

New Year Update

Bethany Christian Trust

Thank You!

We are so appreciative of your continuous support towards the work of Bethany Christian Trust this past year. Your commitment to our mission – through donations, volunteer time and spreading the word – has had a direct impact in the lives of the people we support. Because of your involvement, our services have continued working to prevent homelessness, intervene in crisis and provide housing and support.

With over thirty services in eleven geographical locations, these life-saving projects are designed to relieve suffering and meet the long-term needs of people who are homeless or vulnerable to homelessness across Scotland. We are privileged to highlight a few of these services and share their stories of transformation and changed lives. I hope you find them a great encouragement as we look ahead to another year of partnership.

Your generosity makes the work we do possible.



Hannah Nelson
Director of Income Generation

www.bethanychristiantrust.com





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Jane's Story*

Crisis Intervention

“I feel like no-one has ever cared if I live or die before I came here, thank you for your support and care.”

Jane came to the Welcome Centre after leaving a marriage where she was experiencing psychological abuse from her husband.

Since leaving she had been sofa surfing and staying with friends but had nowhere to go now. After presenting to the Council to seek accommodation she was referred to the Welcome Centre as there was no accommodation available.

“We appreciate you guys!
Thanks for your kindness.”

After just over a month in the Welcome Centre Jane moved into a Move-On Flat with Bethany Christian Trust, where she gets support from Bethany Christian Trust visiting support workers and she is able to start afresh.

At the Welcome Centre, between 2nd October and 31st December 2024, there have been...

- **432** individual presentations
- **5,903** accesses to the service
- **65** guests per night
- Over **10,010** meals served
- **88%** of guests saying they would have been sleeping rough if it were not for the Welcome Centre

Did you know?

The Welcome Centre provides emergency accommodation with support to anyone who has no alternative accommodation and needs somewhere safe to stay.

Operating throughout the coldest months of the year, the Welcome Centre provides each individual or couple with their own bedroom and en-suite facilities.

24/7 care and support are provided by professional Bethany staff, as well as specialised support from 40 partners, with a focus on follow on support. Each day there is breakfast, lunch and a hot nutritious evening meal provided by Edinburgh and Lothian churches.





Move-On Support

Housing & Support

Louise* was living a chaotic life and struggled with substance misuse. She made initial contact with us through Bethany House...

...our emergency accommodation for men and women who are homeless.

At Bethany, we implement a housing-first model, prioritising stable housing as a fundamental need rather than something that must be earned. A stable home provides an environment where we can assist individuals to address the challenges that made them vulnerable to homelessness'

Louise* moved into a tenancy and utilised mental health and substance misuse support services. Our team helped her develop essential skills for maintaining her tenancy and provided advocacy for managing daily responsibilities.

With help from our Move-On Support team, Louise has now moved into her own flat and is receiving assistance with furnishings and any other additional support that she needs.

"I feel like all of the support that I've had whilst I'm here has made the biggest impact and difference to my life... well that, and moving to a full, more independent flat which I really enjoy and I am still enjoying."

Did you know?

Our Housing & Support teams offer tenancies all across Scotland for people transitioning from homelessness and in need of a place to call home.

We offer a range of support services, including 24-hour residential assistance for young people in West Lothian, practical help and advice for tenants in Edinburgh, and 82 supported tenancies across Scotland.

Bethany in Numbers

Statistics from April 2023 to March 2024

We support over 7,000 people across Scotland each year. The data on this page shows the widespread impact of your support.

Crisis Intervention

Welcome Centre

13,204 bed spaces provided
63 people on average nightly

Care Van Edinburgh

20,897 presentations
11,352 lunches provided

Care Van Glasgow

2,454 presentations
2,454 lunches provided

Bethany Christian Centre

100% improved accommodation
670 recovery group sessions

Gateway to Homes and Communities

1,061 households furnished
7,916 starter packs

Anne Hope House

100% developed new skills
435 activities & groups facilitated

Bethany House

33 people moved-on positively
100% satisfied with support

Care Van Perth & Stornoway Outreach

617 presentations in Perth
52 people supported in Stornoway

Housing & Support

Kharis Court

16 young people supported
100% successful moves-on

Housing First Edinburgh

13 people supported
12 accessed housing

Fife Short Term Supported Housing

124 people sustained tenancies
107 referrals made for advice

Bethany Homes

81 supported flats in total
40 new tenancies commenced

Move-On Support

46 people supported
87% tenancies sustained

Supported Housing Dumfries

16 moves to stable housing
945 drop-in attendances

Fife Housing First

21 people supported
14 new tenancies commenced

A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a red-handled paintbrush, applying blue paint to a wooden post. The post is part of a larger wooden structure, possibly a planter or a small table, which is sitting on a white table. The background is slightly blurred, showing an outdoor setting with a paved area and some greenery.

Homelessness Prevention

Inspiring Leith

150 people linking monthly
9 regular community activities

Community Support & Development (CSD) East & Dundee

962 individuals supported
543 CSD sessions facilitated

Connect to Community

21 gate releases
100 liberated and being supported

Community Support & Development North

276 individuals supported
104 CSD sessions facilitated

Community Support & Development West

191 individuals supported
421 significant conversations

UpStream

121 young people supported
154 families supported

Creative Expressions

93 facilitated sessions
Audience reach of 1,878 people

Access through Advocacy

96 referrals received
181 face-to-face meetings

Day in the Life

Mike's Story

Working in Marketing at Bethany, we can sometimes feel disconnected from the real work of Bethany Christian Trust.

Bethany's services

It's important that we get out and about into the heart of the support that goes on each day and see firsthand its life-changing impact.

We took a trip to Glasgow to visit some of the community groups that take place each week in the city. Dilly Harris, Community Support and Development Manager for Glasgow, kindly took the time to show us around.

The day was full of people, laughter, friendship, belonging and hope. Visiting Bethany's services is a fantastic way to connect with the work we support.

Dilly took us around some of the different groups and services around the city, all of which fit into Bethany's Homelessness Prevention work. The focus here is "going upstream" from the visible reality of homelessness (eviction, rough sleeping, fatalities) and intervening before the moment of crisis. This aspect of Bethany's operations is about providing community and walking alongside people.

Self-Reliant Group, Findlay Church

At Findlay Church we visited eight women as part of a Self-Reliant Group, a community-based group where people can freely come and share life while working together on a common interest to sell or gift to others.

The church offers a beautiful and welcoming space for people from the community to gather and build relationships.

The women were working on various projects, from sanitary pads for people living in poverty to community blankets. Jax, an advocacy worker with our Access through Advocacy service, was present, supporting one woman with a particular situation she needed help with. This is the kind of one-to-one support that might often need an appointment and weeks of waiting-lists; Jax brings it to the community.

Clay Café, Possilpark

Next, we headed to Clay Café in Possilpark. The area is a mix of pharmacies and pubs, with a large

new-build estate in construction around the bright white oasis of Bardowie Street Hall, where the café is situated. At the café, a group of young people were taking part in workplace training, learning skills like customer service, kitchen hygiene, and coffee preparation. This is a supportive place where key skills can be learned, confidence can grow, and young people can flourish.

Bethany Homes, Glasgow

Next, we visited the community of guys who live in Bethany's supported flats around the city. We met Toby at a local café and were joined by three others – Joe, Dean and Peter.*

This was such a warm and supportive environment. During the conversation, Dilly supported Peter with his photo ID and completing an online form, as well as, curiously, promising to bring some stick insects for Joe to have as pets. Apparently, caring for pets has been a remarkable indicator of successful tenancies – Dilly hoped the responsibility of cleaning and feeding his stick insects would help Joe in his journey to independent living.





Bethany UpStream, Connect House

The final visit for our day was with Bethany UpStream, our youth counselling service. After the busyness of the day, we returned to Connect House. UpStream make use of the first floor of the building, with private counselling rooms for the young people and families that Bethany support. Martin, who manages the service, showed us around. This is a calm, safe and healing space for so many and I felt that aura as I reflected on the stories I know of those who are referred to the UpStream service: young people who have faced so many battles and barriers before they even reach adulthood.

As we headed to leave, I caught up with Mhairi, who works in the office downstairs with both our Connect to Community and Access through Advocacy services. She was one of the first people I met when I started work with Bethany. She remembers meeting my newborn online, three years ago; she asks after my family; we share stories of her 16- and 20-year-olds... small chit chat but a moment that, in the context of the day, made me feel grateful.

Small connections, community, a feeling of being known, a sense of belonging... these are all things that can be easily taken for granted. These are things we all need.

One person at a time

My question for us all at the end of this day was this: where does your sense of connection come from? Who is your support community? For the ladies at Findlay Church, the guys at the café with Dilly, for the young people that visit the UpStream counsellors, the answer is, in part, Bethany Christian Trust. Bethany works to facilitate these moments of community and personal connection for every individual that we support.

The day was a wonderful opportunity to see firsthand the disproportionate impact of these everyday moments, and how they fit into Bethany's vision of Ending Homelessness in Scotland.

This is what the 'one person at a time' aspect of Bethany's mission statement looks like: a quick chat, a shared coffee, a helping hand, a supportive network. It was a joy to see Christ's love in action.

Bridge to Freedom

Homelessness Prevention

“Bridge to Freedom is not just for supporting people dealing with their addictions. Yes, it’s helped me stay off the alcohol, but it’s so much more than that.”

Last year, our Community Support and Development East team have supported over 700 people with ranging issues that could lead to homelessness (such as addiction, isolation and loneliness) by providing a safe space to connect.

In Edinburgh and Gorebridge, people in recovery are assisted with support and belonging through the Bridge to Freedom (BtF) programme.

In addition to our weekly recovery groups and one-to-one sessions, our Recovery Worker has also arranged successful social outings including bowling, visiting the Christmas markets and rides, enjoying a meal together and going go-karting.

These moments provided opportunities for our participants to engage in activities that they wouldn’t normally do and strengthened relationships within the group.

Jake has been attending our Bridge to Freedom recovery group in Gorebridge for the last few years. He’s shared a little about what the group means to him:

“For me, BtF, it’s a lifeline. I’m enjoying living again. It’s a space where I can be open, it’s safe and we’re encouraging and strengthening each other; it’s like a family and has given me new social and support networks.

As a result of connecting in with other groups at the church, I’ve now been given the keys to the church and am part of the maintenance team. That would never have happened a few years ago! I’ve got a routine and responsibilities I could never have imagined.

It’s affected other areas of my life too. I’m more honest with my doctors now and I don’t keep things from them anymore. Forgiving myself has been the hardest thing, but Joe and BtF have helped me receive that gift. Bridge to Freedom is not just for supporting people dealing with their addictions.

Yes, it's helped me stay off the alcohol, but it's so much more than that.

As soon as I start being dishonest, things start slipping. I need to be vulnerable and honest, and this group has given me the skills to do that. It gives you a purpose, as well as the social side and helping with well-being.

I didn't think I had a purpose in the past, but that's all changed now. It's a lifeline for me and my family as they feel supported when they see my progress and recovery. I can never say enough good things about BtF. It's such a beautiful thing."





Dwelling Place 2030

Bethany Christian Trust's Strategy

Last year we came to the end of Mission 2024, our previous strategic plan. Our Chief Executive, Alasdair Bennett, invites you to join us for the next chapter.

“I am deeply grateful for the steps God has guided us through over the past few years.

We have seen Bethany Christian Trust expand dynamically – not just in the services we offer, but, we believe, in the depth of our Christian foundation, our unity, and our network of dedicated staff, volunteers, and partners. This growth has allowed us to respond to Scotland's homelessness crisis with compassion, humility, and agility.

We are embracing a new metaphor that encapsulates the strategies that will fulfil our vision of ending homelessness in Scotland, one person at a time. At the heart of our strategic plan is the image of a true “home” – a place of safety, warmth, and welcome, grounded on firm foundations.

This “home” is more than just a building; it is a sanctuary where fullness of life and opportunity abound for people, with positive future options and the opportunity to share living hope in community.

In every service, we strive to create a place where people find not just temporary relief, but fullness of life, renewed dignity, and future possibilities. Built upon our faith in God's heart, this Dwelling Place is a place of shelter and rest for people grappling with homelessness and associated adversities. Here, we will seek to prevent homelessness, to intervene when lives are in crisis, and to offer housing with support.

Dwelling Place 2030 is both a call to action and an invitation. To our volunteers, donors, church, charity, and statutory partners across Scotland—thank you for walking this path with us.

Join us as we strive to build a Scotland where no one is without a place to call home. Despite the external national challenges we face, we move forward in faith and hope, towards a future where homelessness in Scotland is a part of our past.”

Alasdair Bennett
Chief Executive



Bethany
Christian
Trust



Wishing you a prosperous and peace-filled 2025.

Thank you again for your caring
and committed support!

As a team, we are humbled by the
dedication you have shown to our mission
through your generosity and support.

Moving into 2025, we step forward into
the vision of **Dwelling Place 2030**.

Scotland is facing a homelessness
crisis and this new strategy prioritises
strengthening our foundation, maturing
holistic services, and expanding
fruitful partnerships with communities,
churches, councils, and government.

We could not do this vital work without you.

If you would like any further information
about our work, would ever like to
visit us or have any questions please
don't hesitate to reach out to us.

To read more about Dwelling Place 2030,
see our website.

www.bethanychristiantrust.com





* denotes names changed to protect privacy.

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