



Bethany Christian Trust: *“Ending homelessness in Scotland one person at a time”*: Possilpark, Glasgow: October 2022 Update

Context:

Possilpark is one of the most deprived areas in Glasgow: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 identifies two Possilpark data zones as being within the top 10 most deprived areas in Glasgow. Perhaps most concerning is that it currently has the lowest life expectancy of all neighbourhoods in Glasgow for both males and females.

The Trusted Executive Charitable Foundation (TTECF) has been supporting Bethany Christian Trust’s community development programme in Possilpark since January 2019 with a series of grants totalling £50,216 (@Aug2022). These grants have helped to support the creation of a community cafe as part of the programme.

October ‘22 Update:

A life transformed:

In October Craig (Chair of TTECF) and Sue (TTECF’s Stakeholder Relationships & Communications Lead) had the great privilege of visiting Bethany Christian Trust’s programme in Possilpark, including the Clay Café which is the heart of their work. The visit included an inspiring conversation with a man who we’ll refer to as F:

F described how he had been addicted to heroin and crack cocaine for over forty years from the age of seventeen, and how that addiction had totally shaped his life. Through the help and support of Bethany Christian Trust his life is totally transformed. He has been on a work placement at the Clay Café for just over a year now, volunteering once a week and developing vital employment skills such as following direction, reliability and time keeping. He has also become a regular attender each week at groups which help him to heal and grow emotionally and spiritually.

F has recently decided that he would like to start a Community Achievement Award; this is something that we would encourage all those on Work Placements to do as it gives them a qualification as well as a clear record of their personal progress. F has declined the opportunity before, as he struggled with paperwork and writing at school. This year, with the help of Lorna (our work placement facilitator), he has built up the confidence to take it on. He will be identifying his own goals to work towards over the coming months, and with support from Bethany and Glasgow Kelvin College to complete the paperwork, he will be able to see the great strides he is making in his abilities and skills.

This empowerment and growth in confidence is exactly what Bethany hope to see in all their work placements; completing this next step will further improve F’s self-belief and enable him take on more challenges in the future.

Expanding horizons:

Emma leads Bethany’s programme in Possilpark as well as being one of the leaders at the Clay Community Church. She has been successful in applying for a grant to hire a Youth Work Placement Facilitator who will be employed through Bethany. The successful track record of Bethany and Clay Community Church working together, and the transformation they have seen, played a big part in the success of the bid.

This new role will focus mainly on secondary school age children that take on apprenticeships / work placement in the café; either through Virtual Schools Glasgow or the Youth Café. They will also be taking on Community Achievement Awards at various levels. This will include hosting the Thursday Café and Board Game Café, as well as leading the daily running of the café, to serve the local community and engage with the customers. All of this experience will provide the young people with valuable life and workplace skills

which will transform their aspirations, hopes and dreams; for many of them it will help to break a multi-generational cycle of unemployment and the attendant physical, emotional and spiritual challenges.

The area around Clay Café is in the process of being transformed from a huge derelict site of the former steel works into a new housing development. Very soon the Café will be at the centre of a huge new community which will provide Emma and the team with the opportunity to build relationships with construction personnel, and new residents to the area, as building work progresses.

Emma is also looking forward to focussing on new community building activities. This will include work at the newly renovated social enterprise space at The Grove, which is due to open in November. The Grove has a large shop front on Saracen Street (A879) which is one of the main routes into and out of Glasgow city centre. The new space will enable Emma and the Bethany team to encourage local people to start to build social enterprise skills including craft and computer based activities, in partnership with local businesses.

These accounts from Bethany Christian Trust's work in Possilpark are great examples of helping people - regardless of age - to rediscover the joy of achieving goals through their own efforts and the support of those around them. They also demonstrate a willingness to rise to meet new opportunities, including networking with local businesses. Bethany are working to transform the community one life at a time and creating resilience through a spirit of hope and generosity. Their care and commitment is demonstrating: the ability to be consistent, and to deliver with kindness & humility (some of the "Nine Habits of Trust" <https://trustedexecutive.com/nine-habits-of-trust>).