

The Thistle Newsletter

Glasgow's Safer Drug Consumption Facility

Open 9am - 9pm 365 days a year

The Thistle - 1 year on

In the year The Thistle has been operational, **575 unique individuals** have registered and **accessed the service 11,348 times** with **7,827 injecting episodes** within the using space.

The service provides wound care, personal care (e.g. shower and clothes store) and injecting advice to reduce harm. Over the course of the year, there have been **13,368** of these interventions.

There were a total of **93 medical emergencies** in the first year. On **78** occasions the individuals were **treated by Thistle staff** and recovered without further assistance. Ambulances were called to the Thistle on 15 occasions, and individuals were transferred to A&E on 9 occasions.

There has been a total of **612 referrals** in the first year.

The top 3 referrals were:

1. Housing / Accommodation
2. Alcohol & Drug Recovery Services
3. Blood Borne Virus Team

Responding to community concerns of drug-related litter in the Calton

Glasgow City Council (GCC) recognises the concerns raised regarding the local environment and the impact of antisocial behaviour in the area. In particular, issues surrounding discarded injecting equipment have been a longstanding challenge. We want to assure you that we remain fully committed to delivering meaningful and lasting improvements, working together to create a safer, cleaner, and more supportive community for all.

Concerns about discarded needles have been ongoing for many years and were a significant factor in the opening of The Thistle, which aims to reduce drug-related litter. GCC teams regularly monitor and remove hazardous materials to maintain a cleaner and safer environment for residents and have seen a **79% reduction** in needles found in Calton area 'hotspots' between May and November 2025.

We also thank the community for their engagement with the needle reporting process and would continue to encourage anyone who sees a discarded needle to report it for removal via the council's online '**Report a Discarded Needle**' form, by calling **0141 287 9700**, or through the **My Glasgow App**.

The Thistle's Outreach Team also respond to any community concerns quickly and flexibly to support people who may be injecting in public areas with guidance, information or help them to access The Thistle. If you wish to share information with our outreach team, please call **0141 553 2832/2833**.

Service User Forum

The Thistle's Service User Forum aims to gather feedback by engaging with individuals to find out how the service can be the most supportive and successful for those who access it.

"They are amazing staff. If it wasn't for them I wouldn't be clothed, I wouldn't be washed. I wouldn't have people to speak to. I get a wee bit of peace here."

"I used the service for the first time today. It was really good. The staff were really nice. I felt safe and clean as I wasn't using outside in dirty lanes."

"I want to thank all the staff who give up their time to work with us, you have no idea how many lives you are changing."

"Five stars, satisfactory service. It saves lives and brings happiness and joy to my life and keeps me safe."

Drug Checking Service

Hunter Street Health and Care Centre has been issued a licence to provide a drug checking service by the Home Office, but this will be a different and entirely separate service from The Thistle.

Sharps Bins

After a successful pilot in the city centre, Glasgow has installed sharps bins in key areas across the city, including the Calton area to further reduce drug-related litter. Sharps bins located in the Morrisons Gallowgate carpark and Elcho Street accounted for **89%** and **92%**, respectively, of needles cleared in the area, between May and November 2025.



Community Engagement Forum

The Thistle set up a Community Engagement Forum (CEF) to allow residents and businesses to raise concerns and allow officers an opportunity to address them. We have been working in partnership with Council colleagues to develop an action plan that tackles the issues raised by concerned community members.

The forum isn't currently accepting new members but if you have feedback you would like to be raised at the next meeting, please contact: ggc.thistle@nhs.scot

Useful Contacts

To report discarded needles, contact 0141 287 9700, or use the My Glasgow App.



0141 553 2832/2833



ggc.thistle@nhs.scot



To find out more about The Thistle, or arrange a tour of the service, please visit: www.glasgowcity.hscpscot.org/sdcf

To anonymously report a crime in Glasgow, contact Crime Stoppers on 0800 555 111.