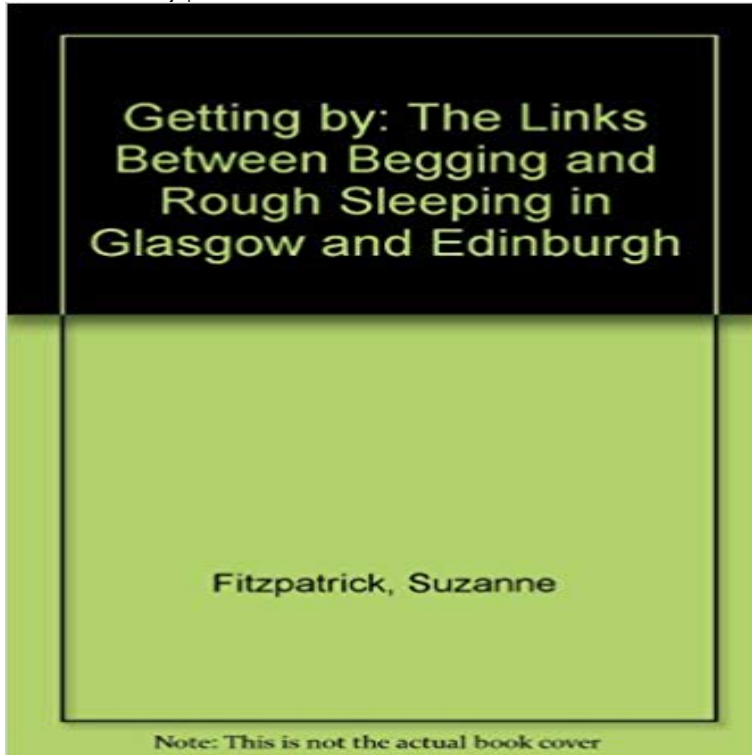


Getting by: Begging, rough sleeping and The Big Issue in Glasgow and Edinburgh



Despite the growing concern in recent years about begging in British cities, there is a paucity of contemporary empirical evidence on the experiences and causes of begging, and on the characteristics of those people who beg. Getting by explores the links between begging and rough sleeping in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and assesses the impact of the emergence of The Big Issue street magazine on this relationship. The report looks at: why people beg; how people experience begging; in what circumstances people would stop begging; whether begging is closely associated with rough sleeping and/or other forms of homelessness; whether The Big Issue provides its vendors with a real alternative to begging. Getting by argues that the multiple problems experienced by those living on the streets need to be recognised and advocates an holistic approach to the provision of services. The report highlights the importance of policies aimed at preventing the need for people to resort to begging. It provides a range of recommendations on appropriate services including social work, health, housing and drugs and alcohol; and on government policies on social exclusion, employment and the benefits system, the police and the criminal justice system. This qualitative study is based on interviews with rough sleepers, Big Issue vendors, people who beg and agency workers in Glasgow and Edinburgh. It is essential reading for policy makers and practitioners in local authorities and voluntary organisations working in the field of homelessness, as well as anyone with an interest in begging, and rough sleeping. The report also has broader implications for a range of service working with people at the sharpest end of social exclusion.

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