

Offering hope, support and a future to homeless
and vulnerable people in the Bath area

A SNAPSHOT



2020/21

Welcome

Silver Linings



The words “silver lining” are often seen as part of the proverb “every dark cloud has a silver lining,” meaning there’s hope or something good to be found in every bad situation. In the case of the pandemic, we have had some dark moments but there have definitely been silver linings.

We have all faced challenges and come out the other side for the better. For Genesis Trust the pandemic has required us to adapt much of how we do things, which has resulted in some of our work becoming more effective. Here are just a few highlights.

Having had to shut our Bath Foodbank distribution centres and adapt to a home delivery system, we have continued to engage with our clients through our delivery volunteers. They have spent time talking to clients on their doorsteps and our volunteers also follow up with a phone call. Every Foodbank parcel now includes a card with a contact number and an invitation to call, which means that volunteers can follow-up to see if there are any other needs. This has enabled volunteers to signpost more clients to further dedicated support.

The Lifeline team at the Gateway Centre have worked hard to adapt from a walk-in day centre to an appointment only system. This has allowed the team to have more effective time with each individual client on a one-to-one basis. Also, to help maintain sensible health and safety practices, they started meeting with clients outside for a walk. These “Walk & Talks” are proving to be invaluable for helping clients open up and have resulted in more positive change.

We’ve found that more clients are progressing from immediate Lifeline support to more long-term Life Skills programmes, especially the Life Course, which enables more sustainable positive change for their future. This is thanks to the more focused and effective time with each client.

These are just some of the ‘silver linings’ we have seen this year. All of the positive impact achieved is only possible because of your incredible support. Thank you to all of you who have donated, fundraised, volunteered and prayed for our valuable work. We could not reach the vulnerable and disadvantaged in our city without you.

Nick Mayo CEO

Some of the highlights of our impact during the year include:

LIFE SKILLS

75 clients were involved in **26** different courses or activities, a total of more than **3,400** client-hours



The introduction of the "Life Course"

Launch of our online Furniture Shop



genesistrust.org.uk

SHOP
ONLINE



The introduction of "Walk & Talk"



LIFELINE

339 individuals with **3,254** interactions, an average of **271** per month



BATH FOODBANK

Over **2,765** deliveries which provided meals for **5,287** people, **1,482** of whom were children



Maintaining excellent overall health and commitment of staff and volunteers



Lifeline and the Life Course

If you had asked Paul Solly, Lifeline Manager, what the best thing about the new Gateway Centre was before the pandemic, he would have said the growing sense of community and the opportunity to nourish people's wellbeing in a calmer, brighter space. But the pandemic brought a stop to the walk-in day centre.

March 2020 saw the suspension of busy morning breakfast and drop-in sessions but over a year later we see the silver linings of the changes forced upon us. Initially, visitors were showing up at random and having to wait in turn for one to one support. Now visitors are given an appointment that allows concentrated time for each individual.

This has resulted in two major opportunities at Lifeline. Firstly, it has allowed us to give more focused attention to each individual and spend time with them without distractions. We have been able to listen to each story behind the immediate crisis. Our emphasis has changed from fire-fighting (although there is still plenty of this) to helping them with their wellbeing in a more holistic manner.

Secondly, we have been able to reflect on the impact of self-neglect and how to offer help. We have begun developing 'companionship activities' as a means of getting closer to people. These are helping visitors relax, enjoy the activity, develop some motivation, and make life more fulfilling.

The new Life Course has been a tremendous addition to the offering made to visitors to the Gateway Centre. The serious subject matter combined with an engaging and fun approach has attracted Lifeline visitors onto the course. It has grown to be an inspiring learning event for them and now many Bath-based agencies are referring clients to the course.



Tilly (left) and Sue from Genesis Life Course

“ I now feel like I’m not the only one dealing with problems because I made connections with different people. The Life Course helped me deal with so many issues and dealing with my emotions. I would like more courses as I would feel stronger.”

Tilly – Life Course participant

Bath Foodbank and Volunteers



The purpose of the Bath Foodbank is to ensure that those whose circumstances

mean that they do not have enough food for themselves and their families do not go hungry, and to do so in a welcoming and friendly way.

We cannot emphasise enough how reliant the Bath Foodbank is on our dedicated group of volunteers. They have energetically and faithfully kept the mission of the Bath Foodbank going through a very difficult year and supported the transition to the home-delivery system.

Here is a snap shot of what the Bath Foodbank volunteers did in the past year:

1. Picking up food from supermarkets
2. Product sorting
3. Date sorting
4. Getting bags of food ready three times a week for delivery (including any special requests or dietary requirements)
5. Delivering food to client homes
6. Follow-up phone calls with clients to see if they need further help and signposting to further dedicated support



Foodbank Volunteers

And if that wasn't amazing enough, look at what they accomplished:

1. 3,805 adults fed
2. Including 1,482 children fed
3. A total of 5,287 people supported
4. And the total weight of food distributed was 82.5 tonnes!

Was the closing of the distribution centres difficult? Yes, of course. But the "silver lining" is what people can accomplish through difficult situations when they are committed to helping those less fortunate than themselves. A big thank you to the Bath Foodbank staff and volunteers for everything they did and accomplished last year.

“ I feel privileged to be able to do something towards helping people get enough food when times are hard. Very aware things change and any of us could be in this situation.”

Kay – Foodbank volunteer

Furniture Shop

One of Genesis Trust's objectives is to run financially effective social enterprises to create a surplus of funds and to create work experience opportunities for clients. The pandemic forced us to close the physical Furniture Project in March 2020 and one of the "silver linings" is that it has given us the time and space to redesign how it operates.

So, in March 2021, we opened Genesis Trust's new Furniture Shop entirely online, selling pre-loved, quality, second-hand furniture. The Furniture Shop team has worked hard to hone the processes for collecting and preparing donations, and selling furniture online. Since then we have seen a consistent increase in sales.

In and amongst all this adapting, we are still meeting the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable people in the Bath area by providing essential furniture and home starter packs through agencies, organisations and individuals that support people in need. From March 2020 to March 2021, we helped 114 people in need with essential furniture and household goods to get them started in their new homes. This is especially impressive since the Furniture Shop was closed during most of that time.

Please encourage your friends and family to use the Genesis Trust Furniture Shop for their furniture needs, and please consider donating your quality, second-hand furniture



Ross Jones – Furniture Shop volunteer trainee

so that we can sell it. All the profits from the sale of your furniture donation will support homeless and vulnerable people in the Bath area.

Visit our website and click Furniture Shop for more information.

www.genesistrust.org.uk



“ I have been helping with the Furniture Shop and Bath Foodbank for 18 months and it has helped me with my social skills and self-confidence. Plus, there's a lot of satisfaction from helping others.”

Ross Jones – Furniture Shop volunteer trainee

**Thank
You!**

**We could not support homeless and vulnerable
people in our community without you!
We love the imagination and generosity
you've shown over the last year.**



The Future

As a Christian charity, we want to continue supporting people in the Bath area as they move forward in their lives to new beginnings and better futures. We will continue to value the wonderful commitment and support of many churches, supporters, volunteers and other organisations. We will continue to follow the health and safety guidelines to keep everyone safe, including both online and in-person activities. And as restrictions reduce, we will develop new ways of helping more people, with the active support of more volunteers in our different projects. If you'd like to talk about volunteering with Genesis Trust, either now or in the future, please email us at office@genesistrust.org.uk.

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