

A full-page photograph of a man with dark hair and a beard, smiling. He is wearing a black puffer vest over a bright green long-sleeved shirt with red and yellow patterns on the cuffs. He is also wearing a black apron and white gloves. He stands in front of a brick wall covered in colorful graffiti. The ground is gravel. The text 'FIFTY YEARS OF GOOD' is overlaid in large white letters on the right side of the image.

FIFTY
YEARS
OF
GOOD



Cover: Michael Riverio | Inside cover: Stuart Manley

OUR MISSION

Creating sustainable pathways out of poverty to end homelessness in Wolverhampton.

#Itstartswithameal

2022 marks 50 years since the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd set up a shelter in Wolverhampton on Christmas Eve 1972. It's an honour to be a part of a charity that has such a strong history of serving the city, and our team are excited to celebrate the golden anniversary of the Brothers' work. The Brothers were inspired by the life of St John of God, a 16th century saint who set up hospitals and shelters in Spain for people in need. His work inspired a global movement of hospitality and left a legacy of hospitality and compassion that continues to this day.

Our theme for this year is "It starts with a meal". Our history and values are important to us and hospitality is the cornerstone on which we build our services. Coming to the service to get a hot meal, a shower or just a hot drink and a friendly face, is usually the first interaction people have with our services. It starts with a meal, it starts with hospitality, but it doesn't end there. Our role as a charity isn't just to be hospitable and compassionate, it's to support change, and provide opportunities for people to be the best version of themselves.

Activities and events are planned throughout the year to celebrate the anniversary. We were honoured to be chosen as an ambassador for the British Art Show 9. With support from the University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton Art Gallery, and Creative Black Country, our service users have

been involved in some fantastic projects and events. Our exhibition highlights the work that we do and its impact, showcasing the talents and stories of the people that make up the Good Shepherd.

Fundraising and donations from the public enable us to support over a thousand people per year across our projects. Alongside our events we are running fundraising activities including a campaign in July for people to donate the cost of a lunch to support our food service. With the cost-of-living crisis, reduction in Universal Credit, and increase in national insurance, we are expecting an even greater demand on our services.

In May Paul Burns and I will be walking 50 miles from Wrexham to Snowdonia and climbing Mount Snowdon to raise funds for our community pantry which supports nearly a hundred families per week. Our team and supporters are planning personal fundraisers so please follow our social media pages for more information.

On behalf of the Brothers, the people that we serve, and our team, a massive thank you to everyone who has supported us and been a part of our journey over the last 50 years. I hope you can join us at one of our events this year. If you have an idea for a fundraiser, or if you have photos, stories, or memories from the past 50 years then we would love to hear from you.

Tom Hayden



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



It started with a meal 50 years ago...

In 1972 when the Brothers started on that Christmas Eve, they offered food and showed compassion to those struggling and on the fringes of society. Fifty years later, hospitality and food continue to be at the heart of our support. The Food Service is usually the very first place our clients visit at the Good Shepherd, and our team of staff and volunteers go the extra mile to make sure that everyone feels welcome.

On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, we open our doors to provide hot, nutritious meals to those that need it, with a sit down and dine service and a take-out service offered. In January and February alone, The Good Shepherd provided more than three thousand meals. Our Family Pantry launched in April 2021 with the aim of providing a dignified shopping experience for families - visitors to the Pantry can choose their shopping from a range of items including fresh, frozen, tinned and baked goods. Families can choose specific items to suit their own dietary and cultural needs in a friendly and nurturing environment. When we started a community pantry between 40 and 50 families were accessing the service. Last month alone 95 families accessed the pantry in total of 227 visits. With the cost-of-living crisis we are expecting a further increase in demand from April and throughout 2022.

It's important to note that our Food Service is not only tackling food hunger

but is also working closely with food partners to tackle food waste. In January and February of this year, we took in 4.8 tonnes of food which was still of good quality but headed for waste, this was then distributed to those who attend our services. It's a partnership that is important to us as well

The Good Shepherd has always been well supported by the City since its humble beginnings in 1972, and continues to be. Without generous donations from the local community and local businesses, the Food Service simply could not exist.

Good Shepherd Spring Shopping List:

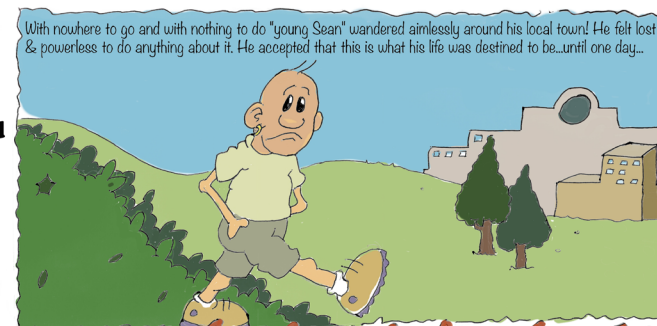
- Long life milk
- Coffee
- Tinned meat
- Tinned pasta
- Tinned meatballs
- Hotdog sausages
- Hot chocolate
- Men's deodorant
- Easter Treats
- Biscuits
- Toilet roll
- Jam
- Ketchup
- Sugar
- Toiletries

Items can be dropped at:

65 Waterloo Road
Monday-Friday 8-11 or 2-3 pm
Thank you as for your support

A Day in the Life of The Lost Soul and The Good Shepherd

#itstartswithameal April 2022



TRUE TO HIS WORD

He fed me when I was hungry
He gave me rest when I was tired
He gave me shelter when I needed protection

Young Sean

had been given a gift, so good, that it turned his life round in such a positive way that now he felt confident & strong enough to go into the world. He wanted to show The Good Shepherd how grateful he was, even though he hadn't got a penny he did the only thing that he could... he let the next person know where to go...

Image: Darren Parkes



Image: Michael Ray Wilson - Good Shepherd art group

Housing First it's as simple as that

People who have experienced homelessness and are facing up to complex needs have found "a way out of their vicious circle" thanks to the Housing First project run across Wolverhampton. The Good Shepherd work alongside Wolverhampton Homes to deliver the pilot project, which operates along the idea of providing accommodation first, followed by intensive and tailored support to help address associated issues.

Specialist workers and peer mentors work closely with individuals to help them move into a home of their own and then develop their skills and interests with the aim of increasing self-esteem and confidence and looking to a brighter future.

"I was homeless after the breakdown of an abusive relationship and had lost everything," says Anne. "I was put on the Housing First programme and managed to get a property, a bank account, white goods for my flat, a carpet and furniture. My life has done a complete 360 degree turn as a result, and Housing First has encouraged me to see a way out of the vicious circle that I was in."

Matt adds: "I was long-term heroin and crack cocaine user for over 20 years and on the streets for long periods of that time. I'm not a horrible person but when you get into the situations that I did with addiction you don't care about anything. Now with the help of Housing First I care about things again and it feels like I have got something to live for every single day."

Anne and Matt both sit on the Homeless Forum group providing details of their experiences to help shape future policies and prevent the trauma of homelessness. Staff are delighted with their progress and that of so many on the Housing First programme. "Housing First clients know that we care and that we are there to support and make change," says Dawn, one of the Key Workers at the Good Shepherd. "Everyone is someone's son or daughter, and everyone has feelings, no matter their lifestyle or their past. It may have started with a meal at the Good Shepherd, but it can end with a home under the Housing First team."

The pilot scheme in the local area is co-ordinated by the West Midlands Combined Authority, and West Midlands Mayor Andy Street has been impressed by its success. "Housing First does exactly what it says on the tin - it prioritises people who are in the greatest need to have a home of their own and to start the journey of recovery and living their life again."

"People who street sleep or have long term experiences of homelessness often have multiple and complex needs, including poor health and trauma. The person-centred and well-resourced support that Housing First provides is critical to making this fresh start and one where people have a chance to really succeed."



HOPE – Homeless, Opportunity, Prepare, Engage

The Good Shepherd has set up a new forum to give people who have experienced homelessness a voice and influence to potentially shape services in the future. The forum's name HOPE (Homeless, Opportunity, Prepare, Engage) was chosen by the service users themselves. Service users meet once a month with guest speakers, and Q&A sessions are held with local commissioners and other guests within the sector.

Leon Barrett, Senior Support Worker at the Good Shepherd oversees the forum and explains: "There were different reasons we wanted to set up the forum, particularly as homelessness can come under an umbrella of situations from being a rough sleeper, a sofa surfer, living in a hostel without permanent accommodation or staying with a friend or family member. We wanted to get different people together who have experienced homelessness to find out what the barriers are to getting accommodation, and how we can break those barriers down to prevent and end homelessness in Wolverhampton. The agenda is planned at a pre-forum meeting with service users deciding what they want to ask and then we invite a guest speaker who can answer the questions and look at changing some of the barriers in place.

"Everyone who is there is also given a role from welcoming people on the door to timekeeping during the meeting or leading an item on the agenda – some people are

always more likely to speak than others but we want to give everyone a job so they can feel their worth. The result so far has been extremely successful. To have had eight or nine people consistently attending has been fantastic. At first the forum wondered if they would be listened to but now, when they ask questions and can see that senior executives from the Council are listening to them, it is a 'wow' moment. At the initial meeting we had commissioners from the City of Wolverhampton Council, and they were impressed by the organisation and professionalism of the forum. It is another part of the efforts to help prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in Wolverhampton and the best thing is that now it is set up, we can leave the service users to run it themselves – it belongs to them, and not us."

One of those regular attendees is Matt Waterhouse, who has experience of homelessness and addiction. Matt helps to lead other groups at The Good Shepherd and can see the value that the forum is having. "This has given me the opportunity to talk to people I would never normally talk to and to be listened to," Matt explains. "It has inspired me because it has given me the platform to make a difference. It has given me my voice back, and I have been able to watch my peers grow with me, which is important."

Image: Michael Riverio

The Hope of Easter

Always look forward with hope - that is the message of the great feast of Easter, the most important celebration of the Christian year. We are remembering the resurrection of Jesus, the incredible good news that death is not the end! Christians believe that Jesus opens the way for all of us to follow him.

There are problems enough in this life. Most of us experience serious difficulties at some point in our lives - it could be illness, depression, accident, failure, guilt, regrets. Our Good Shepherd service users may suffer from

additional problems such as homelessness and crippling poverty. The wider world seems to be full of threats - Covid, climate change, war.

But things are not what they seem, suffering and tragedy does not have the last word. The message of Easter is that we can trust God to bring us through all our difficulties and every threat - including death. There is a way forward. We have a better future.

It's a New Start

Any visitors to the Good Shepherd in recent months will have noticed plenty of graft and hard work going on in the corner of the car park, thanks to a new garden project being cultivated by staff and volunteers.

And the man at the forefront of the project is Kenton, who after a history of substance abuse and minor offending, has now found a new focus and a desire to 'give something back'.

Kenton is part of the Good Shepherd's New Start project which works with adult offenders with a history of homelessness and rough sleeping, prioritising those with multiple disadvantages.

The project provides a wraparound service designed to break the cycle of prison and street homelessness tailored to the individual's needs with support in areas like housing, benefits, budgeting and life skills, external appointments, accessing groups and volunteering opportunities and engaging in meaningful activities.

This includes the current garden project which has seen Kenton lead on the renovation of a piece of disused land on the Good Shepherd's car park to transform the area into a safe garden space with raised beds, planters and a bug hotel.

"Being part of the New Start project hasn't just kept me off the drugs, it has stopped me from re-offending," says Kenton. "The garden project has given me something that I can get my teeth into, something to focus on where my skills are needed. In

the beginning this was a 7ft nettle jungle, with a 2ft mound of rubbish underneath, and I dug it out, put membrane down, gravel and built our own planters.

There has been plenty of community backing for the project, including help with the initial clearance from volunteer Mark Calver-Wilkes, a donation of bulbs from a supporter who saw details on social media, discounts on items from Wood Saints and an incredible gift of two tonnes of decorative stones from Carvers Building Supplies.

Neil Booth, the New Start Project Keyworker, has set up the project at the Good Shepherd and has developed links with other organisations such as with Wolves Foundation for football sessions and support with mental health.

"Getting those on the scheme involved in different activities makes such a positive difference to them and the garden project is a perfect example of that," says Neil. "Kenton has put his heart and soul into the project and speaks passionately about the difference it has made to his life and his hopes for the future."

The Good Shepherd's art and photography class are also getting involved in the garden project with support from local artist Chris Manley and local grower and eco-activist, Kate Gilbert. "It is going to be part of the artshow and will be something beautiful," adds Kenton. "I've worked hard on it but it's my way of giving back to the Good Shepherd for all their help, friendship and support."



British Art Show

Living with and giving voice to difference through art

Many people will already be familiar with the success of our art groups that have been running for over four years now. We have been incredibly fortunate with our volunteers, Chris Manley, Anna Smith and Leanne Hayes who have helped us to curate multi-disciplinary art exhibitions across multiple venues. Our biggest coup was being chosen last year as an ambassador for British Art Show 9 (BAS9), the largest touring contemporary art show in the UK. The British Art Show champions diversity and inclusion, and most significantly the theme for Wolverhampton is 'how we live with and give voice to difference.'

The Good Shepherd has always sought to create platforms for people to have a voice and be seen and valued. We understand the emotional landscape of those affected by homelessness, addiction, and mental health issues. Typically, their circumstances have placed them on the margins of society where people are stigmatised and feel unseen and unheard. Challenging this narrative and creating opportunities for their stories to be told without filters or edits, straight from the horse's mouth so to speak has been incredibly rewarding.

Our first workshop as part of BAS9 was a portrait workshop at the art gallery, and our service users were drawn and painted by local artists. The work produced was

sublime and the atmosphere reflective and kind. Here the sitters were centre stage, but they weren't passive. There was a relationship and unspoken dialogue between the artists and the sitters that surprised and moved us all. People who had experienced real hardship and often abuse were now being treated like royalty with their own portrait artist at the art gallery. It was a moving experience for us all and these portraits will be on display in our upcoming exhibition #itstartswithameal as part of BAS9.

The exhibition has been a labour of love for us all, staff, volunteers, and service users. We have all worked together behind the scenes, recording audio, attending workshops at the University, prepping the exhibition spaces, sharing our stories together through art, photography, poetry and performance. All of this wouldn't have been possible without the support of the School of Art and Design who have made us so welcome as part of the British Art Show, and Wolverhampton Art Gallery. Creative Black Country have supported us with a grant that has enabled us to be our most ambitious yet in terms of a large scale multi-disciplinary exhibition, and funded workshops that meant we could work with families and children accessing our services too.

So with great anticipation and perhaps a little bit of trepidation we are inviting

Image: 'Mara' by Tina Willis Jones

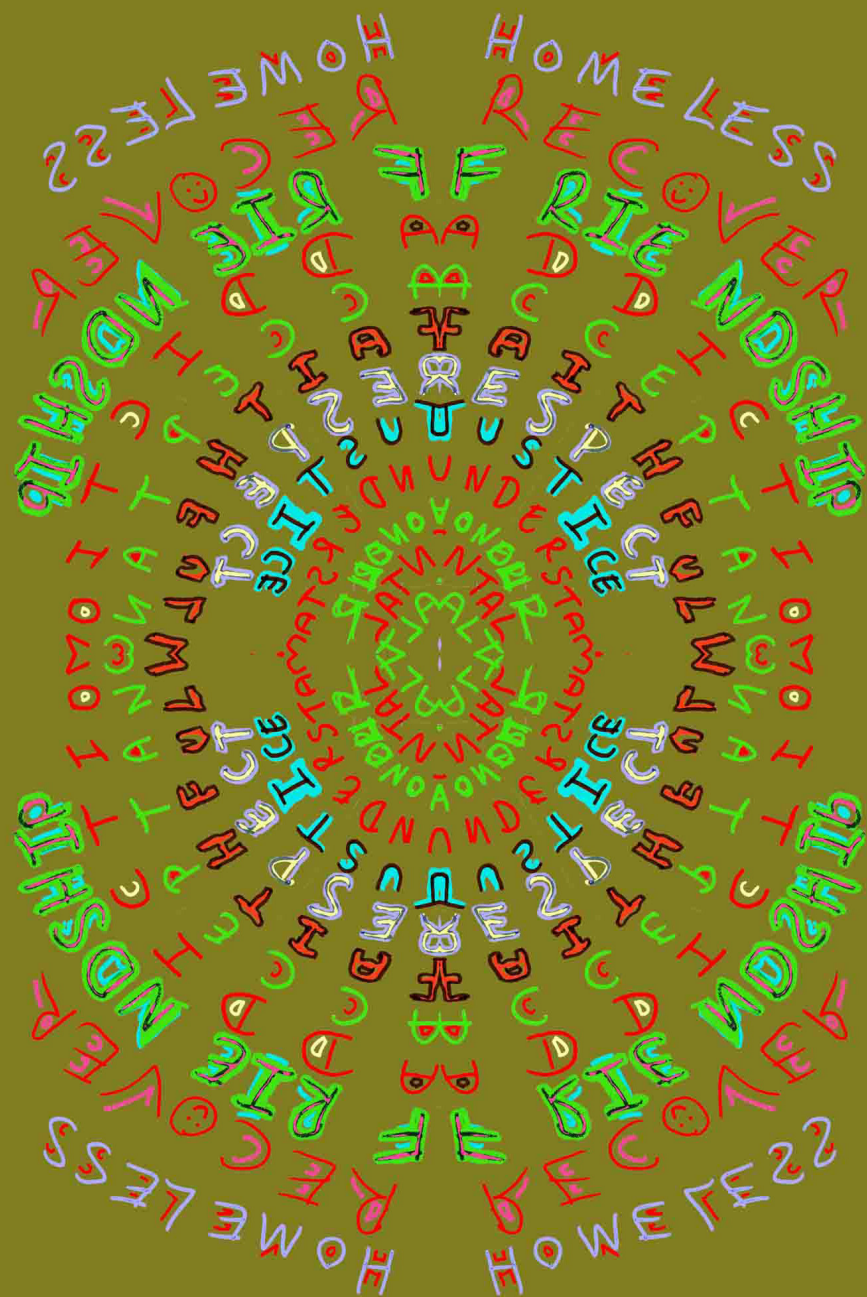


Image: Matt Waterhouse (BAS9 workshop)

LEAP Lived Experience into Action Project

The Good Shepherd are running a new project which will offer people with experience of homelessness the opportunity to volunteer and provide support to others going through similar challenges. LEAP will see volunteers follow a bespoke programme of support to help service users at the Good Shepherd, and take advantage of training opportunities to develop their own skills.

LEAP, an initial five-year project funded by the Oak Foundation, will offer training and volunteer placements for people with lived experience of homelessness, addiction, mental health, or other related issues to become 'peer navigator.' Peer navigators can provide support for people to maintain their properties and reintegrate with the community.

Heading up the project is Chris Cole, who has lived experience himself of some of the issues which Good Shepherd service users are facing. Chris knows the value of channelling personal experiences into helping others. "LEAP is an exciting project where we aim to build up a team of volunteers to support our service users at the Good Shepherd and inspire them to make change," says Chris. "Engaging on an empathic level will help them to open up and that lived experience is vital. Our peer navigators will be able to say to service users that: 'I have been in similar situations, I managed to overcome my struggles, and I am here to help you achieve your goals.'

"A lot of people are ready to make that change to become a volunteer - they are receiving support from many different services and making improvements regarding accommodation and getting structure back into their lives. The next step is what they decide to do next, and that is where this programme can come into play."

Peer navigators will work as part of the LEAP team preventing homelessness by helping with housing applications, debt and benefits support, home visits, access to drug and alcohol treatment, forums and group work, and getting involved in local and national events. At the same time, they can complete a health and social care Level 3 diploma, a level 3 IAG qualification and other role-related training.

Chris has worked with Good Shepherd staff to create the new programme and training, basing the plans around his own experiences. He adds: "I have my own experiences of homelessness and addiction and worked my way up from a service user with drug and alcohol problems to a peer mentor, trainer, qualified drug and alcohol worker and then managing projects - it can be done! Throughout my journey, however bad it got, there were always people who gave me a chance, and I always wanted to get into this position to be able to give other people a chance in the same way."

50 miles and more for 50 years of Good

Half a century on from the Little Brothers of the Good Shepherd first arriving in Wolverhampton, Good Shepherd CEO, Tom Hayden and Housing First worker, Paul Burns are teaming up for a 50-mile fundraising challenge to mark the charity's Golden Anniversary - which will be topped off at the end by climbing Snowdon! The intrepid duo will be walking from Wrexham to Snowdonia from May 17-19, followed by taking on the 3,560 feet of Wales' highest mountain the following day. Their aim is to raise £1,250 to support the charity's Family Food Pantry, a figure which is enough to feed 50 families for one week or one family for 50 weeks.

"The family food pantry has become such an important part of our service, and last week alone we supported almost 100 families," says Tom. "Just looking at some recent statistics, West Midlands has the highest rate of fuel poverty in England and Wolverhampton is among the worst seven areas of the country when it comes to living in fuel poverty. Over 20 per cent of the city's residents are living in fuel poverty and that is even before the cost-of-living increases have really kicked in. Behind every single one of those statistics is a household - it's a family struggling, mum and dad doing their best to keep their heads above water, children not being fed properly.

"As a parent myself I can't begin to imagine how it feels having to look at your children and know you haven't got

enough food for them. With our Family Food pantry we are able, with the help of the community, to provide children with the opportunity to enjoy healthy, balanced meals with fresh ingredients along with the odd treat from time to time!"

Paul is determined to hit their target adding, "When I first came over to this country from Ireland, my family struggled financially. If the Good Shepherd had the family pantry then, my mum would definitely have been in that queue. The motivation for both of us with this fundraising is to help families in this position. The Food Pantry has been a great addition to the Good Shepherd because it is like a little shop where they can come and pick their own food rather than be handed a parcel. It is a community for the families and it's so important to ensure that they are able to get a weekly supply of healthy food."

For Paul, who works with people who

have experienced homelessness and related complex issues, walking has become part of his daily routine. "I think walking is so therapeutic and provides a completely different experience to being in an office and sitting there talking to someone," he explains. "When I walk with our service users who are going through difficult times, I find they tend to open up more and it gives us a real opportunity to be able to discover what they need and provide the relevant support."

The walk is one of several events taking place during the 50th anniversary year, both to raise funds to ensure the Good Shepherd can continue to deliver its services, and awareness of the range of support the charity provides.

Tom is looking forward to the fundraising trek. "There will be many different motivations pushing us on during the challenge

but certainly right up there amongst them will be celebrating 50 years of the continuing legacy of the Brothers since they first arrived in Wolverhampton in 1972. When you look at everything they have achieved in helping people it's extraordinary - and we are delighted to have Brother William, Brother Stephen and Brother Charles still heavily involved with the Good Shepherd. Taking on a challenge like this is an honour in terms of continuing to carry the torch and push it forward into the future."



Image: Stuart Manley



50 years of Good has been brought to you by the Brothers, staff, volunteers, and service users of **The Good Shepherd**. We wanted to let you know how **our values of hospitality, compassion, truth, respect, and justice** are shaping the work that we do at the heart of the city. **We appreciate all the support that the people of Wolverhampton have shown us over the years and to this current day. Please do follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram** for all updates and information on our fundraising efforts.

We can't do what we do without you.

#itstartswithameal

Good Shepherd

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