



# Bethany Christian Trust



conversations

Annual Report 2022

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**Alasdair Bennett in conversation with Ruth Walker, Board Chairman, and Ruth Longmuir, Director of Internal Services.**

Dear Friends,

It is my privilege to introduce Bethany's Annual Report 2022. This year's theme is Conversations. The gospels record encounter after encounter of Jesus in conversation with people. Jesus' approach was so personal to each person in that moment, deeply meaningful for that connection, unique to that relationship, and marked by God's eternal love, which never gives up on people.

These deeply poignant conversations could be challenging, encouraging, questioning, or inviting, and full of the breadth of human emotion. Faith was often found, hope was frequently born, and love was always shown.

This report reflects just a fraction of the myriad and multiple meaningful conversations that take place night and day between our staff, volunteers and the people we support all across Scotland. Captured in a conversational style, these personal and precious stories shine through the pages, brimming with new life, hope and meaning.

It is through your support that we have been able to keep all our services open and operating throughout the pandemic. We have also continued to expand our services this last year despite the external challenges. Access to Advocacy, operating in the West of Scotland, offers advocacy services to people in relation to income maximisation, housing and health rights. Bethany Homes was extended to include West Lothian, offering furnished flats to young people with support for independent living. Finally, we are now operating in Stornoway in the Western Isles, partnering with the SHED project in providing support and opportunities to men and women who are engaged in recovery from substance addiction.

Thank you sincerely for your partnership in enabling all this life saving and critical work. We are deeply grateful for your incredible support.



**Alasdair Bennett**  
Chief Executive  
Bethany Christian Trust

**Kevin Chalmers, Project Worker at the Rapid Re-accommodation Welcome Centre, sat down with Alan to talk about his journey.**



**So, Alan, could you give us a bit of an idea of your background?**

The Rapid Re-accommodation Welcome Centre provides emergency accommodation with support to anyone who would otherwise be rough sleeping in Edinburgh.

I had a good childhood up north. At 18, I came down to Edinburgh to study accountancy. I met a woman and we had a daughter together in the Highlands.

Throughout that time I functioned as an alcoholic drug addict. We split up due to my ongoing issues... it was really destructive, there'd be violence – it was mayhem. I thought that having a daughter would settle me down but I was too immature, I started drinking more than ever.

I moved back to Inverness and got into business with my father. By the time I was 31 I owned my own accountancy practice with 350 clients. It was very stressful, but I married again and was very happy.



### **And what brought you to the Welcome Centre?**

When my dad died in 2013, slowly my life fell apart. I discovered cocaine and it became a habit. I was very paranoid and depressed. My business was crumbling. It was like coke, drink, Valium just to try and manufacture some sort of personality, but of course, it was just a mess.



I was considering suicide... I've got no daughter. No wife. My business is gone. I can't keep myself together. I can't even work anymore.

So I went to see a psychiatric nurse for help. He asked, 'Alan, where are you staying tonight?'

And I says, '...I don't know!' And I burst out laughing. 'I've really not got anywhere to stay.'

So he made this phone call to the Welcome Centre. I went down and they were all so friendly... there was no judgement. They couldn't help you enough. I got a room. I even got fed.



Without exaggerating, the guys in the Welcome Centre saved my life. I'd reached a point of having nothing. But they treated me like a human being. They were like angels, you know?



**And what do you think the future holds for you now?**

I'm laughing because it's unbelievable me saying it... just a year ago I was drinking myself to death. I moved on to Bethany Christian Centre six months ago, I couldn't see any future whatsoever. Now I've got a life beyond my wildest dreams.

I've found a faith in Jesus, which gives me a tremendous sense of purpose. I'm working in the Bethany Book Shop, helping homeless people... I'm actually doing some good and I'm not a bad person.

It's a long process, but the Welcome Centre got me back. I've come into the light now and I can face each day as it comes. And it's a new day.

**Claire and James have both received support from Bethany, with James attending our addiction recovery course, Bridge to Freedom, and Claire gaining work experience volunteering at the Wild Olive Tree café.**



**They sat down with Dilly Harris, Homelessness Prevention Manager in Glasgow to talk about their experiences.**

Bridge to Freedom is a Christian recovery programme delivered in the community which includes both group and one-to-one sessions.

Community Support and Development West is a service working to support local people and revitalise communities where the potential for homelessness is a real concern.

**Dilly:** So, Claire, it was you that first came across Bethany, wasn't it?

**Claire:** I had a lot of support when my daughter was little, parenting classes and various things.

**James:** I first came to Bethany through Claire. I was bad with the drink and it was help I needed. Claire spoke to a lady that worked for Bethany and they put me in contact with Jamie [Recovery Worker]. And it's been a godsend... literally!



**Claire was telling me you're now a year sober. Is that right?**

Yeah, keeping it up.

Before, all I was concerned about was drink, alcohol... that basically was my life.

**Claire, how did [James' addiction] impact you?**

It was a really stressful time. I thought that James was going to die, and that's really frightening. But I've had struggles with alcohol as well and it was through doing Bridge to Freedom that brought us into a totally different life now. And it is thanks to God.





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When I was in the madness,  
Claire was ready to kick me out.  
One Sunday morning we woke  
up and she was like, 'Right. You're  
going doon to my church.' And  
I was like 'Ok then. If it keeps her  
quiet, I'll go.' So... I had what I can  
only describe as an experience.  
Sitting there one minute, pastor  
was reading from Matthew. And  
it was like a light bulb coming on.

And the next thing I knew  
I was sitting and the tears  
were flying out of me.

Claire turned round and she was  
like, 'You alright?' And I was like  
'aye', and she said, 'you're greetin!'  
I was like 'I don't know why I'm  
crying but I just am.'

The Lord's kinda given me a wee nudge, 'I'm here by the way, if you need help.' Not much else to say but... It's been a year now. And I celebrate every day.

### **And Claire, you've been volunteering with Bethany?**

Yeah, down at the Wild Olive Tree Café, mostly as a Kitchen Porter. So I chop vegetables and I do some dishes... bit of cleaning, a lot of baking and things as well, which I really enjoyed. So that was all part of my Community Achievement Award.



### **And you did your barista training here in the Clay Café, where you're still volunteering, how has that been?**

Amazing. When I first came up to the coffee machine, it was like, 'Oh, no. Water and electric. What can go wrong?!' Now I'm trying to do latte art...

I've also done my Food Hygiene, getting more skills, experience and growing as a person. I'm at a point now where I actually feel really happy within myself.



**I first met you about a year ago, and I can't put my finger really on what it is, but there's a difference about you. Always smiling now.**



**And you're actually going along to Bridge to Freedom with James, aren't you?**

I feel that it's important to go along and support James, but it also gives me a chance to look at my own character. Every week I take away something.

It's been good to be surrounded by people in the same situation. When you have addiction, you think that it's just you. It's only you that's got this problem. But until you actually sit in a recovery group and hear people's stories, that's when you work out you're not alone.

**Some sessions can be quite painful sometimes though, can't they?**

Nobody said recovery work was easy. It's not. It's not rainbows and unicorns! But it's needed.

I think it's got to be hard for things to heal.



**What would you say to someone that is potentially looking at a Bethany service and feels like they need support?**

- | Try it. Do it.
- | You could absolutely change your life 100%.
- | It changed mine. I'm walking, living proof, emphasising the walking living bit.

**What's next for you guys?**

| It's exciting to think what God will have in store for us. Maybe in the future I would get into work through doing hospitality. I really enjoy it, I love the customers. I volunteered in the kitchen at an SU camp, that was a massive step forward, my daughter even came along!

| I've not got a clue what's next! It's in the Lord's hands. I get up every morning. I ask Him to keep me right during the day and I just pass my life over to Him. He leads the way.

**Becky Whittaker, a Senior Project Worker at Anne Hope House sits down with Katie\* to talk about her story and time in the house.**



Anne Hope House is a therapeutic residential community for women who are homeless and seeking to make positive changes in their lives.

\*name changed and model's image used to protect identity.

## Tell me a wee bit about your background.

When I first met youse, I was in such a bad place. I was finishing a drug psychosis, it was a pretty bad place. I had no confidence... a really bad place.



## Tell me about what brought you in contact with Anne Hope House?

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I was just fed up taking drugs and being in that bad place. And at the same time, I was fleeing from domestic violence with my ex-partner. I couldn't go back to the house... It wasn't safe.

My sister was like, 'when was the last time you had a shower?'

Three weeks.

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Something had to change. I went to Rapid Access Accommodation and they told me about Anne Hope House. I was assessed on the Thursday and on Friday had a call to say I had been offered a place to move into on the Monday.



**Can you remember when we first met? You were in Anne Hope House - what was it like?**

I was so quiet. I was in my room. People thought I wasn't going to stay, I was so obviously timid. But I was determined.

**So determined.**

The girls in the house were so lovely and the staff were so welcoming. It made me feel at home.

It's such a lovely community. I can go any time and talk to any staff and they'd be willing and open to listen.

**What do you hope for in the future?**

I want to get my own house and see my family. Before, I hated everybody about me. But I've built a few good friendships in this house. We all class each other as family.

**Is there something that you'd like to say to people who were in a similar situation to you? What would you say to them?**

There's life on the other side. I never thought it was possible to have a decent life and that I would even be sitting here now.



**Is there something you'd like to say to the people who support Bethany?**

Thank you so much. If it wasn't for them, it wouldn't be possible. I'm able to be me again. And that's all thanks to all the people at Bethany and the people that support us.

**And thank you for all the things you've taught us! You've been such a key part of this community and helped make it a home for people.**

# Outputs & Outcomes: April 2021 to March 2022

## Homelessness Prevention

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### Community Support & Development West

102 People supported  
242 Significant conversations

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### Community Support & Development East

530 Individuals supported  
521 CSD sessions facilitated

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### Connect to Community

24 Gate releases  
112 Liberated and being supported

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### Creative Expressions

91 Facilitated sessions  
Audience reach of 1,330 people

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### Inspiring Leith

151 People linking monthly  
9 Regular community activities

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### Community Support & Development North

169 Individuals supported  
86 CSD sessions facilitated

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### Upstream

252 Young people supported  
132 Families supported

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## Crisis Intervention

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### Care Van Edinburgh

18,637 Presentations  
9,719 Lunches provided

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### Welcome Centre

8,904 Bed spaces provided  
49 People on average nightly

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### Bethany House

35 People moved on positively  
100% Satisfied with support

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### Bethany Christian Centre

100% Improved accommodation  
567 Recovery group sessions

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### Gateway to Homes and Communities

930 Households furnished  
8,858 Starter packs

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### Care Van Glasgow

2,196 Presentations  
2,250 Lunches provided

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### Anne Hope House

100% Developed new skills  
288 Activities and groups facilitated

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## Housing & Support

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### Kharis Court

18 Young people supported  
94% Successful moves on

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### Bethany Homes

73 Supported flats in total  
23 New tenancies commenced

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### Housing First Edinburgh

26 People supported  
100% Tenancies sustained

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### Housing Support Fife

111 People sustained tenancies  
32 Attendances at hub

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### Supported Housing Dumfries

15 Moves to stable housing  
415 Drop-in attendances

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### Move-On Support

29 People supported  
96% Tenancies sustained

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**Alex Telford, a Project Worker at Bethany House sits down with a previous resident, Bob, to talk about his journey.**



**So, Bob, do you remember when you first came in? What were the circumstances?**

Bethany House provides emergency resettlement accommodation with support for men and women who are homeless.

I was living on the streets. Not a great time. I had a bed and support in the church at Gorgie [venue for the old Care Shelter], but I was pretty run down and depressed.

**I think it was the Welcome Centre that referred you to us. And you went through the interview process, but it wasn't your first time being homeless – do you think it was different from other times?**

I was too old for being homeless. Even when I was younger, I was still too old to be homeless. But this time, I was approaching 60, so I thought to myself, 'What are you doing? Get your act together. Get sorted.' You guys have helped me do that.



**So, before you came to Bethany, you became homeless because you got evicted, I guess because you hadn't paid your rent?**

No, wrong. Universal Credit stopped paying me. For some reason. I was kind of depressed, I was past caring at the time. So I didn't get paid for, what, three or four months?

**Yeah, you would accrue a bill of about...**

... £2,700 or so. They had these two big guys come around and escort me off the premises one morning. Wasn't clever.

I was deemed intentionally homeless. If you're not paying your rent, that's what they say. That's what they call it. 'Oh, you made yourself intentionally homeless.'



**Did you feel you had enough time and support here for that to all get addressed?**

Yeah, definitely. If you ask somebody here, they'll try and help you in any way they can. They provided me information on support I didn't actually know I could get.

If there are any problems here I just speak to you guys and it's dealt with pretty much straight away.

Being treated like a normal person, as opposed to a statistic, basically.

## What's your feelings about moving on?

I'm looking forward to moving on, but I know I'm okay in this place. I know you've looked after me.

It's a big step back into the world again. I met a staff member and she seemed very pleasant. She asked me if I wanted anything, if I needed a hand. So, I'm sure if there's any problems, I can always speak to someone.



**And I think it's good to have somebody who'll be there even when there's no problems, somebody who'll go for a coffee with you.**

For me, it would have been going for a pint... nah, better off going for coffee!

**Sarah Macleod, a Housing Officer from Bethany Homes, talks to Unyime about the struggles her family faced when moving to the UK as refugees and how Bethany was able to help.**



**I remember when you first came to Bethany, you were working hard to make ends meet, then your landlord evicted you without any notice?**

Bethany Homes is a service that offers dispersed supported accommodation within the City of Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Dumfries, West Lothian and Glasgow.

Yeah, the landlord decided to sell the flat we lived in. She gave us an immediate eviction and was very demanding, even checking the flat when I was in labour.

## That must have been really scary.

It was scary, all we could do was hope things would get better, we were both working and it still wasn't enough to live off. Then we were facing immediate eviction and we had two small children.

They were born in Scotland, but Mark and I came from Nigeria, and we had no refugee status or benefits. We were both asked to stop working due to our immigration status, so we were living in limbo at that point. It's very tiring to have so much ahead of you.



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**Yeah, because you weren't able to apply for benefits. So, you were surviving by using food banks.**

Exactly. Eventually, social services stepped in and helped us with our bills. They organised a lawyer to help us get settled status, but it didn't work out, and we had to find a new solicitor.

I think the process is meant to take a year, but the whole situation was four years in the end. So, in that whole time we couldn't apply for benefits, jobs or accommodation. It was really tough. We didn't have any control over our future.

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## How was Bethany able to help you in that time?

We were struggling to find temporary emergency accommodation after our eviction... Someone thought of calling Bethany on the off chance they had something, and the Bethany Homes team happened to have an empty flat that we were able to move into immediately. We were very grateful to have a safe, furnished flat to live in, and to have the support of the Bethany team when we needed it. We stayed in this flat for the four years it took to resolve the issues we had with our immigration status.



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We still faced issues as we tried to get by with no income and the challenges of raising two small children, but we really feel that the support and care we received from the Bethany Homes team, as well as the support from social work, enabled us to get through this time.

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**How is life better for you and your family now?**

Eventually, in 2020 immigration status was granted, so we were able to apply for benefits and social housing ourselves. When we were unable to find suitable permanent housing, Bethany Homes nominated us for a fast-track application with a housing association and we were quickly offered a suitable three-bedroom house with a garden.

Now we are all happy and we are very settled in our permanent home. Mark is working again, the children are settled in the new school and I am able to look after them – we are all more settled.

Now we are happy and we have our life back.

**Joel Cleary, Project Worker at Kharis Court, sits down with resident, Corbin, to talk about his journey.**



Kharis Court is a 24-hour residential housing support service for young people aged 16-25 in Bathgate, West Lothian.

## So can you tell me a bit about your background?

When I was at school I had some family issues going on in the background. Pretty much to do with my mum having cancer.

I left school because I wanted to spend as much time with her as I could and to help out with everything in the house.



## And what situation brought you into contact with Bethany?

There were issues with my dad. He tried to commit suicide multiple times. Police were called in. There was a day when I got quite stressed. I got fed up with it.

I left and phoned my social worker and said I needed to get picked up. We discussed what was happening. It was quite stressful...

**Must've been difficult – your mother passed away and then things with your dad...**

**How did you find coming into Kharis Court?**

Going from being in your house, then straight into meeting new people and doing stuff and trying to explain your story. It was a little bit overwhelming. But apart from that, it was very welcoming. You can just walk around and you don't feel so anxious.

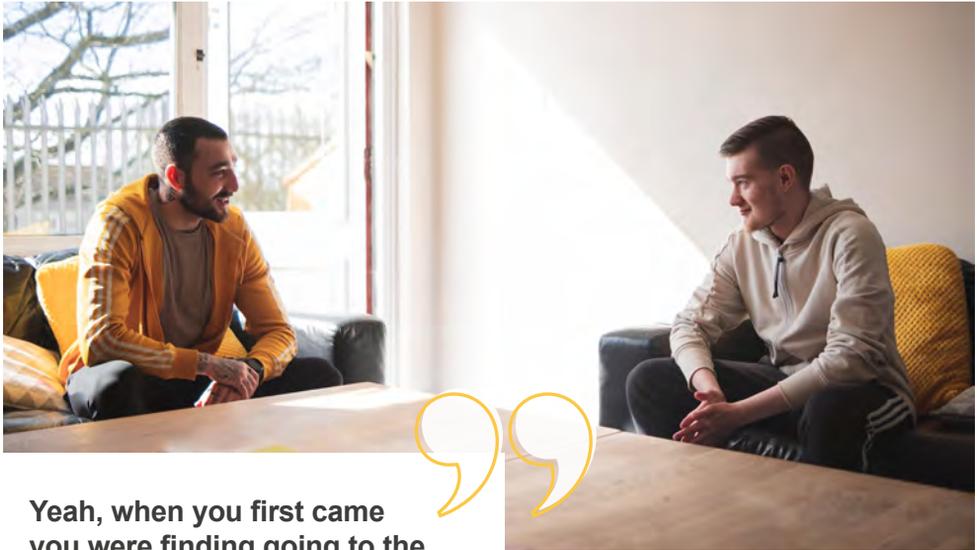


**So you would say Bethany has helped you grow...**

I have definitely not had stressing out issues to deal with. I've not had to deal with police multiple times.

You can come and speak to staff members if you've got issues on your mind and all that type of stuff. They're willing to sit down and speak to you or watch TV or do something else.

Going to the gym has helped confidence-wise, as well as helping with my anxiety and some of the ways I work.



**Yeah, when you first came you were finding going to the shops quite difficult, but now you're managing to go by yourself, which is amazing. What are your hopes for the future?**

Hopefully getting a car and passing the driving test. And just generally moving on with my life.

It's going to be challenging when I move to my own flat because I'm enjoying where I am the now, but it's definitely going to be a step forward when I'm ready.

**I think you do benefit from spending quite a lot of time with us. So, no rush.**

# Finances

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With so much of our income coming from your fundraising activities, donations and prayers, we feel it is important to show you how it is being spent.

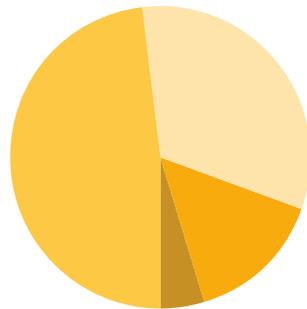
You can access our most recent consolidated accounts by visiting our website:

[www.bethanychristiantrust.com/about](http://www.bethanychristiantrust.com/about)

## Income

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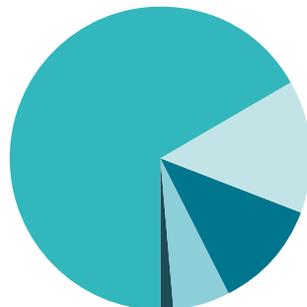
Fundraising	£2,520,567	32.31%
Retail	£1,160,117	14.87%
Statutory	£3,766,162	48.28%
Other	£353,770	4.54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£7,800,616</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



## Expenditure

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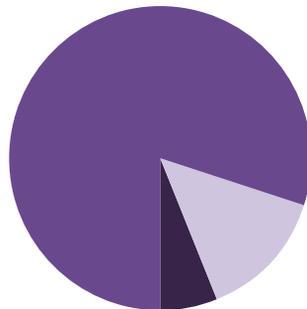
Fundraising	£466,888	6.38%
Retail	£1,027,926	14.05%
Charitable Activities	£4,887,329	66.82%
Support Activities (Business Support)	£850,821	11.63%
Governance & Administration	£81,677	1.12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£7,314,641</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



## For every £1 you give us

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<b>80p</b> goes towards ending homelessness in Scotland	■
<b>14p</b> develops charity shop income	■
<b>6p</b> goes towards raising the next £1	■



Please note: these figures are pending year end audit. The 'other' income figures include an insurance payment for loss of retail income in 2020 due to enforced retail closure during Covid-19 lockdown.

# Thank you

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**A warm and heartfelt thank you to all of the volunteers and donors who have supported Bethany Christian Trust this year with their time, talent, prayers, and donations. It's your generosity that makes our work possible.**

## How to get involved

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### Pray

We believe that prayer grounds all the work that Bethany does. We invite you to join with our staff, volunteers and supporters in using the prayer diary and online resources to pray for the services and challenges in overcoming homelessness across Scotland.

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### Give

Giving ensures that we are able to plan ahead and empower people with long term, practical care. Thanks to the generosity of people across Scotland and beyond, our work continues to benefit more and more people every year. Every gift, be it clothing and furniture for our shops, a donation towards one of our appeals, or a commitment to regular monthly giving, gets us one step closer towards ending homelessness in Scotland.

For more information please contact:  
**supporters@bethanychristiantrust.com**  
or call us on **0131 561 8927**.

Alternatively, you can give directly on our website:  
**www.bethanychristiantrust.com**



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## Volunteer

Every day across Scotland, hundreds of volunteers partner with Bethany to provide vital support to people accessing Bethany's services. Volunteering at Bethany is a great way to meet new people, learn new skills, give back to the community and boost your confidence. Our volunteering opportunities are diverse and flexible to ensure that you benefit too. Please get in touch today to chat about how you can join our team!

## #BCTheroes

For more information please contact:  
**volunteers@bethanychristiantrust.com**  
or call us on **0131 561 8965**



# Thanks to our trust, foundation & statutory body supporters

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The William Syson Foundation  
The Wilson Christie Fund  
The Wise Music Foundation  
Third Inglis Property Trust  
West Lothian Council  
Wilson Family Trust

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## Thanks to our legacy donors

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Every year, we are blessed with the thoughtfulness of our supporters who remember Bethany Christian Trust in their Will. These legacies are an extraordinary help in our work across Scotland, and reflect the often longstanding connection that people have had with Bethany. Their generosity now makes a lasting impact beyond their lifetime. We would like to acknowledge the following legacy left to us since our last Annual Report:

Edmund Klimek

We would also like to pay tribute to all whose lives have prompted generous donations in their memory through the year:

Alistair Dewar  
David Forbes  
Tommy Hargreaves  
David High  
Selma Imrie  
Colin Jackson  
Colin Paterson  
Lynda Rau  
Celia Souza  
Allan Stewart  
David Thomson

## Thanks to our church partners

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We would also like to thank the many churches and communities across Scotland who partner with us. Due to the scale of your support we cannot acknowledge every generous act, but each and every one is greatly appreciated.

## **Chief Executive & Secretary**

Alasdair Bennett

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Angela Stormont (Deputy Chair)  
Mark Hesketh (Treasurer)  
Colin Mason  
James Campbell  
Sonia MacCallum  
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Jo Ratter  
Sofie Gillespie  
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Nicole Beattie

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Katelynne Kirk

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Simon Juho Photography

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