



**SOCIAL
BITE**

social-bite.co.uk

SOCIAL BITE'S JOBS FIRST

Charity No. SC045232

WHO ARE SOCIAL BITE?

Co-founded by Josh Littlejohn MBE in 2012, Social Bite began as a small social business sandwich shop on Rose Street, Edinburgh. Soon after opening, a young homeless man named Pete, who had been selling the Big Issue outside, plucked up the courage to ask for a job and we welcomed him to the team. Seeing what a difference that made, they wanted to do more to help. They began offering jobs and free food to people affected by homelessness.

In 2015, Edinburgh came to a complete standstill when George Clooney visited our café, since followed by the likes of Leonardo Di Caprio, Malala Yousafzai and The Duchess of Cambridge. We expanded into a chain of sandwich shops, a restaurant, and a catering business. A quarter of our 65 employees and 100 volunteers have been affected by homelessness.

Each year, we give out over 140,000 items of free food to those experiencing homelessness and food poverty – and each week we connect 550 vulnerable people with good meals, support, and opportunities.

In the last few years, we've organised a number of mass participation campaigns to fund pioneering projects and full-circle solutions that have shifted the cultural dial on homelessness – from training and employment to innovative housing programmes. Our mission is to bring people together in a collaborative movement to end homelessness. In doing so, we're enabling some of the UK's most vulnerable people to change their lives for the better – swapping a reality of poverty and exclusion for one of compassionate support and inclusion.



WHY DO WE DO IT ALL?

We believe in creating a society where no one should have to be homeless.

We know that homelessness has countless effects on an individual, as well as communities as a whole. In terms of temporary accommodation, we know that it can often feel unsafe and removes a lot of personal autonomy and privacy, due to usually having strict rules about how it is used. From an employment point of view, the personal toll of temporary accommodation can be so high that it is not viable for a person to work.

Knowing the barriers a person faces in a situation of homelessness, Social Bite focuses on creating trusting relationships and real opportunities, so people can make a positive change.



HOMELESSNESS AND EMPLOYMENT – WHAT IS IN AN OPPORTUNITY?

Employment can, on the face of it, appear like an opportunity available to everyone. However, any opportunity is wrapped up in several factors existing that may not be initially apparent.

Many of the people we work with have had to overcome very difficult circumstances to simply survive. What is often sacrificed along the way are things such as completing education and gaining qualifications or having identifiable work experience. These things are necessary, in a competitive working environment, to get your foot in the door for many entry-level jobs.

We know that unemployment is disproportionately higher for people who have experienced homelessness or people who are currently homeless, with just 6 in every 100 in a job compared to 70 in every 100 for the general population.

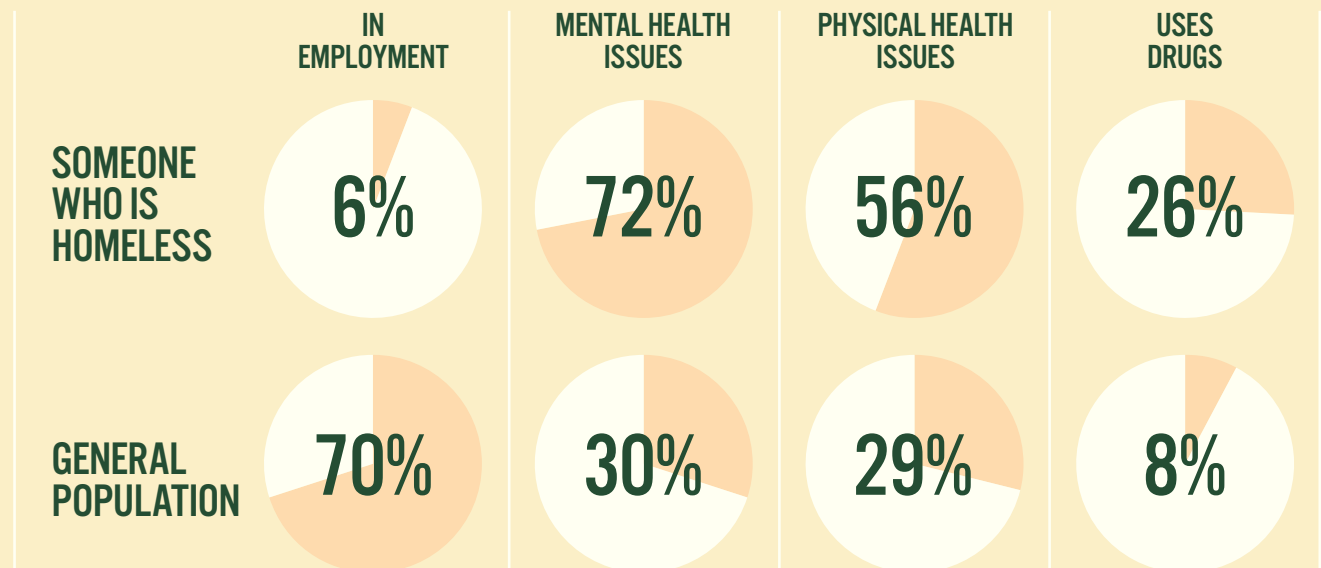
Social Bite's Jobs First Programme looks to work with employers to provide real job opportunities to those who have experienced homelessness. The crucial part of the programme is the trauma informed support that will be offered to every employee as part of their employment.

There can be simple, pragmatic issues that can seem like insurmountable barriers to someone that is experiencing homelessness. For example, without an address, a person cannot get a bank account, without a bank account a person cannot get a job, but a job can be a crucial way of a person recovering from homelessness. This impossible cycle can become de-motivating and exhausting for anyone going through it.

The impact of trauma that may have led the person to become homeless as well as the consequences of being homeless, already

discussed, can make the working environment a difficult place to navigate. We have found that people often find it harder to trust other staff and their manager and be able to have confidence in their own personal strengths and qualities.

To summarise, there are individual barriers that prevent a person from being able to access the opportunity of employment and the employment market is often not set up in a way that can support a person with an experience of homelessness to sustain employment.



FOCUS OF TRADITIONAL EMPLOYABILITY SERVICES

Traditional employability services, in general, are not set up specifically for people experiencing homelessness. As highlighted already, there are specifics around unemployment and homelessness that need to be a part of any service aiming to support someone that is or has been homeless, into employment.

Employability services tend to focus on a lot of the tangible issues e.g. lack of qualifications, CV, interview skills and in some cases, there may be elements of confidence or self-esteem sessions. There are often budgets for travel or clothing for interviews. As well as this employability services, usually have

good relationships with employers to create opportunities. This could be described as making a person “job ready” and then removing support once the person is in work.

However, for a person experiencing homelessness, the barriers around confidence and trust may be so great that even engaging with an employability service can be difficult.

Beyond this, our experience has shown that there is a need to continue to support the person once they are in employment to continue address stressors that are affecting a person out with work as well as in the working environment. Without this support there is a greater chance that the employment will not be sustained.



WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT JOBS FIRST?

Jobs first centres on the idea of trust.

The role of the support worker is to create a supportive relationship with a Jobs First employee to allow that person to begin to understand the challenges and pressures they are facing out with the work context that may not be visible, even to them. By creating opportunities to reflect and having someone on your side that is not there to judge we hope to help people identify these external stressors and support them to work through them. Broadly speaking, this is a trauma informed approach.

The support is also led by the individual. Experience has shown us that leading a person in a certain direction is not conducive to a person's recovery. Importantly we also provide support that is strength or asset based rather than simply focusing on needs.

It can often seem to be the best way forward to begin looking at all the things that are going wrong for a person and try to fix them one by one. Our approach is equally to focus on the resources and skills that a person has and try to nourish these and get a person to the point where they can recognise them in themselves.

Finally, support for Jobs First employees continues throughout an employment contract. All of our lives have ups and downs and for a person that has had difficult and traumatic experiences, these can be greater and a person may not always have the support and tools to deal with stressful situations that are thrown their way in a stable and consistent way. Support is there throughout to help a person to become more resilient and create opportunities for self-reflection throughout their employment journey.



DOES IT WORK?

Over the past four years, Social Bite has supported 34 people into employment that have had a background of homelessness, through our pioneering Social Bite Academy programme.



One quarter of Social Bite’s workforce are people that have experienced homelessness. Of these 34, many have moved onto future employment with other organisations; some have moved onto higher education and university and in a lot of cases we have retained the supported employee as a full-time member of staff within the Social Bite team, including some people that have worked for us for over 5 years.

Having reviewed and developed the programme based on feedback from Academy staff, as well as other team members; this learning has been the foundation for rolling out Job’s First across the UK.

“The highlight of the Academy would be the outlook I now have due to being respected and supported by my fellow staff.”

Former Academy Staff

“It has been great experience for me personally being able to learn and develop my own skills and especially management skills when working with a different outlook on staff. Also on a personal level it is great to see people take on the skills we are able to give them and move on to new jobs and new part of their life using those skills.”

Social Bite Café Manager

WHAT SUPPORT WILL A JOBS FIRST EMPLOYEE RECEIVE?

Engaging with support is an essential part of the programme.

Each Jobs First employee will be allocated a support worker from Social Bite who will assist them throughout the programme. The support will be based on relationship building that will create an opportunity to build trust. Importantly, the support is person centred and informed by the initial assessment and on-going review.

The Support Worker will use a support tool to build a holistic assessment of the employee's needs. This tool will seek to assist an employee to address anything in their life that is creating a barrier to an improved quality of life and sustaining future employment after the Jobs First programme. These are based on the initial assessment as well as ongoing meetings.

The focus areas of the support tool are: Home, Opportunity, People and Empowerment.

What is provided by the support worker?

- Advocacy
- Emotional Support
- Practical support (bills, benefits etc.)
- Referral work (knowledge of relevant services)
- A chance for reflection and consolidation
- Future planning after Jobs First programme

The Support Worker and the employee will meet once a week during the programme. The support meetings are part of employee's employment contract, and it is paid for. The support worker, employee and employer will also take part in regular appraisal meetings to discuss the employee's progress.

During the induction, it must also be clearly explained that the Jobs First Programme is a 15-month process. Planning for exiting the process will begin during induction by setting in dates for 3 monthly reviews and having a sense of what an employee, employer and Social Bite would expect to be happening at each stage of the 15 months process.

WHAT ROLE DOES THE EMPLOYER PLAY WITHIN THE PROGRAMME?

The employer will be responsible in ensuring the employee has a full induction and is equipped with the skills necessary to carry out the job role. They will also line manage the employee and deal with any work-related issues including personal development plans, disciplinary action and pay roll; this is not an exhaustive list and will be discussed more fully with each role.

HOW WILL SOCIAL BITE SUPPORT THE EMPLOYER?

Social Bite will be providing training to each employer so that they are equipped with the knowledge and necessary skills to assist the employee throughout their employment journey. The employer and support worker will also liaise on a regular basis with any concerns or further information the employer may need to assist them throughout the programme. The employer will also take part in regular appraisal meetings with the employee and the support worker to discuss the employee's progress.



WHAT WILL THE EMPLOYEE HAVE GAINED BY THE END OF THE JOBS FIRST PROGRAMME?

- Through the programme the employee will have developed their soft skills, such as communication, teamwork and problem solving.
- The individual will also have gained confidence around CV writing and interview skills.
- Throughout the induction process and on the job training employees will have built up new skills and had first-hand experience of a working environment.
- This will hopefully lead to them staying on with the company in their current role or new role or moving into different employment based on their skills and ambitions for the future.



HOW CAN I REFER SOMEONE TO JOBS FIRST?

A Jobs First Employee

1. The candidate must be committed to making positive changes in their life and engaging in support.
2. Share Social Bite's ethos of wanting to work hard, be safe in the workplace and respect others.
3. Have a background of homelessness.
4. Be proactively tackling historic substance misuse problems or mental health conditions
 - a. if substance use is in their recent history they must be in active treatment or recovery that will not affect the workplace (willingness to share information, so the workplace can be reasonably adjusted)
 - b. if diagnosed with a mental health condition - already engaging and/or willingness to engage with appropriate mental health support (willingness to share information regarding treatment including medication, so the workplace and/or workload can be reasonably adjusted).
5. If currently experiencing homelessness, living in temporary/ emergency accommodation and not sleeping rough (the first steps here would be to support the person off the streets into a more stable environment).
6. Eligible to work in the UK and eligible in connection with the benefits that person is currently receiving.

When a job opportunity arises the Senior support worker for Jobs First will get in touch with your organisation to send a job description to see if you have any suitable candidates. At this stage the candidate would be required to send a CV to Social Bite.

HOW CAN I REFER SOMEONE TO JOBS FIRST?

Our Recruitment process is as follows:

1. Organisation to send CV to Emma Colgan-Blair the senior support worker for Jobs First.
2. If suitable after shortlisting the candidate will be invited to take part in the recruitment process which will be detailed for them. This will include an interview with Social Bite and a member of the company wishing to employ the candidate.
3. If successful and offered the job the Jobs First employee will be allocated a support worker from Social Bite and will complete an assessment that will inform their support plan.
4. The Jobs First employee will meet with their line manager and start their paid employment completing an induction process.
5. The Jobs First employee will then complete a probationary period (0-3 months) and will have on-going reviews as well as weekly support from their support worker. They will also be involved in regular appraisals with their support worker and line manager.
6. The contract would then continue for a further 12 months making a total of 15 months.
7. It is hoped that through on-going support the Jobs First employee will have a full-time contract with their current employer or have been supported to find a role more suitable to their needs.

Should the candidate be unsuccessful at the CV or Interview stage, but Social Bite and your organisation along with the candidate feel they would benefit from being further involved with Social Bite, we would look to get them involved in workshops around self-confidence and employment to equip them with the skills needed to progress. An additional training programme with Social Bite will also be discussed with individuals at this point. This would help people to move forward and give them a springboard before being involved in the Jobs First programme.

IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:

Emma Colgan-Blair
Senior Support Worker Job's First

emma.colgan-blair@social-bite.co.uk

07399115786