



To take full advantage of the new Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) regulations which came into effect on 1 July 2007, a new Community Interest Company (CIC) - Solent Re-

use has been set up. Solent Re-use is now responsible for dealing with the collection, checking, cleaning and repair of electrical items. Some of these are then passed to SCRATCH for the White Goods project, which are delivered free of charge, with the surplus being available for purchase through Choices. For further information regarding Solent Re-Use, please refer to the website - www.Solent-Re-Use.co.uk.

COMMUNITY RE-PAINT SCHEME is a means of distributing surplus paint for use by disadvantaged people, charities, voluntary and community groups. We are able to provide paint free to referred clients, but we are now asking for a donation from Community Groups to help cover our operating costs. Please phone the SCRATCH office to check availability and arrange a time to come to view and collect. We cannot deliver paint.

MEGABITES is a food meal square (voucher) scheme for those begging on the streets and for other vulnerable / homeless people. Meal Squares are worth £1 and can be purchased from the SCRATCH Office. Currently, these can be redeemed at four food outlets across the city. (Further information available from the Office).



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

SCRATCH was successful in obtaining Investors In People accreditation in November 2007

Every year the above projects help families and individuals escaping domestic violence, single parents moving from hostels and bedsits into permanent housing and young people setting up independent homes for the first time. Some of the reasons included: - giro payments being delayed, the loss or desertion of a partner, house fires or individuals in search of suitable clothing for an employment interview. Every family and individual helped by these projects has been referred by recognised and approved referral agencies including Social Services, Health Visitors, City Council, Churches, Probation, Victim Support and CAB.

VOLUNTEERS – Volunteer and work experience placements are available. For further information and current vacancies, please contact Annie at the SCRATCH office.

SCRATCH relies very heavily on volunteers for all of its work and on donations from the general public. We wish to give our sincere thanks to all those who support our work whether by practical donation, voluntary time or funding. Further details regarding the work of SCRATCH can be found in the Annual Report, available on request from the Office.

SCRATCH

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www.scratchcharity.co.uk

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Southampton City and Region, Action to Combat Hardship is registered as a Limited Company, Number 3830305
Registered in Cardiff.
Registered Charity Number 1078344



Information Sheet: Regarding the various SCRATCH Projects

SCRATCH (Southampton City & Region Action To Combat Hardship) is a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee, set up in October 1999 to manage the social action projects initiated by the registered charity Southampton City Mission. The projects, which include Dorcas Project and Basics Bank, are designed to relieve the effects of poverty by providing furniture, household items, clothing and emergency food to families and individuals with recognised needs. SCRATCH operates throughout Southampton, Eastleigh, Waterside and Winchester areas of Southern Hampshire.

DORCAS PROJECT made 1104 deliveries in the year ending March 2007 (a decrease of 37% on the previous year), due to the introduction of a charge for deliveries introduced in October 2005.



As from April 2007, the cost of a basic furniture package is £60 for deliveries within Southampton and £85 outside of the city. This pack, as well as offering beds, bedding, seating, curtains, kitchen box, kettle and toaster, now includes a Wardrobe and Chest of Drawers or Table and Chairs which we hope represents good value.

Non essential furniture and other household items are available from 'Choices' (which is operated by McDermott Trust with the surplus coming to SCRATCH). Choices shops are currently at Millbrook and Aldermoor - please contact the office for current locations and opening hours.

As well as being open to the general public, individuals and families who are referred or have proof of means tested benefit can buy at half the marked price. Students are able to obtain a 25% discount.

To help cover the operating costs, we have had to introduce a collection charge for people donating furniture to the project. This currently stands at £5 per collection for Southampton and £10 for collections elsewhere.

We would like to set up more Service Level Agreements with various agencies and organisations to ensure that those in genuine need of help with furniture do not go without.

BASICS BANK, which was opened in May 1996, is a clothing and emergency food project with referrals made via a voucher scheme.

The voucher reveals the identity of the agency referring, the client and the help needed. Clients are then sent or brought to the 'Bank' to choose the clothing needed (as much as three or four outfits per person can be covered by the voucher) and to collect food if required.



The project does not expect to clothe an individual more than four times a year or to feed a family or individual more than once a month, for a maximum of three consecutive months (unless previously agreed by the Office).

Food parcels are designed to last for up to five days depending on the need and intended to help in emergency situations. In the year ending March 2007, 2112 people were clothed and 5722 helped with food parcels (compared to 2981 and 6806 in the previous year). The decrease in numbers is largely due to the introduction in February 2005 of a charge, to our referral agencies, for vouchers.

However, lower numbers and an increase in the amount of food donated has meant that we have not had to turn people away and have a much wider variety of food to suit particular dietary needs.

Basics Bank is open at James Street, St Mary's 10am – 2.30pm (weekdays) as well as Satellites at Blackfield and Totton. Details of current locations and opening times are available from the office.

CHRISTMAS COMPLETED runs each year immediately prior to Christmas and is the means of helping local children trapped in poverty.



Local schools, organisations and churches, from across the city and beyond, donate the toys and

other gifts. We were particularly grateful to support from Russ Berrie, Barclays Bank and Bacardi.

Referral agencies are invited to contact the charity with details of children who would otherwise receive little or nothing for Christmas.

During the sorting process every child is allocated six or seven appropriate gifts that are then delivered on the days leading up to Christmas. In 2007 1420 children received gifts, which was an increase of 30 from the previous year.

We were extremely grateful for the use of a building on the Ordnance Survey site again this year which gives us more space and is in close proximity to our office and warehouse in Millbrook.

REMOVALS SERVICE – During 1999 the charity entered into a partnership with Southampton City Council to provide a free removal service for people escaping domestic violence, or harassment due to colour, race, gender, creed, age or sexuality. The current arrangement is that we will make up to two removals per week. In some instances we have to make a charge of £100 for the removal.

In 2002 a similar scheme started with Winchester City Council, which enables us to do two removals per month in the Winchester area.

From time to time the availability is limited to certain criteria due to funding restrictions.

WHITE GOODS – This project deals with Electric Cookers, Fridges, Fridge Freezers, Washing Machines and Tumble Dryers. At present there is funding from a local charity for people living in the city centre area. Outside that area charges apply for each appliance. However, from time to time additional funding is available to supply items free of charge. (Please contact the office for current funding details).