



HOMELESS TUCK IN TO CHARITY BANQUET

Residents at the *Dunedin Harbour Hostel* for the homeless in Edinburgh will eat their fill on **Monday 14th June 2004**, in a buffet charity banquet provided free by **Tommy Miah**, proprietor of the nearby **Raj on the Shore Indian restaurant**. Waiters in uniform will deliver a typical selection of dishes from Tommy's Charity Banquet menu and residents will be encouraged to eat all they can.

The free meal is an extension of the Charity Banquet service introduced at the Raj as an enjoyable fundraiser for registered charities.

The **charity banquet** concept has already benefited several good causes since some 5,000 firms were introduced to the simple, effective scheme in March. All that needs to be done is organise a party of 20 or more for a buffet meal in a private room at a set price of £20 per head.

At the end of the night The Raj on the Shore hands back a cheque for £10 a head to a charity of the customer's choice.

Organisers are free to choose any registered charity.

They are also free to choose the menu for the meal from samples sent out in advance.

These menus give a selection of starters and main courses, including winning dishes from Tommy Miah's long-running International Indian Chef of the Year competition.

Leith Community - Leith has undergone massive regeneration over the past few years. The regeneration is most noticeable in the Shore area where traditional tenement flats sit beside luxury new developments. Leith's renowned community spirit is slowly being eroded but desperately clung to by local "Leithers". One reason Dunedin Harbour has been chosen for this special meal is to try to help out the local community and help give the homeless a voice.

In an area with varied demographics hostel residents often get the blame for any crime. We would encourage any journalist to interview Dunedin Harbour residents for their opinion on what the Raj restaurant is trying to achieve.

With charitable donations at the lowest in decades, everyone involved at the Raj restaurant is in a privileged position. In today's popular culture, people outwardly appear more interested in lifestyles rather than humanitarian causes. We attempt to prove the reality is different.

Dunedin Harbour - Dunedin Harbour is a partnership project with the City of Edinburgh Council located in Leith. The service provides accommodation and support for up to thirty-five residents in single, twin and couples rooms. All rooms are en-suite with each flat having a shared kitchen.

The main referral criteria are that persons must be 16+ and roofless, or at risk of rooflessness and be willing to live in a communal environment and actively engage with support offered. Pets can also be accommodated at point of admission.

The hostel currently offers short-term accommodation with the aim of accessing more appropriate move-on provisions dependent on needs.

The service is funded through Housing Benefit and Supporting People. Staff are on site 24 hours. There is a regular nursing service, a benefit surgery and a needle exchange is planned.

The ethos of the service promotes personal choice, tolerance, dignity and understanding and works to a harm reduction philosophy.

The hostel has been in and out of the press over the last year after Kevin Gibson, a resident of the hostel was charged and sentenced to life for the horrific "body in a suitcase" murder last year.