

changing lives

Annual review 2008



“ When I had nowhere else to go it's been a help. The food has saved me and the staff are very helpful and friendly. ”

Visitor to Bridge drop-in

Who we are

Jesus Centres are set up and run by the Jesus Army Charitable Trust. JACT is a registered charity (no. 1091912) and a Faithworks Affiliate. JACT is an initiative of the Jesus Fellowship Church (Jesus Army), which is a member of the Evangelical Alliance.

Mission statement

“Expressing the love of Jesus daily in worship, friendship and help for every kind of person.”

This report tells of how we have achieved our charitable aims in 2008.

More detail on our aims is available at www.charity-commission.gov.uk/registeredcharities/ (search for 'Jesus Army Charitable Trust').

AIM 1

MEETING NEED

To give material and personal support

AIM 2

BUILDING CAPACITY

To help people make real progress in their lives

AIM 3

PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY

To recommend the Christian faith, hold Jesus Fellowship events and run spiritual services

AIM 4

DEVELOPING SOCIAL SKILLS

To foster friendship, and provide recreational and community facilities

AIM 5

BEING AN EFFECTIVE CHARITY

To work well, and constructively with other agencies and develop volunteers

A message from the chair



Many activities raced ahead of expectations last year. We borrowed a new word - hectivity! Space for donated bicycles from our new Re-Cycle initiative competed

with food parcels for visitors let down by the benefits system. So our volunteers and visitors together built two storage shelters - funded from donations. The following statistics show the increase in activity in the centre over the last year:

- Active volunteers went up by 18, including 11 who first came as visitors
- We received 250 donations, compared with under 200 in 2007

- Lettings went up by a third, when we thought they'd reached the limit
- 16 visitors joined the Church through baptism
- The total number of tenants placed through our Bond Scheme passed 100.

Have we maintained our special atmosphere and heart? We think so, as these quotes demonstrate:

"My son become more sharing, talkative, learnt some good manners."

Mother from Little Ark Mums & Tots.

"My relationship with God is growing; I've made loads of friends."

Visitor who has become a volunteer.

We also have plans to improve further. We feel our Caf e's got overlooked in our services. Now we're talking to architects about a new extension. We'd like to coax in a wider section of local folks to enjoy our updated menu.

The UK's present financial challenges mean the possible loss of income, just when our vulnerable visitors will need us even more. So a big thank you to the many donors who have helped us - often again and again.

Ian Callard, Chairman

“ I was homeless and a raving drug addict. I’ve now got place and I’m ten times better. I was shown faith and given support. ”

Bond Scheme service user

Aim 1

MEETING NEED

To give material and personal support



Pete’s changed

Pete Montgomery was one of the first people to visit the Bridge drop-in when it opened in 2002. Six years later he was baptised and then became a volunteer, working in the kitchen and drop-in.

He said: “After my marriage finished in 2001 I lived in hostels and my drinking got a lot worse. When I came to The Bridge I relaxed and enjoyed it. I finally stopped drinking after a medical crisis; I didn’t want my two daughters to grow up remembering me like that. I knew I had to break away from the wrong people and I wanted to be around the church and good friends - it’s what life is all about. Now I am much happier and more confident and I enjoy joining in.”



Ann Hawker makes a friend in the Bridge drop-in, Sylvia Tomascyk

Bridge over troubled water



The Bridge drop-in

The Bridge has been a haven for thousands since 2002. Over half of our visitors have no home of their own and their needs include mental health issues, addictions, family breakdown or failed asylum claims. We meet basic needs including food and hot drinks, free clothing, shower and hygiene facilities. In a typical week we have 350 visits. We also give food parcels to those in need - we provided up to 70 a week in 2008.

The key to the Bridge is friendship. People feel safe and at home, and they can start to make progress with our help.

The Bridge Bond Scheme and Support Workers

The bond scheme enables people to get into rented accommodation. It started in October 2005 and three years on had got 110 people into flats or bed-sits. We work with the Housing Benefit department and local landlords and we give ongoing tenancy support. The rate of tenancy stability is high.

Gwen Harrison, 32, is just one of the people we have helped to date. She said: "I heard about the Jesus Centre when I was homeless and on drugs five years ago. I went to the Bridge drop-in and

was told about the bond scheme. Val is my Support Worker and she got me into a two-bedroom flat. That meant I got my son Connor back. I was there for two years and then Val got me another flat and I then got my daughter Charlie back too. Now Val has moved us to a three-bedroom house and it's great. She has helped so much. I've been clean from heroin for three years and I'm getting married next year. Thank you."

The Bridge Bond Scheme and Support Workers are partly funded by the government's Supporting People funding stream, and the city council also gives some financial support.

“ My life has changed completely,
I now work there as a volunteer. ”
Bridge drop-in visitor

Aim 2

BUILDING CAPACITY

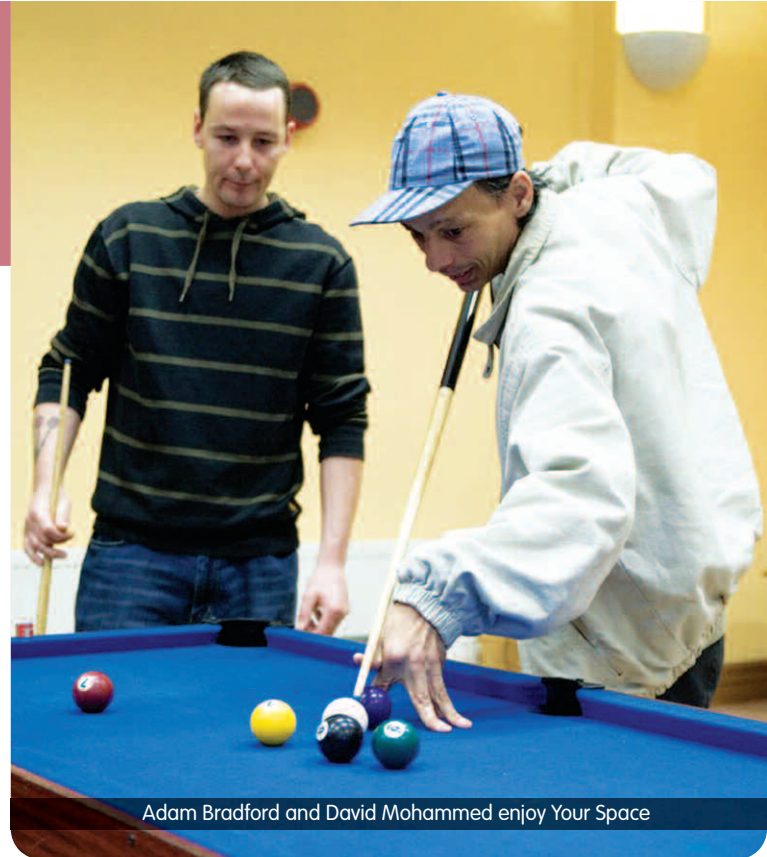
To help people make real progress in their lives



Alex in action

Alex has been very deaf since childhood. He is a trained volunteer at the Jesus Centre, working in the kitchen.

He said: “I am doing a catering course at college, so the work isn’t difficult. It’s been good to make lots of friends at the centre. My disability has isolated me for years but I feel accepted here.”



Adam Bradford and David Mohammed enjoy Your Space



Your Future

Anyone's future depends on what skills they have. Your Future courses provide training in bite-sized pieces. Each course is a 'starter' of a few weeks. They run on Friday mornings and are free and relaxed, and certificates are given for participation. Courses run in 2008 included:

- Conservation work at Ryton Pools
- Bicycle repair
- Bike rides
- Making Choices confidence building (adult education tutor)
- Healthy walks

- Music appreciation
- Healthy cookery.

More capacity building

Other activities run by the centre in 2008 included:

- IT For Starters - to help anyone to use a computer from scratch
- Re-Cycle bicycle repair - to train people, recycle bikes and generate revenue
- Mental Health Awareness training
- Choral singing evenings
- Creative Art evenings, art in Your Space, and Your Art painting and drawing group

- Talk English conversation for non-English speakers.

Visitor to volunteer

One of the best ways that people can gain new skills and confidence is by becoming a trained volunteer. It often starts with a visitor wanting to help out as a way to give something back and make good use of their time. The next stage is to be taken through the volunteer induction process, including interview, training videos and orientation. It is very encouraging to see those who came in need of help becoming able to help others.

“ The Church has taught me loyalty,
faith, friendship and love. ”

Visitor, now a volunteer

Aim 3

PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY

To recommend the Christian faith, hold Jesus Fellowship events and run spiritual services



Carrie-Ann becomes a Christian

“I used to believe there is something out there but I didn't know what. I came to the Jesus Centre and Your Life and I was introduced to God and helped to understand about him.

“It felt like home and I believe God brought me here. People helped me with friendliness, acceptance and by listening to me and being there for me when I was at my worst. I was invited to church and someone prayed for me and I felt the presence of God. You've helped me through a lot of hard times.”



Dorothy McConnichie and Gina Bunyan at the volunteers evening



The Jesus Centre

Francis of Assisi is reported to have said: "Preach the gospel at all times, if necessary using words". Our aim is to have Jesus at the centre of everything here. Anyone is welcome, regardless of creed, but we aim to demonstrate something of what Jesus is like by the way we treat people. Actions speak.

There are services that specifically promote the Christian faith, such as Your Life lunchtime fellowship or Solid Rock Café, our Sunday night church event. Some services include a Christian approach, such as Habit Breaker which

tackles addictions with faith, and Live at the Well which is mostly gospel-driven. Other services provided have no Christian content but take place in the atmosphere of the centre.

Spirituality is a vital part of most peoples' lives. When they use our services, they have the chance to find spiritual support as well. Some choose Christian commitment, so we baptised over 16 visitors in 2008. Others find new moral strength or a vision for their lives.

Your Life was a real success in 2008. Simon or Tony led it on Tuesday lunchtimes, and it included watching

a video, prayer for healing, and free pizza! It has a spiritual atmosphere and warmth that brings people back for more, and new faces often come too.

One of our recent visitors said: "I am glad and grateful for the centre and I've reintroduced myself back into society. As an ex-nurse, I have tremendous respect for what you do to help people, a bit like St Francis of Assisi. I personally have a long way to go but I feel hopeful! Even though I have only been coming for two weeks I have met a lot of genuine people whom I hope will be my new friends."

“ The staff members are very co-operative, I like their attitudes, behaviours - I would like to continue to come here. ”

Visitor to Little Ark's Mums & Tots

Aim 4

DEVELOPING SOCIAL SKILLS

To foster friendship, and provide recreational and community facilities

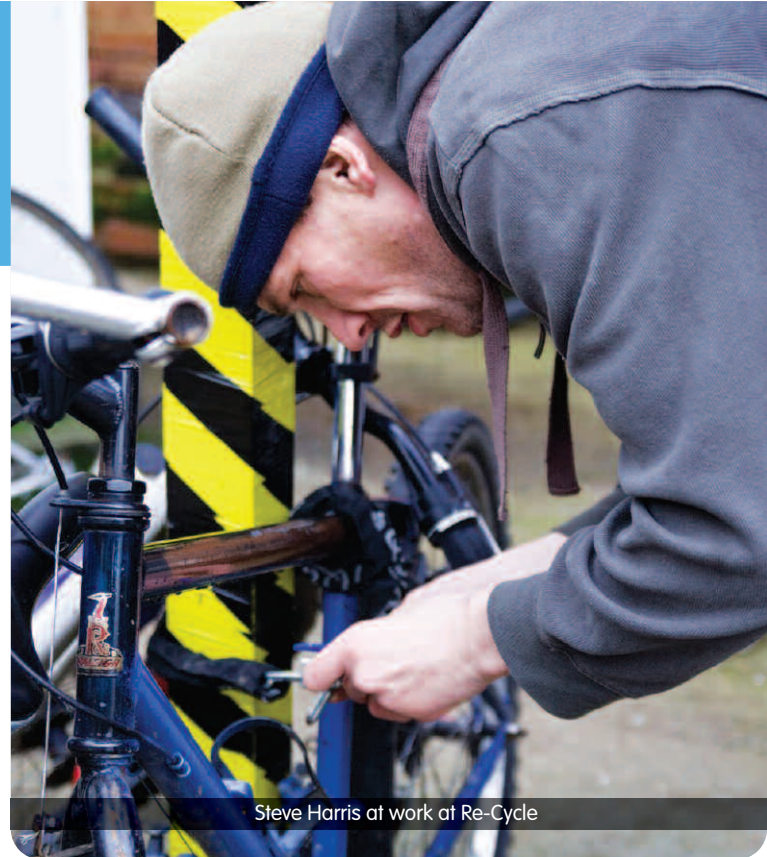


Keith gets things moving

Keith Harvey, volunteer and bicycle enthusiast leads Re-Cycle.

He said: “Bikes are donated to us and we repair them. We sell them to people who need them, such as a centre visitor who needs to get to a job. After the costs of repair are covered we make some money that goes towards the work of the centre too.

“The best part is having people come along and help. That builds their confidence and brings them out of themselves. People can also bring their bikes in for repair and all we charge for is parts. They can make a donation on top if they want. The scheme seems to be a winner and ticks all the right boxes.”



Steve Harris at work at Re-Cycle

Developing social skills



Joining in

For many people the next step towards productive lives is having something positive to do. Constructive activity and the chance to make friends are key aspects of services like Your Space, Your Move, Re-Cycle, and Little Ark Mums & Tots groups.

Your Space is an activity zone which attracts many people to its friendly atmosphere. It has proved so popular on Wednesdays that a second session has been added on Fridays and numbers have reached 40 a session. Activities include board games, table tennis, pool,

artwork, computer access, one-to-one support where required and free snacks and drinks. Dan, a regular visitor, said: "Your Space is an excellent place for people to talk and meet. It seems people come for support and advice, as well as to enjoy the activities on offer."

Your Move and Your Time alternate on Thursdays. They include outings, gardening and spiritual exploration. Led by young volunteers like Daryl and Dave, they are quite experimental and vibrant.

Mums & Tots

Little Ark Mums & Tots group is held on Friday mornings and attracts a lot of

mums. A recent visitor said: "I am helped very much by this centre because my child learns so much about sharing and playing with other children."

Support groups

Support groups run at the centre during 2008 included Your Hope, which deals with coping with depression and anxiety, Habit Breaker, which tackles addictions spiritually and Survivors - a support group for those bereaved by suicide. The groups give people the opportunity to share in a safe supportive environment.

“ You are doing a fantastic job in the community and we are proud of you. ”
Pastor Eniwaju Etomi (Redeemed Church of God)

Aim 5A

BEING AN EFFECTIVE CHARITY

To work well, and constructively with other agencies



Kieran reaches new clients

Community Alcohol Service (CAS) worker Kieran McInerney said: “It has been particularly useful in allowing me to meet with clients who might not attend appointments at CAS. It helps deliver a service to hard to reach clients.

“Joint working has helped deliver results and volunteers and staff have been supportive and helpful.

“In June we undertook Alcohol Awareness Training for Jesus Centre staff and volunteers.

“Having Margot and Joe from the Anchor Centre attend is also helpful. For example, I have seen a client who has reported health problems, and I have been able to pass the client over to Margot for medical advice.”



Nigel Gallagher behind the cafe counter

Partnership works



Outreach workers

A number of agencies run services at the centre to complement what we do. We aim to help people that are hard to reach and help agencies to do the same. Agencies that visited in 2008 included:

- The Anchor medical team
- The Community Alcohol Service
- Local Jobs employment and training agency
- The Oral Health Team
- The Council's Health Development Unit
- HDU Smoking Cessation clinic
- Cyrenians accommodation outreach team

- Discretionary Housing Payment advisor
- MIND
- Podiatry service.

We also work closely with landlords' agents and meet with clients together.

Money

It costs about £200,000 per year to run the centre.

This is raised from hire of rooms, sale of breakfast vouchers, the café, our own church giving, Supporting People funding, trust grants and business and public gifts.

By using this money effectively we have achieved the following in the past year:

- 29 new bond scheme tenancies
- 20 active services maintained
- 40 food parcels issued per week
- 350 Bridge drop-in visits on average, including 10 new people and nine outcomes (counts of significant progress made), per week
- 150 visits and 25 outcomes per week for all other services
- Plus many lives have been changed.

We also have 60 volunteers, 11 staff and a wide impact on many people beyond the centre.

“ I have increased in confidence at leading afternoon activities and feel more able to make friends and deal with people. ”
Visitor, now a volunteer

Aim 5B

BEING AN EFFECTIVE CHARITY

To work well and develop volunteers



Dorothy gets a new view

Dorothy McConnachie is a volunteer at the centre. She said: “I have really enjoyed being part of the team at the Bridge and working with Tony at Your Space.

“I have found you all a real encouragement and at times I have been challenged in my thinking to embrace new ideas. God has challenged me on my heart attitude toward the marginalised and how to walk with people at different stages in their journeys.

“Thanks for giving me an opportunity to share in your vision.”



Piers Young, Centre Manager on reception

Benefiting volunteers



Staff and volunteers

We have the equivalent of almost eight full time staff including managers, a fundraiser, catering supervisor, support workers, administrators and a maintenance man. Tony Schelts, support worker, said: "The job has awoken my spiritual life - I'm now aware of issues and get inspired more easily."

We also have more than 60 active volunteers and have trained 34 visitors to become volunteers since we opened (12 were active at the time of publication). Gill is our volunteer coordinator and looks after our people to make sure they get the support and training they need. They

include committee members, marketing helpers, IT support, cleaners, drop-in teams and support partners.

We hold annual training days - this year's was attended by 54 people (including some from Birmingham where a new centre is being planned). We also held a volunteers' event in March, with food, videos, prayer, and games as a way to say thank you.

Our supporters

Local supporters are a lifeline for us. Schools have given us tins and dried foods for making up food parcels from harvest festival collections, clothing donations come in daily from the public

and more than 100 bibles were donated after an appeal to churches.

We keep our supporters informed with our quarterly newsletter and eBulletin and also invite donors to coffee mornings to see the work of the centre in action.

Going green

By turning off equipment overnight, tweaking the thermostat down and recycling (paper, cooking oil, clothing, printer cartridges just to name a few), we work hard to make sure the centre is kind to the environment. Being green also helps us to save costs - for example ten of our eleven staff work within two miles of the centre saving the cost of travelling and fuel.

Thank you

We gratefully acknowledge the following donors of goods or money to the Jesus Centre:

- Alderminster Quality Meats
- Alderman's Green Primary School
- All Saints Church, Allesley
- AXA Equity & Law
- Bablake school
- Bilton Evangelical Church
- Blakemore Foundation
- Cannon Park Primary School
- Cheshunt School
- Christian Funds International
- Christian Initiative Trust
- Clifford Bridge Community Association
- Community Dental Team
- Coventry Cathedral Knitting Group
- Coventry City Mission
- Coventry City Council & Supporting People
- Dhaliwal fruit and veg store
- Earlsdon Primary School
- Ecover
- Elco Uk Ltd
- FareShare
- Foleshill C of E School
- Green Lane Town's Women's Guild
- Health Development Unit
- Hillfields Christian Fellowship
- Holyhead Road United Reformed Church
- Housing Benefit Office staff
- Jubilee Church
- Keresley United Reformed Church
- Knights Meadow Church
- Limbrick Wood Baptist Church
- Liz and Terry Bramhall Charitable Trust
- Marks & Spencer
- Matthews Wrightson Charity Trust
- Moseley Primary School
- New Horizons Church
- NP Aerospace Ltd
- Park House Charitable Trust
- Potters Green United Reformed Church
- Redeemed Christian Church of God Holy Ghost Zone
- Sacred Heart Catholic School
- Seedfield Trust
- St Columba's United Reformed Church
- St. Laurence's Church
- St Michael's Committee
- Stivichall Primary School
- Subway
- Templars Primary School
- Walsgrave Baptist Church
- Willenhall Community Primary School
- The Coufts Charitable Trust
- Westwood Church
- Wyken United Reformed Church
- Many other private donors.



Opening Hours

Monday - 10am to 1pm
Tuesday - 9am to 4pm
Wednesday - 9am to 4pm
Thursday - 9am to 4pm
Friday - 9am to 4pm
Saturday - 9am to 12noon
Sunday - 9am to 10.30am

Where we are

Lamb Street is a one-way street off Bishop Street (turn off the ringway next to the canal basin) and leading to Upper Well Street near the Belgrade Theatre.

Venue for hire

We hire out rooms at the Jesus Centre as a social facility, and to raise revenue. Information about lettings is available on request, or on www.covjc.co.uk.

Heartcry appeal

Jesus Army Charitable Trust, Nether Heyford, Northampton, NN7 3LB
Tel: 0845 166 8174 • Fax: 0845 166 8178

Coventry Jesus Centre

7 Lamb Street, Coventry, CV1 4AE
Tel: 0845 166 8205 • Fax: 0845 166 8204
Email: info@coventryjesuscentre.org.uk