

GOSPEL STANDARD BETHESDA FUND

Registered Charity 209376

Bethesda COVID-19 Update Saturday, 11 April 2020

We have included in this Update information on the COVID-19 situation within the Bethesda Homes and other items that may be of interest.

COVID-19

We are thankful that currently both the Brighton and Studley Homes are continuing to operate as usual, both residents and staff appear to be free from the virus symptoms at present.

At Harpenden, there are six residents who are experiencing or have experienced the symptoms of COVID-19. Of the original three who were confirmed to have COVID-19: one will be through their period of self-isolation tomorrow and is keen to come out of their room! One of the other two is continuing to make progress and the others are not progressing so well but their symptoms are under control and being cared for accordingly. Of the three new cases, two have symptoms associated with the virus and the other has been confirmed. They are at varying stages related to the condition; none have the associated cough and their temperatures are being controlled as part of their 'care package'.

There are also two residents, who do not have any apparent COVID-19 associated symptoms but are showing signs of old-age through tiredness and weariness.

Staffing continues to be a challenge at Harpenden. However, in the Lord's mercy, provision has been made and we trust there has been a proving of the experience expressed in the hymn "Be still, my heart!, these anxious cares" in the verse:

"Brought safely by his hand thus far,
Why dost thou now give place to fear?
How canst thou want if he provide,
Or lose thy way with such a guide?"

It would be remiss not to acknowledge the Lord's good hand in watching over the Homes (especially as there have been serious outbreaks in care homes in the areas where the Harpenden and Brighton Homes are located) and answering the prayers that have gone up for the residents and staff. We would also recognise the dedication and love shown by the managers and staff in caring for the residents. We know that this is appreciated by the residents' loved ones and those who have Bethesda in their thoughts and prayers.

We are also thankful for the merciful provision in the Homes of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) - especially when we hear of the situation in other places; and we would also acknowledge the Lord's hand in providing the warmer weather and sunshine and the effect of this on the residents and staff.

Help still needed

Debbie (Scott) would be very pleased to hear from anyone with experience of caring who can help at Harpenden and assist through the staffing challenges, God willing, in the forthcoming weeks.

In addition, we are keen to build a 'bank' of staff to call on if there is a change of situation in either the Brighton or Studley Homes.

Also 'pairs of hands' are still needed to help with 'household' duties.

We would thank those who have come forward to help and do pray the Lord will guide others to come and help Bethesda at this time.

Anyone volunteering to help at Bethesda, aged between 16 and 69 years, will be given a full induction to the role that they will be undertaking. We do appreciate there are those over 70 years of age who are willing to help and we look forward, once the current restrictions are relaxed, to welcome you back into the Homes but at the current time this would not be prudent.

In the first instance contact the local Home Manager:

Brighton Home: Miss Sarah Williamson (01273 735735, sarahwilliamson@gSBF.uk)
Harpenden Home: Mrs Debbie Scott (01582 761359, debbiescott@gSBF.uk)
Studley Home: Mrs Sammy O'Dwyer (01249 816666, sammyodwyer@gSBF.uk)

Alternatively, Adrian Topping, General Manager (adriantopping@gSBF.uk or 07525067708 (m)).

Morning and evening readings

We would reiterate our thanks to those who have helped externally (digitally) and internally with the morning and evening readings at the Homes, as this is an important part of the ethos of Bethesda.

To allow us to manage the overlap between the reading times at the Studley and Brighton Homes, we have installed another 'mixlr' facility so that we have one for Studley and another for Brighton - these are clearly labelled on the website:

<https://www.gospelstandard.org.uk/Bethesda/Morning-Worship-Livestream>

It has been encouraging to see the number of people listening to the morning readings, in addition to the residents in the Homes, and we do pray that the readings have been a help to them.

At both Brighton and Studley, the afternoon readings are taken in-house and we do pray the Lord will help those of the residents and staff (Brighton) who undertake this for us.

If you know anyone who might be interested in listening into the morning readings, then do pass the website details to them.

Staying in touch

For the duration of the COVID-19 outbreak, we will endeavour to remain in regular contact with those on this email list. Consequently, please can you forward this email to any of your contacts who may be interested in the contents of this document or may be able to help us. If anyone wishes to be added to the emailing list then please contact Adrian Topping (adriantopping@gSBF.uk)

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If you are able to print this Update, please pass it onto someone who does not have access to the Internet. This would be appreciated as it will help keep them in touch with what we are trying to do.

Finally

We would also acknowledge, once more, the Lord's goodness and mercy in answering many prayers enabling the Homes to continue operating in these trying times and that He might put his protecting hand over the residents, managers and staff. Your continued prayerful interest and messages of support to those, residing or working, in the Homes is much appreciated and valued.

We would encourage you to continue to pray for Bethesda that the Lord would hear those cries for help in time of need and grant wisdom in those decisions that have to be made both now and in that way before us.

On behalf of the Bethesda trustees

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Ridout". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line that serves as a separator.

M Ridout
Chairman GSBF