



Bringing Hope Through Jesus Christ

2021 IMPACT REPORT

the year in review



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Wesley Downs

2021 was another amazing year at Renewal North West! We discovered more of our amazing God who we love to serve here at Renewal. We discovered once again that he is always able to meet the needs that we encounter and we are reminded from Psalm 121 that our "help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth". We have an amazing team who I count it such an honour to lead. The things that they are achieving as they work together are breaking the targets set despite the difficulties that COVID brought. I love the family environment that we have and believe our Christian values outlined in this report are the reason behind this. We have some amazing customers and donors who are so supportive of the charity and it's aims. I have observed first hand the relationships that have been built up between our staff and customers/donors. They are often on first name terms, even with the occasional hug thrown in. Lonely people are warmly welcomed, hurting people often find comfort, unemployed people find work, sad people find joy and hopeless people find hope. This is community at its best and we love to see it because it brings glory and fame to our great God!

Transforming lives is a big claim for any charity to make. At Renewal North West it is

'Transforming Lives by Bringing Hope Through Jesus Christ'. He is the key to the transformation and we act as his servants in this process of Renewal of the mind and life. As you read through this report there are recent stories of transformation, but over the years we have seen these stories repeated as God is at work changing lives and renewing minds. At Renewal we have the privilege of seeing this happening year after year as the gospel is shared and we just say "to God be the glory great things he hath done!"

We have some big plans for 2022 but we know we have a big God! We would love to purchase another house to provide supported accommodation for guys leaving prison often homeless, penniless and sometimes with no families to go back to. We currently have space for 5 people but want to double this to 10. Please would you pray with us for this project that we will have the resources to carry it out. With more accommodation, we will need more jobs to occupy people and so we are planning to add another shop in a different location. Once again we would value your prayer and support as we make these plans and look to God to meet our needs. Thank you for taking the time to read this report, we hope it is a blessing to you!

OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES:

1. To help the long-term unemployed break down the barriers that keep them from working, such as a lack of education, skills and opportunity, addiction, criminal convictions and homelessness.
2. Offer affordable furniture and goods to the community that we serve.
3. The furtherance of the Christian faith.

OUR CHARITY VALUES

An organisation's values illustrate what they prioritise, they underpin the way that the charity makes decisions, or conducts its business.

At Renewal North West, we could think of no better values than the ones God has given us. These are to be:



But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians 5: 22-23



SCOTT'S STORY

From the day I was born, I have had a criminal element around me, let me explain how.

When my mum was pregnant with me, my father committed a capital crime and was sentenced to life in prison. My mum decided to forgive him for what he did and give the marriage another chance, but when my dad was eventually released, he never stayed faithful to my mum. We decided to leave and move closer to my mum's side of the family, and, after a little while, my mother remarried into a family that was widely feared in the community. As things progressed, a close friend of my stepfather's became the drug lord of the area. I was still only 10 years old, but quickly became enveloped into the circle of crime our family belonged to. With this sort of upbringing – seeing my biological father in prison all my life, having crime as a commonplace part of my upbringing – it's no wonder that I fell into it myself. As I was growing up, I was part of many criminal endeavours myself and started stealing, drink driving, selling and taking drugs, getting into fights and committing robberies. I found myself struggling with addiction pretty soon after.

I was out on a job one day, a fairly standard robbery, when things suddenly went very wrong. A man died because of me. I was arrested on murder and eventually charged with manslaughter, attempted robbery, and possession of a firearm.

At the time this incident occurred, I was still on licence from my previous conviction, so things didn't look good. I got remanded into prison for the manslaughter charge and genuinely thought my days were over. I was facing life in prison and was very much at the bottom of the pit. Emotionally and mentally, I was wrecked. I wanted to say sorry for everything that I had done wrong, over 40 years of fighting against everyone and everything. I felt as if I was in the wilderness and couldn't break away from the hurt, pain, anger, frustration, and resentment I had caused. All of it, 40 years' worth, going around and around inside my head.

I wondered how I might go about saying sorry for everything, what would that even look like? I pressed the bell in my prison cell and an officer came. I asked them if I could see the prison chaplain. That day, I explained everything to the chaplain and said that I wanted to say sorry for everything. I broke down crying. I sobbed and sobbed that day in a prison cell, and at the bottom of the pit, I gave my life to the Lord. My Saviour. His name is Jesus.

**"...AT THE BOTTOM OF THE
PIT, I GAVE MY LIFE TO THE
LORD. MY SAVIOUR. HIS NAME
IS JESUS."**

I was still on remand at this time, but I started to go to chapel on Sundays and I attended bible studies. Over a period of six months or so, I began to see a change in myself. The way I thought and spoke was different, as was the way I came across to others. My heart had changed. This is how I recognised that the Lord, my God, had started his work in me. He began to make me holy, set apart. I needed to tell everyone that Jesus had saved me. I was advised to keep praying, and reading, and worshipping the Lord. I remember praying one prayer over and over, "Lord, our heavenly Father, I'm sorry for everything that I have done wrong. I take full responsibility for my actions. Please, Lord, don't let the judge give me life in prison. I ask this in your name, Jesus. Amen."

I was approaching my trial and the barrister asked me to write a letter to the judge. The barrister said that he had no means to fight my corner. I was still on licence for GBH, supply of cocaine, possession of a firearm, among others. I was stuck and didn't quite know what to say but I eventually pieced together a letter and gave it to the barrister. After reading it, he said "One thing I'm going to say Scott, it's straight from here" - he pointed to his heart - "this letter has come from your heart." Except, it wasn't my heart, it was God's, it was Him living in me. God had changed my heart and my life, and I was a new creation. "The old has gone and new life has come" - 2 Corinthians 5:17.

"THE RENEWAL FAMILY HAVE BEEN SUCH A MASSIVE SUPPORT..."

I was sentenced to 12 years with a five-year extended licence after my release. Over a period of 40 years, I have had 57 criminal convictions on my record.

I spent roughly nine and a half years in prison, making a few mistakes along the way, but Jesus has told me that He will never leave me nor forsake me. He has never shut the door on me. In fact, He has been opening doors for me recently, one of which was Renewal North West in Stockport. I have been in contact with Renewal since 2018 and had met with them a few times before coming here. I was released from prison in February 2022 and have been with Renewal since. I believe it is part of God's plan for me to be here and share His love with other people. I've only been here for five weeks so far, but it's been a great experience. The Renewal family have been such a massive support for me, it's been so inspiring, and everyone is so loving and kind. We come from all different backgrounds, but we are one family under God. A family I am now part of as well. If you've not been, come and have a look around, try the coffee and cake - I recommend the rocky road - and feel the love that Renewal North West has for you.

Love and Blessing in Jesus,
Scott.



2021 STATISTICS

3

BAPTISMS AMONG
OUR STAFF AND
VOLUNTEERS

35

INDIVIDUALS
PROVIDED WITH
WORK EXPERIENCE
AND SKILLS
DEVELOPMENT TO
SUPPORT THEM BACK
INTO WORK

213

HOUSE AND OFFICE
CLEARANCES CARRIED
OUT

21

FORMERLY
UNEMPLOYED
INDIVIDUALS NOW
EMPLOYED THROUGH
RENEWAL NW

837

DELIVERIES INTO
THE COMMUNITY

450

METRIC TONS
SAVED FROM
LANDFILL

85,910

ITEMS OF LOW COST, HIGH-
QUALITY HOUSEHOLD
GOODS SOLD TO THE
COMMUNITY

2,363

ELECTRICAL ITEMS
REHOMED

3,634

ITEMS SOLD
THROUGH EBAY

979

FURNITURE
COLLECTIONS FROM
THE COMMUNITY

75,338

BRIC-A-BRAC AND
CLOTHING REHOMED

4,014

ITEMS OF FURNITURE
REHOMED

197

SESSIONS OF
BIBLE TIME

WHAT PEOPLE HAVE TO SAY ABOUT US:

“I have purchased so many articles there as everything is reasonably priced.”

I praise God daily for this wonderful family called Renewal.

“I’m never happier than when I’m at work. I can be myself which is something you don’t often accomplish in a retail setting.”

Wonderful as always and everyone is very helpful. Not only do I buy, but I often donate as well. Definitely my favourite shop!

Such an amazing company!! Truly a God send when I needed their help. Very thorough and careful, and an unbeatable level of care and service. I would definitely recommend to anyone who needs a hand. They were on time and very professional at every contact stage.

They couldn’t have been any nicer or more helpful. Please don’t consider anyone else, plus your items go to a good cause so it’s win win.

I found it really difficult to motivate myself before joining Renewal, it was so much easier to just stay in bed. I really value the friendships I’ve gained through being here, they have provided me with a lot of good guidance.

“I have worked at Renewal for nearly 12 years now and over all these years I have been truly blessed and helped so much by them. I came from prison and joined the programme in 2010 and I’ve learnt many, many new skills that I never would have used or done in my past.”

Renewal does community outreach really well, they’re great at helping people who need it the most.

It’s a real pleasure to shop here knowing you are contributing to Renewal’s Christian ethos and helping out those facing unemployment.

My coworkers are really encouraging and being part of the team here has shown me just how much I am capable of. My faith in God has been strengthened as a result and I am so happy to be part of this family.

“They treat you like part of the family at Renewal. They have really helped me to become more confident.”



ABED'S STORY

I've been working in the showroom at Renewal North West for a little over two years now, and an average day for me is quite varied. I am responsible for making sales, moving and pricing furniture, chatting with our customers, and taking donations from the public. At the same time as this, I have been working towards finishing my apprenticeship in Customer Service and finished this in October of 2021! I am now the proud owner of an NVQ Level 2 qualification. I was originally going to do my apprenticeship at Manchester University, but Renewal said that there was a chance I could do it with them. Although nothing was confirmed, I trusted God and decided to withdraw from my place at the university, later that same day, I got a call from Renewal to say that the apprenticeship with them was confirmed to start the following month! I have really enjoyed my apprenticeship and am so grateful to Renewal for setting this up for me.

Working at Renewal North West is really enjoyable, but it has also been a challenge at times. I tend to be quite an introverted person and being around people all the time isn't always something that comes naturally to me, but actually, the people here are the thing that make my job so good. It is a great blessing to work so closely with people that I can learn from, not only to improve my

customer service skills, but also to encourage me in my walk with God.

At Renewal North West, there are so many good examples of how living out the Word of God can change lives for the better. It's really inspiring to be surrounded by people like that, but it also makes me examine myself. Do I really love people in the way God wants me to? Do I really love God in the way He wants me to? Am I living fully for His glory? These questions are worth asking, but the answers aren't always easy. I am happy to be changed by the Holy Spirit, even if it's difficult, as I know that this will be done in love. Something I heard this year triggered the thought that God will sometimes use rough tools to shape us, but the hand that is using them is gentle. I have seen this in my own life and as I get to know God better, I am starting to truly understand how deep His love for me is. I am justified only by my faith in Him and my failings pale in comparison to the salvation that He gives through His grace.

**"...I AM HAPPY TO BE
CHANGED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT,
EVEN IF IT'S DIFFICULT, AS I
KNOW THAT THIS WILL BE
DONE IN LOVE..."**

I am currently living with Scott, who is part of the Renewal Living programme, we live just next door to work in accommodation that is owned by Renewal. I had wanted to move out of living with relatives before I knew about this house, but I found the prospect of it really daunting. I didn't have much knowledge about how to organise my finances, or how to deal with the responsibility of sharing a house. Thankfully, I was able to sit down with someone from Renewal who talked me through the whole process, it gave me a curiosity to want to learn how to do things more independently and I took the step to move out, it's been great living there! I now feel so grateful to my family for looking after me for all those years as I now have a much better understanding of all the things I took for granted before. God has provided so many good things for us in this house, especially during lockdown. There is one particular instance where I had to make some unexpected payments due to an emergency, I wasn't sure how I was going to cover these extra costs. At the same time, a friend of mine felt like God was prompting them to give me some money, they had no knowledge of the hardship I was facing, but were obedient to God and it was just enough to allow me to cover these expenses. It was incredible, and God continues to show His faithfulness to me in many different ways.

**"LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL
YOUR HEART AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL
AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH"**

DEUT 6:5

I also got baptised this year. The conversation came about through the Bible studies we do at Renewal on Sunday evenings. I initially dismissed the thought of being baptised myself as I had actually already done it when I was younger. However, at that time, I didn't understand what it meant to follow God properly, with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, as it states in scripture. Although I am nowhere near perfect and God is still working in me, I am committed to living my life for Him and following His plan for my life. I truly believe that God has led me to working at Renewal in Stockport and I'm really pleased to be a part of the team here, and I'm even more excited for where He is going to lead me next.



NOTABLE EVENTS

BAPTISMS

2021 started with the country in lockdown, so the year for us began more or less fully remote. We reopened the shop at Shaw Heath on the 12th of April and hit the ground running.

In June, we had the honour of baptising three members of our team, Abed, Shaun, and Chris. We hired a baptismal pool and put it up just outside the showroom and baptised the guys at our HQ in Shaw Heath. The turnout was great and it was such a blessing to praise God as a Renewal North West family together.



FESTIVE SHOP

To thank all of our most valued customers, we held our first ever late night, Christmas shopping event. We had mince pies, Christmas jumpers, and the launch of all of the Christmas stock that we had been saving up throughout the year. It was such a fun evening and a really good opportunity to say thank you to those who have supported us so well for so long. We hope to do this bigger and better in 2022!

OUR GOALS FOR 2022

LAUNCH REFRESH COFFEE HOUSE

So much progress has been made on the coffee house so far and we're so close to opening. We are looking to launch early February, so please pray for us in the early months of this venture.

REFRESH

C O F F E E H O U S E

FURTHER THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

God is at the centre of all of the work we do and this is crucial for transforming lives by bringing hope in His name. We want to spread the good news of the gospel to more people and support Christians in their journey to better know Jesus Christ.

LOOK FOR MORE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE RETAIL SECTOR

We are aiming to add more shops to the organisation this year. This would mean more low cost household items available to those that really need them and more opportunities to provide work experience and skills development to the long term unemployed.

EXPAND RENEWAL LIVING

We are hoping and praying for the opportunity to buy and renovate another house in Stockport. Our aim for this is providing accommodation for offenders leaving prison who are looking for a fresh start in a new area. We would love to be able to support those in this situation and reduce the likelihood of them reoffending or getting back into old habits.

GROWTH FOR COMMUNITY COMPUTERS

Community Computers has seen some phenomenal growth in its first year and we are confident there is more to come. We would love to work with other councils or organisations to further this work, while still providing IT equipment for those struggling with digital poverty.



FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF OUR HOUSE CLEARANCE OPERATIONS

Our clearances business, Stockport House Clearances, is growing steadily, but we would love to see this develop further. Our long term goal for this would be to have multiple teams and vans dedicated to this project. We aim to scale this operation up and see it thrive over the next year and beyond.

renewal
NORTH WEST

Bringing Hope Through Jesus Christ

GET INVOLVED!



BECOME A HOPE GIVER



Donate monthly
to support our work

Scan me



DONATE GOODS

We accept good quality
furniture, appliances,
household goods, IT
equipment and more!

We offer furniture
collections in our local area
too! Send photos to:

donations@renewal-nw.com
or 07549035783

or call us on 0161 476 2777 to
chat to the team.



VOLUNTEER WITH US

Our volunteers are a huge
part of our Renewal family
and we depend on them
hugely.

If volunteering with us is
something that interests you,
reach out to us on

0161 476 2777
to chat with our team.



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