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Frost says they receive up to 1 000 complaints across the city per month through the call centre. Last year they assisted 2 751 people to get into shelters or be relocated back to where they came from. Besides daily interventions they also run various programmes. The Winter Readiness programme offers emergency bed space in shelters. "This year we managed to get an extra 250 beds and we fill them every night." The Give Responsibly campaign aims to raise awareness about giving to shelters and organisations that assist street people rather than giving directly to street people. Frost says they do find that in the Goodwood area people are enabling the homeless to stay on the streets – residents, businesses and restaurants give hand-outs, she says. "They become your problem, but you are feeding your problem." She says if people want to bring their pop-up kitchen to the Safe Space they are more than welcome, rather than handing out sandwiches. She says the recently opened Safe Space under the Culemborg Bridge in the CBD is of great interest but is "a very expensive exercise". It can accommodate 230 people and currently there are 138. It is a temporary transitional space and different from other shelters. Frost says they have asked street people what they

want in a space to make it more attractive to them. Security is important as they are very vulnerable on the street. According to Frost street people are being infiltrated by parolees – about 400 parolees are released from the overcrowded Pollsmoor Prison every second month, she says. Other things they asked for were ablution facilities, a place to get food and a place to wash their clothes.

She says they have found that most shelters in the city are at maximum capacity. Finding bed space can be an issue and shelters do not take in partners. At the Safe Space they make provision for couples, transgender people and families. They accommodate all except foreign nationals who don't have legal papers, she says. The facility opened on 29 June with 15 people to check the intake system before it launched on 17 July. Frost says they will definitely get up to accommodating 230 people as they are placing 10 to 12 people daily. There are various services on site like City Health which offers the Matrix programmes to help with substance abuse. Social Services are on site 24/7 and there are reintegration programmes and EPW opportunities.

She says many of the people, especially those who have lived on the streets for a long time, don't want to be walled in. The Safe Space is an open space with the bridge overhead, which is full of sleeping bays with access to ablution facilities, showers and fresh water.

There are rules and regulations but not as strict as other shelters. "We allow a person to be on site between four and six months during which time they will participate in all of our programmes." An assessment is done on intake. "It is not a case of you get into a safe space and all is fine." People can still be on alcohol or drugs but they can't do it on site. They have to go on the Matrix pro-

gramme or some do go cold turkey, she says. No weapons, no fires and no cooking are allowed on site. It's not all rosy and fights do happen. They will then sit the individuals down the next day and have a conversation with them.

Frost says this is a pilot project for eight months to a year. They are learning from their mistakes and successes going along. Successes include relocations and people that have been on the streets for 40 years being placed in frail care facilities. The EPW programmes take three months, but they also organise opportunities outside.

"We have an agreement with the Waterfront where people can go through our programme and get permanent employment." The first two people were just appointed to do maintenance, she says. "We are looking at other corporates to do something similar."

There are 27 organisations supporting the site already. They are planning to roll this out to different areas throughout the city after the initial pilot project. They would however need the local communities, businesses and ward councillors to come on board as it is not cheap to set up a safe space, she says. "It does not have to be done on a scale of 230 people or under a bridge, but we will be looking at financial support for any new safe space established in any other part of the city."

Frost says they don't have the mandate to deal with illegal immigrants. The immigration office at Custom House is still closed and people do not have the opportunity to get their paperwork in order.

Another problem is that street people move around and it is very difficult to serve a warrant of arrest for them to appear in court for any contravention as the magistrate will refuse to sign the warrant without a fixed address, admits Frost.