

GOSPEL STANDARD BETHESDA FUND

Registered Charity 1199341

Position Statement: Harpenden Bethesda Home Closure Process

The trustees felt it would be helpful to inform supporters and other interested parties about what has been involved in the Harpenden Bethesda Home closure process, the progress being made and the implications this has had on the operation of Bethesda.

As you may know, the operational closure date for the Harpenden Home has been set as 26th September 2025 and much planning has already gone into ensuring that the Home is closed by this date.

Closure of a care home under any circumstances is an involved process to manage, particularly when making a number of resident transfers between locations. This includes balancing the needs, expectations, constraints, and potential risks to each individual and to each home. Preparing for the move of each resident is time-consuming: requiring the assembly and implementation of a safe and robust personalised transfer plan. This includes linking together all the different people and external agencies involved, some of whom are outside Bethesda's control and amending relevant contracts.

As the closure programme progresses, the team at Brighton Bethesda Home will become more and more involved in the preparation for making a number of admissions over a relatively short period of time. This will be on top of continuing to manage the care needs of the existing residents, some of whom have complex care needs.

Outside of the internal transfer process is the external transfer of those who may have chosen other care options will also require much consultation, planning and liaising with the receiving care provider.

Within the operation of any care home, it is easy to overlook how much time and work is required to admit a new resident, whether for short stay or long-term admission. Central to this is a need to put in place a comprehensive plan that meets both regulatory requirements and more importantly is sufficiently detailed to ensure the physical, well-being and spiritual needs of the resident have been identified together with providing details of their likes and dislikes. This, in turn, allows managers and staff to ensure the resident's needs are met, a rapport is developed and the resident feels at home in their surroundings. In addition, there is time involved in arranging GPs, setting up the room and allocating staff and many other tasks.

We are thankful for the continued loyalty of staff who are continuing to support the work of Bethesda in the closure process, despite many of them seeking other employment whilst doing so. The pathway staff are passing through should not be forgotten and Bethesda's management are doing all they can to support them in this process. Neither should we forget the pathway the General Manager and Home management teams are walking through and their burden for the residents and staff.

Bethesda is very aware of the need to steward its capacity and capabilities during this difficult time. This factor, along with the need to maintain a feeling of community within the Home, has meant that, most if not all our residents may well have moved out of the Harpenden Home to their new care setting sooner than 26th September. This is partly due to the need to phase the transfers between Harpenden and Brighton and prudently allow a contingency time.

Respite care

Although it has been the desire of Bethesda to offer respite care during the closure period at Harpenden; sadly, this has proved not to be possible. Arrangements are nevertheless in place for respite care at the Brighton Home until the end of July.

During August the majority of transfers, if the Lord will, will take place, such that respite care during this month will not be offered, but it is envisaged that opportunities for respite care will resume in September.

We trust that supporters and families of those concerned will understand the many matters to be addressed and bear with us whilst we continue to work through the closure process. It is our desire to provide a dwelling place for those currently in our care for their remaining days.

Please pray and commit into the Lord's keeping the residents, their powers of attorney, the staff, Home Management teams and the General Manager in this trying and unknown way.

GSBF Trustees
17th June 2025