to become involved in the Project Scotland Initiative. Four young people (aged 16-25) provided thirty hours of support per week for those on the Turnaround programme. For this voluntary service, they received £55 per week for one year. The Cafe received £13,000 to meet these and other costs.

ClubZone

Since the ClubZone charter was launched in 2004, the under-18 nightclubs were fulfilling a useful function for this age group. Over the summer of 2005, however, because of criticisms of the Mission nightclub, the Anti-social Behaviour Team was sent in to investigate under-age drinking there. The Board of 6VT went on record to defend the Mission. The criticism was unfair because the nightclub was following the ClubZone guidelines by keeping intoxicated young people out of its premises and could not be held responsible for the behaviour of young people in the vicinity of the club any more than 6VT could be blamed for drunks hanging around the Terrace.

In March 2006, Community Safety gave £10,000 to maintain and develop the under-18 nightclubs. Staff within the clubs and doormen had to be registered by the police and screened for child protection, and they were also given special training. So that they could be easily identified, they wore special bibs marked "Safeguarders". Users were breathalysed and screened with metal detectors as they entered. The clubs occasionally had to call on the services of 6VT staff, but on those occasions those staff were employed and paid by the clubs.

The Cafe had provided considerable assistance in setting up ClubZone but, by 2007, its involvement was limited to providing advice and equipment when requested. This work did not directly benefit the Café users. In fact, it was felt that it might actually be preventing the Cafe from making applications to Community Safety for funding that would benefit the Cafe. It was therefore suggested that the Cafe might receive a retainer of, say, £5,000 pa in return for which Dot's services would be made available when required. Community Safety responded by giving the Cafe £7,547 for its work with ClubZone until March 2008. Dot was now a member of the Licensing Standards Initiative Committee.

The success ClubZone was threatened in the autumn of 2007 when a new police Inspector replaced the original charter with one that was much more rigid and bureaucratic. Alex Justice and Dot attended a meeting called to discuss why the new regulations were going wrong. They concluded that it was unworkable because, for example, it was a condition of receiving a licence that clubs had to breathalyse every user, and this had resulted in users still queuing up outside two hours after a three-hour event had started. Clubs were also expected to provide the breathalysing kits (costing £400), and their staff had to go through the Enhanced Disclosure process. That was difficult at the best of times, but impossible when there was such a large turnover of staff. It seemed to be assumed that the Cafe would carry out the disclosure screening but, as Dot was the only Cafe person qualified to do this, it was a non-starter. Also, if the clubs signed up to the police charter, there had to be police on duty for the duration of the event – a very costly exercise – and, if the clubs did not sign up, there would be no police presence at all. In fact, the clubs might even lose their licence. There was also a fear that, because of the emphasis on breathalysing, young people would turn to drugs for which there was no detection kit.

Alternatively, they would shun the clubs and thereby destroy a project which had been working well and which had taken many young people off the streets.

At the end of the discussion, the Inspector agreed to suspend the new rules for the time being, but he had clearly no intention of dropping them completely. When asked when the proposal would go before the Council as the licensing body, he said it would not go before that body.

The 6VT Board made representations to the Council expressing their concerns over the damage being done to a very good project. Following that, the matter was approached through the Licensing Board and, by the beginning of 2008, things had settled down and the police were no longer insisting on unreasonable conditions.

On 14 October 2008, the Board was told that ClubZone was now doing very well. The message seemed to have got through to the young people that these were no-alcohol nightclubs because none of the 1,200 young people attending these clubs were ever caught by the breathalysers. To meet the criticism that users might be turning to drugs instead of alcohol, the police and sniffer dogs were employed during the forthcoming Hallowe'en events as part of a deal in which the Cafe was paid £5,000 to run the supervision of the nightclubs. The equipment was used not only in the nightclubs but also on the trains and buses coming to the events.

Youth interests change, however, and by 2014 only one under-18 night club had survived.

Go4It

In 2005, 6VT received a grant of £1,500 which it used to organise various activities over the summer holidays, including visits to the M&D Theme Park near Motherwell, Edinburgh Castle, the Scottish Museum and Portobello beach.

In 2006, however, 6VT ceased to receive funding for its Go4It programme. The city had been divided into neighbourhood areas, and all the Go4It money was now distributed among them. 6VT fell into South Edinburgh, but that area group refused to give 6VT any money since it was argued that the Cafe had a city-wide remit, drawing users from all the neighbourhood areas.

Vacation Station Club 2007

It was not in the psyche of 6VT to accept defeat. Action was immediately taken to ensure that the summer programme was kept alive. The Youth Opportunities Fund gave £6,655, another £1,000 came from the Youth Projects Fund, and there were smaller sums from other sources. Roughly £3,000 of this was set aside to subsidise a sailing trip (see page 112), but there was enough money actually to enhance the vacation programme in 2007. A high proportion of the participants were disadvantaged socially, physically or mentally and came from families which could not even afford to send them on school trips. The emphasis was on doing things together, and they were engaged in a range of ordinary but, for them, completely new experiences such as visiting the Castle, going to leisure centres, crossing to Fife on a hovercraft, going skiing and spending time at the beach.

For the fortnight, 28 July to 10 August 2007, 6VT ran a concentrated programme of activities from 10 am to 10 pm each day. The young people received all their meals, snacks and juice free of charge, and the group even had its own holiday money which they could exchange at the 6VT coffee bar. The first week concentrated on holiday activities in the city. The eleven who took part were selected on the grounds that they would benefit most from such a project. Two were from a young people's unit (both tagged), six were on supervision orders, and the rest came from a mix of social backgrounds. There was 100% attendance during this first week. In the second week they went further afield. Forty-five, for example, went on the day trip to the M & D Theme Park.

Over the duration of Vacation Station, 869 contacts were made during the holiday drop-in. The staff greatly appreciated the active help they got from PC Claire Coleman from the Central Edinburgh Youth Action Team. Her work, together with the informal encounters the young people had with police in the city, helped to break down barriers that often occurred between young people and the police.

Even more adventurous was the chartering of the T.S. Firimar owned by The Cirdan Sailing Trust which specialised in giving disadvantaged young people the challenge and adventure of life at sea on a large sailing vessel. Seven young people and three members of staff became the crew of the yacht along with two permanent crew from the Trust. Everyone took it in turn to helm, set and stow sails, cook and clean. The young people learned that, as a crew, they all had to pull together. They could not walk away from personal issues with other members but had to resolve them.

The vessel sailed from Granton on 11 June 2007, and the 6VT leg of the voyage ended at the Caledonian Canal in Inverness on 16 June.

On the way, all the young people and staff undertook, and passed, the practical assessment for the Royal Yachting Association's "*Start Yachting Award*", which involved displaying a basic knowledge of the yacht, rope work, meteorology, experience in steering a yacht under sail or power, emergency equipment, clothing and precautions, including "man overboard".

The feedback from the young people was very positive and, although they found it challenging and sometimes suffered from sea sickness, they still felt they had benefited from the experience.

The Social Work Department gave £200 towards the trip, and a donation of £312 was received from the John Watson's Trust. The Cafe also subsidised the trip to some extent, and the group contained a mixture of ISMS young people, users from the secure units and other Cafe users. It did not contain any B-Boys since they had already received a lot of financial support from the Cafe.

In addition to the summer programme in 2007, two visits were made to The Risk Factory in Chesser, Scotland's first purpose-built interactive safety centre, whose purpose was to make communities aware of safety issues. The fifteen who took part enjoyed the day and admitted that they had learned a lot.

At the end of the programme, a boy brought in a "Thank you" card and a box of biscuits for the staff.

Vacation Station 2008

The funding for the 2008 summer programme came from Cash Back for Communities (money recovered from the ill-gotten gains of criminals through the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002) and St Giles' Cathedral Neighbourhood Group.

The participants were aged 13-19 and, as usual, they took part in the sort of visits and activities that are undertaken by people holidaying in Edinburgh. 55% of them were from the top areas of deprivation and, for many, these were completely new experiences. But the main aim was to help them establish meaningful relationships and build their confidence, self-esteem, sociability and integrity. Over four weeks in July and August, 6VT provided an additional 140 hours of summer activities which were designed to divert these young people from anti-social behaviour and give them something to look forward to when there wasn't much going for them in their lives. Altogether, there was a footfall of 247 at the various events, involving sixty-two young people.

There were two separate weeks of activities. In the first week, which ran from 14-18 July, visits were paid to Dalkeith Country Park, Edinburgh Zoo, the Ski Centre at Hillend, Blair Drummond Safari Park and Doodles Ceramic Workshop. Besides attending the drop-in evenings, participants also took part in an

art workshop, a movie evening and a BBQ on the Terrace, and the week ended with a meal at Jimmy Cheungs.

In the second week (4-8 August), visits were paid to Doodles Ceramic Workshop, Hillend Ski Centre, the Time Capsule Ice and Swim centre, Blair Drummond Safari Park and Portobello beach. The art workshop was repeated, as were the big screen movie and the BBQ. The final meal this time was at China China.

During the four weeks, other activities were arranged for different age groups. For example, a double-decker bus took seventy-two users and some members of their families to Strathclyde M&D Theme Park, and twelve of the older users at 6VT (16+) went karting and paintballing.

As was the case in 2007, they were given all their meals, beginning with breakfast right through to the evening meal.

The total received in grants amounted to £9,108

Summer Café

In the spring of 2005, a complete refurbishment of the kitchen, which included the installation of industrial equipment, was completed at a cost of around £5,000. The original estimate had been £9,500, but the considerable savings had been achieved because of staff DIY. For example, Fiona Horne had prepared the design plan, and the staff bought the cupboards from IKEA and assembled them themselves.

The refurbishment was completed in time for the Summer Cafe which made a profit of £5,863 for Cafe funds from a turnover of more than £15,000. This was remarkable considering the cafe had not opened on Sundays or in the evening. There had been keen competition among users to be employed in the Summer Cafe. They were put through formal interviews and given training, and they were paid the minimum wage which was £3 per hour in those days.

It was not possible to have a Summer Cafe in 2006 and succeeding years because the entrance from George IV Bridge had been blocked off while the old Regional Headquarters building was demolished to make way for the new Messoni Hotel.

Another problem was that some of the vermin which had been disturbed by the demolition work decided to take refuge in the Cafe, and the Pest Control Officer had to be called in. The developers paid for this and also agreed to erect a sign to indicate where the Cafe was. There were other problems, however. In July 2007, it was reported that 6VT had been flooded following heavy rain because the new ramp had been constructed over the only drain in the Terrace. Also, cupboards fell off the wall because of the heavy vibrations caused by work on the new hotel site.

The Cafe submitted a claim to the builders to compensate for the loss of trade at the Summer Cafe because of the closing of the ramp. Income from rentals had also suffered. This claim was resisted but, in the end, in August 2008, HBOS sent a cheque for £3,000 as a charitable donation rather than as compensation. It was made as a goodwill gesture rather than compensation since it was difficult to prove loss of income.

When access to George IV Bridge was restored in November 2008, a ramp had replaced the steps, so that there was now disabled access. The hotel opened in March 2009 and, as had happened when 6VT first opened, the staff had to work hard to keep on friendly terms with their new neighbours (the hotel and Pizza Express), dealing with young folk who tended to hang around that end of the Terrace.

User Residentials

In August 2007, Dot and eight users accepted an invitation to attend an adventure centre run by Columba1400 in Skye. Normally, this would have cost £2,500 per person, but all costs were met by Columba 1400. It was very well run, and the 6VT young people responded well to the demands made on them. One boy got a job directly as a result of attending this course. A further invitation in 2008 had unfortunately to be turned down because of pressures on staffing brought on by likely cuts in Council funding.

Also In August, the two Danish students accompanied a user to an army camp. They all found it tough going, but the 6VT girl emerged as the top student.

In March 2008, twelve young people along with three members of staff attended another Youth Army Residential, all expenses paid by the army.

Eight users attended a 3-day residential in April 2009, and fourteen attended a residential at Aberfeldy in July 2010, where the emphasis was on adventure activities.

Staff Residentials

Because so many staff were part-time, it was difficult to bring them all together to discuss policy and how projects were developing. The Board therefore agreed that there should be no drop-in on Friday, 8 April 2005 to enable them all to attend a weekend residential. This was followed by another on 5-6 May 2006, and eleven staff again gave up their weekend to attend a residential which began on 23 March 2007. Its main theme was how to be more effective in one-to-one sessions. They stayed in a little cottage and rented the village hall at £10 per hour, so that the whole thing was achieved at minimal cost. This was followed by a First Aid course on 23 August 2007.

On 24 June 2008, the Board and the staff held a half-day joint meeting to discuss working conditions and the general running of the Café. This was the first time that the Board had been able to meet the staff as a group, and everyone found the discussion beneficial. It was recognised that, although staff were supervised and supported in their work, there was no planned programme of staff development. However, it was possible for them to access the training that the Council provided for its staff, at no cost to the Cafe. Staff were paid for attending the joint meeting, and all enjoyed the lunch which followed.

Step Up

In 2007, Kenny MacAskill, the Justice Minister for Scotland, used the Cafe for the official press launch of the national Cash Back for Communities initiative which used the ill-gotten gains of crime to support worthwhile causes. In June 2008, 6VT received a grant of £15,485 from Cashback to work in partnership with Lothian and Borders Police in running a 30-week course in Horse and Stable Management aimed at young offenders or those at risk of offending and vulnerable. It aimed to divert these young people from offending behaviour by increasing their confidence and self-esteem, encouraging them not to give up when faced by challenges, and fostering positive relationships with others in the group and with adults and community members, in the hope that this would improve their employability.

Agencies across Edinburgh were asked to nominate suitable referrals. From the twenty names received, thirteen were selected for interview. The aim of these interviews was to establish their level of commitment and to leave the young people in no doubt about what was expected of them. Poor behaviour and backsliding would not be tolerated. Twelve passed this test — ten females and two males drawn from all over the city. Three were “looked after” by the local authority, two came from a secure unit, and one was in foster care. They were accompanied by Louise McQuoid from 6VT and PC Steve McGill, Youth Engagement Officer for Edinburgh, who were both experienced horse riders.

The first task was to take them to buy wellie boots, a must for working in the stables. They were then divided into two groups — one consisting of those who had already done some riding and the other of complete beginners. While one group was out for riding lessons, the other was doing stable management. Over the thirty weeks they learned how to care for the animals' welfare and learn about health and safety in dealing with the animals and working in stables. They also visited Oatridge College to see what courses were available. The planned work experience at the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Rescue Centre at Balerno had to be abandoned because insurance cover could not be obtained for under-16s. The course finished with two big ride-outs, the first in Dalkeith Country Park watched by families and referrers, and the second in John Muir Country Park at Dunbar where the young people trotted through the woods and did a fast gallop along the beach.

Steve McGill had known some of the participants before the course. He was amazed that these young people, who had never engaged in any project in the past, willingly did what they were told and stuck to their tasks. Some of them even returned to help at the stables in their own time in return for more riding instruction. People going through personal turmoil seldom smile, but loud laughter was frequently heard as the whole group relaxed. For him as a policeman, it was gratifying to see the change in attitude towards authority of young people who had previously had only negative experiences with the police.

One girl aged 16 said she was given a good talking to by staff when she returned to 6VT and told them she was too scared to get on to the horse's back. It was so big. She was told in no uncertain terms that she would be pulled from the course if she persisted in that attitude. She got on the horse and finished the course galloping along the beach.

The general feedback from referrers was also very positive and many noted a change in the attitude of the young people. Lothian and Borders Police provided statistics in October 2009 which supported this impression, showing that deviant behaviour in the group had disappeared or was greatly reduced. Two girls were moved from secure units into open units, and another was motivated to stay on at school. A boy applied for a place on a full-time Preparation for Racing course at Oatridge College.

Streetwork

The feeling of the Board was that, in selecting staff to work with young people, authorities possibly laid too much emphasis on paper qualifications and not enough on practical experience in dealing with young people in a testing environment. The success of the Cafe depended on the attitudes of the staff and the approaches they adopted more than anything else, and this was not something that could be learned by others simply attending a course. It was because of this special way of handling young people that the police frequently turned to the Cafe for help when young people were accused of causing trouble in different parts of the town. These appeals were not ongoing but only when trouble flared up.

For example, in the middle of 2005 there was very little involvement since the town appeared to be very quiet but, two months later, Cafe staff were engaged in streetwork in the city centre because there was concern that young people who had been moved from the undesirable environment of Hunter Square were now congregating in Calton Cemetery where they were at higher risk from alcohol and sex abuse. In June 2006, problems re-emerged in Cockburn Street and Hunter Square, and the police asked Cafe staff to do some streetwork there. They were called out again in the summer of 2007 both in the city centre and in neighbourhoods where local people were complaining about the behaviour of young people. On those occasions and when they were working in Winter Wonderland in January 2008, 6VT staff encountered no serious problems although they could understand why members of the public might be concerned. Broadly speaking, people were frightened by the mere presence of groups of young people, especially when they were noisy.

Following streetwork in March 2008, two rival gangs (the Young Edinburgh Team and the Young Leith Team) began attending the drop-in, which led to potentially explosive situations which the staff had to handle. A year later, when two staff did streetwork to publicise 6VT on 26 April 2009, they encountered very few young people in town. Teenage patterns of behaviour could be quite unpredictable

Cooperation with the police

This was still very strong in 2007. At a personal level, as mentioned elsewhere, Policewoman Claire Coleman was a frequent visitor, a Police Constable did some DIY jobs in his spare time, Charlie Bootland, a retired PC with whom Cafe staff had been associated in streetwork, handed over £285 which had been raised for the Cafe in the Police Club, and another PC brought in a box of chocolates for the staff. Even the local Chief Superintendent paid a visit.

Cafe staff continued to help the police in streetwork when requested and at Winter Wonderland at Christmas. The police Action Team reciprocated by providing a Safe Driving course for older users and by dropping in frequently at 6VT to chat to users in an informal way. Unfortunately, a change in the shift system in 2007 under which PCs went off duty at 7 pm made this impossible unless they would have had to visit in their own time. This was a big loss to the Cafe as the Youth Action Team had been successful in breaking down barriers between the police and young people.

In an indirect link with law and order, a member of the Children's Hearing in 2007 paid for the sponsorship of two baby elephants and a baby rhino at a wildlife trust and donated this sponsorship to the Cafe in appreciation of the work 6VT was doing for children in trouble.

Drop-in

Attendances were lower during this period but still averaged in the high 30s each night, with the usual inexplicable variations from month to month, including big gender variations. The number of young people from the Black Ethnic Minority groups also increased greatly. It was not unusual for a queue to form long before opening time.

It was always the case that, following streetwork and at the start of a new school session, there was a big influx of newcomers who not only displayed behaviour that was challenging but had never learned to respect other people. This changed the dynamics of the drop-in for a time, but staff took this in their stride and worked on them till they learned and accepted the rules of the Cafe. They did this by sending them home when they stepped out of line and insisting that they visit the Cafe outwith drop-in hours to discuss their behaviour in a one-to-one with a member of staff. Almost all of them accepted this strict treatment because they were desperate to be allowed back.

In 2005, there were two occasions when large numbers of disturbed young people from different residential care homes descended en masse on the drop-in, and this considerably disturbed the atmosphere in the Café and upset existing users. The care home staff had suggested to the young people that they should try visiting 6VT, but they did not alert 6VT that they had been classified as "high risk" and were receiving intensive support. Nor did any of them accompany the young folk. Normally, staff could cope with one or two disturbed users, but on this occasion additional staff had to be employed till the problem was solved by limiting the number of these young people who could attend on any night.

Considering that the drop-in continued on three evenings week after week for fifty-two weeks in the year, it was amazing that only occasionally did the staff even mention such incidents in their nightly reports. For example, at the beginning of 2007, there appeared to be a certain restlessness around the town, including fighting and knife-carrying. This came to the vicinity of the Cafe, but the vigilance of the staff prevented it from getting into the Cafe itself. In the summer of 2008, 6VT was involved in the

making of a DVD on drink awareness and crime called "*The Lads*". The resourcefulness of the staff was also evident at an event in September 2009, in which they arranged for members of the Cock n' Bull theatre group to burst into the Cafe like drunken jobs. The shocked reaction which this produced among the users was much more effective than any amount of talking.

2008 was a particularly difficult year. A number of factors came into play. Attendances included more users than usual with personal problems, many immature younger users, users who were in care, some who were attending the drop-in as part of the ISMS programme, and members of two rival city gangs — all of this was compounded by the very high numbers who were attending each night. For example, in August 2008, the average evening attendance was 66.6. With so many youngsters around who displayed erratic behaviour, staff had to be careful to plan activities in such a way that certain users were kept apart from other volatile users. Besides that, under-age drinking and drug abuse were rife in the town, and there was also the constant battle to ensure that those who arrived under the influence were kept out of the Cafe.

The staff handled all of this without having to dial 999 until November 2009 when gangs from different parts of the city began to appear in Victoria Terrace, many of them under the influence of alcohol and drugs. The police had to be called on several occasions to deal with that and instances of users who refused to leave because they had been drinking or were under the influence of drugs. As usual, however, additional staffing, the use of breathalysers, the re-siting of the CCTV camera to give wider coverage 24 hours per day, and the professionalism of the staff saw 6VT through these difficult times.

Despite having to deal with all these difficulties, the staff still found time to provide their usual high standard of care for individual users. They regularly went out of their way to support individuals who came to them with personal problems. Nor did they make a song and dance about it. In June 2009, for example, an appreciative letter was received from a mother and daughter who had been given the use of a caravan hired by 6VT so that they could spend quality time together. But for that letter, the Board would not have even heard about that kindness.

In June 2007, a man from the Quakers Meeting House handed in 60p which they had received from a man to whom the Cafe had given a can of juice when he had no money. In June 2008, staff went to a user's home and cleaned it up. As there was no food there, they took the user back to the Cafe and gave him his dinner there. Other users got free food and clothes, and staff helped the families of two users move their belongings to new homes. All of these "little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love" were typical of the staff's willingness to go the extra mile, even though they were sometimes at the receiving end of verbal abuse from a small minority of users — not to mention the compassion and support they gave on most nights to individual users who were facing personal tragedies in their lives. Parents (and also grandparents) increasingly called the Cafe to discuss problems they were having with their children. Users also played their part through the buddy system whereby regular users supported particularly vulnerable users.

The emphasis on mutual respect was paying dividends. During this period, for example, staff were encouraged by visits from former users who had been a nuisance in their time, but came in to thank staff for what they had done for them — one said he hadn't been in trouble for eight months, now had a flat in Leith and was about to start college; another who had been a real handful brought in a box of chocolates; another dropped in to say that Turnaround had helped her get back on track; another said that, thanks to 6VT, he had stopped smoking, was now attending a gym, had passed all his exams and was about to start college; yet another thanked the staff for their support, so that he was now in a permanent job; and two others simply came to say "Thank you." A former user and his girl friend thanked 6VT for helping them to get a council house. There were also lots of other ex-users who simply dropped in to see how things were going. On one occasion, in April 2010, two former users came to the Café to get signatures for their passport applications. With them was another ex-user who confessed to being in a mess (drinking, drugs and crime) since he stopped attending the drop-in.

The young people also greatly appreciated the food and fruit which the Quakers regularly sent round after one of their evening events. They even did this the morning after a boy, angry at not being admitted to the drop-in, kicked their door and punched their window.

Early in 2008, staff also agreed to work with an 11-year-old boy referred to them under the ICSS scheme. He had been well known to the police from the age of six and his behaviour and attitude were now so bad that no organisation would accept him. He never settled anywhere long enough even to have his needs assessed. Although his conduct was unpredictable, the staff at the Cafe began to make some headway with him at the drop-in sessions three nights per week although, for a time, because of the risk he was presenting to himself and others, he had to be secured in the secure unit at Howdenhall, with occasional spells out in the community. At the time of writing, he is now 17 years old and is living at home. He still keeps in touch with 6VT.

While all of this was going on, the users in 2009 were involved in charity work of their own in aid of a children's hospice, Comic Relief, Race for Life, and Children in Need. One user alone raised £30 for Children in Need, and those who did not bring in items for Christmas hampers which were dropped off at young tenants' homes donated £7.04. The users had also just started to investigate how they could help Sashita, a Scottish charity which was trying to improve the living standards of the people of Samuye, a small village in rural Tanzania. Diane Elliot, a trainee social worker attached to 6VT, was going to visit Samuye in her own time in the summer of 2010 to see for herself if there is any more that the Café could do to help.

Occasionally, something quite out of the ordinary happened. On 13 April 2005, a boy was found in possession of a BB gun. The gun was confiscated and the matter reported to the police. All of a sudden, ten police from the Armed Response Unit arrived, with a dog. Fortunately, Dot was able to intercept them on the Terrace and tell them that she had the gun in the office. That gave the staff time to escort the users inside. Otherwise, the armed police might have burst into the Cafe, with possible serious consequences. As it was, they followed her into the back office and, when she turned after retrieving the gun from the filing cabinet, they had their guns trained on her. Quite scary! The boy was arrested and started attending the Turnaround project. Both he and his mother were given one-to-one counselling.

In another incident in September of that year, two BNP supporters, aged about 30, threw the Boogie Box down into Victoria Street and then attacked a black user. When staff went to his aid, they were attacked. The police response on this occasion was poor, and the Cafe later received an apology, followed by increased attention from those on the beat. Besides being distressing for the users and staff, there was concern that any passer-by might have thought that the two men were being attacked by those in the Cafe.

There were occasionally unwelcome visits from undesirable adults. For example, in June 2006, two middle-aged men were on the Terrace chanting neo-Nazi stuff and, the following month, two younger men shouted that the Café was "full of black b.....s" as they passed

There was also excitement on 19 December 2008 when the Cafe had to be evacuated when Kushi's in Victoria Street went on fire!

Danish students

Jydsk Paedagog Seminarium in Aarhus continued to send students to 6VT for training. They were involved mainly in the drop-in but were also given experience of working in the NiteZone programme.

Bebo Account

The Cafe set up its own Bebo account in May 2007, and over 200 users signed up to its Jobs Blog. What was really interesting was that several former Cafe users had also logged in. The staff monitored everything entered on the account by Cafe users. It was also used to great effect, along with radio and texts, to warn users that there would be no drop-in when the Terrace was snowed-in in January 2010.

The police used the BEBO site to help trace runaways.

Baby Think it Over

Concerned about the number of teenage pregnancies and the glamour that having a baby seemed to have for some teenagers, 6VT in 2009 ran this programme, for males and females, to bring home to young people the pressures and responsibilities of parenting. Life-size simulator baby dolls, with realistic computerised responses, helped them to experience some of the demands of baby care. In particular, the 4-week course highlighted the conflicts that looking after a baby can create for those who believe that they can continue with the same life-style that their non-parent friends can have. The four-week course concluded with a residential for 6VT's temporary mums. (All the young "dads" had already dropped out despite their promise to stand by their child!) The "mums" took their simulator babies (by bus and train) to a caravan park where they lived for two days and nights with the babies, which were programmed to be very unsettled, so that they required a high level of care, day and night. By the end of the 48 hours, the young mums had become highly fraught, bad-tempered, exhausted and generally unhappy. The "Think it over" message had gone well and truly home.

Art and Drama

In 2009, 6VT hosted a collaborative art exhibition "*Urban Rhythms*" which featured the work of Susie Keith and Mike Daniels — both strong supporters of 6VT. Mike, the front man of Groove Armada had presented the awards at 6VT's annual event in 2008, and Susie had produced an amazing painting of Victoria Terrace. The exhibition was sponsored by First People Solutions, and the profits were shared between 6VT and Streetwork UK.

In March 2009, twelve users went to the theatre to see the Pied Piper HipHop production.

In September 2009, 6VT co-produced with EmeraldBlue "The Cock and Bull Story". The play, first produced in the 1980s, addresses working class attitudes to sexuality and highlights how male violence can dominate emotional intelligence. It demonstrated that issues relating to sexuality were dealt with in much the same way as they were in the 1980s. A group of 6VT youth workers and young people went along to watch the play in the Brunton Theatre, and one 15-year old described it as "minted".

In January 2010, users were shown a film about the holocaust. The reaction of most of them was, "Did this really happen?" and "You shouldn't have shown us such an upsetting film."

Remote Reporting Site

In the early part of 2009, the Café was designated a Remote Reporting Site, i.e. a place which could receive anonymous calls about crimes. The Café made this new site known to users through its BEBO site, and the police were responsible for publicising its existence more widely. Though the information from the calls could not be used in court, they provided the police with useful intelligence.

Governance

Since some trusts were unhappy about applicants having a paid employee as Company Secretary, it was agreed on 22 April 2008 that Caroline Kehoe should take on that role.

Since the size of the operations at the Cafe were now huge compared with its early days, it was agreed that more than three Directors were required. On 13 January 2009, the size of the Board was doubled with the election of Donald Gorrie, Alex Justice and Caroline Kehoe as Directors.

Staff restructuring

Because of the increased activity of the Cafe, and particularly the development of NiteZone, the Board decided at the beginning of 2008 that a complete staff restructuring was required.

New job descriptions and contracts were drawn up. All staff were told that they had to buy into the new arrangements. Existing staff were put on a new one-year contract which gave them a pay increase, but they were warned that, if the NiteZone contract was not renewed, they would revert to their existing salaries. A cost of living pay increase of 2.3% was made without waiting to discover what increase the Council staff would receive. The 2.3% was later increased to 3% following the national agreement.

In view of the excellent work that Fiona Horne was doing in securing funding from a wide range of trusts, it was agreed in February 2008 that she should become Development Coordinator and be put on a permanent contract of 21 hours per week. Dot's involvement on so many outside committees ensured that 6VT was always on the front foot when an opportunity arose to extend the range of services it provided. The main aim of Fiona's appointment was to relieve Dot of some of her administrative load, but it was also advisable that someone was in charge during her absence. Besides acting as Dot's deputy, Fiona acted as an organising link between the different branches of the Cafe's work. She also became responsible for preparing all funding applications and developing IT within the Cafe.

Anti-bullying

In November 2009, the Scottish Government gave 6VT £1,000 to organise an anti-bullying week. On the final night of this "Respect Me" project, Sarah Boyack MSP chaired a panel of experts on youth issues in the Scottish Parliament from 6-8 pm. It was attended by large numbers of young people who voiced their concerns very clearly. The responses from the Panel were disappointing, however, and it was felt that the event had only scratched the surface of the problem. The Board therefore recommended that another event should be arranged early in 2010 when it was hoped that more than token answers would be given. Nothing came of this suggestion.

Finances

On 31 March 2004, the Cafe's unrestricted funds stood at £52,925 but, by the end of the next financial year, these had dropped to £36,567, partly because there were fewer room hires, but mainly because there was now no income from the EGO discos and the Summer Cafe which had both been major sources of income. By the end of March 2006, the unrestricted funds had dropped still further to £20,203.

The Board decided in February 2007 to set up a small Finance Committee to monitor the short-term and long-term strategies of the Café, including the amount charged for administration costs in providing the services. Not a great deal came of this, however.

While all other projects were adequately funded, funding for the drop-in had always been a problem, since it depended almost entirely on the revenue grant received from the Council which didn't keep pace with inflation. It stood at £32,640 in 2001-02 and 2002-03, was increased to £33,293 for 2003-04, to £33,959 in 2004-05 and to £34,638 in 2005-06.

There appeared to be a big increase to £50,294 in 2006-07, but this was due to a structural change. Up to 2005, the Council had supplemented the revenue grant by seconding and paying for part-time youth workers. In 2006-07, the Council stopped doing this and consolidated the contribution of the part-timers within the revenue grant by adding £15,656 to it. The new revenue grant of £50,294 became the benchmark for future years, and the Cafe became responsible for National Insurance and the holiday and employment rights of these staff.

A new Council Administration was formed in May 2007, and it set about reducing expenditure. The Cafe's annual grant was pegged at £50,294 but, as a one-off for one year only, that was topped up to £58,806 because of the important work 6VT was doing, and that was increased to £60,230 in the following year. It has stuck at that figure ever since then, but it was gratifying to note that the Council did not reduce 6VT's grant at times when other voluntary organisations were having their grants cut. The fact remained, however, that the revenue grant never matched the increasing costs of running the drop-in facility.

The Cafe, of course, received other grants from the Council for specific tasks. For example, in 2008-09, Community Safety gave £30,000 for ClubZone, and there were four Service Level Agreements:

- £36,000 from the Education, Children and Families Department for Turnaround
- £21,363 from Supporting People for Keysteps
- £15,871 from Education, Children and Families for the ISMS project
- £227,157 from Education, Children and Families for Nitezzone (ICSS)

There were also two grants from Cash Back for Communities:

- £15,857 for the Step Up (Stable Management) project, and
- £9,108 for the summer programme

In that year also, there were other small grants:

- £2,130 from the John Watson's Trust to fund Christmas activities
- £4,210 from Lothian and Borders Police to help deal with gangs
- £8,314 from Lloyds TSB for the third instalment of the Culture Worker grant

The following donations were also gratefully received in 2008-09:

- £3,000 from HBOS
- £1,000 from St Giles' Cathedral
- £100 from St Columba's Free Church
- £200 from the Rotary Club of Braids
- £40 from Sara Ferrier
- £126 from the young people towards their outings

6VT attracted a lot of support from outsiders. For example, in June 2007, in appreciation of the work Dot had done for the Children's Hearings, Lady Kirkwood invited the Cafe to apply for a grant from a small private fund called the Daisy Chain Trust. That resulted in a donation of £2,000.

And, on 26 September 2009, young people from St Giles' Cathedral took part in a music marathon from 12.30 pm to 5 pm in aid of 6VT funds. They raised £250, and this was topped up by one of their employers and the church so that the final total raised was £1,426.

The following table shows how the scale of operations had grown over the years:

	Income	Expenditure	surplus (deficit)
2001-02	£156,411	£139,199	£17,212
2002-03	£228,055	£179,107	£48,948
2003-04	£293,777	£239,442	£54,335
2004-05	£210,946	£257,934	(£46,988)
2005-06	£223,169	£297,358	(£74,189)
2006-07	£298,765	£253,837	£44,928
2007-08	£328,557	£281,264	£47,293
2008-09	£499,891	£410,343	£89,548
2009-10	£517,321	£534,474	(£17,153)
2010-11	£383,548	£444,404	(£60,856)
2011-12	£446,507	£437,518	£8,989
2012-13	£451,218	£417,322	£33,896

By 2008, the Cafe was clearly handling a lot of money, and most of the time it was running at a surplus. But the table shows how a healthy surplus can quickly turn to a deficit. The future became particularly bleak after the Credit Crunch which followed the collapse of the banking system. All funding was being squeezed, and nothing was certain. For example, in February 2010, the funding for Turnaround was stopped completely without any warning.

A major stumbling block in applying for grants was that most trusts refused to give money to an ongoing activity like the drop-in. The application had to be for a sizeable new project with specific aims. With the introduction of Nitezone, space within the Cafe was now at a premium and it was no longer possible to start new big projects. Since major grants were now out of the question, a new strategy of applying for smaller grants from more trusts was adopted.

Ensuring cash flow is crucial for any business and the Cafe was no exception. Relatively small things could damage the cash flow. In June 2005, for example, a mix-up over the payment of a cheque for Turnaround resulted in that fund being overdrawn by £5,724.

Although it was now handling very large sums of money, much of this money was restricted, i.e. it was tied up in meeting the commitments to the many outside contracts which 6VT had. In April 2008, the Cafe's cash flow was seriously threatened when an e-mail was received from Health and Social Care to the effect that they would no longer fund organisations in advance, and there were rumours that all Council departments would follow suit. Such a policy had caused cash flow problems for the Cafe in the past because staff had to be paid before any grants were received; and some organisations had had money taken back from them without discussion at the end of a project. The Board therefore decided that, if the Council adopted such a policy as a general rule, written guarantees would have to be sought before the Cafe undertook any project on the Council's behalf.

it was pointed out that running costs had tripled because of the increased work involved in dealing with clients' problems and in travelling to meetings (e.g. in 2008-09, the phone bill was £4,620 and the travel bill was over £8,784). It was also important to have enough money to deal with redundancies should the revenue from grants be cut, and to avoid having to stop various projects abruptly. In November 2009, therefore, the Board began to carry out regular checks to ensure that, even if the Café was forced to wind up suddenly through eviction, it could still meet all its commitments.

In June 2008, the five-year lease of the office in the Upper Bow expired, but the Boys' Brigade agreed to extend it for another 10 years. However, the rent was increased from £4,000 to £5,500 per annum, paid quarterly. At the same time, the Boys' Brigade had hinted that they would really like to sell the building, but they would be expecting around £100,000 for it.

The Board therefore decided to set up of a reserve fund in the form of a Capital Development Fund in the hope that the Cafe might be able to buy the office at some time. Before taking this decision, however, they confirmed that setting up such a fund would not affect the level of grant from the Council. It was also agreed that this fund would be “reserved for” rather than “restricted to” the purchase of the office. That would allow the money to be used for another purpose should an emergency arise. The Office Purchase Account was opened in March 2009 and, by September 2009, there was £60,000 in it.

By 2004, the Cafe usually held well over £100,000 in the bank between the Restricted and Unrestricted funds and, following the banking crisis in 2008, there was concern that money would be lost if the bank collapsed. It was decided at the start of 2009, therefore, to split all the funds between two accounts to get the benefit of the Government protection scheme which guaranteed savings up to £50,000 (later increased to £85,000 in 2010). It was further agreed that the money received for the secondment of Dot and Gill Burnside to the Brae should be deposited in the new account to start off the Capital Development Fund.

In October 2009, the Council decided that all grants of over £50,000 should be moved from the Revenue Budget to become contracts. This had no effect on the Café’s finances, however.

In the middle of 2009, the Board began to turn its attention to making pensions available to the staff. Staff had regularly rejected the option of joining a Stakeholder Pension. In September 2009, a summary paper was presented to them of another scheme called Salary Sacrifice, which it was thought might prove more attractive. Under it, employees gave up part of their salary in return for the employer paying the reduction into the scheme. There appeared to be benefits for both employer and employee, but great care had to be taken by both sides before deciding to implement the scheme. A pension specialist visited the Cafe in November 2009 to explain the options and, in January 2010, Standard Life was asked for a quotation, but they were only interested in facilitating pensions for individuals. A group pension would not generate enough profit.

Since there continued to be no interest among the staff and since the date when companies were bound by law to offer staff a pension scheme had been deferred to 2018, it was agreed to drop the matter for the present, but to keep a watching brief on new legislation and also to keep consulting the staff on the kind of package they might like.

Annual General Meetings

Annual General Meetings now followed a well-defined pattern. They were held in a neighbouring church hall in order to accommodate the large number of people who attended (usually upwards of 100) — representatives of organisations which worked with young people, the families of users, many of the users themselves, and a principal guest who spoke to the meeting and presented awards and certificates. Formal business was kept to a minimum, the meeting was chaired by a user and users provided all the entertainment. There was always a DVD prepared by Fiona Horne which highlighted the events of the year. In other words, it was not so much an AGM as a showcase and celebration of the achievements of 6VT during the previous year. At the end of the meeting, everyone adjourned to the Cafe where they mingled and were treated to a buffet and non-alcoholic refreshments.

Research Project

At the beginning of 2005, a young researcher at Edinburgh University began visiting the Café. She felt that there were so many interesting things going on that she asked if she could begin preparing a major research project on the work of the Café. Really big money for this sort of project was available through

the Lottery Fund and European structural funds. A similar project in Australia had been successfully marketed as an effective model for working with young people.

This was something that the Café had always wanted to do but had never had the necessary resources. Moreover, approaching the research in this way would give it an academic standing that in-house research could never achieve. The Board therefore agreed in principle but, before committing itself, it insisted that there had to be a written contract establishing, among other things, the ownership of the final report and the right to any royalties.

It was to be a two-year study which concentrated on the reasons for 6VT's success — its ethos, type of staffing, style of working with the young people, etc. To bring more reality to the work, the researcher proposed to involve in the research around eight young people who were likely to continue using the Café for the duration of the research. They would receive a small remuneration for this.

It was all very exciting and, in June 2005, an application for a research grant of £124,000 was submitted to the Lottery Fund. A first stage interview was held in September 2005, but it all came to nothing because the application was rejected in March 2006. The grounds for rejection were that the University's charges were too great, and the adjudicator did not think that the young people could be relied on to work on the project for ten hours per week over two years. There were also so many other demands on the Lottery money.

The researcher had been so confident of success that she asked if she could begin work immediately, and various documents were handed over to her including all the nightly diaries and reports that had already been written. Unfortunately, these were never returned to 6VT and this, combined with the fact that a lot of data was lost when a new computer system had to be installed, meant that much detailed factual information was completely lost. This explains why there are so many gaps in the statistical data to be found in Appendix 8.

Chapter 14: Riddle's Court

Riddle's Court is an "A" Listed building of great historical and architectural importance set within the World Heritage Site of the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh. It is set behind the Royal Mile with access through a close from the Lawnmarket. The first of the present buildings dates back to the late sixteenth century, and various additions were made so that by the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries it had become one of Old Edinburgh's most fashionable residences occupied by members of the aristocracy and the rich merchant class.

Following the construction of Victoria Street and Victoria Terrace, Riddle's Court went into a period of decline before there was a revival in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Most significant in this revival was the acquisition of the building in 1889 by Patrick Geddes, who championed a new form of urban planning which cleared away squalor and the worst of the existing buildings to make life more bearable for the residents while preserving the best of the buildings. As a sociologist, he was also interested in using the building as a learning centre and, as a symbol of this intent, he inscribed the words *VIVENDO DISCIMUS (by living we learn)* above the court archway. His dreams never quite reached maturity.

However, in 1948, the City of Edinburgh Council took ownership, carried out necessary repairs and opened Riddle's Court as an education in-service centre. The centre was active in the early 1970s, but it became less popular as other in-service centres opened up and that resulted in a period of neglect during which the state of the building deteriorated seriously.

In April 2008, the 6VT Board learned that the Patrick Geddes Society was considering putting in a bid for the building and that the Council was considering the possibility of using at least part of the building to extend its ISMS work in collaboration with 6VT. By June, the Cockburn Association (of which Patrick Geddes had been an influential member in his time) was acting for the Patrick Geddes Society and the Board decided to write to the Association asking them to support the Café's efforts to have use of Riddle's Court for its important ICSS work. It was made clear that the Café's interest in the property was limited to providing an educational base for the ICSS programme (group work, counselling, etc) and possibly using the flat for crisis accommodation. It would not be used as an extension of the drop-in facility. In October 2008, architects from the Cockburn Conservation Trust spent almost an hour looking at every part of the Café as part of a feasibility study for the whole building. It was revealed at that time that the Council was trying to sell the building for £1 million. That bid failed.

In June 2009, Donald Gorrie and Henry Philip attended a lecture on Riddle's Court organised by the Cockburn Conservation Trust. The lecturer said that he thought 6VT's proposal was most appropriate because of the historical link with the Workers Educational Association which was already based there. He added that the stairway between the Café and Riddle's Court had been "unceremoniously capped" in the 1960s, and that several rooms had been turned into office accommodation and were no longer worthy of conservation. Following that, 6VT asked the Council if it might visit the building to see which parts might be suitable for use by 6VT. The Council sent an official to check out the proposal, and he concluded that extending 6VT into Riddle's Court seemed a good option. The business plan which had been prepared when No.2 India Buildings was under consideration was resurrected and sent to Councillor MacLaren, Convener of the Education, Children and Families Committee. It was decided in the end, however, that that business plan was not suitable for what was now proposed as it had concentrated mainly on providing office accommodation for various Council support agencies rather than on extending provision for the young people. At the same time, the Board reiterated that 6VT would be willing to be a partner with the Patrick Geddes Society but not if the plan included the use of the Café for receptions as this would disrupt the work of the Café.

Shortly after that, however, the Board began to be concerned about what was going on as it had not been asked to be involved in discussions about the future of Riddle's Court, and it had heard that there were moves to find alternative accommodation for 6VT. For example, towards the end of 2009, the Board was asked to visit Trinity Apsse near John Knox House in the High Street. This vaulted property was completely unsuitable for 6VT's needs and, at any rate, it transpired that it had already been promised to another organisation.

At the same time, Donald Gorrie held discussions with Adam Wilkinson who had been appointed Director of Edinburgh World Heritage Trust in April 2008. He was very supportive of the 6VT proposals because social inclusion was an important aspect of World Heritage's agenda. He tried but failed in his attempts to arrange a meeting between 6VT and the architect who was dealing with Riddle's Court.

Joyce Connor, Scottish Director of the Workers Educational Association, whose offices were in Riddle's Court, was also becoming concerned. She told Mac Wilkinson, Chair of 6VT, that she was quite frustrated by the whole process. WEA had initiated the "Save Riddle's Court" campaign, but she felt that the consultants had run away with the project and had not involved WEA in discussions for many months. She felt completely marginalised and commented that it was a nonsense to imagine that Riddle's Court could be a viable source of income through social functions. Since WEA had no money, it would be forced to relocate away from Edinburgh if ejected from Riddle's Court.

On 15 December 2009, Councillor MacLaren, Chair of Education, Children and Families, brought Council officers and Una Richards (Director of the Alba Trust) to the Cafe to meet Café representatives. It was not a pleasant meeting, The Café representatives had assumed that the meeting was called to hear about the Café's claim to remain in its existing premises as well as the proposals from Alba. However, after describing how Riddle's Court would be refurbished and that the cost would be in the region of £4.8 million, not including the cost of installing a lift, Mrs Richards went on to say that the success of the project depended on incorporating 4-6 Victoria Terrace to create an impressive frontage for the refurbished building. She did not seem to be interested in the people who would use the building, only its architectural features. Mrs Richards did admit, however, that including youth in the grant application would increase the chances of obtaining funding.

The Café representatives complained that they had been excluded from previous consultation and had been brought in only when the decision appeared to have been made to take over its premises. Even then, an embargo had been placed on talking publicly about the proposals. Prior to the meeting, Mrs Richards had not set foot in the Café, and she, the Councillor and the Council officers all appeared to display appalling ignorance of the extent of 6VT's operations. Although the 6VT representatives emphasised the volume, variety, history and importance to Edinburgh's young people of the services provided by 6VT, and the strength and extent of the enthusiastic support for the Cafe locally and nationally, it was clear that it would be difficult to persuade the Councillor and Mrs Richards to accept proposals which did not include giving up the present Cafe premises. The Cafe representatives made it clear that they would resist being evicted. They also expressed surprise that the Chair of the committee which was supposed to protect young people was threatening to close 6VT down if it did not co-operate with the refurbishment proposals which had been prepared by the Alba Trust.

The only positive outcome of the meeting was that the Café was given two months in which to develop its ideas on how it could contribute to the overall project.

After the meeting, the Board decided to resist the temptation to start a public campaign against its eviction, including a formal complaint against Councillor MacLaren, and instead continued to try to persuade Mrs Richards to spend some time in 6VT to make herself more knowledgeable about 6VT's activities.

It also prepared an educational case which explained the major contribution that 6VT was already making to the Scottish Government's policies in dealing with vulnerable young people and the contribution it could make to a Learning Centre which had local participation, including youth, at its core. Such a scheme would incorporate practical training in youth work and also the promotion of the community development ideas of Patrick Geddes through attachments and visits to 6VT and discussions on how to learn from the work of 6VT and replicate it elsewhere.

6VT was willing to become part of a "Riddle's Court Partnership" which would retain the present Café as a going concern and would offer the possibility of the Patrick Geddes Project using 6VT to enhance its training courses, study sessions and seminars through short-term attachments, study visits and interaction with the young people and their families in 6VT. At the same time, 6VT could benefit from the use of rooms in Riddle's Court to develop its training, educational and community activities, as well as securing much-needed quiet areas for counselling.

A whole range of courses could be developed. One potential group would be UK students training for youth work, who would benefit from the practical experience of working alongside Café staff. Another group could be young people who were not in employment, education or training. They could benefit from acquiring personal and social skills, self confidence and some knowledge of possible careers — all of which could help them begin developing a positive CV. Yet a third group could be drawn from overseas students already training for youth work who could add to their theoretical work a period of attachment to 6VT to experience good youth work in action.

Despite its strong preference for the *status quo*, the Board would nevertheless investigate in more detail whether satisfactory alternative accommodation could be found for 6VT in what was presently known as Riddle's Court. However, any arrangement which did not guarantee a separate area set aside for the exclusive and uninterrupted use of 6VT would be unacceptable. Many of the 6VT users lacked stability in their lives, and having to move from room to room, wherever one was available, would add to that instability. If a lift had to be installed in the Café premises, it should be programmed not to stop at the floor occupied by the Café. Brilliant architectural design should not be allowed to drive the whole venture.

Over the next two months, several phone calls and emails were made to Mrs Richards inviting her to the Cafe. She did not reply to any of them. Adam Wilkinson also failed in attempts to call a joint meeting. He remained supportive of the idea of making funding available for building works required to make Riddle's Court a dynamic new youth work centre, especially if it did not involve the eviction of 6VT.

On 4 February 2010, when only a few weeks of the period of grace granted to 6VT remained, Councillor MacLaren wrote to the Chairman of 6VT saying that, following "*the acrimonious meeting*" in December, she had thought long and hard about the role of 6VT in the proposed new development and, "in view of the evident unhappiness of the Board and their reluctance to be associated with the project," she had decided to recommend that "*the Council and its partners should go ahead with the recommendation of Riddle's Court, leaving 6VT to continue their work in their existing premises,*" even though that would increase the cost of the project. There would inevitably be some disruption to 6VT but it would be kept to a minimum.

There were no more developments during the rest of 2010, although Adam Wilkinson kept trying unsuccessfully to arrange a meeting with the various parties that were interested in the development of Riddle's Court. There was a rumour, however, that the Alba Conservation Trust — a partnership of Cockburn Conservation Trust and Scottish Historic Buildings Trust — would be given the lease of Riddle's Court. In January 2011, Friends of Riddle's Court Edinburgh (FORCE) invited representatives of

the WEA and Diverse Attractions, which already used the building, and 6VT to discuss the future use of the building.

At its regular meeting on 8 March 2011, the Board was told that it had been learned at second hand that a report on the future of Riddle's Court was to go before the Education, Children and Families Committee on Tuesday, 15 March 2011. Even though it was understood that the report was ready for publication, access to it in time for the Board meeting had been denied, and the Board had to re-convene on 9 March to discuss its contents. These were alarming. Section 2.8 of the Report held out the possibility of a lift running from the Café's premises to the upper floors, and there was now no guarantee that 6VT would be entitled to remain in its premises in Victoria Terrace since it was only to be "accommodated" within the refurbished Riddle's Court.

The Board sent a letter to every member of the Education, Children and Families Committee pointing out that the promise made by Councillor MacLaren in her letter of February 2010 was about to be broken. While the Board continued to be willing to work with other interested parties in the development of Riddle's Court as a Learning Centre, relocating 6VT from its existing premises in Victoria Terrace was not an option which they would consider. 6VT worked with vulnerable young people and their families seven days a week throughout the year and to be simply "accommodated" within the refurbished Riddle's Court was not acceptable. Good educational practice demanded that there should be a dedicated space which these vulnerable people could call their "home". Having to attend different venues, even within the same building, would be most upsetting for them, because what they particularly needed in their lives was some stability.

The future of 6VT's valuable work with vulnerable young people seemed to depend on whether or not a lift shaft would start from within 6VT, and it was particularly galling that 6VT's fate was likely to be decided without the Council ascertaining whether it was technically feasible to install the proposed lift. No technical survey had been carried out in the eighteen months since the original proposals were published.

The letter to members of the Committee had the desired effect since paragraph 2.8 in the Report, which left open the possibility of using the Café as an entrance to Riddle's Court, was removed following strong opposition from members of the Committee. However, that did not completely remove the threat, and the Board realised that they would have to be vigilant to ensure that the proposal was not resurrected at a future date. The report still proposed to give the lease of Riddle's Court to the Alba Conservation Trust, with the Scottish Historic Buildings Trust in charge of operations. The Board also agreed to become members of FORCE and to work closely with that body to protect the interests of 6VT, the WEA and Diverse Attractions and to ensure that the project was not driven only by architectural considerations.

The Board continued to press for greater clarification and succeeded in getting a joint meeting with Council officials, Mrs Richards of SHBT and the Board arranged for 3 May 2011. That meeting did not achieve very much, however. Although the offending Clause 2.8 had been removed, SHBT would still be in complete control when the lease was signed and there was no protection for 6VT and the existing tenants, the WEA and Diverse Attractions. There was particular concern over the powers of the proposed Property Manager in the allocation of space since profitability might be his/her top priority rather than the human aspects of how Riddle's Court would be used. 6VT required a permanent dedicated area for its work with the young people, and that area would have to be physically separated from the other activities of Riddle's Court since it was dealing with many high risk young people.

At the joint meeting, Mrs Richards did not respond to the Board's protestations about the importance of stability in the lives of those attending 6VT. Instead, she reported on the progress made regarding the lease. SHBT required a five-year lease to enable it to apply for funding. She hoped to do that by 7

June but, if that deadline was missed, the application would be postponed until August. She promised that, if the application was successful, SHBT would then involve the various stakeholders, including the Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Scotland, in more detailed discussions. It was hoped that funding would be in place within one year, but it would be two or three years before it was known whether the project was viable or not. That was why the five-year lease was necessary. Raising the last million pounds was always the most difficult in any project. As soon as the lease agreement was signed, SHBT planned to take over the caretaker's flat as its headquarters. On the matter of the lift, Mrs Richards said it would be very wasteful to stop the lift at the level of the Lawnmarket and then decide at a later stage that it should be extended to Victoria Terrace. The lift could terminate at Victoria Terrace, but that did not necessarily mean that access had to be extended that far. If initial funding became available, some of it would be used to ascertain whether the installation was technically possible. She acknowledged that the work of 6VT would be seriously disrupted during the installation and that most of the back room in the Cafe would be lost.

Although the project would undoubtedly have to wash its face, she said that this did not necessarily mean that subsidised users would be excluded. She admitted that having 6VT as part of the funding proposal would help the application, but she insisted that 6VT was vulnerable without SHBT. If the project did not go ahead, the property could well go on the market again, and any developer would certainly wish to have the Cafe frontage as part of the deal. She asked the Board to prepare a brief detailing its needs, and they should ignore the existing spaces in the building as they could be altered if necessary. The Board agreed to do this and to discuss the issues further with the Pilotlight representatives who were presently giving the Cafe advice.

The Board concluded by emphasising the importance of Mrs Richards and Council officials taking up the long-standing invitation to visit the Cafe when it was in use so that they could better understand the issues that were being raised. They clearly did not have any idea of the vulnerability of the youngsters who attended 6VT nor indeed how disruptive they could be, not on an occasional basis but regularly. Having the Café's users mixing with distinguished guests might not create the sort of image that the SHBT proposals envisaged. Mrs Richards appeared to be concerned only about the premises, whereas the young people were 6VT's main concern.

Following the joint meeting, a report went to the Council's Finance and Resources Committee on 7 June 2011 which seemed to leave the Café as tenants of the Council rather than of SHBT. Although the statement in paragraph 3.6 that "4-6 Victoria Terrace does not form part of the proposed lease to SHBT" was reassuring, the suggestion in the remainder of the paragraph that the Council and SHBT would take "all reasonable steps to ensure the Youth Café suffers as little disruption as possible" still seemed to leave open the possibility that the lift might start from within the Café. Also, the mention in paragraph 3.7 that SHBT would have the option of including the Café in their lease "in the event that the Café decide to relocate from 4-6 Victoria Terrace at some future date" showed that the original plan to use the Café as the main entrance to Riddle's Court was still lingering in the background. It was also noted that FORCE and Diverse Attractions were not mentioned in the Report.

The Board was not aware of any new developments during the rest of 2011, apart from the granting of the five year lease to SHBT and the fact that Mrs Richards had taken over as Manager of Riddle's Court and was now based there. She continued to ignore invitations to visit 6VT during the drop-in.

The Board met a senior official in the Education, Children and Families Department on 9 January 2012 in an attempt to be kept up to date on the latest developments. This produced very little that was new. SHBT had so far been promised £1.4 million by the Heritage Lottery Fund towards the target of £5.8 million. WEA which had sprawled through most of Riddle's Court had had its space very much reduced so that SHBT could proceed with the works. The official said that a report going to a Council meeting on 31 January would confirm that 6VT would remain in situ and its landlord would be the Council, not SHBT.

As far as he could tell, bringing the lift down to Victoria Terrace level was still in the plans of SHBT. When 6VT's work with vulnerable young people was raised, he admitted that the authority's record on Positive Destinations for school leavers was not good — 25th out of 32 authorities — but Positive Destinations and Early Intervention remained the Council's top priorities.

At a meeting convened by FORCE on 18 January, Mrs Richards stated that the amount promised by the Heritage Lottery Fund had risen to £2.4 million and further applications were being made to Historic Scotland and other trusts. SHBT was receiving a management fee from the Council which was equivalent to the loss the Council was making on the upkeep of the building. SHBT had in return taken on responsibility for any losses. She said that, since she and her colleagues were basically "buildings people", she intended to appoint someone who would work with stakeholders to put life into the building by organising how the building would be used. SHBT did not want a dead building. 6VT asked to be treated as one of the stakeholders.

On 31 January 2012, the Education, Children and Families Committee passed a motion which stated categorically that 6VT was entitled to remain in Victoria Terrace whatever plans emerged for the development of Riddle's Court.

In March 2012, an official who had been designated to liaise with SHBT visited 6VT during one of the drop-in sessions and emphasised that the Cafe and Riddle's Court were two separate buildings and that Mrs Richards had no interest in the Cafe area. However, he did ask if 6VT would be willing to relocate if suitable alternative accommodation could be found. It was noted that WEA was now renting a room from the Cafe for its Exploring Books course because so many of the existing rooms in Riddle's Court had been taken over by SHBT.

Following the Council elections in May 2012, a Labour/SNP coalition replaced the previous LibDem/SNP coalition.

In June 2012, SHBT hand-delivered a letter to 6VT stating that access to the Café would be required in the following week to carry out survey work. There was no indication of what this involved and it was therefore not known if the work of the Café would be disrupted. The surveyors spent two days surveying, not just the Cafe, but the whole of Riddle's Court.

In August 2012, the Board sent the Council a series of questions regarding developments in Riddle's Court. They also asked officials to convene a meeting with Mrs Richards so that they could find out what was happening.

Things went quiet again following that. There was no response to the set of questions and no meeting was convened. Towards the end of January 2013, Councillor Karen Doran, who had joined the Management Committee of 6VT following the Council elections, began to press officials about the lack of information flow to 6VT, especially regarding the bigger development plans for Riddle's Court. The Board was very keen to learn what medium and long term impact that development would have on the services provided by 6VT. The Council sent another letter to Mrs Richards asking her to host a meeting at which she would share the current position with people at the meeting. That letter also emphasised that better communication was required.

There was no response from Mrs Richards, and the Board became even more anxious about the mixed messages that were reaching them. For example, on Wednesday, 6 February, a member of staff took a call requesting permission to come to 6VT on the Friday of that week "to scan the floor where the lift is going." The caller made no attempt to speak to the person in charge. Dot complained to the Council how disturbing this sort of thing was for the staff who were becoming increasingly worried about the future of 6VT and how this would impact on their employment. There were also rumours that other

venues were being sought for 6VT, even though there had been repeated assurances that 6VT could remain in situ, whatever was happening in Riddle's Court.

Since there had been no reply to the series of questions which 6VT had sent to the Council in August 2012, the Board decided on 14 February 2013 to write to the Council repeating the questions and restating the importance of the Victoria Terrace site to the future success of 6VT. Young people wanted to get away from the negative aspects of their own locality and refused to go to any building associated with another neighbourhood. The neutrality of the site was one of the features which attracted users from all over the city and beyond and helped to break down barriers. The Board could not do any serious forward planning when the future of 6VT was in doubt, and that also made it more difficult to get grants from funders. Public access through the Café was unacceptable on Child Protection grounds and would have the same effect as closing the Café down. It had also to be remembered that 6VT had undertaken a financial liability by leasing an office in the Upper Bow. It appealed again for Mrs Richards to be asked to meet with the Board.

Councillor Paul Godzik, the new Chairman of Education, Children and Families, came to the Cafe with two officials on 18 March 2013 to meet the Board. After emphasising the high quality of the service which 6VT continued to provide in partnership with the Council, Mac Wilkinson, the Chair of 6VT, expressed concern that SHBT was ignoring the decision of 31 January 2012 and was drawing up plans which included the 6VT premises in its proposals for Riddle's Court.

Councillor Godzik confirmed that his committee had no plans to change its decision and said that he would write to SHBT reminding them that 6VT was not included in the agreement between the Council and SHBT and that 6VT would remain a separate organisation in separate premises. He did ask if 6VT would be willing to relocate if a suitable alternative property could be found (including properties not owned by the Council) within half a square mile of 6VT. In that case, the Council would bear the cost of relocation and bringing the property up to an acceptable standard. Another attempt would be made to persuade SHBT to meet the Board of 6VT. At the close of the meeting, Councillor Godzik was given a copy of the paper "The Case for 6VT remaining at 4-6 Victoria Terrace" together with the DVD illustrating the work of 6VT which had been shown at the 2012 AGM.

Mrs Richards eventually invited the Board to meet her in Riddle's Court on 24 April 2013. At this meeting, she went over the history of the project and showed the plans for the refurbishment. She intended to submit these plans to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 21 May and then to submit them to the Planning Committee in May or June. She denied that SHBT had ever intended to submit plans which did not incorporate the 6VT premises on Victoria Terrace because without kitchens and toilet space at that level the project would not be commercially viable. She made great play of the difficulty of access from the Lawnmarket for building materials and catering. She said there had never been a Plan B. They would have to prepare one if Plan A was rejected, but it was virtually certain that an alternative plan would be rejected by funders. When asked why she had ignored so many invitations to meet with the Board of 6VT, she claimed that SHBT had been told to "keep away" from 6VT. However, she could not at first say who told her this but eventually named the official who was charged with liaising between SHBT and 6VT. He later denied this. Finally, she said that, if SHBT walked away from the project, 6VT would lose out because the Council would be forced to sell the whole property to a developer who would insist on taking over the whole building. Her attitude throughout implied that she looked on 6VT as a glorified youth club. If the Council could not find alternative accommodation, SHBT would allow 6VT to rent Glasite Meeting House in Barony Street which SHBT owned. Having examined the area, the Board decided it was unsuitable because it was far from central, was located in the middle of houses, and at least one of the nearby buildings would put the 6VT users at risk. Mrs Richards promised to send a copy of the Riddle's Court plans to 6VT.

The Board immediately started to lobby politicians, and it was soon clear that Councillor Godzik and his colleagues were unaware of what was going on. Councillor Godzik wrote to the Board assuring them that the Council's position had not changed — that 6VT would not be required to move from Victoria Terrace unless suitable alternative accommodation could be found. At its meeting on 21 May, the Education, Children and Families Committee gave strong backing to 6VT and reaffirmed its promise not to evict 6VT unless suitable alternative accommodation could be found. Efforts by the Council to find alternative accommodation were unsuccessful. All empty properties were examined, but the officials rejected all of them at this stage as unsuitable. There was no response from either the Council or SHBT to the question of who would bear the costs of any relocation, temporary or permanent.

No further information reached 6VT from either the Council or SHBT over the next three months, and the Board breathed a sigh of relief, believing that the position of 6VT was secure.

Some of our People — Past & Present



Donald Gorrie



Dot Horne M.B.E.



Henry Philip



Fiona Horne



Louise Ferguson



Margaret McLean



Steve More

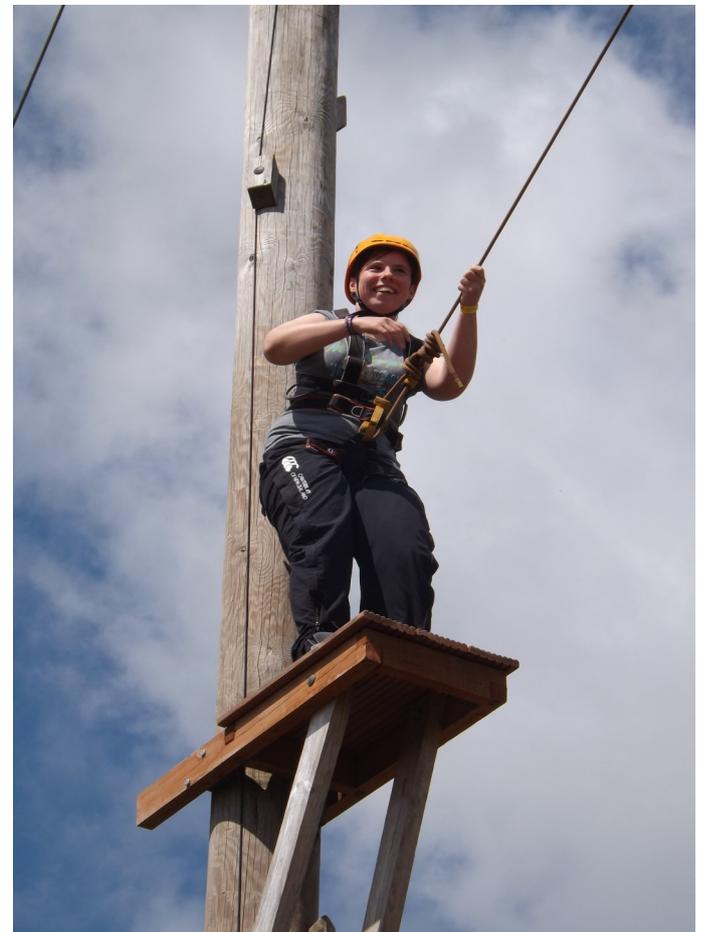


Mac Wilkinson

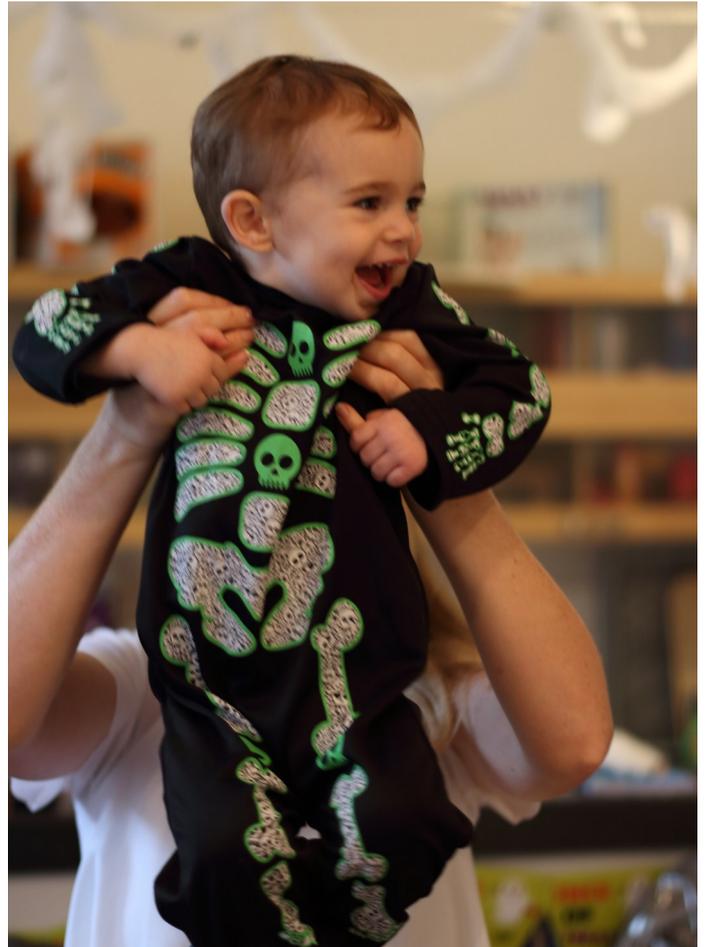


Danny Bradley

User Activities at 6VT Youth Cafe



User Activities at 6VT Youth Cafe



User Activities at 6VT Youth Cafe



Chapter 15: Pilotlight

As it entered a new decade, 6VT was in good heart. Attendances were good, its services were increasingly in demand by policy making bodies, and its future in Victoria Terrace seemed to be assured. The one area that was causing concern was finance, where expenditure was now outpacing income.

In March 2010, Dot wrote to Pilotlight asking if they could help. Pilotlight was set up to work with charities and social enterprises, which had an annual turnover of less than roughly £3 million and were tackling disadvantage in the UK, to help them “think and plan strategically and be more effective, efficient and sustainable.” Through Pilotlight, business leaders volunteer to work as part of a team which coaches and mentors the charity or social enterprise. Each team comprises four skilled business leaders and a dedicated Pilotlight project manager whose task it is to see that the process works. The team works closely with the charity, meeting every month for roughly two hours over a period of a year, not telling the charity what to do but guiding it towards its own solutions. They concentrate on three key areas: preparing a business plan, a marketing plan and a funding strategy. There is no charge for the service.

At the Board meeting in July 2010, Dot reported that 6VT’s application had been successful and that she and the Chairman had been invited to an induction meeting on 28 July. She had been told that it might take up to one and a half years before any real benefits would be obvious.

The first meeting with the Pilotlight team took place on 4 October 2010. The Pilotlighters were Ian Craig of Lothian Buses, Susan Dickie of Visit Scotland, Colin Ewen of Lloyds Banking Group, and Duncan Thomson of Scottish Widows Investment Partnership, with Kerrie Jopling as the project manager. The first two meetings were taken up largely with the team getting an understanding of the ethos of 6VT and the wide range of services it provided. As part of this process, the team held meetings with members of staff as well as reading the literature and meeting representatives of the Board. Each of the remaining meetings was devoted to a particular theme.

Governance

6VT had increased the number of Directors from three to six in 2009, but Pilotlight recommended that the size of the Board should be increased in order to widen its range of expertise. Before this could happen, however, the Board was reduced to five.

Donald Gorrie who had been the driving force behind the setting up of the Café and who had continued to champion it despite his many other interests, suffered a severe stroke towards the end of 2011. He never recovered from it and died on 25 August 2012. The success of the Cafe was due in no small part to Donald's drive and tenacity. Six people who had worked with him in setting up the Cafe attended his funeral. His widow replied expressing her appreciation and asking that her best wishes should be extended to everyone working for the success of the Café.

Although the Management Committee was strengthened by the introduction of new members, it was some time before there was progress on increasing the size of the Board. Christina Burnett, who had served on the Management Committee after retiring from her post as Head of Support to Children and Young People, agreed to become a Director in October 2012, as did Stuart McIvor who had attended meetings as a Councillor up to 2012. Stuart did not stand for re-election in 2012 but had become so interested in 6VT that he asked if he could continue on the Management Committee. Christina brought with her an intimate knowledge and understanding of the workings of the Education, Children and Families Department, while Stuart’s knowledge of committee procedures was an additional benefit.

The Board was increased still further when Jim Bryce, a retired accountant, joined and took over the post of Treasurer in February 2013.

However, this state of affairs did not last long. Gordon Banks, who had served 6VT for eight and a half years including several as Acting Treasurer, decided in February 2013 that, with the Board now greatly increased, this was an ideal time for him to tender his resignation. Besides serving several years as Acting Treasurer, Gordon had made some other major contributions. Besides bringing a business approach to the Board's thinking, not least his constant insistence that grant applications should always contain an element which took account of the value added to any project by the staff's expertise, it was he who introduced 6VT to Pilotlight and did the spadework in having the Café registered as a company limited by guarantee.

Unfortunately, 6VT also lost the services of Stuart Mclvor when he moved to the north of Scotland at the beginning of 2014. That brought the number of Directors back to six, and so the Board decided at its meeting on 22 April 2014 to begin another search for new directors and a number of suggestions were made to extend the Board's expertise.

Strategic Plan

The second area where the Pilotlighters thought improvement was necessary was in forward planning. They criticised the first Development plan which 6VT produced for them in October 2011 as it was more appropriate as an advertising glossy to place before interested parties. What they wanted was a very specific Strategic Plan based on the type of work carried out by 6VT and projecting forward into the next four years. This was not particularly easy for 6VT since most of the projects undertaken by 6VT had emerged spontaneously from a dialogue between the users and staff and from issues that had arisen at Council level which required immediate action. However, an Action Plan covering the period 2011-2014 was ready in May 2012.

Risk Assessment

The Pilotlighters also expressed concern about the load that Dot was carrying, and said that the Board should be carrying more responsibility. Was enough attention being paid to the risk involved in losing key persons?

Marketing

Regarding marketing and branding, it was recommended that 6VT needed a flexible package which highlighted its vision and which could be adjusted to fit the requirements of different funders. It was also suggested that the term "6VT" should be used rather than the word "Café" since the latter gave a misleading impression of the work of 6VT.

Dot was asked to produce some case studies which could be used for marketing. It was noted that 6VT prepared weekly reports on the young people while they are on the ICSS programme, including their involvement in anti-social behaviour. It would be useful if the police could provide statistics about re-offending after the young people had left the programme. Unfortunately, these re-offending statistics did not materialise, and it remains an aim which should be seriously considered.

Finally, following a workshop on Marketing, 6VT was given a comprehensive document to study.

Finance

One of the most urgent topics was Finance since 6VT had run a deficit of £17,153 in 2009-10 and was clearly heading towards an even bigger deficit in 2010-11. The Pilotlighters pointed out that, unless drastic action was taken, 6VT would soon run out of funds. (The final deficit for that year turned out to be £60,856.) It was intended that the December meeting would focus on Finance, but it had to be

postponed to the start of 2011 because of a severe snowstorm. Following a financial review carried out by one of the Pilotlighters, the team expressed concern that most of the Café's funding came from the City of Edinburgh Council and advised that, as part of its risk management strategy, the Board should look into other possible sources in case CEC funding was reduced or removed. The costs of the various projects were unpicked in the hope that unit costs might be linked with added value to help future funding applications.

As far as further expansion was concerned, the Board confirmed that its first priority was to try to find new outlets for the 6VT's existing expertise, rather than to launch out into ventures which would require additional expertise. However, if the ambitious plans for the development of Riddle's Court as an international education centre came to fruition, such an extension might still be considered. In the meantime, the Board would work constructively with those involved in the planning of the refurbishment.

During 2011, there were general worries about severe cuts that all voluntary organisations were likely to face in the coming Council budget following the Credit Crunch. According to Audit Scotland, there was likely to be an 11% cut in Council revenue funding and a 36% cut in capital funding in the years 2011 to 2014. 6VT was protected temporarily from this prospect since it had a service level agreement up to March 2012, but it was a sign of the times that, for the first time in the Café's history, two organisations had failed to pay their bills for rented accommodation, amounting to over £2,000. They were eventually paid.

Despite these worries, the Pilotlighters continued to press the point that drastic action was required and, although Margaret McLean, the Administrator, was keeping the books meticulously, it was not part of her remit to decide on financial strategy. That required a Treasurer and a Finance Committee. The Board immediately set up a Finance Committee, but finding a qualified Treasurer continued to be a problem. Donald Gorrie had agreed on 9 March 2010 to take on the post temporarily and, at the next Board meeting on 11 May, Mac Wilkinson, Alex Justice and Donald were appointed to serve on the newly constituted Finance Committee.

At its first meeting on 12 October 2010, it agreed that its main role would be to examine the existing systems, highlight areas of concern, scrutinise the cash flow and prepare forecasts to enable the Board to make informed decisions. At first, it met for only 30 minutes prior to the Board meeting which was not long enough for in depth discussions.

On 14 June 2011, the Board was told that the Café was still running a deficit, and money had to be withdrawn for running costs from the Yorkshire Building Society account which held the Office Purchase Fund.

Dot brought the staff together to explain the serious financial position and asked them to consider ways of making savings. Closer checks began to be kept on the food store to cut down on wastage; heaters and lights were switched off when rooms were not in use; the Upper Bow office was closed after 6 pm and all staff worked from the Cafe; laptops were switched off when not in use; greater care was taken in purchasing new resources; the length of phone calls was reduced and land lines were used instead of mobiles, where possible; greater use was made of emails, texts and Facebook; photocopying in colour was stopped and a limit was put on the number of extra copies run off; instead of being taken out for coffee, potential clients were entertained in the Café; staff drivers instead of taxis were used to take users home; those using the Family Café had to pay a small charge for food and refreshments.

All of the above made a big difference to running costs, but the biggest savings were undoubtedly in staffing, which accounted for over 80% of all expenditure. No one was made redundant but, when a member of staff left he/she was not replaced or a part-time appointment was made. The staff also helped by being prepared to work more flexible hours. For example, the new INCU project was begun without employing additional staff. This was made possible because it was Café policy to give all

members of staff experience of working on all projects rather than detailing specific staff to specific projects. This resulted in a more efficient use of staff time.

Another concern expressed by the Pilotlighters was the limited sources of funding on which 6VT relied. Almost all of it came from the Council, and this made it particularly vulnerable in times of austerity. More ways had to be found of raising additional income. It was decided that Fiona Horne should join the Finance Committee to discuss grant applications. Funding from trusts now generates around £45,000 per annum.

Pilotlight also illustrated how to emphasise added value. When making an application, the Café usually included an element to cover the administrative costs but, although having a large reserve fund was regarded as good governance by some funders (e.g. Edinburgh Council), it automatically counted against 6VT in other funding applications. Also, very few funders were prepared to award grants for core activities such as the drop-in. They insisted on projects which had a specific outcome targeted to be achieved by a specific date.

Many of the financial problems were solved by following the advice of the Pilotlighters, but the problem of finding a qualified Treasurer continued to prove intractable. When Donald fell ill at the end of 2011, increased efforts were made to find a qualified Treasurer, but these continued to be unsuccessful and, following Donald's death in August 2012, Henry Philip offered to stand in. It was agreed that the amount of business that had to be covered could not be overtaken in 30 minutes. Henceforth, the Finance Committee met in the week preceding the Board meeting, and the Committee began to look at financial issues in much more detail.

Initially, it examined the spreadsheets of income and expenditure over the previous twelve years to satisfy itself that the finances were now on an even keel. It was noted that, although most of the funding came from the City of Edinburgh Council, it was impressive how much had been secured each year from smaller trusts and donors. It then examined the various projects to satisfy itself that an element was included for administrative costs and for the value which staff expertise added to projects.

However, this was just a beginning and it was only when Jim Bryce, a retired accountant, agreed to become Treasurer that the Committee received very detailed analyses to examine at each meeting. Margaret and Jim worked closely together in producing, not only a cash flow picture and projected year-end outcome, but also a "budget" and "actual" comparison for each quarter so that the Board could be assured that it was sticking to its policy of having enough money in reserve to cover three months' running costs and any redundancy payments in the event of the withdrawal of key funding. The huge deficit in the year ending March 2011 was changed to a surplus of £8,989 in the following year and to a surplus of £33,896 in the year ending March 2013.

The Aftermath

As promised, the Pilotlighters met Dot and Mac in June 2012 and they expressed satisfaction with the Action Plan and with the progress made in stemming the outflow of funds. Although technically their involvement was at an end, all of them said they would like to keep in touch with the Café. In most cases these contacts have been informal, but two of them have given considerable practical help.

Ian Craig, Chief Executive of Lothian Buses, arranged for £7,500 in bus vouchers to be available to 6VT in 2012. These vouchers were used regularly for Nitezone users, and they were particularly useful for the Family Café where numbers had dropped because it was very expensive for a parent and children to pay normal fares. Numbers rose again immediately. A log was kept each night giving details of who received the vouchers and whether they turned up or not. The vouchers were also used for Keysteps group work, summer outings and the new INCU project. At the end of the year, 6VT reported to Lothian Buses that they had not used all the allocation, so the 2013 allocation was reduced to £5,100 of

vouchers, which proved adequate. Ian has also become a regular attender at the AGM and he also donated a wooden “Lothian Buses” toy which Family Café children could sit in as part of their play equipment.

Colin Ewen, of the Lloyds Banking Group, has also continued to provide on-going support for 6VT. The fundraising efforts of his team at Lloyds were eligible for the Bank’s employee match giving scheme. Some of the team brought donations of toiletries for young people who have become homeless. During the visit, they met young people on the Keysteps course. At other times, his staff have handed in toys and provided clothes to help young people make a better impression when they go for an interview.

The other Pilotlighters have also kept in touch and provided on-going advice to Dot and her staff.

Chapter 16: Rebranding ICSS (2011-2014)

As reported towards the end of Chapter 12, 6VT's ICSS (NiteZone) contract had been extended to March 2012 to give the Council time to prepare its new strategy. Meantime, the staff continued to build up and adapt their own guidelines as circumstances demanded. For example, it was noted that, although a NiteZone course was supposed to last for only twelve weeks, things seldom worked out as neatly as that. Some of the course members continued beyond the end of the course, and some also continued to use the drop-in facility. Things were not made easier when, towards the end of 2010, the Council's ICSS manager began to ask for statistical returns which reached a level of micro management that was not required by the funding agency. Despite the very difficult task which the staff faced, however, the Board heard in January 2011 that staffing at 6VT had been very stable.

In April 2011, the Board was pleased to learn the good news that three members of NiteZone, accompanied by two members of staff, had been to London as part of a Starbucks project. It was all too short and hurried, but it did introduce these youngsters to new experiences, including flying to London. They were also pleased to hear that, although the new group of youngsters who had joined the course recently presented their usual challenges until they accepted the rules of the Cafe, there was nothing exciting to report. However, some of the other users had raised concerns that bad behaviour on the part of ICSS users seemed to be treated differently from that of ordinary drop-in users. Although ICSS users were less likely to be banned from the Cafe than other users, staff didn't feel that this was an issue as each incident was dealt with on an individual basis.

On 1 November 2011, Dot reported that the Council had begun a review of the whole ICSS service rather than of specific parts of it. She was pleased that this was happening because there were so many aspects of NiteZone (i.e. 6VT's version of the ICSS programme) which did not appear to be fully understood outside 6VT.

During 2011, the number of ICSS referrals declined for some reason, but this was put down to system changes and it was hoped that this would not continue. However, the reduced numbers were still noticeable in June 2012. On the other hand, by the middle of 2012, the Family Café part of the NiteZone programme was really very busy. Its numbers did not depend on referrals, and as many as thirty parents and offspring were attending each Saturday. The families seemed to like the pleasant environment and the activities laid on for them. Attendances were undoubtedly helped by the availability of Lothian Region bus vouchers since travelling costs for a whole family could be expensive. A spin-off for 6VT was that the parents had money to spend on purchases from the cafeteria.

On 26 June 2012 it was reported that the City's ICSS programme had won third place in the Partnership Working Social Services Care accolades.

When the officer, who carried out the third review of 6VT's services, came to discuss her findings with the Board in October 2012, she said that her latest review had produced the same very positive results as the previous reviews. She had sought the views of users, families and other stakeholders. Normally such a consultation produced few responses but, in the case of the 6VT, there was a massive response — and all of it was very positive. The reports which had gone to the Heads of Service stated that investments in the Café's projects were giving the Council very good value for money. She was particularly impressed, not only by the valuable support and advice which users received from the staff, but also by the peer mentoring whereby users helped and supported one another through difficulties. Having now spent a lot of time in the Cafe, she felt at home there, and she thought that the users were now comfortable with her. That meant that she could be sure that she was getting a true picture of what was going on at the Café, including many features which were not officially included in the review. Previously, the Council did not have good evidence of whether it was getting value for money from its investments. It now had that evidence thanks to case studies and the views of users.

However, despite receiving such praise, the Board raised with her various problems which the 6VT staff felt were impeding progress in the NiteZone programme. The big drop in referrals was making the staff insecure, none more so than the changes which affected the NiteZone Coordinator. The Cafe was dealing now with only secondary referrals, since they were no longer allowed to act as key workers. They were also concerned that there were no crisis arrangements in place for vulnerable young people over the weekends. The reviewing officer said that she and her line managers were aware of the processing problems which were resulting in an unnecessarily low number of referrals, and she said she had made it clear to the Council that this should not result in money being clawed back from the Cafe, since the fault lay with the procedures within the Authority rather than with the failure of the Cafe to meet its contractual obligations. She was hopeful that the problems would be resolved by the end of the month.

Shortly before Christmas 2012, the Board again complained to the Authority that internal organisational problems at HQ were limiting the number of referrals and concern was expressed about how this was affecting the development of NiteZone. To offset this limited involvement, the Board agreed that 6VT staff should go out and work with the young people in the Council's secure units. Almost immediately afterwards, twenty one referrals came through. This placed an unexpected burden on the 6VT staff, but they agreed to undertake both tasks rather than renege on the promise made to the secure units. They continued to undertake this additional work until March 2013.

The consultative document which the Council issued prior to its 2013 Budget stated that the Authority was keen to introduce Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) which required the whole family to work closely with the MST team. Since such an ambitious scheme could not be implemented overnight, it was unlikely that NiteZone would be terminated when the present contract ended in September 2013, but the Board took the precaution of asking the Council to inform it by June 2013 whether this was likely to happen so that it could take appropriate action over staff redundancies. However, the Board was unlikely to make staff redundant because it did not wish to lose the services and expertise of its loyal staff. In the Board's opinion, there was no doubt that ICSS had reduced the number of young people who had to be placed in secure units and it was confident that, even if NiteZone ended, 6VT would be able to use the staff's vast experience to win other contracts. 6VT's policy of not restricting staff to specific projects meant that the expertise which staff built up over several projects would enable them to cope with any new project.

In March 2013, the Head of Support to Children and Young People, his assistant and the Commissioning Team invited Dot and representatives of Action for Children to a meeting to sound out their views. Both organisations were asked to assess what their capacity was and what they could deliver. What the Council was going to do was still not known, but it was already clear that what it wanted was a new way of dealing with the ever increasing number of young people who were landing up in care under the existing system.

There were two big problems facing the Council at that time: crises on Friday afternoons and over the weekends when accommodation could not be found for vulnerable young people; and also how to help young people with disabilities such as autism. Since the officials seemed surprised that those sorts of referral were being blocked by the present processes for both 6VT and Action for Children, these organisations submitted a joint paper stating that they could best provide support by taking referrals direct from Social Workers, rather than through the Over-12s Panel. In such a scenario, however, Action for Children said they would want 6VT to be the referral base since they had no actual premises themselves.

The Board's concern was that, if the Council decided to amalgamate ICSS and Youth Offending, there would be a completely new type of service and that, when a decision was taken, the change could be introduced very quickly. Dot had therefore begun training the 6VT staff to deal with this new type of client.

By May 2013, the Council had shed some of its agency staff and 6VT had been asked to go back to undertaking all the things it used to do, such as acting as key workers. There had been meetings between Youth Offending and ICSS to talk about amalgamating them but the only thing that had been decided was that they would be under one manager. The ultimate aim, however, was clear — to create a combined service that would respond to young people in need, and to their families. The vagueness was frustrating but, in an attempt to promote a positive attitude among staff, 6VT invited the ICSS and Youth Offending teams to a coffee morning to discuss how the various 6VT services and ICSS fitted together. About 35 attended, mainly Youth Offending staff who showed a lot of interest.

The official confirmation that ICSS and Youth Offending were to be amalgamated came through in July 2013, and all operations at the Brae were terminated in August. A major reorganisation such as this hadn't happened before, so it wasn't known how long it would take. That would clearly depend on how quickly the new overall manager could be appointed, but interviews were held up by the illness of one of the existing managers. The appointment was eventually made in October 2013.

In September 2013, a letter was received which extended 6VT's existing contract to March 2015, with the possibility of the waiver being extended still further to September 2015.

In April 2014, the Board learned that the group carrying out the overall review had adopted "Youth Services" as the working title of the new service. One of its aims would be to reduce the number of young people going into care by 50%. Another was to remove the duplication between existing services. The review would also involve Edinburgh Alcohol and Drug Partnership in examining all drugs and alcohol provision. Under the existing ICSS service, the voluntary organisations had been very much on the periphery. They would be more involved in the new system. When the final plan was in place, the contracts would have to go out to open tender, and 6VT would have to compete for the contract. It was hoped that this would happen in October 2014 but, in the meantime, the funding for Nitezone was continued until at least March 2015. There were 250 young people already on the books of the various agencies.

Dot was a member of the Strategy Group and also a member of the Over-12s Panel which met weekly to allocate the young people to different parts of the service. In October 2013, she informed the Board that the number of referrals to 6VT would probably increase because of the policy of reducing the number of those going into care. Although her involvement in the planning of the new arrangements would make greater demands on her time, that situation was likely to continue for only around six months, and she was confident the staff would cope for the time being. Her initial assessment was that the new system was working well.

Over the next three months, 6VT was involved in many discussions with the Education, Children and Families Department. In February 2014, Dot told the Board that the decision to close Wellington School and one of the secure units had created several care issues. The reduction in the number of secure beds would probably mean that more of these young people would require to be helped by 6VT. The young people had to be cared for somewhere in the community. It was confirmed that electronic tagging would continue although it had been rarely used since it was introduced in 2007, and 6VT would be involved in that by delivering on-to-one support in the community on week days and at week-ends in some cases and, in other cases, between 4pm and 6pm at the drop-in depending on the time of their curfew which always accompanied Movement Restriction Conditions. It was likely also that 6VT would have to deal with at-risk welfare cases, while Youth Offending would continue with their existing task of dealing with offending statutory cases. Support for Edinburgh City Council foster carers was to be another priority. Some of these carers were struggling with awkward teenagers, and it was likely that 6VT would be responsible for supporting them.

With so many new things happening and so much uncertainty, the Board decided it should have a detailed discussion about the role of 6VT in all this work because things could go seriously wrong when dealing with young people at the high end of difficulty. The Board needed to know what was involved so that, if there ever was an inquiry, everyone knew what their responsibilities were. It was also important that the Council should move away from a one-year cycle in awarding its grants and contracts, since that inhibited forward planning for the sort of large-scale operations that were now envisaged.

There was one difficulty which was already apparent under the new procedures. Because the Council had revamped its systems for handling data protection, 6VT staff could no longer access the Council computers for case notes. Social workers were given laptops which they could take home to work on cases notes, but 6VT staff had to type up notes which then had to be taken physically to the Social Work Department to be put onto their system (SWIFT). This raised serious concerns about security. 6VT had raised this issue some time previously and, realising that it could be costly for the Council, it had even offered to buy into the Council computer system, but by February 2014 no solution had been found. Another difficulty which emerged later was the lack of access to global email, which could have been achieved at no cost to the Council.

The new Young People's Service was duly launched in April 2014, with the Council teams based in the High Street. It was, as expected, an amalgamation of ICSS and the Youth Offending Service. The three main priorities had been identified as:

- (a) Movement Restriction Conditions (MRC) would be a community alternative to placing young people in secure care. There would be stricter curfews, almost like those for adults (i.e. 7 pm to 7 am). So far, the MRCs had been given only to young people who had offended. Before putting a child into secure accommodation in future, an MRC had to be considered, and those categorised under MRCs would continue to receive intensive support. 6VT would continue to do what it did at present for the welfare of young people at risk, but it would now also have to provide support for the MRC young people at weekends because the Council did not provide that.
- (b) Another priority would be support for foster carers, especially those looking after young people with complex issues. There would be a particular focus on finding Edinburgh Council carers as far as possible because a growing amount of the Council budget was going on foster care placements from private and voluntary agencies, some of which were very expensive.
- (c) A third priority was to keep 16-17 year olds out of the homeless accommodation system where possible. A pilot study began on 1 May 2014. When young people who already had a social worker presented to the Housing Department in Cockburn Street, contact was immediately made with that social worker. Those who had not been already allocated a social worker received support from a worker from the Young People's Service. In either case, this person had to work with the young person and the family to try to negotiate for the young person to return home. If that was not possible, the young person had to go into temporary accommodation. There were no workers on stand-by at weekends and 6VT was expected to go through Social Care Direct to support young people out of hours.

When it learned about these outline plans in April 2014, the Board had to consider how to react to them. More information would be required before the contract for the new service went out to tender, and there would probably have to be staff consultation to meet the new arrangements. Edinburgh Council's Early Intervention service was to be disbanded, and one consideration was whether 6VT staff should become lead workers for young people. Such a decision would have implications for 6VT as full statutory responsibilities for a case would come with this role. Serious consideration would have to be given to whether this was a route the Board wished to pursue.

To speed things up, it was already possible for referrals to be made directly to 6VT from practice teams, as well as from the Over-12s Panel. It was felt that the new arrangements would not affect the number of staff required because the existing contract stated the number of young people 6VT had to work with, not the number of hours to be given to each young person. If a young person needed only five hours per week, that is all they had to be given. If they needed twenty, they would get twenty. The number of clients might turn out to be greater, if they required only a few hours' intervention, but additional staff would not be required. The aim was to have no more than three workers in a child's life, but there were issues that still had to be resolved in achieving this. Dot said that the staff were happy with the way things were going, especially since they now had lots of young people to work with. Dot would still attend the Over-12s panel.

And so things dragged on, with the continuing uncertainty threatening to undermine staff morale.

Chapter 17: Business as Usual (2010-2014)

With the Café facing such major issues as a serious cash flow problem, major changes in the ICSS programme and its very existence in Victoria Terrace, one might have expected a winding down of activities but, as it entered yet another decade, 6VT was in good heart and it was business as usual.

Governance

There were big changes in the Board during this period. As reported in Chapter 15, three new members brought valuable new expertise to it — Christina Burnett, Stuart McIvor and Jim Bryce, who also took over the post of Treasurer. Unfortunately, these gains were offset by important losses. Donald Gorrie died on 25 August 2012 following a stroke, Gordon Banks resigned in February 2013 after serving eight and a half years on the Board, and Stuart's services were also lost when he moved to the north of Scotland at the start of 2014.

Donald Gorrie Challenge Fund

In February 2013, Robert Gorrie, Donald's son, told Dot that Donald had left a sum of about £20,000 in his will to help young people overcome a challenge in their lives. In tune with Donald's distaste of bureaucracy, the Gorrie family said that the help should be quick and effective and not bogged down by administration.

Following lengthy discussions with the family, a Memorandum was drawn up. Only users of 6VT who met the criteria were eligible, and grants were limited to a maximum of £250 to help the young person meet any personal or career challenge, or possibly buy a piece of equipment. The administration of the fund was left in the hands of LAYC, which was one of the many youth bodies on which Donald had served but, to ensure that there was a rapid response to any requests, around £500 was to be held by 6VT at any one time. The money was not to be handed directly to the young person but given to a supervising worker or to a body running a course. The capital and any interest accrued could be spent till the whole fund was exhausted. Dot's view was that the money could last quite a few years, if supported by the interest and other fund raising. Donald's family did not wish any publicity, but a leaflet was prepared for the users detailing the criteria. Regular reports are made to the family on how the Fund is being used.

Only £886 was disbursed in the first year, but assistance was provided to fourteen young people — a guitar case and straps, clothes to attend an interview, boxing equipment, dance lessons, boots to join the cadets, help with the first rent payment for a boy who had just come out of care, and a small grant to two girls who were going out to Turkey to do voluntary aid work — just the sorts of things of which Donald would have approved.

Commissioning Reviews

Because 6VT's service level agreement was due to end in October 2011, the Council began a Commissioning Review of the Café's work on 13 April 2011 to see if it continued to justify its level of funding. The report was for internal use by the Council and was not published. However, the officer who carried out the review, gave the Board and members of staff feedback on 2 August 2011. She reported that the review had been very positive with no negative aspects. Her observations at the drop-in and the family cafe had not only given her a full insight into the good practice and excellent work; she had thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience.

Over the previous year, 44% of the 416 registered users had a current or recent social work involvement in their lives, 13% had a disability, and 7% considered their ethnic background to be in the BME category. Following the review, the Council decided to authorise a further year of funding, with the option of a second year to October 2013.

Further reviews were carried out in 2012 and 2013 by the same officer with the same positive conclusions. The only thing to add was that, having now carried out five reviews, she was confident she had a real feel of the place and, because the users were accustomed to having her in their midst, she was sure that she was getting their true feelings about 6VT. Funding for the drop-in was later extended yet again.

The Annual Report for 2010-11 reported that there were 462 young people aged 12-21 who regularly used the services provided by the Café. 28% of these lived in parts of Edinburgh which fell into the top 15% of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation; 29% were not in employment, education or training; 23% had active Social Work involvement; 10% were young homeless or vulnerably housed; 6% were looked after and accommodated; 5% were classed as vulnerable adults; 7% were Black Minority Ethnic; and 1% had refugee status. The gender split was 50-50.

According to the 2013 Review, there were 357 registered users of the services provided by 6VT. A very significant change had taken place in the profile of the service users. The percentage of those who currently, or previously, had social work involvement had gone up from 43% in 2012 to 67% in 2013; the number of looked after/accommodated young people had increased from 11% to 19%; 31% lived in the top 15% of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation areas of Edinburgh; 11% were young homeless or vulnerably housed; and 10% were Black Minority Ethnic. A positive development was that the number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs) had dropped to 18%. This was probably due, at least in part, to the work of the Activity Agreement Hub.

The Drop-in

Wednesday, 6 January 2010 marked one of those very rare occasions when 6VT failed to open for the drop-in. Conditions on the Terrace became so hazardous because of a severe snowstorm that it was deemed unsafe. Users were alerted through their usual social networks. As conditions eased, the users helped to clear the snow from the Terrace.

As part of the HM Inspectors of Education report on James Gillespie's High School, the Inspectors visited 6VT in the early part of 2010 to talk to users. They reported that the users had rated the Café very highly and had commented particularly favourably on the support the Café staff gave them.

The footfall in August and September 2011 was very high — over 50 on nineteen of the 26 drop-in nights, seven times over 60 and three times over 80. These large numbers, combined with an influx of new younger users, meant that the staff had to work very hard to inculcate the rules of the Café, particularly the no-alcohol and no-drugs rules.

Numbers were still very high in October and November, although they dropped slightly in December. Numbers often dropped in December and January. One explanation was that the young people couldn't afford the bus fares since they were enjoying the Christmas festivities. In the first three months of 2012 they were still relatively low but, by October, they had shot up again, repeating the pattern of peaks and troughs which the Café had experienced throughout its existence. Attendances in 2013-14 were much lower, although they still averaged around 30 per night. Some nights were particularly quiet for no apparent reason. On the rare occasions when evening attendances dropped below 20, the quieter atmosphere made one-to-one conversations easier.

One interesting development was a huge increase in the number of BME users over an extended period. There was no apparent reason except, possibly, that they felt comfortable in the Cafe and word had spread among their peers. They were mainly at the bottom end of the age range, and included some refugees. Those on supervision orders were also well represented.

At the beginning of this period, there were numerous mentions of young people (girls just as much as boys) being refused admission because they had been drinking but, by the autumn of 2012, the pattern changed and cannabis (and latterly legal highs) became the major concern, with a suspicion that there was drug dealing in Fisher's Close.

However, the picture was not all negative. In November 2011, two users who were regularly excluded for arriving after drinking were sober all evening, and the same was true in September 2012. One user asked for advice about her brother who was drinking excessively, while another was concerned about his roommate who was bringing people back to snort drugs, and yet another told staff he was keeping clear of alcohol because he saw his mother drinking in excess. There was even a funny side to it all. One boy was breathalysed, but it turned out to be his aftershave.

In May 2012, it was reported that the laptops were suffering from intensive usage. Instead of buying replacements, it was decided to buy two PCs which would be screwed to the wall so that they couldn't be stolen. It was thought that these might cost £700 each but, in the end, the combined cost was only £836. The numbers attending the drop-in increased considerably following their installation, which suggested that the assumption that most households had access to a computer was wide of the mark. The PCs continued to be extensively used, maintaining the number of users in the Cafe.

However, the high numbers were not down solely to the PCs. As had been the case from the opening of the Cafe, the staff continued to produce varied programmes which chimed in with what was going on in the world outside and held the users' interest.

Mysteriously, from the summer of 2011 to the end of the year, the Cafe was periodically flooded. The water seemed to be coming from under Riddle's Court, but the source was never identified. It never stopped the activities, and the flooding stopped as quickly as it started, never to happen again.

In the early part of 2013, staff had to be alert not just to users arriving after consuming alcohol, but a growing number who were using cannabis. One interesting fact which emerged from a workshop on legal highs was that some users confessed to having taken them, while others had no knowledge of them at all.

Throughout the period, there were the usual social-work types of cases where staff unobtrusively helped users and their families, e.g. supporting a boy whose mother had been murdered by her boyfriend; and a homeless boy and girl whose father had died of a heroin overdose; dealing with a girl (not from the Café) who was found paralytically drunk at a bus stop; helping a user who had no money and was facing eviction because his mother had died; comforting two users whose little brother had been taken away by Social Work because their carer was drunk; bullying on Facebook; girls who were pregnant or had miscarried; helping a user who was caring for a sister who was terminally ill; a transgender user; helping users just released from prison; finding crisis accommodation for a young person; dealing with a feud between two families that was in danger of spilling over into the Café; persuading absconders to return to their care unit; taking young people home to make sure they arrived safely; accompanying a young person to college on his first day; making lengthy phone calls and home visits to support parents. The list is endless. There were also several reports of positive acts by users to help others.

Two particularly welcome developments were the increase in the number of unpaid volunteers who were attracted to help at the drop-in evenings, and the arrival of two unemployed men who offered their services as handymen and carried out valuable repairs to the Café in June 2012. Though this reduced the cost of much-needed repairs, it resulted in a big increase in the repairs and maintenance element of the accounts. One of the men later found a job, but he continued to help out at the Café.

User Attitudes

Users continued to give as well as take. They contributed to the contents of hampers which were distributed to disadvantaged homes at Christmas, and on one occasion they dipped into their pockets to donate £10.68 after watching Comic Relief. They were only too willing to help clear the snow away from the Terrace, they fixed the lights and painted the walls in the toilets and scraped the damp back wall. In fact, one or two of them acted as DIY handymen on four occasions during this period. One user did a sponsored sky dive to raise funds for Crohn's Disease, and several of them helped Murdo in the neighbouring garden instead of going to the Meadows to play football. There were no more embarrassing moments when users, often accompanied by the parents as well as staff, went on outside visits. Whether they went to Winter Wonderland, theatre performances, football matches, white water rafting or the Commonwealth Games, their behaviour was a credit to 6VT. Within the Café, there were always some who niggled away at each other and had to be persuaded to calm down, and some nights were hairier than others. But all of them came together to genuinely congratulate someone who was celebrating a birthday or some success. A worker or volunteer was never allowed to leave without receiving a grand send-off. Newcomers almost invariably commented on how well they were welcomed by existing users.

Keysteps

This project which started as a pilot in 1996, providing individual and group support to young tenants, had ceased to be funded as a course in its own right in 2004 but had continued to deal with individual cases, subsidised by the Café. It resumed again in 2010 as a funded course after a break of six years, although it was able to do so only as a group model because of financial cuts which were affecting all Council services.

In 2010/11 housing support was given to twenty-one clients, including six parents of 6VT service users. Seventeen of these individuals successfully sustained their tenancies, as well as making positive changes in their lives. The course included the following topics: getting into employment, budgeting, reducing debts, food hygiene and cooking, fire safety, DIY, energy efficiency, rights and responsibilities, and improving health and well-being. There were also opportunities for young tenants to meet up with others in a similar situation. From September 2011, housing support was limited to 15-24 year olds.

The Keysteps programme continues to run in 2014, supported by £19,135 of funding from Services to Communities to work with forty young people a year. However, dark clouds were beginning to appear towards the end of the year, as will be seen in the final chapter.

The Family Cafe

The Family Café, which was started in 2008, continues to flourish. It meets on Saturday afternoons from 1 pm to 4 pm and provides a range of activities for the whole family. The aim is to bring parents and children together to experience quality family time. Family life can be full of highs and lows, good days and bad days. The Family Café provides a break from daily life and enables adults and children to chill out. Friendly and supportive staff listen to problems and provide helpful information, if requested. There is an affordable cafeteria and the whole group engages in fun activities. The availability of Lothian Buses vouchers is a godsend to many families. In 2009, one former Café user started attending with her child. The footfall for 2010-11 alone was 866 and twenty-nine families were involved. In 2013-14, the footfall was 510, with 22 families involved. Numbers fluctuate according to needs.

Cashback for Communities

On 9 March 2010, the Board congratulated Fiona Horne on being invited to act as an assessor for Edinburgh and agreed that she should accept.

Baby Think it Over

The successful 2009 sexual health and pregnancy awareness course was repeated during the period September to November 2010 for four girls and three boys (mostly NiteZone people). The 5-week course again ended with a 3-day residential looking after a fractious “baby”.

The Upper Bow Office

By March 2010, there was £90,000 in the Office Purchase Account which had been set up in March 2009 with a view to purchasing the Office in Upper Bow. The Board decided that, since the property market was depressed, the Boys’ Brigade should be approached to see if it wished to sell the property. The Boys’ Brigade decided, however, that they no longer wished to sell.

Choices and Personal Development

On 17 June 2010, 6VT held a very successful Open Day for 15-24 year olds. Various organisations set up stalls in the back room of the Café and on the Terrace, and over a hundred people attended, including some sixty young people. Some of these were Café users, but there were quite a few who were new to 6VT. Apart from staff time, it was a no-cost event as far as 6VT was concerned and it considerably raised its profile. The stallholders were also pleased with the event.

Community Police Officers

On 28 September 2010, the Board was pleased to learn that the new police Inspector had agreed to reinstate the previous policy of appointing a dedicated officer to liaise with 6VT and, from then on, police community officers began visiting the Café on a regularly basis. They also organised workshops.

There was further cooperation with the police when their Amethyst workers (who work with sexually abused young people) laid on a workshop on domestic violence, and still more in April 2011 when Café staff helped in a police project called “Act Now”.

Police support was very welcome on Monday, 8 August 2011, when there were 85 users at the drop-in. The police had heard that a knife-carrying gang was planning to come to 6VT to attack a Café user. Their presence nipped the potential incident in the bud.

Unfortunately, the community policing policy changed again in 2013-14, and police officers are rarely seen now in the Café except to ask for help in routine police enquiries. This short-sighted policy may save money but the attitude of the users towards the police has reverted to one of suspicion which does not augur well for community relations in the future.

Young People and Alcohol

The Justice Secretary and Chief Constable launched this new strategy at the Cafe on 8 October 2010.

Theatre visits

In September 2010, the Lyceum Theatre held twelve workshops in the Cafe on the theme Romeo and Juliet. They then provided free admission for twelve users to the performance of the play. They also agreed to sponsor participation for some users in the Youth Theatre. Users groups were taken to see plays at the Lyceum on several occasions in the years that followed.

In February 2012, twenty-five users went to see a production by the Balmy Youth Theatre about road safety entitled "Better Late than Dead." In the same month, four females went to the Citadel with staff to see a play about knife crime which they found thought-provoking.

Tanzania Project

On 30 June 2010, the Evening News carried a centre-page spread praising the efforts of the Café users in raising hundreds of pounds to help children in the poverty stricken village of Samuye in Tanzania. Following that, Café worker Diane Elliot flew at her own expense to Samuye on 5 July to investigate whether 6VT could become more involved in the Samuye charity project by providing fresh water and some form of education, and possibly even sending some users on a residential there. From the jumble sale in July 2010, the staff and users raised £455 to adopt a grandmother who was caring for more than a dozen grandchildren whose parents had died of AIDS.

Njia Panda Ya Tumaini (Road to Hope)

From the jumble sale in July 2011, 6VT young people and families raised £500 for this project which was run by the Railway Children charity and which helped with the rehabilitation of street and other abused or neglected children in East Africa. The money was used to reunite families which had been separated by war. Each family was given money to create its own bio-intensive garden and kitted out with tools to give them a sustainable food source and provide for their children's basic needs.

Jumble Sales

The proceeds of the jumble sales in 2010 and 2011 went to the charities in Tanzania and East Africa but, because of the Café's financial position, it was decided that the Jumble Sale held in July 2012 would be in aid of Café funds. Besides raising £700 in 2012 and £407 in 2013, these jumble sales demonstrated the excellent teamwork of staff, users, parents and volunteers. There was a tremendous atmosphere on the Terrace, in the church hall and in the Cafe itself. For reasons that will be explained in the final chapter, there was no jumble sale in 2014.

Summer Café

It was agreed in May 2010 that the summer cafe was no longer viable because of the intensive use of the rooms at 6VT.

CLAN Advocacy and Legal Services

Since 2010, lawyers from CLAN have been available once a month at the drop-in to give individual legal advice free of charge to any user who seeks it. Having these facilities in the informal setting of the Café has made it particularly valuable to young people who tend not to have the confidence to approach lawyers in their offices.

BMX Bike Building Club

Derek Scally started this club in 2010-11, using Café funds to give users a new interest. They built their own bikes from old bikes and were trained to maintain them and use them safely. The course ended with a day mountain biking at Glentress. In June 2011, the club received a grant of £2,000 from the Cycle Trust charity to buy some BMX bikes and run biking activities for 6VT users. It is now funded by Youth Clubs Scotland.

Summer Activities 2010

6VT continued to run summer activities for a four-week period in July and August, from 10 am to 10 pm, mainly for those aged 12 to 18. In 2010, the programme included a range of activities:

9-11 July	A residential at Aberfeldy
10-23 July	Users were shown how to maintain bicycles and, if they made a good job of them and could demonstrate that they could cycle safely, they were allowed to keep the bicycles.
24 July	Family Café trip to the Zoo.
27 July	Users taken to the M&D Theme Park
2-6 August	All inclusive holiday activities in and around Edinburgh for twelve youngsters.
14 August	Family Festival Café Trip — members of the Family Café walked down the High Street as a group taking in some of the Fringe Shows.

Summer Activities 2012

In 2012, these were funded by Radio Forth Cash for Kids and Cashback for Communities.

Dispatches Programme

On 1 November 2010, Channel 4's Dispatches programme "Britain's Street Kids" featured a Café user who was living on the streets. Following the programme, some members of the public wrote messages of goodwill to her via 6VT, and some even sent small financial donations, again via 6VT in order to protect her from unscrupulous strangers. Other people sent donations directly to a trust which the programme makers set up for the four young people who were featured in the programme.

Following that, the Railway Children charity paid for the 6VT user to be flown to a rehabilitation clinic in South Africa. Dot gave up her Christmas holiday to accompany her and see her settled in. She made good progress, but she became homesick and discharged herself after six months. When she returned to Edinburgh, she was placed in a hostel but, because there was no care support, she landed back on the streets. She is now 21 and still turns to the Café regularly for help. Though still using drugs, she is in a slightly better state than she was in 2010.

I LUVME4ME

On 21 January 2011, a six-week course for girls began on Friday afternoons which was designed to build their self-confidence. It was funded by money from Cashback for Communities.

Masquerade Ball

Following the success of the Gala Dinner which she had organised in 2001, Wendy Henderson ran a Masquerade Ball in the City Chambers on Friday, 24 June 2011. Not only did this raise the profile of the Café, but it boosted Café funds by £1,319.

Greyfriars Church

In March 2011, the Minister of Greyfriars extended an invitation to 6VT to visit the church. A small group of users, accompanied by staff, began to visit on a regular basis and indications were that they were enjoying the experience, particularly the quiet. They found the whole atmosphere welcoming and relaxing. By October 2013, however, the person running the Night Kirk at Greyfriars was tending to push religion more than was originally the case, when the emphasis was on quiet meditation.

Trelese Band

In August 2011, some users were so impressed with this evangelical band which they heard during the Festival, that they invited them back to the Café to give a performance. Following this, two users went across to Kansas to meet up with the band there. They said it was an enjoyable trip.

Music project

In October 2012, Community Learning and Development (CLD) began giving four boys and four girls from 6VT free tuition in song writing and electronic music making. In January 2013, 6VT submitted an application to CLD for £3,500, again for the benefit of users, with no money coming to 6VT as external staff were employed. This resulted in the project being extended for another 8-week block. Experienced professional musicians and teaching artists created this bespoke project for 6VT young people who would not ordinarily have been able to access this type of opportunity. This whole project arose from a member of CLD hearing a girl singing at the Café AGM.

YouthLink Scotland encouraged both these applications but, because there was not a lot of money available, they targeted individuals rather than advertising these grants.

Creative Dance

At the end of the 2012 AGM, a Cashback representative asked 6VT to submit an immediate application for £3,208 to be used by June 2013. Again, this did not bring any money to 6VT since external staff were employed, but it opened up opportunities for users, including visits to theatres.

Youth Board

In May 2012, since no users were now attending Management Committee meetings because they found them so boring, it was agreed to set up a Youth Board which would pass on recommendations to the Board. However, it was not until September 2012 that this group was up and running. One of its first projects was an application to Starbucks for a grant to provide a residential for young carers and young homeless. (It emerged that some of the Youth Board had themselves been carers.) Having got through the first stage in their application, they went for a training day in April 2013 to prepare them for the next stage and, in May 2013, Starbucks granted them £2,000.

The Youth Board continued to be very active and, to encourage them in their work, the Board decided in March 2013 to set aside £10,000 as a Programme Development Fund which the Youth Board would control to provide quality activities for the users, such as residencies, holiday work, youth participation training and bus hires. They were also asked to organise a project once a month away from 6VT.

Included in the £10,000, was a donation of £3,000 which First State Bank had made to the drop-in through Siobhan Donaldson, one of the Cafe volunteers. Other unexpected income was also used to top up this fund, such as the £5,000 received from the will of Liz King, a member of the St Giles' Neighbourhood Group who had taken a great interest in the work of the Café. The Youth Board prepared the Vacation Stations programme for the summer of 2013 and, in October, they presented an excellent report on it to the Management Committee. It was also made clear to the Youth Board that they could purchase new items of equipment for the Café but, to date, they have not felt this was necessary. However, they are still making a big contribution to the activities of 6VT, preparing the monthly programme and passing on the views of the users.

In February 2014, it was reported that the Youth Board would have £1,956 available to them from the Lottery Community Fund to promote physical activities in the lead up to the Commonwealth Games.

Alternatives

In March 2012, because of police concern about undesirable activities in Hunter Square and the large numbers of young people hanging round there, the Council agreed to make money available to open 6VT for twelve weeks on Saturday evenings on lines similar to the previous Alternatives project.

It began in May and there was a concentration on the Goths' type of music. There were reasonable numbers on the first night, but only one on the second night because most of the Alternatives attended a music event in town. Later weeks produced no higher numbers even though Café staff twice did streetwork in Hunter Square and the West End in May. There were hardly any young people to be seen. The police also reported that there were very few young people in the streets generally, probably because the weather was so bad.

The uptake continued to be low and the Council was told that the project should be abandoned since it was wasting money. It was noted that young people were not hanging around Hunter Square or anywhere else in the city.

The numbers in the Café were also low, although the ethnic minority numbers held up. The question was, "Where were the young folk? Were they staying at home and associating with one another through social networking?" Even though the Café for the Alternatives was opened up later in the year to any young person hanging around Hunter Square, it still did not take off.

Since there seemed to be no need for it, there being no trouble anywhere in the City centre, 6VT recommended that it be brought to an end.

InclU

This project began in March 2012, funded by a grant of £9,274 from the Lottery Awards for All. It targeted disadvantaged young people who would not normally join a club. The Café staff began by having talks with the staff of different children's units, schools and colleges which promoted the work of 6VT. They then met potential users and gave them further information and invited them to come to the drop-in. As an incentive, for a limited period, they provided them with bus vouchers provided by Lothian Buses. Sixty individuals were helped over the one year period.

Easter Residential 2012

In April 2012, fourteen users (including some members of NiteZone) and three staff spent a week at Comrie Croft. £5,000 of the cost was covered by a grant from Cashback for Communities, but the participants paid £50 for the week.

Mentoring Violence Prevention

In the autumn of 2012, the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit approached 6VT to work in partnership with it to recruit young people who would act as peer mentors by going out into the community and challenging gender violence. This approach had been introduced from America, and a pilot was currently running in Portobello High School. 6VT received £5,000 from Cashback to support Portobello in this project.

In February 2013, it was reported that it had been very difficult to get enough appropriate boys from among 6VT users who were willing to live up to the acceptable conduct. Advertising in Volunteers Scotland didn't produce any more, so the course went ahead consisting mainly of girls.

Network Rail

In 2012, the Network Rail Community Safety Fund supported 6VT in running a six-month education project which highlighted the risks associated with misuse of railways, ways to improve personal safety and ways to reduce rail crime. In particular, 6VT continued to share Network Rail's campaign website "No Messing" which promoted activities that diverted young people from playing near railways.

A team of 6VT youth workers also assisted at the inaugural Borders Railway Youth Football Tournament in the Inch Park. Sixteen teams from across the Borders Railway route took part. The hope was that the tournament would be extended to other areas along the route in future years, helping to enhance community links.

Activity Agreement Centre

In June 2012, 6VT was invited to become an Activity Agreement Centre which was designed to help 16-19 year old unemployed people make themselves more employable. It also helped them to complete forms to obtain educational maintenance allowances (£30 per week), which could be very complicated for people from dysfunctional families to complete. The centres were usually called "Hubs" but this was not suitable for the Café since it was situated so close to The Hub restaurant at the top of Johnston Terrace. Young people were referred to their Hub by the Activity Agreement Team. The Café received £5,000 for the six-month pilot to cover the cost of staffing, though it was reckoned that the full cost to the Cafe was nearer £8,000. To meet this new challenge, 6VT upgraded its career progression software. The pilot ran from July to the end of the year from 2pm to 6pm on Wednesdays with Alison (Ali) McLaughlin in charge.

By August 2012, 6VT was helping an average of five or six young people every day. None of these, however, had been referred through official channels. Young people, who had stopped trying to access Job Centres because of the hurdles involved, were referring themselves directly to the Café.

The work was very time-consuming, and the Cafe staff were learning how difficult it was for a young person to sign on. For example, it was not possible to sign on in person. It had to be done over the Internet. In one case, Dot spent 28 minutes with a young person trying to get through to the proper agency, only to discover that the young person had the wrong security code and the whole procedure had to be started again. It was not surprising that young people were giving up. The system was shambolic, and young people could not afford the cost of using a mobile phone for lengthy calls. On another occasion, when a boy from a deprived area keyed in his postcode to see what jobs were available, he was told there were no jobs within a 30-mile radius. The staff told him to key in 6VT's postcode and several jobs were immediately listed. That appeared to suggest that success depended on a postcode lottery.

In September 2012, Sarah Boyack MSP spent about one and a half hours in the Cafe discussing problems with young people who were in the Activity Agreement project.

Edinburgh's contact rate had previously been one of the worst in Scotland but, since the start of the Activity Agreement, the quarterly contact rate went up from 80 to 130. The project was reviewed at the end of December, and 6VT's contract (worth £18,869) was extended to March 2014. There was no stipulation in the contract about the number of young people who had to be helped, but it was interesting to note in February 2013 that the Cafe now had almost 20 clients and these had come, not from schools, but as self-referrals by the users themselves. The project used existing staff, which extended their experience and expertise.

The Council was satisfied with 6VT's performance and extended the contract to March 2015, with £15,568 of funding.

The Terrace Tots

This project started in October 2012, with a grant of £9,940 from the People and Communities Fund to sustain it for one year, meeting from 10.30 am until 1.30 pm on Wednesdays. It had initially been intended for young mothers (aged 15 to 24), a group which faced more barriers to services than most parents, but it was later extended to include young fathers as well, and then grandparents who looked after young children were also allowed to join. Some referrals came from Health Visitors, but the majority were self-referrals. Both the young parents and the children really enjoyed it. The only problem was where to store all the toys.

The project went well and Aileen Campbell MSP, the Minister for Children and Youth, came to see it in operation on 10 April 2013. She found it so interesting that she stayed much longer than planned, talking to the parents while the wee ones played around them on the floor. She was surprised and horrified by some of the answers she got from the parents, e.g. their views on politics, their reluctance to vote, not registering to vote in case the debt collectors caught up with them, wondering if they would be any better under independence, worried that they could be classified as bad parents if they asked Social Work for help

The Minister enjoyed her visit so much that she used the Café for a press launch of the Scottish Government's Youth Work Strategy on 3 April 2014.

Street Pastors

In May 2013, 6VT became involved in the training of the street pastors twice per year. They had no money to give 6VT, but they prayed for all the staff, and their first prayer was for the protection of the building which was at the time under threat.

All Stars film

In 2013, the Cafe received some very good publicity from the premiere of the film "All Stars" which was about a youth club fighting a move by developers to demolish its premises and make way for a public car park — a story which clearly resonated with users of 6VT. The Café closed for the first part of the evening of 12 April so that around sixty users, parents and siblings could use their free tickets to attend the premiere in the Omni Cinema and, as was usual on such occasions, the behaviour of the Café representatives was exemplary.

On the day following the premiere, there was a press launch in the Café at which Theo Stevenson and Akai Osei, two stars of the film, joined a workshop in 6VT and shared their experiences with users. Ashley Johnson, who played the role of centre manager, said the following:

"I worry about youth clubs being cut. Youth centres are desperately needed, but everything is about cuts. Youth centres can nip a problem in the bud before the problem happens. If young people are about to go down one path, you can direct them somewhere else and give them hope and self-worth."

Commonwealth Games

On 26 July 2014, two members of staff accompanied eight Café users to see weightlifting and gymnastics events. 6VT had received complimentary tickets from the Games organisers.

Sailing Trip

Through donations they had received, the Tallships Youth Trust were able to offer ten Young people and two staff four days of Tall Ships experience from 17 – 21 September, crewing a Challenger yacht

round the west coast of Scotland — a fantastic opportunity. The Tallships have since approached 6VT to explore working together on another project relating to employment and sailing in 2015.

Finances

Since all efforts to find a qualified person willing to become Treasurer had failed, Donald Gorrie agreed on 9 March 2010 to take on the post temporarily and, at the next Board meeting on 11 May, Donald Gorrie, Mac Wilkinson and Alex Justice were appointed to serve on the newly constituted Finance Committee.

At its first meeting on 12 October 2010, it agreed that its main role would be to examine the existing systems, highlight areas of concern, scrutinise the cash flow and prepare forecasts to enable the Board to make informed decisions. At first, it met for only 30 minutes prior to the Board meeting.

When Donald fell ill at the end of 2011, increased efforts were made to find a qualified Treasurer, but these continued to be unsuccessful and, following Donald's death in August 2012, Henry Philip offered to stand in. It was agreed that the amount of business that had to be covered could not be overtaken in 30 minutes. Henceforth, the Finance Committee met in the week preceding the Board meeting, and a start was made on looking at financial issues in much more detail.

Initially, it examined the spreadsheets of income and expenditure over the previous twelve years to satisfy itself that the finances were now on an even keel. It was noted that, although most of the funding came from the City of Edinburgh Council, it was impressive how much had been secured each year from smaller trusts and donors. It then examined the various projects to satisfy itself that an element was included for administrative costs and for the value which staff expertise added to projects.

In the early part of 2011, there were general worries about severe cuts that all voluntary organisations were likely to face in the coming Council budget following the Credit Crunch. At the Finance Committee on 6 September 2011, the Chairman reported that, according to Audit Scotland, there was likely to be an 11% cut in Council revenue funding and a 36% cut in capital funding in the years 2011 to 2014. 6VT was protected temporarily from this prospect since it had a service level agreement up to March 2012, but it was a sign of the times that, for the first time in the Café's history, two organisations failed to pay their bills for rented accommodation, amounting to over £2,000. The bills were eventually paid.

On 14 June 2011, the Board was told that the Café was still running a deficit, and money had to be withdrawn for running costs from the Buildings Fund banked with Yorkshire Building Society. On 2 August 2011, Board members held a seminar with staff which raised awareness of Café expenditure, and this soon had a positive effect. The greatest savings were in staffing, which accounted for over 80% of all expenditure. When a member of staff left he/she was not replaced, and the staff also helped by being prepared to work more flexible hours. For example, the new IncU project was begun without employing additional staff. However, many small, but cumulatively significant savings were also made, e.g. using land lines rather than mobile phones, switching off lights, heaters and computers when not in use, working from Victoria Terrace rather than the office in the Upper Bow after 6 pm, preventing food waste, and using emails rather than letters where possible.

Another option was to look for ways of raising additional income, and it was decided that Fiona Horne should join the Finance Committee to discuss grant applications. As noted in Chapter 15, Pilotlight also illustrated how to emphasise added value, and, when applications were submitted, the Café usually included an element to cover the administrative costs. However, although having a large reserve fund was regarded as good governance by some funders (e.g. Edinburgh Council), it automatically counted against 6VT in other funding applications. Also, very few funders were prepared to award grants for core activities such as the drop-in. They insisted on projects which had a specific outcome targeted to be achieved by a specific date.

All of the above actions proved effective. Although there was a deficit of £12,500 in the first six months of 2011, the financial year ended on 31 March 2012 with a surplus of just under £9,000.

At the end of the day, however, 6VT was not about making profits. All income was ploughed back into the provision of services. Its general policy was “speculate to accumulate”. For example, when asked by Community Safety to do streetwork, the Café received no financial benefit, but this service resulted in 6VT being contracted by Community Safety to carry out several projects, because it had been willing to go out and work in the community. 6VT’s reputation for delivering desired outcomes usually resulted in additional work which secured its financial foundations.

This reputation also won it support from many unexpected sources, some financial, some in kind. For example, in October 2012, the Volunteer Champions of the American global State Street Bank nominated 6VT to its Board for a grant to renovate the toilet areas. Eleven employees from State Street carried out the work at no cost to the Café and they made a lovely job of it. In 2013 alone, 6VT’s finances were boosted in a number of other ways:

- (i) On 19 April 2013, St Giles’ Cathedral arranged a performance of the Portmanteau Choir, with the proceeds shared between Christian Aid and 6VT. Each received £750, and the St Giles’ Neighbourhood Group gave 6VT a further £700.
- (ii) Mrs Elizabeth Grant, a member of St Giles’ who had for several years shown great interest in 6VT, left £5,000 to it in her will.
- (iii) A team of S5 boys from Drummond High School entered the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (Scotland) competition organised by the Wood Family Trust for schools. In it the competitors researched a project and made a presentation to a panel. The boys chose homelessness as their theme and researched 6VT’s Keysteps programme. They won first prize and presented a cheque for £3,000 to 6VT.
- (iv) On top of the £7,500 which it donated in travel vouchers in 2012, Lothian Buses gave a further £5,500 in travel vouchers in 2013 which were used for NiteZone, Keysteps, the Family Café, summer outings and the new IncU project. This support continues to the present.
- (v) 6VT received free tickets for football matches through the Hibernian Community Foundation, and these were passed on to users and some of their families.
- (vi) Braids Rotary Club gave £500 to support the drop-in.
- (vii) Some employees at State Street Bank held a Cakebake which raised £160 to pay for the Terrace Tots outing to the East Links Family Park at Dunbar.
- (viii) Lloyds TSB sent £250 which had been raised by one of its employees through matched funding.
- (ix) Café received £200 from Radio Forth for staff helping at a sponsored City Disco.
- (x) Five cameras worth £500 were donated by Olympus, and Phil Chetwynd, a retired social services worker, volunteered his time to run digital photography classes for users.
- (xi) The employee match-giving programme of News UK paid for a trip to the M&D Theme Park for seventy service users.
- (xii) In May, Dale Wilkinson a former 6VT user, ran his first ever marathon and raised £500 for 6VT.
- (xiii) In December, State Street donated Christmas hampers.

Fiona Horne's efforts were also beginning to produce large amounts of revenue. In the financial year 2012-13, in addition to the £60,230 Revenue grant from CEC, there were the following grants:

- £290,000 from the CEC for the NiteZone programme.
- £19,139 from Services for Communities for Keysteps.
- £9,940 from the Big Lottery People and Community Fund for the Terrace Tots project.
- £5,773 from Cashback for Mentors in Violence Prevention.
- £2,000 from Radio Forth's Cash for Kids to fund holiday activities.
- £15,095 from Youth Work Services for the Activity Agreement Hub.
- £15,000 from the Robertson Trust for the drop-in.
- £3,250 from First State Bank for the drop-in through Siobhan Donaldson, one of its employees who was a volunteer at the Café.
- £4,775 from Cashback for an inter-generational gardening project.

The surplus at the end of the year was £32,957.

The arrival of Jim Bryce as Treasurer early in 2013 was a major milestone in 6VT getting onto the front foot regarding its finances. The accounts had always been kept meticulously by Margaret McLean, but under Jim's leadership much more information became available to assist in forward planning. Jim and Margaret worked closely together to produce projections over the coming months, spreadsheets were regularly produced which compared actual expenditure with what had been budgeted, salary comparisons were drawn up, a project costing exercise was carried out, and there was always a careful check to ensure that there was enough in reserve to cover redundancy payments and three months' running costs should disaster strike.

With the finances now on a stable footing, the Board turned its attention to staff salaries. Café policy had always been to base these on similar grades within the Council. However, Council reorganisations and regradings had resulted in Café staff losing out at a time when the Café's finances were struggling. Although Café staff could have applied for better paid Council posts, they remained loyal. When times were hard, they also agreed to work more flexible hours and to take on an extra workload when staff members left. In 2008-09, 6VT had 25 members of staff (FTE 15.81). In 2011-12, there were only 22 (FTE 12.96).

In addition to this, the Cafe lost the services of a worker funded by the Presbytery of Edinburgh. The Presbytery had supported the Café from the very beginning in 1994, initially through a volunteer, then for a few years by paying for a youth worker to attend the drop-in on one night per week, followed by a much longer period when they paid for two nights per week. In 2010, however, the Presbytery decided it could no longer afford to do this. Although disappointed by this decision, the Board expressed its gratitude to Presbytery for the very strong support it had given to 6VT over so many years.

When the financial situation began to ease, the Board decided to gradually compensate staff for their loyalty and dedication. Where possible, it gave above inflation increases. In January 2013, it was noted that there was one member of staff whose salary was below the level of the living wage. That was rectified soon after.

The staff were also consulted in 2010 on their attitude to the compulsory pension scheme which was originally scheduled to start in 2012. However, no member of staff expressed interest. Generally speaking, companies were not interested in small groups like 6VT, and it was agreed to postpone its introduction until better schemes were available. The deadline for enrolling staff was later extended for organisations which had fewer than 30 employees to give them a staging period from January 2016 to April 2017, but the Board decided that, as a good employer, it should encourage as many of its staff as possible not to opt out as better schemes were now in prospect. Ten members of staff would have

been affected and, if it had been implemented in May 2013, the cost to the Cafe would have been around £6,000, plus pension administration costs. To compensate staff for the drop in take-home pay they would face by joining the pension scheme, they were given a 2½% pay rise, which was 1½% above public sector pay rises.

It has always been one of the strengths of the Café that it has been alert to major issues that are likely to arise because of new external factors, and then discussing with staff how these can be handled. Bringing all the staff together to do this had always been a problem since there were so many part-time staff, but from time to time the staff agreed to work overtime by attending a staff residential or half-day conference. For example, it was recognised towards the end of 2012 that the forthcoming Benefits Reforms were likely to create serious problems for some 6VT users and their families, and the staff did not know enough about the Bedroom Tax and Universal Benefits to provide adequate support on issues such as debt management, homelessness and how to submit claims. The Café, therefore, set about giving the staff that knowledge.

The Café staff are fortunate in that they can join courses run by the Council for its staff. However, now that the finances are under control, the Board is turning its thoughts to developing a more proactive training programme.

Other Continuing Projects

(a) C Card Plus and C Card Direct

C Card was introduced in 1989 to combat HIV transmissions and unplanned pregnancies. 6VT staff are trained to offer this confidential service which is delivered in partnership with NHS Lothian. The service is open to anyone over the age of 13 living in Lothian.

(b) Remote Crime Reporting

In 2014, the Café continues to run this scheme on behalf of the police. Victims, witnesses, carers and others who wish to remain anonymous can speak privately to a member of the Café staff about a crime or other incident without talking directly to the police. The staff pass on the information to the police.

(c) Food Access Scheme

6VT is the only dedicated youth location, protected from the risks of locations used by adult homeless people, where vulnerable young people can be sent by organisations to receive a substantial and nutritious hot meal if they are not able to feed themselves for various reasons, such as not having money because they were waiting for benefits to be paid and living in temporary accommodation with no access to cooking facilities. 186 meals were provided in 2012.

Former Users

From the very start, it has been quite common for former users to call in past the Café to say “Hello” again to staff and exchange experiences. Such contacts have increased since the Facebook page was set up, and there has been a growing demand from former users to hold a reunion. One idea being considered is for 6VT to gather stories on DVD in time for the 21st anniversary in 2015. The Café would certainly be willing to put ex-users in touch with one another and suggest that they might arrange a get-together themselves.

In this period, one or two former users did more than just get in touch:

- (a) On Christmas Eve 2012, Jason Wright, who had become Head Chef at the Steak Edinburgh restaurant, prepared a top class lunch for fifty service users. He now owns his own Steak Restaurant and in 2013, beside entertaining fifty 6VT users and their parents to a Christmas lunch, he extended the invitation to fifty homeless people. In 2014 he was even more ambitious and produced 200 free meals. In this, he was assisted by Steak's main food suppliers who kindly donated all the food, including Gary Welch from Welch Fishmongers, Peter Flockhart from Campbell's Prime Meat, Central Produce, and John Bastianelli who supplied all the Christmas puddings. Despite rumours to the contrary, the Christmas spirit is not dead, provided the cause is good and the correct approaches are made.

In commenting on the reasons behind this generosity, Jason commented as follows on the STV website: *"It's good to give, and one of the charities coming is 6VT which means a lot to me. I actually went to 6VT when I was younger. Yeah, I used to be one of those kids. It's a great place and lets kids know that they can do anything they want to if they work hard enough."* Jason is living proof of that. At just 26, the former sheet metal worker is a fast rising star on the Edinburgh restaurant scene.

- (b) On 26 May 2013, Dale Wilkinson, who was now Director at Lush Marketing, ran his first ever Edinburgh Marathon and raised £500 for the Café.
- (c) At the beginning of 2014, Caristiona (Ony) McLeod, who organised the Bullying Uncovered campaign in 1998, was back in charge of the cafeteria. She is very much in control and is producing food that delights the users.

Chapter 18: End of an Era (2013-2015)

Although the Board stopped worrying about eviction because of the strong reassurances it had received, that peace of mind was soon shattered and it became clear why the Director of SHBT had so studiously avoided meeting the Board of 6VT. SHBT had continued to work away behind the scenes to force 6VT out of Victoria Terrace, and it was later learned that they had been lobbying hard, especially among senior officials. A rumour, the source of which can only be guessed at, was also circulating that “some youth club or other” was holding things up by refusing to leave part of Riddle’s Court.

In October 2013, information reached the Board that SHBT had submitted a Planning Application for the refurbishment of Riddle’s Court which assumed that the premises occupied by 6VT at 4-6 Victoria Terrace were part of that building.

The Board was surprised that anyone could submit an application incorporating property which they did not own, but planning officials replied that this was quite legitimate for planning consent; but, of course, SHBT could not follow up these proposals unless 6VT agreed to move out. The Board nevertheless decided to submit an objection which concentrated on the apparent threat to 6VT and to the ground-breaking work it was doing with vulnerable young people. The aim was not to kill off the plans for the part of the building which had been leased to SHBT, but to ensure that none of the works encroached on 4-6 Victoria Terrace, including installation of the lift-shaft. It was thought that SHBT’s strategy was to seek planning permission in principle but to modify it later to take account of the fact that 6VT had the lease of 4-6 Victoria Terrace. There was concern, however, that this had never been stated in meetings with 6VT and circumstances might change, causing the whole Council to take control and withdraw its guarantee to 6VT.

SHBT had planned to make its application to the meeting of the Planning Committee on 1 November 2013 but, in the event, the application was delayed until 29 January 2014. At that meeting, several Planning Committee members from across the political parties expressed concern about what was going on, but they reminded 6VT that it could not be forced to move unless suitable alternative accommodation could be found. In the end, however, the Planning Committee had to accept the Clerk’s ruling that 6VT’s objection had raised matters that were not relevant to the planning consent since they were not material matters.

In the course of the debate, the Clerk said that, even if planning consent was given, no work could be carried out without 6VT’s consent since 6VT was a separate building from Riddle’s Court. He also mentioned that the whole project could collapse if 6VT refused consent, but assured members that 6VT had viewed a few potential properties.

That was not quite true. The Council had certainly listed several buildings that were currently empty (Leith Walk, Bonnington, Blackfriars Street, Canning Street, the Canongate, the Pleasance and the Vennel off the Grassmarket), but the officers themselves had discounted all of these as unsuitable, except the last two.

When 6VT representatives visited the former clubrooms of Lismore Rugby Club in the Pleasance, they were deemed to be completely unsuitable as a cafe because they were like a rabbit warren, terribly dilapidated and very dangerous because of the ups and downs. However, the Number Shop next door had potential. Overall, the floor space was possibly slightly bigger than 4-6 Victoria Terrace, but it would require more staff for supervision, and the architects had estimated that it would cost in the region of £300,000 to bring it up to the standard required for a cafe. They hadn’t costed how much would have to be spent on the clubrooms to provide office space and meeting rooms, but they agreed it would be a considerable amount. 6VT Board was told to concentrate on finding a suitable venue and not to consider the possible cost. The officials also agreed that the uncertainty could not go on forever since it was affecting future planning and funding applications by 6VT.

Although the building on the Pleasance had potential, the location was not at all suitable. It was not central and therefore not in neutral territory, and it also was surrounded by houses. It was inevitable that the neighbours would constantly complain about noise, and streetwork experience had taught 6VT that residents were always unhappy about groups of young folk hanging around. The users were bound to spill over on to the pavement, and that would attract youths from different neighbourhoods whose sole aim was to disrupt.

The Grassmarket Nursery was not seriously considered at first because the Vennel is very steep and disabled access would be very difficult because of the numerous steps that had to be negotiated.

At its meeting on 4 February 2014, the Board re-iterated its position that it would be willing to leave Victoria Terrace only if suitable alternative accommodation was found. If no suitable premises could be found, the Board was utterly opposed to the lift shaft coming down to Victoria Terrace level. Regarding disruption from the other work, 6VT had coped with scaffolding and dust in the past. It emphasised that either the Council or SHBT would have to bear the cost of any relocation, and there would require to be other guarantees, such as longer security of tenure of the new premises. The possibility of leasing accommodation in Riddle's Court was a non-starter because of the charges SHBT was imposing. For example, the Patrick Geddes Gardening Society was quoted £65 per hour for the use of one room, whereas the previous charge had been £10 for 2 hours.

On 12 February 2014, SHBT invited the Board of 6VT to meet them in Riddle's Court. After recounting the history of the Riddle's Court project, the Chairman, John Campbell QC, reminded the Board that SHBT had been promised a grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund and had now received planning permission for the whole building. He put it bluntly that it was now necessary for 6VT to vacate 4-6 Victoria Terrace so that the work could proceed.

The Board representatives responded that it was a Council decision that 6VT could remain where it was until suitable alternative premises were found. The tone of the meeting then changed. The SHBT Chairman criticised the Council for being dilatory in trying to find suitable premises and made the threat that 6VT would ultimately have to vacate its present premises if SHBT did not carry out the necessary remedial work to make it safe and wind and watertight. When asked if SHBT would walk away from the project if 6VT did not move out, the Chairman replied, "That is the logic. Either there is a project or there is not. If not, we move on to the next property that needs to be refurbished." Mrs Richards added that, without a public entrance via Victoria Terrace and the money that the cafe there would generate, the project was not viable. They refused to disclose their business plan but promised to provide a Gantt Chart for progressing the work.

The Board of 6VT felt that the stance adopted by SHBT was aggressive and condescending but, since SHBT wanted immediate action, it agreed to reconvene in a fortnight in the Cafe which would give the Board of SHBT an opportunity to see a DVD of 6VT in action.

The meeting on 26 February continued in the same vein with claims that the building was becoming so unsafe that 6VT would have to leave anyway. SHBT did not produce a Gantt Chart and they again refused to discuss the contents of their business plan. The only positive outcome was an agreement to ask the Council to convene a joint meeting at which the Council's stance would be stated.

After the Pleasance site was discounted, the Board of 6VT began to give the Grassmarket site serious consideration. There were two main drawbacks. The existing building was too small and disabled access would be very difficult because of the steps and steep slope. However, it was centrally located and in neutral territory, and it was in a secluded area not surrounded by houses. Since the site is near the top of the Vennel where only six steps had to be negotiated, the architects thought that the disabled problem could be overcome with a portable chairlift. The building itself had now become sad looking because of neglect, but there was a lot of ground at the front and at the back where single

storey extensions could be built so that the meeting areas could be increased and additional office space provided.

Having failed to pressure 6VT into submission, SHBT then began to target the Council and its senior officers.

On 5 March 2014, Mrs Richards sent a long briefing paper to Councillor Godzik, Chair of Education, Children and Families, for discussion at a joint meeting to be held on 6th March. In it she said that, besides restoring a very important building, the Riddle's Court project would bring an inward investment of over £6.5 million to the city and create a minimum of seventeen new jobs. It would be a learning centre of which the City could be proud and would add an important tourist attraction.

She said that SHBT had currently raised £5 million, including a £3.4 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. It was a condition of that grant, however, that SHBT obtained the lease on the property (including the Victoria Terrace level) by 11 March 2014. Only then would the Heritage Lottery Fund grant permission to start work, and without that permission SHBT could not instruct its Design Team to take the project through to the tendering stage. It had been hoped to start on site by September 2014, but that was now unlikely. Planning Permission for the full scheme (including Victoria Terrace level) had been granted on 29 March 2014, and SHBT required vacant possession of 4-6 Victoria Terrace by 31 December 2014. That would allow 6VT "to move to larger premises where their own project can develop to meet their ever changing requirements in supporting young people. This is particularly relevant with the government's current reforms which we understand will put further pressure on the services they deliver." The report by SHBT's architects had highlighted the fragile state of the whole Riddle's Court building, including Victoria Terrace, and the potential danger to the building users and the general public. It estimated that it would cost the Council in the order of £1.5 million to return the premises to a good state of repair and, in terms of its lease, 6VT would be liable for around £170,000 of this.

SHBT's briefing paper went on to say that 6VT appreciated the implications of SHBT not receiving vacant possession of 4-6 Victoria Terrace, and claimed that the 6VT Board was concerned about the impact which the current uncertainty was having on its ability to continue delivering its services if the condition of the building deteriorated, especially in relation to the safety implications for their own users and staff. The 6VT Board had expressed willingness to relocate but, according to the briefing paper, it had rejected the one property offered to them by the Council because of its poor condition. They were currently considering a property in Barony Street owned by SHBT. (Neither of these claims was accurate.)

SHBT would require 4-6 Victoria Terrace to be included in its 99-year lease since its business plan depended on "a public face for the building with provision for a public cafe, interpretation, exhibition space as well as kitchen and WC accommodation which supports the use of the upper floors." If the above requirements were not met, all funding could be lost and SHBT would have no option but to walk away from the project, leaving the Council with responsibility for a decaying building and liability for health and safety risks.

At the conclusion of this meeting with SHBT, Councillor Godzik said that he appreciated what was stated in the briefing paper but he and his committee were standing by the promises they had made to 6VT — that it could remain *in situ* until suitable alternative accommodation could be made available.

On the following day, John Campbell, Chairman of SHBT, wrote to Councillor Godzik and Sue Bruce, the Chief Executive of Edinburgh City Council, to put further pressure on the Council. The Board of 6VT felt that this letter was overbearing and intimidating. The Council needed to make "a more determined effort to persuade 6VT that it is in their interests to move, since they will be getting better premises; will have to decant anyway during the Riddle's Court construction works; will lose their current office

within Victoria Terrace; and because the building is unsafe.” SHBT would make the premises in Barony Street available to accommodate 6VT from August 2014. The cost of modernising the kitchen would be borne in the first instance by SHBT, and 6VT could repay this over, say, three years. A commercial rent would be negotiated and 6VT would move to Barony Street between 1 August and 31 December 2014. In the event of an “unwarranted” refusal by 6VT, SHBT would renounce the lease, all grants would be lost and the risk to the Riddle’s Court project would become a risk for the City of Edinburgh Council. The Heritage Lottery Fund would also be reluctant to fund any other project in the City. If early entry to Victoria Terrace could be achieved, the annual Management Fee of £44,000 which the Council paid to SHBT could end in 2016/17 instead of 2021.

Following this, SHBT met Sue Bruce on 11 March to press its case.

Councillor Andrew Burns, Leader of the Council, decided that the stakes were now so high that the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee should take over responsibility from the Education, Children and Families Committee.

The 6VT Board heard about these developments less than a week before that Committee met, but Councillor Burns agreed to an emergency meeting with them. He apologised for the speed at which things were happening but said that he had become involved in the issue only in the past few weeks following his being copied into correspondence between the Chair of SHBT and Sue Bruce, the Chief Executive. He agreed that this impasse could have been avoided if there had been better communication. His aim was to find a solution that would allow the Riddle’s Court project to proceed, but gave his word that he would do all in his power to protect the interests of 6VT whose contribution was highly valued by the Council. Within reason, sufficient money would be found to secure alternative accommodation acceptable to 6VT. He committed to maintaining his personal involvement until a resolution could be found.

When the Report of the Director of Services for Communities came to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee on 25 March 2014, it acknowledged that 4-6 Victoria Terrace did not form part of the proposed lease to SHBT. Access might be required for certain works, but all reasonable steps would be taken to ensure that the Youth Cafe suffered as little disruption as possible. SHBT had later decided that the project could not be delivered without the Victoria Terrace premises because, according to the report, that was “the most valuable part of the building.” Much of the report was taken from the SHBT briefing paper which had been sent earlier to Councillor Godzik. It stated that both Education, Children and Families and SHBT had suggested that the management fee paid to SHBT could be used to fund the borrowing costs to refurbish a new venue for 6VT, although such an agreement was later refuted by SHBT.

The final paragraph of the report read: “In summary, the project to restore Riddle’s Court is ready to commence releasing over £5m of investment. For the project to proceed the Council is required to agree to relocate 6VT and include the area they currently occupy into the lease with SHBT. This would ideally be done by mutual agreement. If this cannot be achieved then the Council will need to decide whether to terminate 6VT’s lease at the next opportunity, 31 March 2015.” Recommendation 5 at the end of the report was “to instruct Council officers to work with 6VT to seek their relocation by 31 December 2014, ideally by mutual agreement.” Recommendation 6 requested officers to report on “the most appropriate mechanism to allow the resources currently allocated to SHBT to be realigned to 6VT to support the cost of capital fit out and rent for their new premises.”

Both 6VT and SHBT were permitted to address the Committee. Following a lengthy debate in which concerns were expressed over the possible loss of grant and the threat to the future of 6VT, the Committee refused to be intimidated and passed by a large majority an addendum to the report which did not fix any date for 6VT to vacate its premises but agreed to work with both SHBT and 6VT to achieve an outcome that satisfied both parties. A Project Delivery Group was set up, chaired by

Councillor Burns and comprising the Convener and Vice-convener of Education, Children and Families, two representatives each from SHBT and 6VT, and senior management representation from Property Services, Education, Children and Families, and Children and Families Social Work. SHBT was represented by Una Richards and Marilyn MacLaren, who had now become a Director of SHBT.

The first meeting of that committee was convened four days later at which there was conditional agreement that 6VT would be prepared to locate to the Grassmarket Nursery, provided two main conditions were met — satisfying 6VT's space requirements and ensuring appropriate disabled access. It was understood that other requirements, including the granting of a long-term lease, would be subject to negotiation. Immediately after the meeting, Councillor Burns and Sue Bruce wrote to the Heritage Lottery Fund describing the progress made and asking for an extension of the deadline they had set to SHBT.

A second meeting was held a week later at which it was reported that 6VT representatives had had meetings with the architects and were studying preliminary drawings. They hoped to be in a position to give tentative agreement so that more detailed drawings could go to the Planning Committee as soon as possible. SHBT continued to press for early entry (preferably by September 2014, but definitely no later than 1 January 2015). They said that delay had already cost them £60,000 of additional costs and further delay would add to these costs. It was made clear to them that this was not possible. Before planning work could take place, approval of the estimated expenditure would be required from the Economy Committee which would meet on 29 April and from the Finance Committee which would meet on 7 May. Also, 6VT's lease entitled it to remain in its present premises until 31 March 2015. The 6VT representatives rejected a suggestion that 6VT might help SHBT by relocating temporarily to another venue such as the Canongate Project in Infirmary Street on the grounds that it was unreasonable to expect it to endure two disruptions in the course of a few months. SHBT continued to try to pressure 6VT into vacating Victoria Terrace, but the Council held firm and, despite the delay, the funding was not withdrawn from the Riddle's Court project.

On 1 May 2014, the Council approved a lease of Riddle's Court (including the 4-6 Victoria Premises) for 99 years with effect from 1 April 2015. At the same meeting, the Council decided to cap the cost of the building works and refurbishment of the former Grassmarket Nursery at £530,000, although the original estimate had been £600,000.

In the meantime, the Council's architects had been working with 6VT to produce acceptable plans. The proposed plans included extensions at the front and rear of the existing building to provide additional activity and office space.

The first suggested solution to the problem of disabled access was unacceptable. It involved staff bringing out a chair which "walked" down steps. This was rejected on two grounds. Firstly, it would have depended on staff bringing it out whenever a disabled person requested it and being trained to manoeuvre the sophisticated equipment down six steps in the Vennel. That would have proved embarrassing for the individual and an unacceptable burden on the staff. Secondly, it could not handle electric wheelchairs, which most disabled young people now had.

It was later agreed that a new entrance should be made at the top of the Vennel steps, with a platform lift inside the site, on to which individuals could drive their wheelchairs and operate them down four steps without assistance.

The architect quickly produced draft drawings which were discussed with 6VT and modified to meet certain other concerns. He then set about seeking the necessary planning permission and building warrant.

Dot received an invitation from the Lister Housing Association, which covers the properties between Keir Street and Lauriston Place, to attend their meeting on 27 May 2014. Although they had concerns, their attitude was not hostile, but they hoped they would be consulted over what was being planned. The Board thought this was a reasonable request and invited them and the residents of Brown Place on the opposite side of the Vennel to a meeting in the Café on 1 July. Here again the atmosphere was cordial, and it was helped by the presence of representatives from the Quakers who said they were sorry they were going to lose such good neighbours.

There was no further contact between SHBT and 6VT. SHBT continued to insist on working through Council officials rather than discussing issues directly with 6VT. At one stage, the Council had to erect scaffolding in Victoria Terrace to satisfy itself that a claim about unsafe stonework above 6VT was unfounded. It turned out that the fall of masonry had occurred within Riddle's Court and not above Victoria Terrace. Also, it was noted that, despite articulating general concerns about the safety of the building, SHBT continued to host large-scale events which included many children.

Towards the end of 2014, another issue came to a head. It will be recalled that the Council began a major review of youth offending services early in 2013 and, in July 2014, it was decided to amalgamate ICSS and Youth Offending. After the appointment of the head of the new department, 6VT's ICSS (NiteZone) contract was extended yet again, this time until March 2015. This was an anxious time for 6VT, what with the move to new premises and the possible loss of a contract that was worth £290,000.

On 10 November 2014, interested parties were invited to what was called a Market Engagement Event organised by the Young People's Service. At this, YPS explained the lines on which it proposed to run the new service. The commissioned service would work closely with YPS and would be based at YPS headquarters in the High Street. It would deal with a minimum of ten families across the city, and a maximum of fifteen, working with them for between eight and fifteen hours per week, including weekends, and this would include forty hours of direct contact. It was hoped that, once the outcome of the Market Engagement Meeting had been studied, a service specification would be issued in early December. Depending on how long the tendering process took, 6VT's existing contract might have to be extended yet again beyond March 2015, and possibly until September 2015.

When the Board discussed these proposals at its meeting on 13 November 2014, it agreed unanimously that, unless the proposals were changed radically, it would have to give serious consideration as to whether it wished to be involved in the new contract. The proposals were very different from what 6VT had been doing over the previous eight years. The emphasis since the beginning of ISMS and through NiteZone had been on working with the young people and their families, individually and in groups, in the informal atmosphere of the Café. 6VT was currently working with twenty young people. Virtually all of them were welfare cases, i.e. young people at risk, and the aim was to prevent them from getting into deeper trouble by supporting them and their families so that they did not land up in care. YPS, on the other hand, seemed to be planning to deal with only those whom they were statutorily bound to work with (i.e. those who had already offended), which explains why their average target was as low as fifteen young people. This would clearly cost far less, but it would jettison the valuable preventative work that 6VT had been delivering so successfully and which had saved a considerable amount of money through keeping young people out of care.

At the Annual Event on 3 December 2014, the principal guest was Councillor Paul Godzik, Chair of the Children and Families Committee. Before presenting the awards to users, he spoke highly of the work of 6VT and promised continuing cooperation between the Council and 6VT. At the end of 2014, Dot was invited to join the police Committee on Sexual Exploitation.

Formal notice to vacate 4-6 Victoria Terrace by 31 March 2015 was received from the Council on 22 December. To enable the staff to completely clear out the building before the deadline, the Board agreed that the last drop-in would take place on 6th March.

Since the new building would not be ready till late May or early June 2015, 6VT would be homeless for around two months and alternative ways had to be found to keep its activities running — a major inconvenience, but not the sort of thing which usually defeated 6VT. With their usual resilience, the staff made arrangements to continue its activities as best it could until the new premises were ready. And, as usual, many others rallied round to make the transition as smooth as possible. The history of 6VT has been that almost everyone who comes into contact with it is caught up in its infectious enthusiasm to help young people, and this was still true in this latest crisis. As had been the case twenty years ago, Councillors and Council staff didn't just go through the motions of relocating Edinburgh City Youth Café. They took a personal interest in its future because they realised what a valuable asset it was for the City.

However, although the Council had been very generous in paying for the creation of the new premises, it became increasingly clear that relocation was going to be expensive for 6VT, and it was just as well that the Board had had the foresight to build up a sizeable reserve fund.

On 10 December, 6VT was told that its ICSS contract had been extended to 30 June 2015.

The new YPS tender specification was not published until the end of February 2015. Interested parties were invited to another briefing meeting on 11 March, and the closing date for tender submissions was set for 17 April. Very little had changed except that the new plan was to cater for a minimum of twelve young people and a maximum of eighteen.

Following this, the Board agreed that a tender should be submitted which slightly modified the terms of the specification. The staff could be based in the High Street office, but 6VT was prepared to help only if work with the young people and their families was carried out along the same lines as the existing NiteZone model, i.e. a mixture of one-to one and group work with clients and their families in the Youth Café and in their communities. This would not only cost less but it would produce better outcomes. 6VT's existing work had prevented 78% of its vulnerable ICSS clients from going further into the care system, but many of this type of young person would not be covered under the new arrangements. While it was important for 6VT not to price itself out of the market, it was equally important not to become involved in the provision of a service that sold the young people short. The Board continued to be worried about the effect the continuing delays were having on staff morale, and about the working conditions for staff under the tender specification, including split shifts and unrestricted hours in the evenings and at weekends. The very detailed submission along the NiteZone lines was costed at £626,072 over two years, including staff redundancy and TUPE costs.

The first of the closing down celebrations was held on Friday, 6 March, when thirty-five users attended the final drop-in at Victoria Terrace. There were fun activities and an excellent buffet. The leftovers of the buffet were given to a homeless man sitting outside the neighbouring Pizza Express.

On 12 March, there was a reunion of ex-users. It went really well and there was good video footage of the users speaking about what 6VT had done for them. The oldest person to attend was 37. Friendships had not ended after leaving 6VT. One girl, for example, said that her mother had not been at all pleased when she took her 6VT friend from Broomhouse home from the Cafe. Now the Mum had become that girl's "auntie". Overall, they emphasised how much 6VT had helped to stabilise their lives. Residentials had made a particular mark on them. One breakdancer, who came to 6VT with his big sister at the age of eleven, said that before he started attending the drop-ins he had been a big fish in a little pond. All the activities to which 6VT had introduced him (including visits abroad) made him realise that he was just a small fish in a big pond. He had since done really well for himself, as had many of the others. Even the girl who featured on the Dispatches programme about homeless youngsters (page 149) was still in touch with staff and being helped through the problems of her still troubled life.

Over thirty former and present members of staff attended yet another Get-Together on 14 March, including Mia Jacobson who had flown over from Denmark and others who had come from Dundee, Lancaster and Manchester. Also present were Steven More, Justin Robertson and David Henderson, three of the young people on the original steering group, and Ian Boardman, Henry Philip and Dot who had been adults on that group.

Finally, the staff enjoyed cakes and a glass of prosecco on the final day in Victoria Terrace just before the keys were handed over on 31 March 2015.

Over the final three weeks of March, the staff cleared everything out of the Victoria Terrace premises. The decision was taken that the new Grassmarket venue should be completely fitted out with new equipment, and all the old equipment was gifted to other voluntary organisations. Storage in Sighthill was rented for everything else, including archives.

St Columba's Free Church had agreed to let their hall for the drop-in, but the Wednesday opening had to be dropped because the hall was not available then. The Family Café also had to be discontinued because the Hall was not available on Saturday afternoons, and there would be further disruption during the week of the General Assembly. The Terrace Tots also became a victim because attendances were very poor because the time for their meetings had had to be changed. The plan was to resume again on 18 June.

The young people treated the premises with respect, but they clearly found a church hall unattractive. Attendances in January and February had averaged over 30, but in the last three weeks of March they averaged only 15 — a clear indication of how important the quality of the venue was to teenagers. Attendances continued to drop during April and May with only around ten attending on average. The effect on the BME and SC70 youngsters was less marked, however, and it was noticeable that, although new ICSS referrals had virtually stopped, most of the existing youngsters still attended the drop-in and they often made up half of the total attendance — clear testament to the importance of 6VT in their lives. However, the drop-in had become a pale shadow of its normal self, although special efforts were made to maintain interest, including an Easter residential, ice skating at Murrayfield Ice Rink and a visit to Combat Challenge near Dobbie's when the Hall was not available. The behaviour on these outings continued to be very good. These interim arrangements, however, were very much a holding operation until the new premises were ready.

Support from outside continued. In September 2014, Tall Ships Adventures heavily subsidised a trip in a tall ship for eight young people and two staff. They sailed from Inverkip and called in at Largs and Campbeltown over the next five days. This fantastic experience helped the young people to understand the need for teamwork as well as increasing their confidence and enhancing their personal development.

During the session, Balerno High School had based its charity research project on 6VT, and they won third place in the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative run by The Wood Foundation (formerly The Wood Family Trust). They handed over the £3,000 prize to 6VT, and Dot was invited to join them at a big celebratory event in Perth organised by the Trust on 10 June 2015.

6VT held a planning meeting with the Lloyds Banking Group to discuss their continuing involvement when 6VT moved to the Vennel. Lloyds gives staff money for their "gardening" days and they put that

money into their 6VT project. The staff also continued to make monthly collections of items (mainly toiletries) for 6VT.

Lothian Buses gifted another £5,500 worth of bus vouchers to 6VT.

6VT staff took part in the Council's Systemic Family Therapy training courses, and the small attendances at the drop-in provided opportunities for more training to be given to the large number of volunteers now helping there, but they were feeling frustrated because there was so little to do.

On 1 May 2015, the users and staff made a presentation to Lorraine Goodwin who was leaving Edinburgh to make a new home for herself in the west of Scotland. In many ways, Lorraine typified the loyalty and versatility of the 6VT staff. She had served for fifteen years in several capacities — in Keysteps in 2004, the Cultural Exchange to France in 2004, Turnaround in 2007, and the Activity Agreement and back to Keysteps in the last few years, not to mention the drop-in and residential.

The early months of 2015 proved a depressing time for staff with so many jobs at risk. But there was light at the end of the tunnel. Good progress was being made on the preparation of 6VT's new home at the old Grassmarket Nursery in the Vennel, where its future would be much more secure with a 25-year lease. By October 2014, all planning consents had been received and, in order to cut down on any delays, an in-house contractor had been appointed to carry out all the works. The contractor began clearing out the site in November and a start was made on the new build towards the end of January. Occupancy was originally planned to take place on 8 June but, as often happens in building projects, there was slippage and the keys were not handed over until 29 June — three months after the eviction from Victoria Terrace.

The new venue in the Vennel will appear almost luxurious compared with the spartan premises at 6 Victoria Terrace. The café/bar area will reach the standards of a commercial nightclub. There will be private meeting rooms and also other areas fitted with full media IT equipment for workshops and training. Besides indoor social areas, there will also be outdoor activity spaces, including a recreational garden and a therapeutic garden. Under the new lease, 6VT will be responsible for all maintenance work, but a back letter ensures that it will pay only a peppercorn rent.

6VT's governance was further strengthened by the addition of two new Directors in the early months of 2015 — Alasdair Soutar, a practising lawyer, and Mik Wilson, the retired Headteacher of a special school.

When the result of the tendering process for the YPS contract was announced a day late on 9 June 2015, 6VT learned that it had not won the contract. The winning bid by Action for Children was less than 50% of what 6VT had submitted, and it was clear that YPS had not accepted 6VT's suggestion that most of the work with young people should take place in the informal atmosphere of 6VT or the clients' homes since 6VT's score on quality was 25% lower than the winning bid.

In one sense, this was a huge disappointment, especially since more than seven staff would lose their jobs after building up a really valuable service. At the same time, it came almost as a sense of relief because the original misgivings of the Board still remained over the nature of the new contract, and the staff would not have been happy working under the new conditions.

So, as it approaches its twenty-first birthday, the wheel seems to be turning almost full circle for 6VT, but not quite. In 1994, there was only the drop-in, but in 2015 the funding for Keysteps and the Activity Agreement is guaranteed for another year, and there is funding support from the British Airport Authorities Community Trust for the Terrace Tots. Smallish contracts keep appearing, including a nine-

month pilot funded in 2014-15 by the Scottish Government to help some 16-19 year old offenders to engage in Activity Agreements or other positive destinations. To recover attendance at the drop-in, the staff have already started visiting schools to tell the students all about 6VT. It is likely that, in addition to older teenagers, there may also be a slot for younger users on Friday afternoons, similar to the Rugrats at the turn of the century.

Most importantly, however, the needs of vulnerable young people which were identified under NiteZone still remain, and it is the intention of 6VT to use the impressive submission that was made for the tender as the basis for an application to a major funder to address these needs. The plan is to develop still further the work of NiteZone which prevented more than three-quarters of 6VT's ICSS clients from going further into care away from home. Instead of limiting its efforts to those who have already offended, it will concentrate on vulnerable young people who are a risk to themselves and others. NiteZone has already shown that this preventative approach has been a cost-effective way of beginning to deal with a major problem facing society generally. Securing such a contract will take some months but, fortunately, the good governance of the Board has ensured that there are sufficient funds to see 6VT through these leaner times.

That is the challenging position in which 6VT finds itself in the middle of 2015, not where it might have hoped to be, but still going forward in confidence that it can make a difference to the lives of young people now and in the future, and still sticking to the principles on which it was built, that prevention is better than cure, that no youngster is beyond redemption, that meeting young people on their own ground and supporting them through their difficult teenage years is rewarding in itself and stores up future riches for them and for society in general. Despite the recent setbacks, 6VT still plans to lead the way for the young people of Edinburgh, and the future still looks rosy for this flagship project.

The Board is bolstered in these efforts by three significant events which seem to indicate how much the work of 6VT is appreciated.

On 12 June 2015, Dot was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List — no more than she deserved considering the impressive journey on which she has taken 6VT over the past twenty years.

The esteem in which the City of Edinburgh holds 6VT will be marked by two events. The Lord Provost has agreed to perform the official opening ceremony at the Vennel on 24 July, virtually twenty-one years to the day after the official opening of the Café on Victoria Terrace. He has also agreed to host a civic reception in the City Chambers on 8 October to mark 6VT's 21st anniversary.

6VT looks forward with confidence to continuing its productive relationship with the City of Edinburgh Council in their joint efforts on behalf of the youth of the city. 6VT's attitude has always been to turn setbacks into opportunities for improvement.

Appendix 1: Principles and Practice

The Edinburgh City Youth Cafe aims to provide facilities for young people aged 15 to 20 years in the Lothian Region. The Cafe will encourage young people to take full advantage of educational and recreational opportunities available to them and will encourage young people to take a major responsibility for the organisation and planning of the project. The Cafe will encourage young people to make informed decisions through providing accurate and up-to-date information in accessible ways.

- Young people will be welcomed into a provision that is comfortable and relaxed. They will be able to talk to staff who are friendly and non-judgemental. The service will be physically and psychologically accessible to all young people.
- The Cafe will be centred on the needs of young people and will adopt a personalised approach.
- The project will develop styles of operation and management which will allow maximum participation by young people.
- There will be a commitment to working interactively and innovatively within the locality to develop working relationships with other agencies.
- The Cafe will provide an advice and information service to young people which is non-directive and will enable young people to understand the information, arrive at their own decisions and take their own action.
- The information and advice service provided within the Cafe will be available free of charge to all young people wishing to use it.
- The Cafe will offer a confidential service to young people within the project's policy on confidentiality.
- The information and advice service will cover a wide range of issues including arts and entertainment, educational and leisure opportunities as well as the more "problem" based issues. Practical services, for example, will help with the preparation of curricula vitae and form-filling. The provision of more specialist services (e.g. health, careers advice) may be made available by arrangement with other agencies.
- The project will seek to involve members of local communities in the provision, and appropriate training will be provided for paid and voluntary workers.
- The project will take positive action to challenge prejudice as outlined in the Café's equal opportunities policy.

Appendix 2: Confidentiality

The Edinburgh City Youth Cafe is committed to practices and procedures which ensure confidentiality in respect of information relating to users of the project. Within the project, young people will be seen as responsible individuals in their own right and not as objects of concern.

The confidentiality policy will apply equally to project staff and volunteers who have completed induction, and all staff should have a clear understanding of the project's policies on confidentiality. Students on placement should have the same rights and responsibilities as other project staff during the placement period.

Internal Confidentiality:

There should be no issue of breaking confidentiality within the boundaries of the team – information may be shared regarding individual young people within the team where it is regarded as being beneficial to the needs of that young person. Individuals should be made aware of this and no promises should be made that we will never share information and issues within the team. It can be made clear at the time that staff may need to do this, not only for staff support, but to provide a better service to individuals. Care will be taken to ensure that issues are not discussed within the hearing of others who are not members of the team.

Information to Third Parties:

As a general rule, except in exceptional circumstances (see below), no information about a particular individual with whom we are working should be given to any third party or agency without the permission of the individual concerned. Where possible, the individual concerned should be in the presence of the worker when consented information-sharing is taking place. Where this is not possible, the individual should be informed of the contact and substance of the conversation as soon as possible.

No information regarding individuals will be requested of third parties by project staff without the prior permission of the person concerned.

Exceptional Circumstances:

There may be occasions when exceptional circumstances prevail: for example, when the person or a third party is at risk or in immediate danger. There is no prescriptive list to cover all occasions, but broad guidelines should be:

- where the person concerned is clearly not in control of their own safety, e.g. involved in an accident, suffering from a drug overdose.
- where the emotional or mental state of the person concerned is such that it puts their own or third parties' lives or safety at risk.
- where a third party is at risk of danger or abuse, e.g. where a sibling is left within the family and is being abused

Records:

Only information that is required for a specific purpose and that is adequate, relevant and not excessive for that purpose will be kept. The project has an open records system which means that an individual's records are accessible to them and relevant project staff – but to no one else. For security reasons all records will be kept under lock and key.

Any monitoring system in place will ensure complete anonymity.

This policy will be displayed in project buildings and all efforts will be made to ensure that individuals using the project are aware of this policy.

The above records the policy adopted when the Café opened. Since then, of course, the requirements of Data Protection have been incorporated in the policy on Confidentiality.

Appendix 3: Drug Use

In recent years there appears to have been a significant shift in the types of drugs young people are using and their availability. The task of Edinburgh City Youth Cafe is to provide young people with accurate, understandable information on legal and illegal drug use and to encourage young people to take "harm reduction" seriously.

- Edinburgh City Youth Cafe will actively seek to involve young people in a range of informal educational opportunities around the subject of substance education.
- The Cafe will provide up-to-date information about drugs, legal implications and young people's rights.
- No illegal drugs will be allowed onto the project's premises, or in any other premises that may be used by the project. Prescribed medication should be taken at home where possible.
- The staff of the project cannot be put at risk of prosecution by participating in any activity involving illegal drugs. Staff are obliged to act within the law at all times.
- Individuals or groups who bring illegal drugs onto the premises will be asked to leave, with an explanation and an invitation to come back at another time.
- No illegal substances will be allowed whilst on residential trips organised by the project or in any minibus or other vehicle being used by the project.
- Alcohol will not be allowed onto the project's premises.

Appendix 4: Equal Opportunities

Edinburgh Youth Cafes Association is positively committed to opposing all direct and indirect discrimination towards its workers, job applicants, users and Management Committee. Our aim is to ensure that nobody receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, sex, marital status, ethnic or national origins, being lesbian or gay, age, disability, education, religious belief, trade union activity, unrelated criminal convictions.

Edinburgh Youth Cafes Association will seek to implement a programme of positive action to make its Equal Opportunities Policy fully effective. As an employer, it will examine and keep under review all selection criteria and procedures, ensure that all employees are selected, promoted and treated on the basis of their relevant merit, potential, experience and ability and are given special training, where appropriate, to ensure their progress within the organisation. As a resource group it will seek to ensure that all our users have access to our services and that the service we offer is appropriate to the needs of our users.

Edinburgh Youth Cafes Association therefore declares that it will introduce and keep under review measures that will combat all direct and indirect discrimination in its employment practices and service provision and will campaign with other groups in the City of Edinburgh to achieve equal opportunities for all.

Appendix 5: The Café's Constitution

1. Name:

The organisation shall be known as the **Edinburgh City Youth Cafes Association**.

2. Area of Benefit:

The area of benefit shall be Edinburgh and the district areas of Mid, East and West Lothian.

3. Objects of the Association:

To provide facilities for young people in Lothian Region which promote their social welfare, provide educational and recreational opportunities and in general improve the quality of life for young people in the area of benefit. The Association shall be non-political and non-sectarian in nature.

And in particular the purposes shall include:

- (a) to provide a safe environment for young people to meet through which social issues/concerns can be addressed.
- (b) to encourage young people using such facilities to take a major responsibility for its organisation and management.
- (c) to encourage young people to be committed to improving the quality of life for themselves and those around them.
- (d) to offer appropriate experiences whereby young people will have the chance to learn about themselves and to become more effective in their relationship with others.
- (e) to create opportunities for young people to explore issues of relevance and provide information that allows them to make informed choices
- (f) To provide an alcohol-free **and health-conscious environment.

** The words "and drug-free" were later inserted here.

4. Membership:

Membership of the Youth Cafe shall be open to:

- (i) interested persons of 15 years to 20 years of age residing in the area of benefit (hereinafter referred to as full members).
- (ii) interested persons of 15 years to 20 years of age visiting or temporarily residing in the area of benefit (hereinafter referred to as guest members)
- (iii) any youth work agencies operating in the area of benefit whose objects are similar and whose membership is broadly similar and would be of benefit to the Youth Cafe (hereinafter referred to as Agency Membership).

The Management Committee shall have the right to set an appropriate Annual Membership Fee and terminate any membership. Members shall have the right to an Appeals Procedure.

5. Office Bearers and Management Committee:

The Office Bearers shall be a Hon. President, Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Hon. Treasurer and Secretary, each of whom shall serve until the next Annual General Meeting in an honorary capacity. No office bearer or committee member shall receive financial reward from the Association. The office bearers and committee members shall be considered full members.

Any casual vacancy in the Management Committee may be filled by the Committee, and any person appointed to such a casual vacancy shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting of the Association and shall be eligible for re-election.

The Office Bearers and Management Committee and Auditor shall be elected annually at the AGM.

The Management of the Youth Cafe shall be vested in the Management Committee. The Management Committee shall consist of:

- a) Hon. President.
- b) Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Hon. Treasurer.
- c) Six full members as defined in 4 (i), who must be at least 16 years old.
- d) The Local Councillors from Lothian Region and Edinburgh District Council.
- e) Director of Education or his/her representative and a Councillor from the Education Committee.
- f) A representative from Lothian Youth Forum and Lothian Association of Youth Clubs and the Presbytery of Edinburgh.
- g) A representative from the local community.
- h) A maximum of 3 co-opted places as determined by the Management Committee.

Provision for further co-options from major funding bodies or partner organisations shall be available at the discretion of the Management Committee.

The Project Co-ordinator has the right to attend all Association meetings.

6. Powers and Duties of Management Committee

The Management Committee shall have the responsibility for the formulation of policy, development of practice and management of the Youth Cafe and this shall include:

- (i) The appointment and management of staff.
- (ii) The management of financial affairs and premises in line with constitutional and legal Requirements.
- (iii) The securing of appropriate funding
- (iv) The setting and evaluation of agreed objectives

- (v) The power to delegate any of their responsibilities to any sub-group appointed by, and responsible to, the Management Committee.
- (vi) Ensuring the maximum possible opportunities for young people to participate in the policy formulation and day-to-day Management of the Youth Café.

7. General Meetings:

- a) An Annual General Meeting shall be held in each calendar year at a time determined appropriate by the Management Committee.
- b) Matters arising at general or committee meetings shall be decided by a simple vote of those present and entitled to vote. The Chair shall have a second or casting vote in the case of equal voting.
- c) Notice of General Meetings shall be given to all full and agency members at their last known address, with at least 21 days' notice in writing.
- d) An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be called upon the written request of at least 20 full members. The Secretary shall send out calling notices within one week of receipt of such a written request, giving at least 21 days' notice of the meeting itself.
- e) Those entitled to vote at a general meeting shall be full members as specified in 4 (i) and (ii).
- f) The Management Committee shall meet as required and not less than four times per year.

8. AGM:

The Agenda for the AGM shall normally include:

The election of Office Bearers, Management Committee and Auditor
Adoption of Annual Report
Adoption of Annual Accounts

9. Quorum:

The quorum of a General Meeting of the Association shall be 20 full members and for a Management Committee shall be 6.

10. Finance:

The financial year shall be from the 1st April to 31st March. The Association shall be empowered to raise funds in such a manner as the Management Committee may decide and any funds so acquired or received shall be solely devoted to the promotion of the objects of the Association.

The Annual Accounts shall be professionally audited and submitted to the AGM for approval. The auditor shall be appointed at the AGM.

11. Alterations to Constitution:

No alterations shall be made to this Constitution except at either the AGM or an EGM called for the purpose. Notice of any proposed alterations shall be circulated not less than 21 days before such meeting. Such alterations must be approved by at least two thirds of persons present and entitled to vote.

Any proposed alteration which would affect the charitable status of the Association shall be declared null and void.

12. Dissolution:

In the event of the Association ceasing to exist, any remaining funds of the Association, after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities, shall either be given to a similar or like-minded charity operating in the area of benefit, or held in trust for the pursuit of similar charitable objects as those of the original Association.

The Association shall then be declared dissolved.

Appendix 6: Donations to 6VT up to the end of 1994

In addition to the Capital grant received from Lothian Region, the following donations helped 6VT establish its revenue account in the first year:

Lothian Regional Council	£2450	Non-staffing costs
Lothian Regional Council	£6840	Staffing costs
Beveridge Trust	£500	
Church of Scotland (Make a Difference Scheme)	£200	
Price Waterhouse	£100	Residential course
Abbey National Charitable Trust	£600	Leaflet racks, books, leaflets, whiteboard
Health Promotion Dept. (Lothian Health)	£3000	Education equipment, leaflets (HIV, AIDS and Drugs)
Tudor Trust	£1500	Furnishings and equipment
Safer Edinburgh Project	£7600	Equipment (fire/security, music, audio visual, games)
CRISIS	£2000	Computer, display boards, production of leaflets
Percy Bilton Charitable Trust	£470	Flipchart, display materials, publicity
Prince's Trust	£500	Furnishings
Dr Guthrie's Association	£1000	Whiteboard, noticeboard, leaflet racks, publicity
Youth Development Fund	£400	Residential course
Hilden Charitable Trust	£375	Drugs education resources
Building Society	£1000	
Telethon Trust	£1000	
BBC Children in Need	£5000	
George Wimpey Trust	£1000	
TSB Foundation for Scotland	£1500	
Edinburgh District Council	£500	
EVOC Charitable Trusts	£150	Furniture
Petra Youth Action Fund	£8190	
City of Edinburgh Lions Club	£73	First Aid kit
Christian Aid Foundation	£100	
Scotmid	£20	Equipment
Francis C Scott CT	£1000	Leaflet racks and information boards
North British Distillers	£150	
Barclays Youth Action Awards UK	£710	Setting up advice and information service
Allen Lane Foundation	£900	Purchase of computer
Variety Club Children's Charity	£1000	General running costs
John Watson Trust	£2500	Coffee bar equipment
UVAF	£1100	Establishing information project for young people
Nancie Massey Charitable Trust	£750	General running costs
Joyce Dunford Bequest	£75	Personal safety
Connect Europe	£150	Worker study visit
Others	£128	
	<u>£54,531</u>	

There was also bank interest of £1,681.22

Appendix 7: Organisations and people that have helped 6VT

Statutory Bodies

<p>Big Lottery Fund Awards for All People and Communities</p> <p>British Council</p> <p>City of Edinburgh Council Activity Agreement Hub Arts Department Children and Families Dept Community Education Community Safety Fund EYSIP Family and Community Support Housing Department Local Action Fund Ooshla (Out of School Hours Learning Activities) Open All Hours Revenue Grant Safer Edinburgh Project Services for Communities Small Projects Fund Supporting People Youth Crime Review</p> <p>Community Food and Health (Scotland) Connect Europe Edinburgh District Council Heritage Lottery Fund Historic Scotland</p>	<p>Lothian and Edinburgh Enterprise Ltd Lothian and Borders Police Lothian Health Board Community Food and Health Scotland NHS Tobacco Awareness Fund Lothian Regional Council Education Department Lothian Youth Forum Planning Department Revenue Grant Youth Development Fund Regeneration Fund M-Power Millennium Awards Millennium Award Scheme (CHASE) Millennium Commission Scottish Executive Awards for All Safer Scotland Scottish Community Safety Youth Link Scotland Youth Music Initiative Scottish Government Awards for All Cash Back for Communities Project Scotland Scottish Violence Unit Youth and Philanthropy</p>
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Trusts

<p>Abbey National Charitable Trust Allen Lane Foundation Austin Hope Pilkington Trust Bank of Scotland Foundation Beveridge Trust British Airport Authorities Community Trust Brownlee Trust Catherine Cookson Trust Charities Aid Foundation Cirdan Sailing Trust CTC Charitable Trust Cycle Trust Daisy Chain Trust Dr Guthrie's Association Donald Gorrie Challenge Fund Dulverston Trust EVOC Charitable Trust Francis C Scott Charitable Trust Gannochy Trust Garfield Weston Foundation George Wimpey Trust HBOS Foundation Hedley Foundation Henry Duncan Award</p>	<p>Hilden Charitable Trust J K Young Endowment Fund John Watson's Trust Joyce Dunford Bequest Laing Trust Leith Benevolent Fund Lloyds TSB Foundation for Scotland Moffat Charitable Trust Nancie Massey Charitable Trust Nationwide Foundation Old Town Trust Percy Bilton Charitable Trust Petra Youth Action Fund Prince's Trust Railway Children Robertson Trust R S McDonald Foundation Scottish Community Foundation Tall Ships Youth Trust TelethonTrust Tudor Trust Variety Club Children's Charity Wood Family Trust Wood Foundation</p>
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Other bodies

<p> Angle Club Army Youth Training Team Arnold Clark Audience Business Balerno High School Barclay's Youth Awards UK B and Q Boilerhouse Theatre Company British Council Commonwealth Youth Exchange British Gas Canongate Youth Project Charlie Miller's (Canonmills) ClanChildLaw Children in Need Christina Mary Hendry Church of Scotland Clarkston Jewellers Columba 1400 CRISIS Drinkaware Drummond High School Edinburgh Flotarium Edinburgh Presbytery Ego Night Club Deep Sea World Dobbies Garden Centre Drummond High School Edinburgh Lions Club Fairbridge Festival Theatre First State Bank Fopp Records Fort William Adventure Centre Freespirits Outdoor Adventure Greyfriars Church Gumtree Heart Research UK Hibernian Community Foundation High Constables of Edinburgh John Lewis Partnership Jydsk Paedagog Seminarium (Aarhus) Keystones Project Kickass (London) </p>	<p> King's Theatre Knockhill Racing Lloyds Banking Group Lothian Buses Lush Marketing Lyceum Theatre Maud Wallace Fund Megabowl Narcissus Florist Network Rail News UK North British Distillers N Power Odeon Cinema Wester Hailes Olympus Pilotlight Portmanteau Choir Price Waterhouse Coopers Quakers Meeting House Radio Forth Cash for Kids Robert Horne Paper Company Rock Trust Rolling Stone Gallery Rotary Club of Braids Sara Ferrier Save the Children Scotmid Scottish Whisky Heritage Centre Sheraton Hotel St Columba's by the Castle St Columba's Free Church St Giles' Cathedral St Margaret's by the Castle Starbucks Youth Action Fund State Street Global Services STEAK EDINBURGH The Nail Factory Traverse Theatre UK Youth Microsoft Unite UVAF Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (Scotland) Youth Clubs Scotland </p>
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And countless individuals

Appendix 8: Attendance statistics

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NB

1. The reason why there are gaps in some statistics is explained on page 124.
2. BME originally covered only the black ethnic minority, but from April 2006 it included Poles and then Eastern Europeans.
3. The SC70 category covers those who are under the Children's Hearing system. After their 16th birthday, they fall out of that system, but 6VT continues to look after them as "Vulnerable Adults".
4. The 2015 statistics demonstrate the effect that the lack of quality facilities can have.
5. These statistics cover only contacts at the drop-in. They do not include the many hundreds of other contacts made through projects such as Keysteps, Turnaround, Action 4 Change, ICSS, Activity Agreement Hub, Family Café, Terrace Tots.

1. Drop-in Attendances

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year Total
1997													
Male	57	129	190	229	271	214	97	154	109	158	116	164	1,888
Female	74	193	227	217	214	257	105	198	72	217	113	173	2,060
Total	131	322	417	446	485	471	202	352	181	375	229	337	3,948
openings/average	12/10.9	12/26.8	13/32.1	13/34.3	13/37.3	13/36.2	14/14.4	13/27.1	13/13.9	13/28.8	13/17.6	12/28.1	154/25.6
1998													
Male	190	182	197	189	140	139	164	112	122	215	260	249	2,159
Female	238	297	254	193	231	199	163	177	159	268	277	269	2,725
Total	428	479	451	382	371	338	327	289	281	483	537	518	4,884
openings/average	12/35.7	12/39.9	13/34.7	13/29.4	13/28.5	13/26.0	14/23.4	13/22.2	13/21.6	13/37.2	13/41.3	12/43.2	154/31.7
1999													
Male	217	287	321	225	212	155	246	213	231	273	191	175	2,746
Female	272	261	322	244	306	210	309	253	295	269	256	198	3,195
Total	489	548	643	469	518	365	555	466	526	542	447	373	5,941
average/opening	12/40.8	12/45.7	13/49.5	13/30.1	13/39.8	13/28.1	13/42.7	13/35.8	13/40.5	13/41.7	13/34.4	13/28.7	154/38.6
2000													
Male	133	208											
Female	182	243											
Total	315	451							426	349	430	377	
openings/average	13/24.2	12/37.6							13/32.8	13/26.8	13/33.1	12/31.4	
2001													
Male													
Female													
Total	318	457	492	317	361	498	411	470	480	658	860	590	5,912
openings/average	13/24.5	12/38.1	13/37.8	13/24.4	13/27.8	13/38.3	13/31.6	14/33.6	12/40.0	13/50.6	13/66.2	13/43.4	155/38.1
2002													
Male													
Female													
Total	735	792	781	779	751	710	757	493	1004	928	954	914	9,598
openings/average	13/56.5	12/66.0	13/60.1	13/59.9	14/53.6	12/59.2	14/54.1	13/37.9	13/77.2	13/71.4	13/73.4	12/76.2	155/61.9

2. Black Minority Ethnic *

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2006 Total	33	43	71	70	103	95	138	192	126	129	85	80	1,165
openings/average	11/3.0	12/3.6	14/5.4	12/5.8	13/7.9	13/7.3	13/10.6	13/14.8	13/9.7	13/9.9	12/7.1	10/8.0	149/7.8
2007 Total	70	85	76	64	55	55	94	182		120	133	57	991
openings/average	12/5.8	12/7.1	12/6.3	13/4.9	13/4.2	13/4.2	13/7.2	14/13.0	closed	13/9.2	13/10.2	9/6.3	137/7.2
2008 Total	78	74	59	59	68	62	74	133	95	59	53	27	841
openings/average	12/6.5	13/5.7	13/4.5	12/4.9	13/5.2	13/4.8	13/5.7	13/10.2	13/7.3	14/4.2	12/4.4	10/2.7	151/5.6
2009 Total	50	46	56	49	33	33	38	96	62	51	70	44	628
openings/average	12/4.2	12/3.8	13/4.3	13/3.8	13/2.5	13/2.5	14/2.7	13/7.4	13/4.8	13/3.9	13/5.4	10/4.4	152/4.1
2010 Total	40	46	77	53	44	27	42	36	23	36	36	26	486
openings/average	10/4.0	12/3.8	14/5.5	13/4.1	13/3.4	13/2.1	13/3.2	12/3.0	12/1.9	13/2.8	12/3.0	8/3.3	145/3.4
2011 Total	31	30	33	30	52	59	53	62	59	29	35	37	510
openings/average	12/2.6	12/2.5	13/2.5	12/2.5	13/4.0	12/4.9	13/4.1	14/4.4	13/4.5	13/2.2	13/2.7	11/3.4	151/3.4
2012 Total	76	57	48	49	52	57	62	60	85	62	73	47	728
openings/average	12/6.3	13/4.4	13/3.7	13/3.8	13/4.0	13/4.4	13/4.8	14/4.3	12/7.1	14/4.4	13/5.6	8/5.9	151/4.8
2013 Total	40	35	36	60	111	108	119	88	68	82	80	46	873
openings/average	11/3.6	12/2.9	13/2.8	12/5.0	14/7.9	12/9.0	14/8.5	13/6.8	13/5.2	13/6.3	12/6.7	11/4.2	150/5.8
2014 Total	75	88	62	96	92	113	105	129	150	154	110	94	1268
openings/average	13/5.8	12/7.3	13/4.8	13/7.4	13/7.1	13/8.7	13/8.1	13/9.9	13/11.5	14/11.0	12/9.2	10/9.4	152/8.3
2015 Total	103	104	44	20	13								
openings/average	12/8.6	12/8.7	8/5.5	8/2.5	8/1.6								

* Includes Eastern European and Poles from April 2006

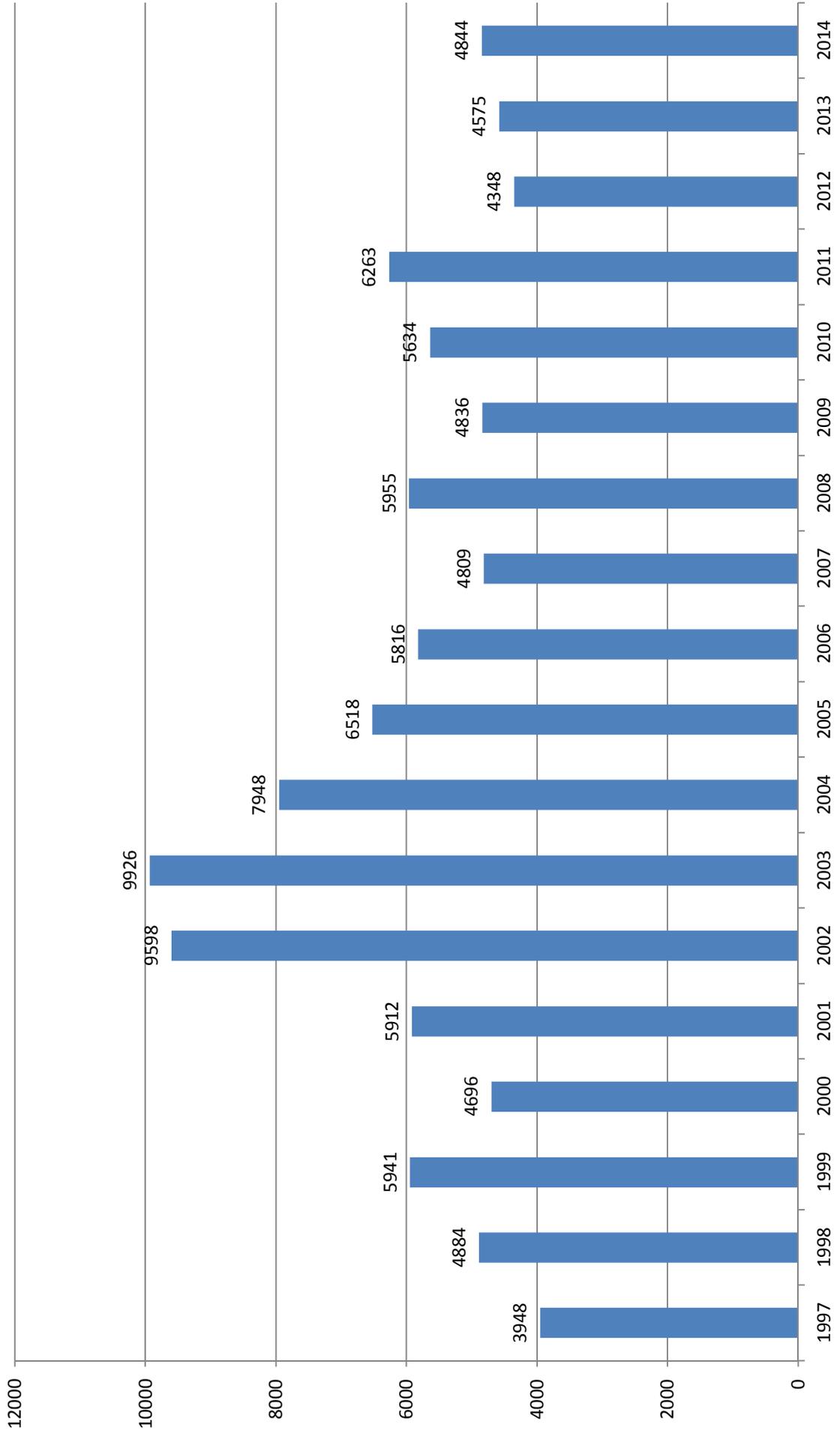
3. SC70s (users who are under supervision)

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2008 Total								94	77	132	86	61	450
openings/average								13/7.2	13/5.9	14/9.4	12/7.2	10/6.1	62/7.3
2009 Total	58	38	55	27	23	42	42	70	82	85	62	48	632
openings/average	12/4.8	12/3.2	13/4.2	13/2.1	13/1.8	13/3.2	14/3.0	13/5.4	13/6.3	13/6.5	13/4.8	10/4.8	152/4.2
2010 Total	36	80	106	59	79	75	81	59	82	72	52	29	810
openings/average	10/3.6	12/6.7	14/7.6	13/4.5	13/6.1	13/5.8	13/6.2	12/4.9	12/6.8	13/5.5	12/4.3	8/3.6	145/5.6
2011 Total	67	65	85	82	78	110	62	70	59	36	36	33	783
openings/average	12/5.6	12/5.4	13/6.5	12/6.8	13/6.0	12/9.2	13/4.8	14/5.0	13/4.5	13/2.8	13/2.8	11/3.0	151/5.2
2012 Total	44	33	43	43	29	29	46	64	55	53	16	16	471
openings/average	12/3.7	13/2.5	13/3.3	13/3.3	13/2.2	13/2.2	13/3.5	14/4.6	12/4.6	14/3.8	13/1.2	8/2.0	151/3.1
2013 Total	33	48	49	32	43	20	27	82	69	59	94	68	624
openings/average	11/3.0	12/4.0	13/3.8	12/2.7	14/3.1	12/1.7	14/1.9	13/6.3	13/5.3	13/4.5	12/7.8	11/6.2	150/4.2
2014 Total	36	28	36	64	79	77	101	109	121	165	130	73	1019
openings/average	13/2.8	12/2.3	13/2.8	13/4.9	13/6.1	13/5.9	13/7.8	13/8.4	13/9.3	14/11.8	12/10.8	10/7.3	152/6.7
2015 Total	93	109	59	45	30								
openings/average	12/7.8	12/9.1	8/7.4	8/5.6	8/3.8								

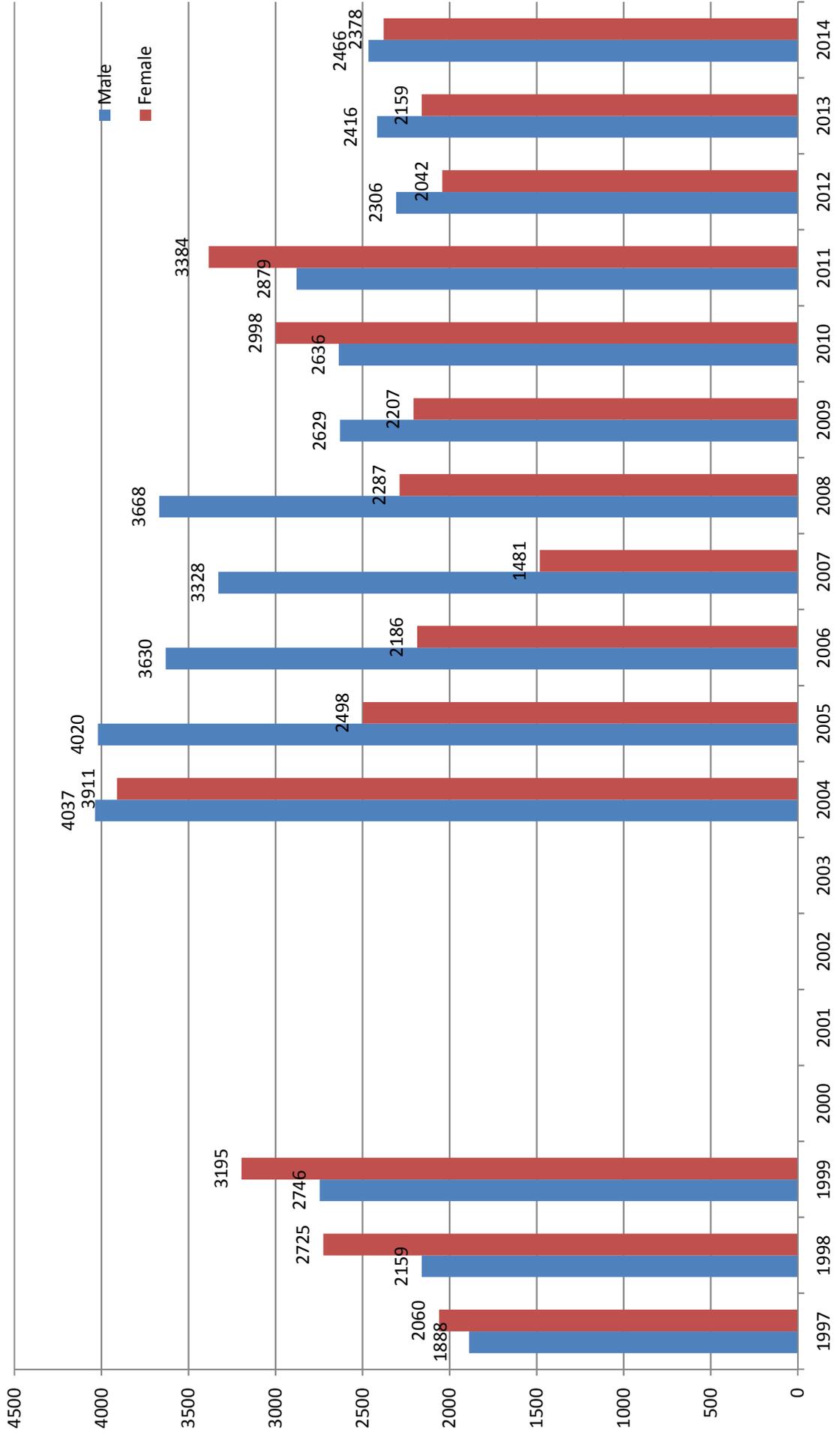
4. Alternatives

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2002													
Friday afternoon													
openings/average			70	381	554	425	77	closed	221	202	350 (F+Sat)		2,280
			1 opening	4/95.3	5/76.2	4/106.3	1 opening		4/55.3	4/50.5	9/38.9		32/71.3
2003													
Friday afternoon													
Saturday afternoon										130	91	72	
Total										223	271	155	
openings/average	208	483	442	472	538	409	214	closed	201	353	362	227	3,909
	9/23.1	8/60.4	9/49.1	8/59.0	10/53.8	8/51.1	6/35.7		8/25.1	9/39.2	9/40.2	6/37.8	90/43.4
2004													
Friday afternoon													
Saturday afternoon	105	141	122	105	95	118	151	93	95	125	85	81	1,316
Total	279	216	214	139	208	202	178	128	165	161	151	82	2,123
openings/average	384	357	336	244	303	320	329	221	260	286	236	163	3,239
	8/48.0	8/44.6	8/42.0	7/34.9	9/33.7	8/40.0	10/32.9	8/27.6	8/32.5	10/28.6	8/29.5	6/27.2	98/33.1
2005													
Friday afternoon													
Saturday afternoon	91	91	73	112	65	63	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	closed	495
Total	109	115	86	104	88	97	closed	closed	48	167	85	68	967
openings/average	200	206	159	216	153	160							1,462
	8/25.0	8/25.8	8/19.5	9/24.0	8/19.1	8/20.0			3/16.0	5/33.4	4/21.3	3/22.7	64/22.8
2006													
Saturday afternoon													
openings/average	48	54	70	83	27	18	stopped						
	4/12.0	4/13.5	17.5	5/16.6	3/9.0	2/9.0							

TOTAL ATTENDANCE AT DROP-IN SESSIONS 1997 to 2014

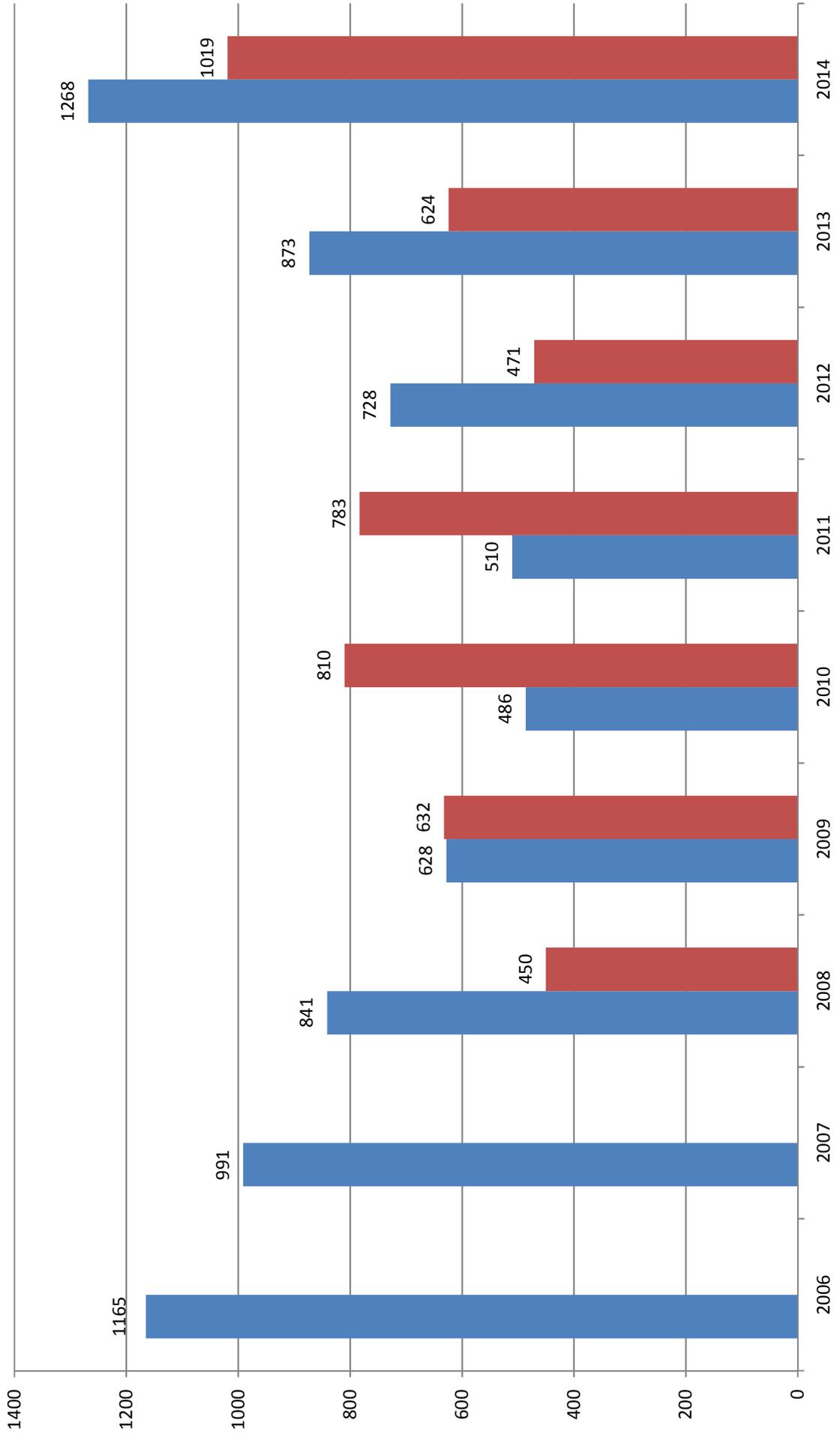


TOTAL ATTENDANCE AT DROP-IN SESSIONS 1997 to 2014 (MALE & FEMALE)

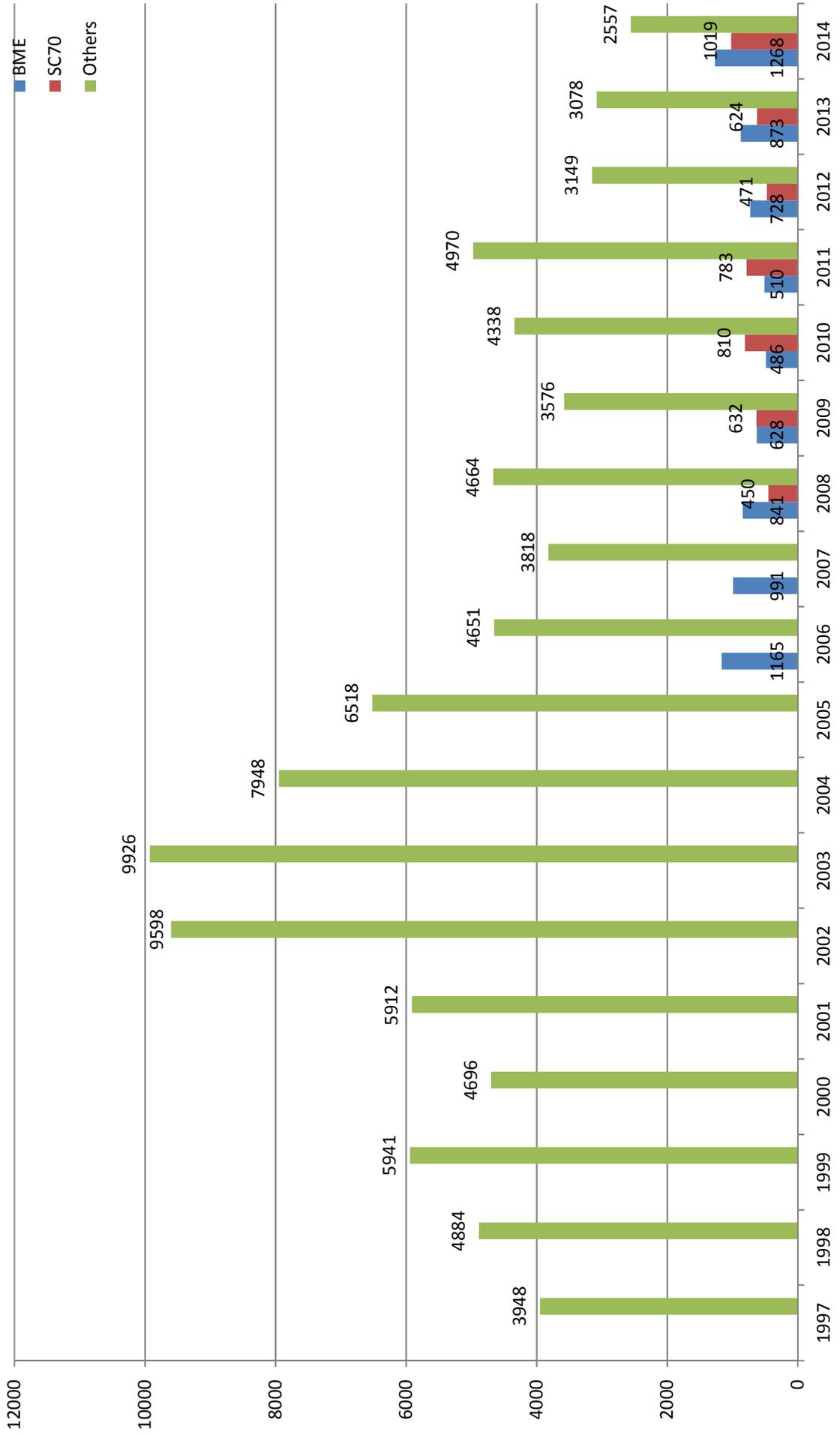


TOTAL ATTENDANCE AT DROP-IN SESSIONS (BME & SC70)

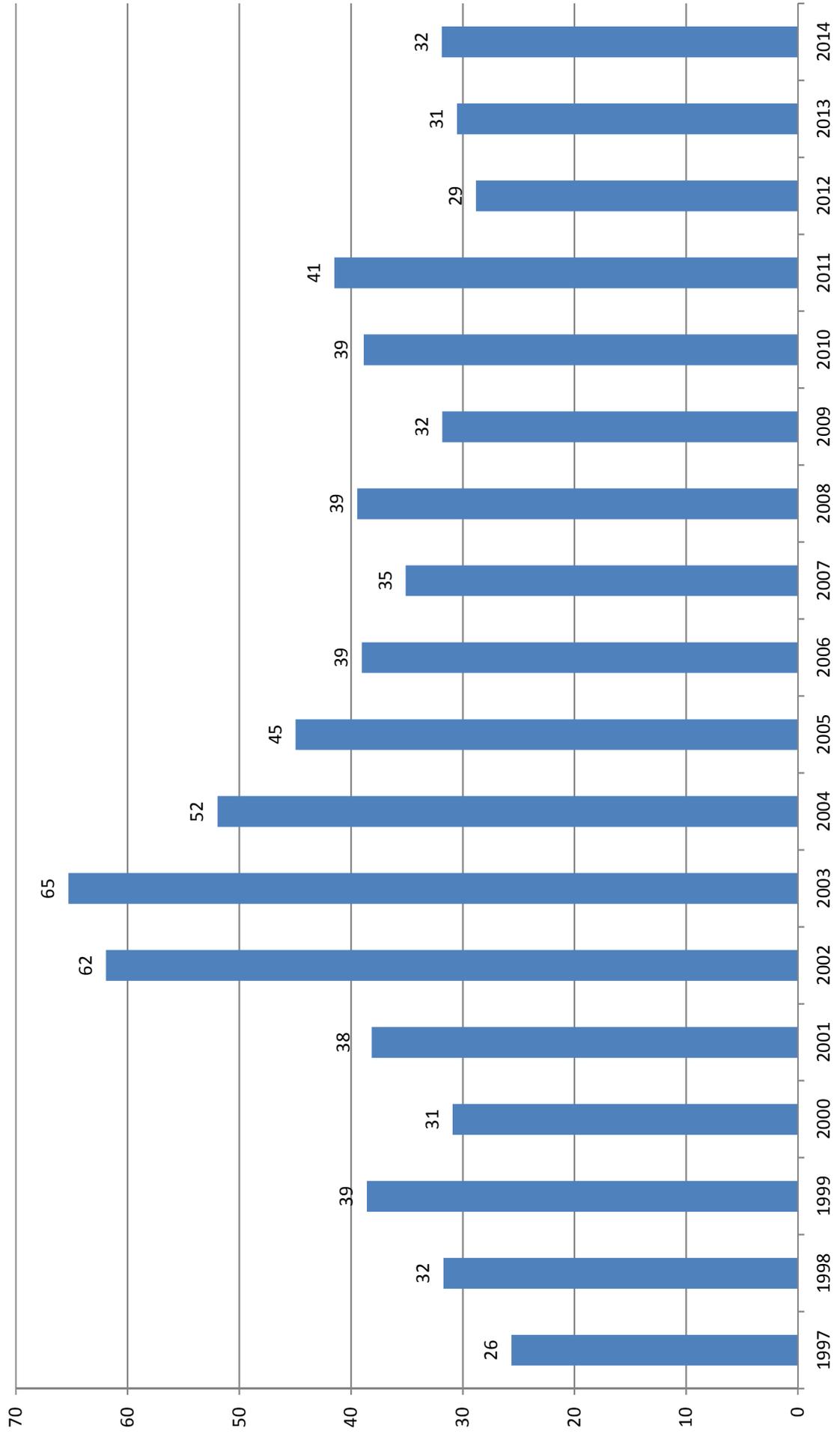
■ BME
■ SC70



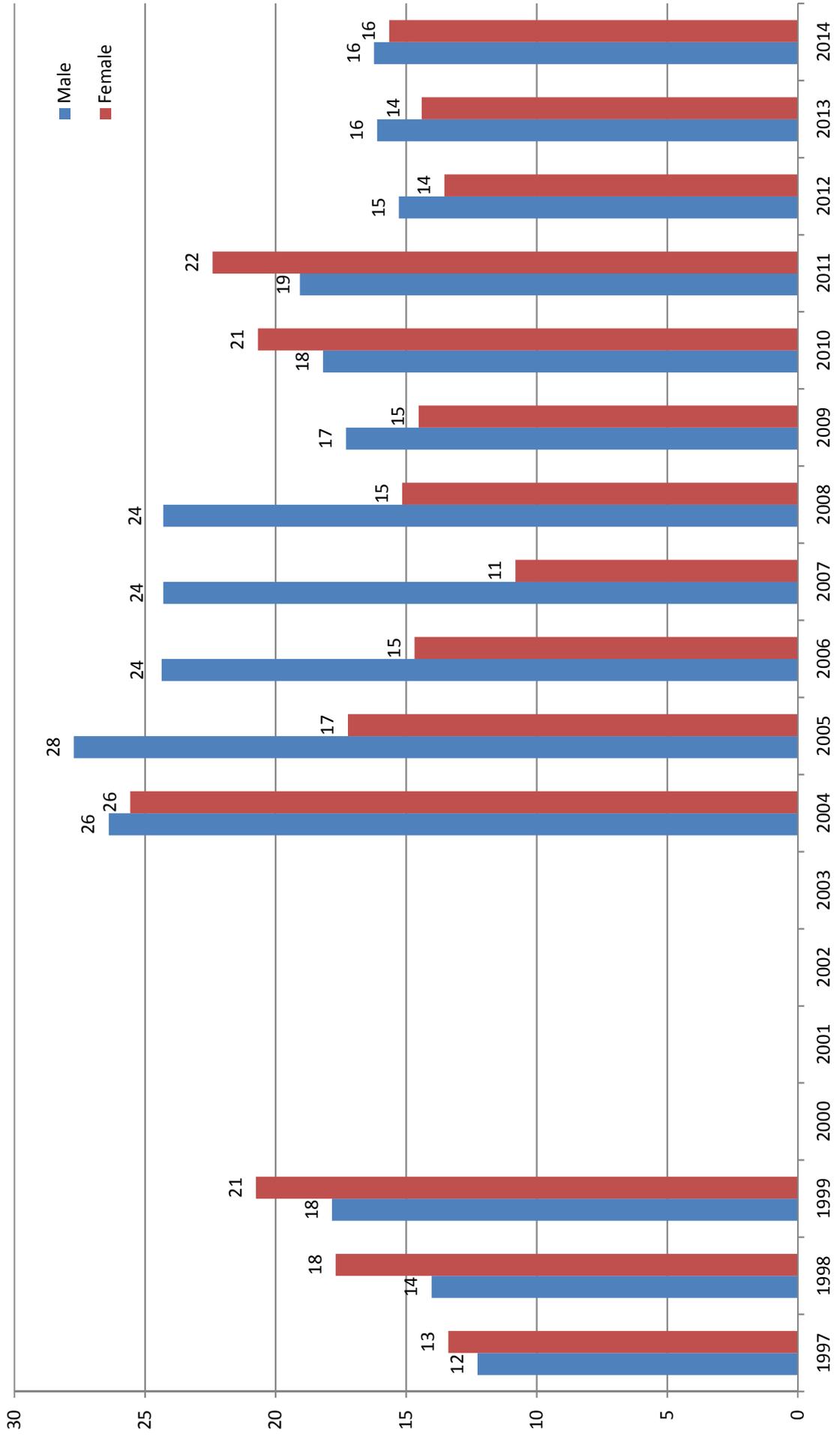
TOTAL ATTENDANCE AT DROP-IN SESSIONS 1997 to 2014 (BME, SC70 & OTHERS)



AVERAGE ATTENDANCE PER DROP-IN SESSION 1997 to 2014

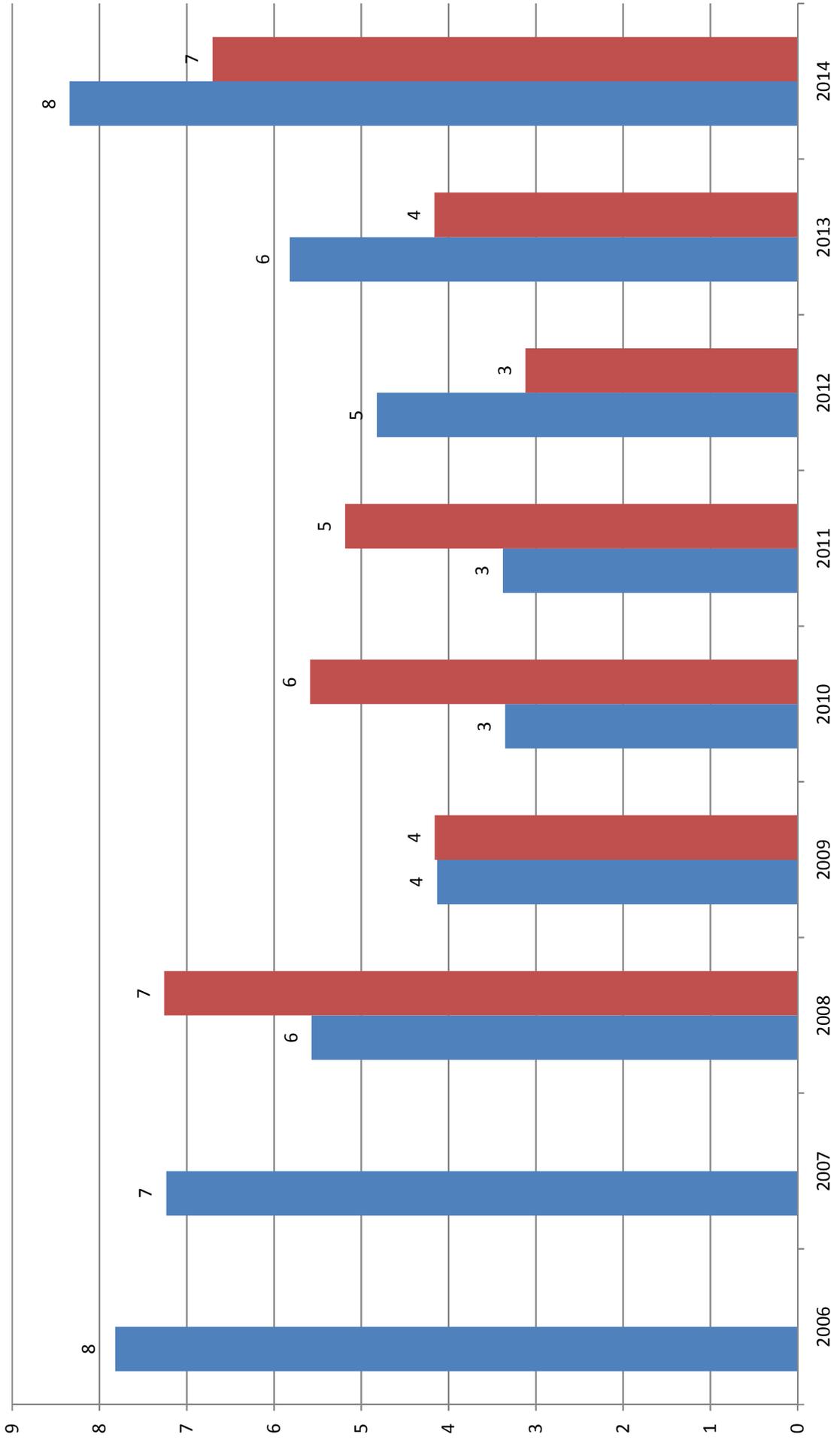


AVERAGE ATTENDANCE PER DROP-IN SESSION 1997 to 2014 (MALE & FEMALE)

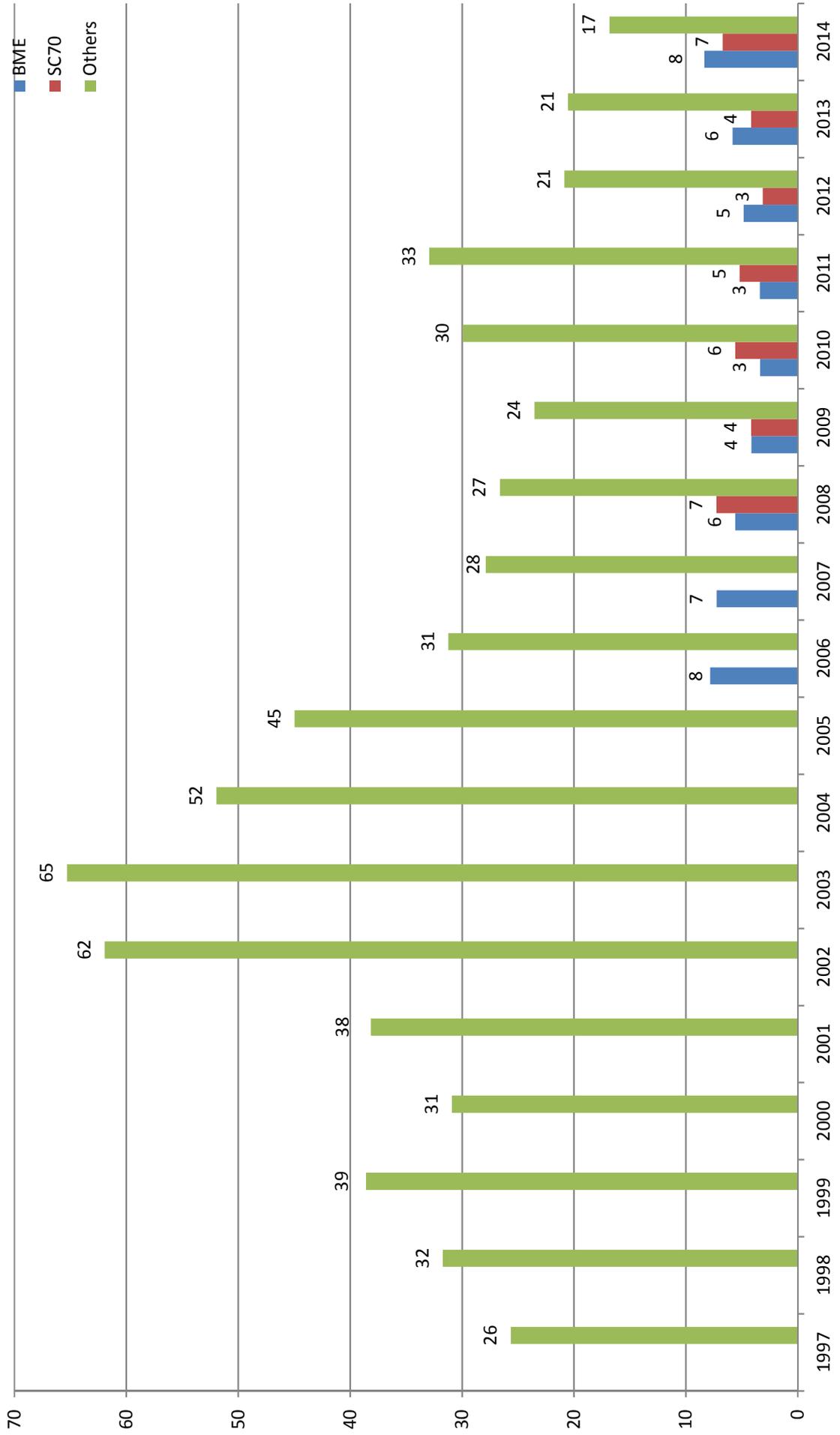


AVERAGE ATTENDANCE PER DROP-IN SESSION (BME & SC70)

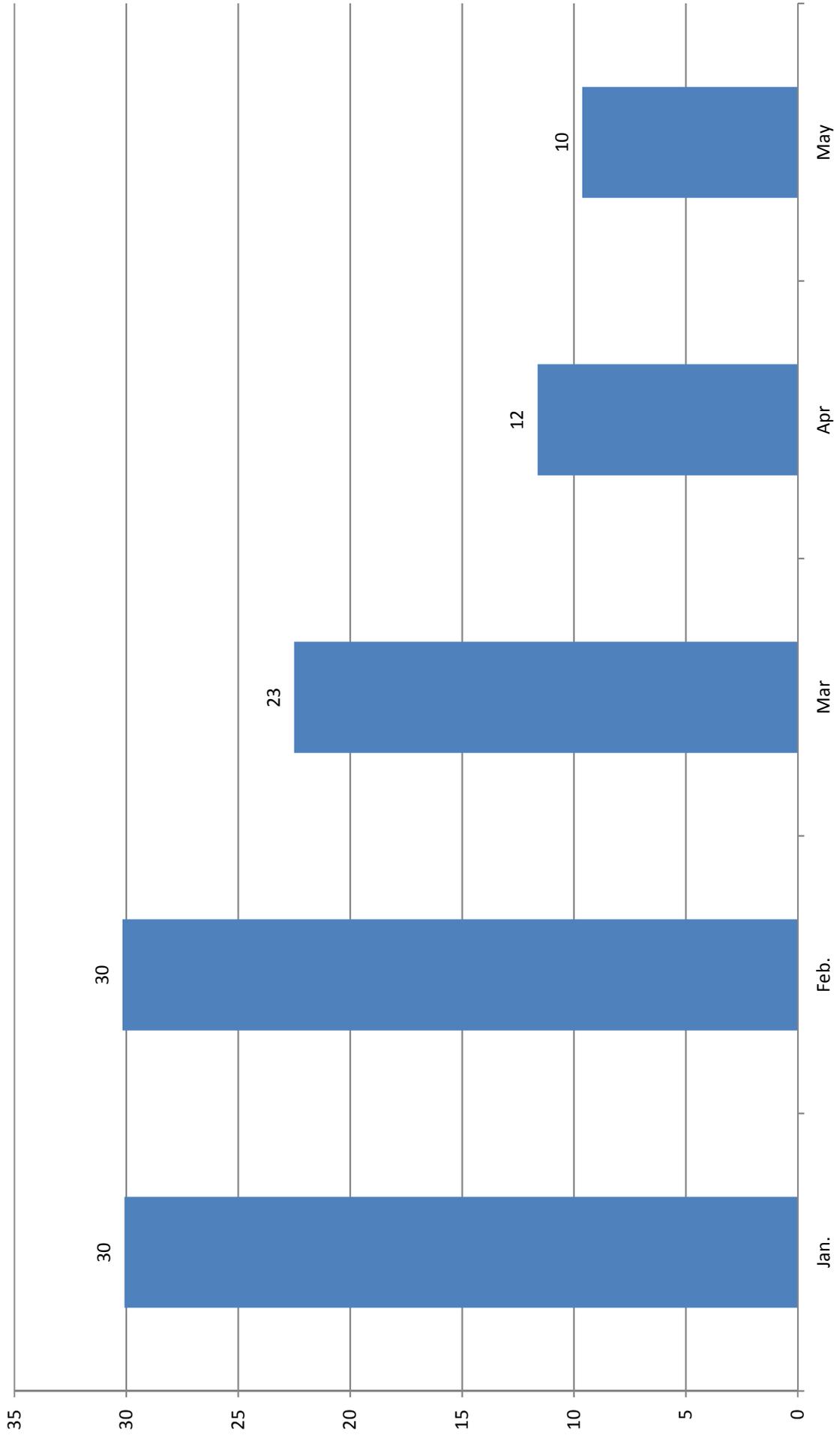
■ BME
■ SC70



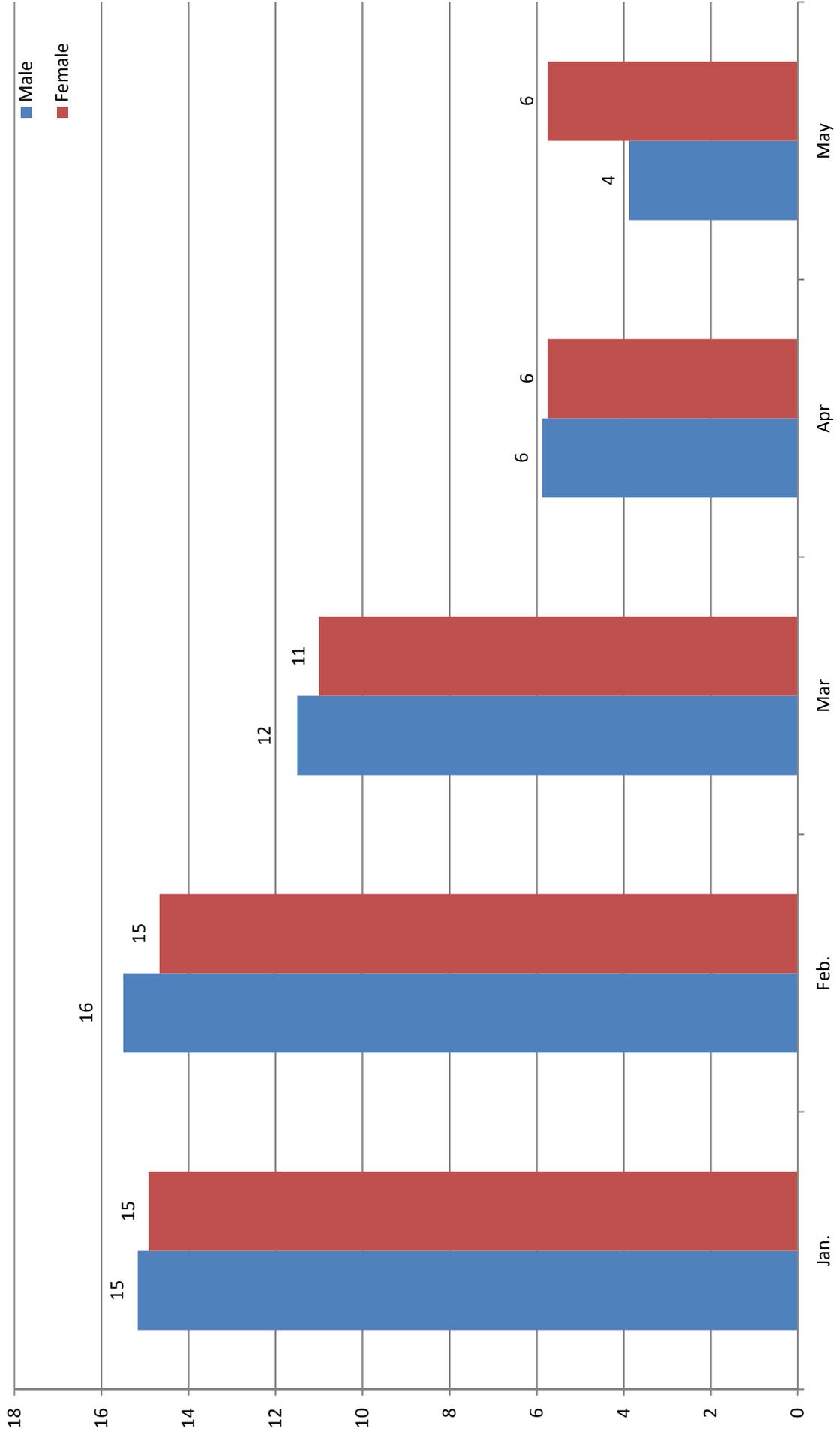
AVERAGE ATTENDANCE PER DROP-IN SESSION 1997 to 2014 (BME, SC70 & OTHERS)



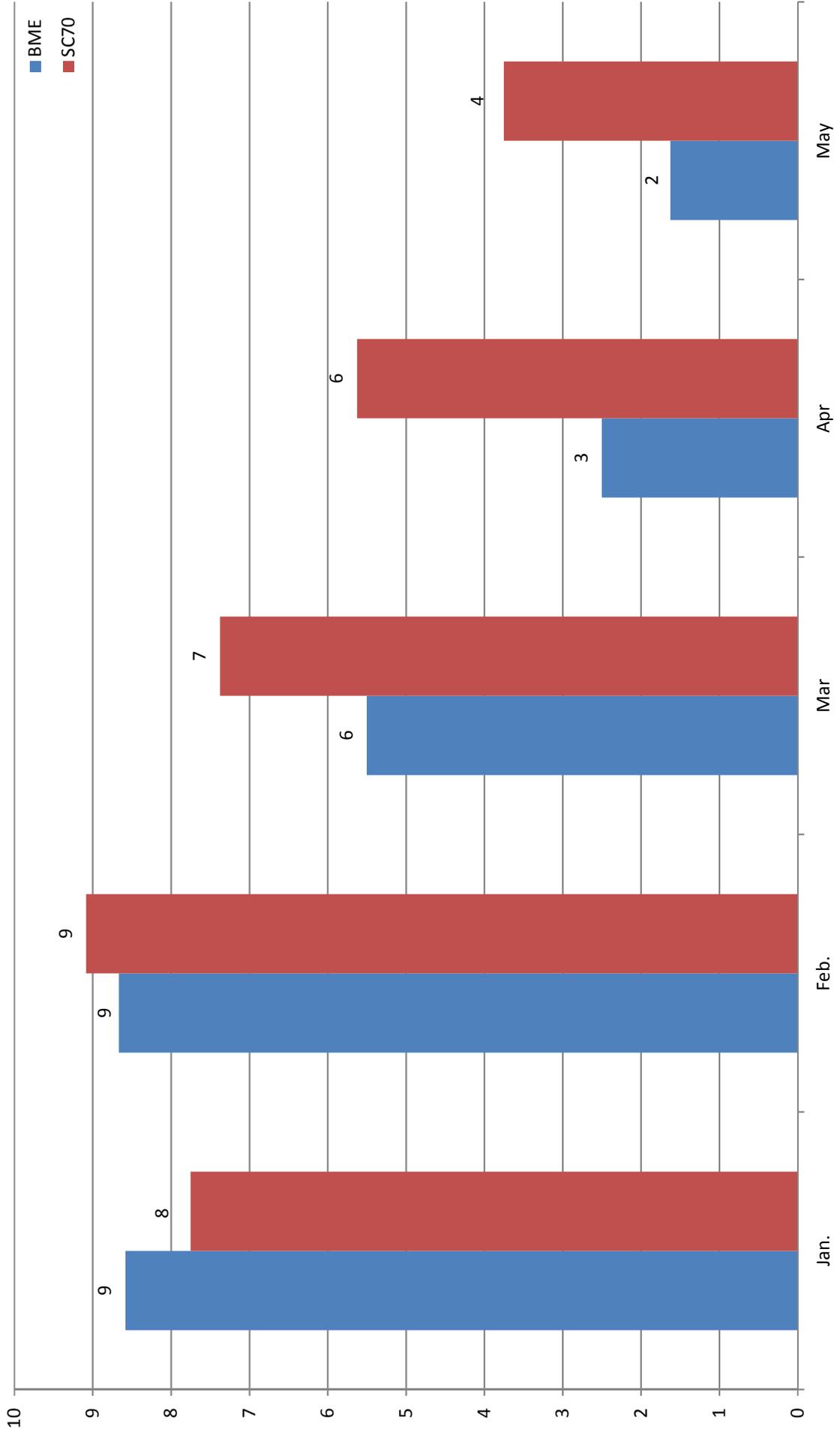
AVERAGE ATTENDANCE PER DROP-IN SESSION 2015



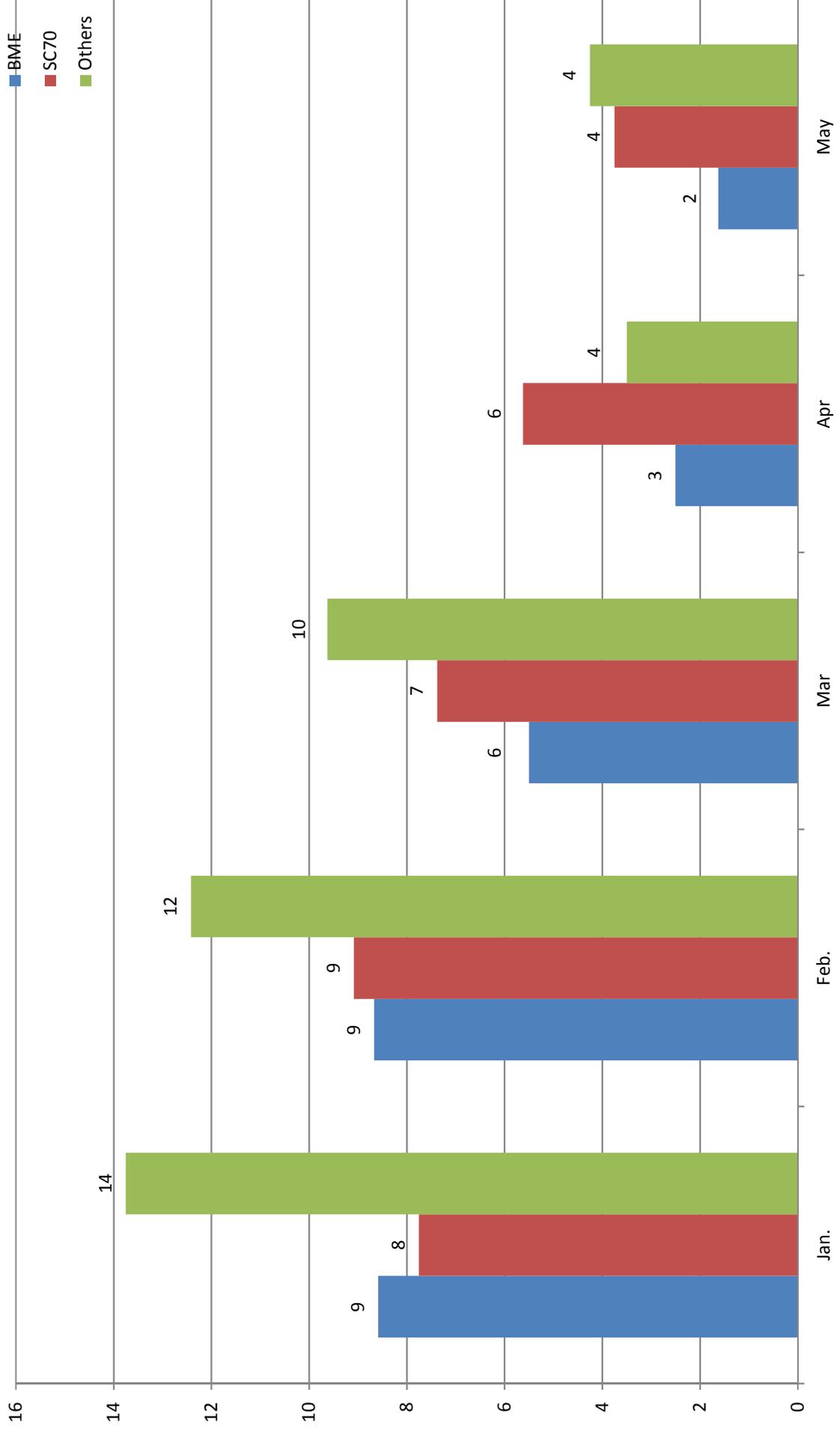
AVERAGE ATTENDANCE PER DROP-IN SESSION 2015 (MALE & FEMALE)



AVERAGE ATTENDANCE PER DROP-IN SESSION 2015 (BME & SC70)



AVERAGE ATTENDANCE PER DROP-IN SESSION 2015 (BME, SC70 & OTHERS)



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