



**home  
for good**



**Together we can find  
a home for every child  
who needs one**

# Every 15 minutes, a child in the UK enters the care system.



Many will have suffered neglect or abuse. All will experience trauma and loss. Each one deserves a home where they will be loved, nurtured and enabled to thrive. Today, too many children are waiting too long for the stability, care and love they need.

There are around 50,000 churches in the UK. In every village, town and city in the country there are churches – big, small and in between – filled with people who want to follow the example of Jesus and come alongside the vulnerable and marginalised with welcome, compassion and care. Everyone has a part they can play and everyone has something they can bring.

As an adoptive mum, I've witnessed the lived reality of the saying 'It takes a village to raise a child'. My church community is my village, and has been invaluable in wrapping around me and my children; practically supporting us, standing with us in the tough times and celebrating with us on birthdays and other special milestones.

A decorative graphic in the bottom left corner consisting of three overlapping circles: a light blue circle at the bottom left, a light green circle at the top left, and a light yellow circle at the top right.

**“As an adoptive mum, I’ve witnessed the lived reality of the saying ‘It takes a village to raise a child’.”**



Imagine the transformational difference the Church could make if even more individuals and families in our congregations opened their homes to children and young people.

Imagine the impact if church communities wrapped around those who care for children with love, encouragement, prayer and practical support.

**Home for Good has a bold vision to find a home for every child who needs one.**

**What part could you play?**

*Tarn*

**Tarn Bright**  
CEO, Home for Good





## **A ready-made community:** **Sharon's story**

*Our foster child joined our family in the spring of 2020. And when I say family, I don't just mean my husband, my birth children and myself. As a church leader, and as part of a small and supportive community, the word reaches well beyond the four walls of our home.*





*My husband and I heard a Home for Good speaker at a conference. We read the Home for Good book and felt compelled to act. We met with a member of the Home for Good team; it was an inspirational meeting. She connected us with an agency, and we left thinking, "This is definitely something we can do!"*

*We had a fantastic social worker who really helped us understand some of the challenges we might encounter as foster carers. I found it so interesting to explore our own support network with her. It was eye-opening and affirming to see in black and white who our points of contact were if ever we needed any help. Many of those listed as part of our support network were members of our church family. For us, church has been a ready-made community. It's an instant extended family.*

*Not long after we were approved, our social worker told us about a little boy who was staying with short-term carers, but needed a long-term foster family and had to move immediately. We met him once and agreed with our social worker that we felt we could meet his needs and be family for him. He moved in the very next day.*

*Communities, in all their varied forms, can play such a significant role in helping children experience stability, allowing them to feel safe, secure and to experience consistent love and care. Because our boy didn't have a secure base growing up, he's unable to understand right now that we're going to be there for him always. We're hoping that over time he will grow to understand this. I think that things must still be a little confusing for him; he still has contact with his birth family, but he's also part of our family. But even though his concept of family is full of intricacies and complexities, he is part of something bigger: our community of people who care about him. And we think he really loves that.*

*He was so keen to celebrate with the whole church family when he had been with us for a year. We baked some cupcakes together, icing his name on the top, and we took them round to the people in our street. We told them, "We've been family for a year, and we've made you a cake so we can all celebrate." This is what family truly is. It's community at its best.*

# Why does Home for Good exist?

## 1. MORE FAMILIES ARE URGENTLY NEEDED

Too many children are waiting far too long for the stability, care and love they need.

- Right across the UK, there is a desperate shortage of foster carers with the right skills and in the right locations.
- There is a significant need for adoptive families who are able to meet the needs of children who are waiting.
- Teenagers in care are increasingly being placed in unsuitable accommodation due to a shortage of options, instead of being offered the chance to thrive within a home setting.
- There are groups of children who are waiting much longer than others. Black children are overrepresented in the care system, but are less likely to find an adoptive family, even when this is deemed the right plan for them. Children with disabilities or complex needs often wait longer for the right carers, and many sibling groups have to be separated, with the oldest child often placed separately because there are not enough homes where they can stay together.



## 2. EVERY CHILD NEEDS A PLACE TO BELONG

Coming into care is traumatic for every child, whether this happens when they are a baby, a toddler, or a teenager. Loss, separation and uncertainty all contribute to the instability they will experience, and this is compounded with each additional move or change.

*"For the first seven years of his life, our foster son hadn't known when his next meal was coming, and it took the best part of a year for him to begin to get used to the fact that in our house we had regular meals at the same time every day. For the first eight months, our boy didn't tell me he didn't like tomatoes. I do often wonder, if a long-term placement hadn't been found for our boy, how long would he have carried on eating food he didn't like for fear of what might happen if he didn't?" – Foster carer*

## 3. GOD CALLS US TO RESPOND

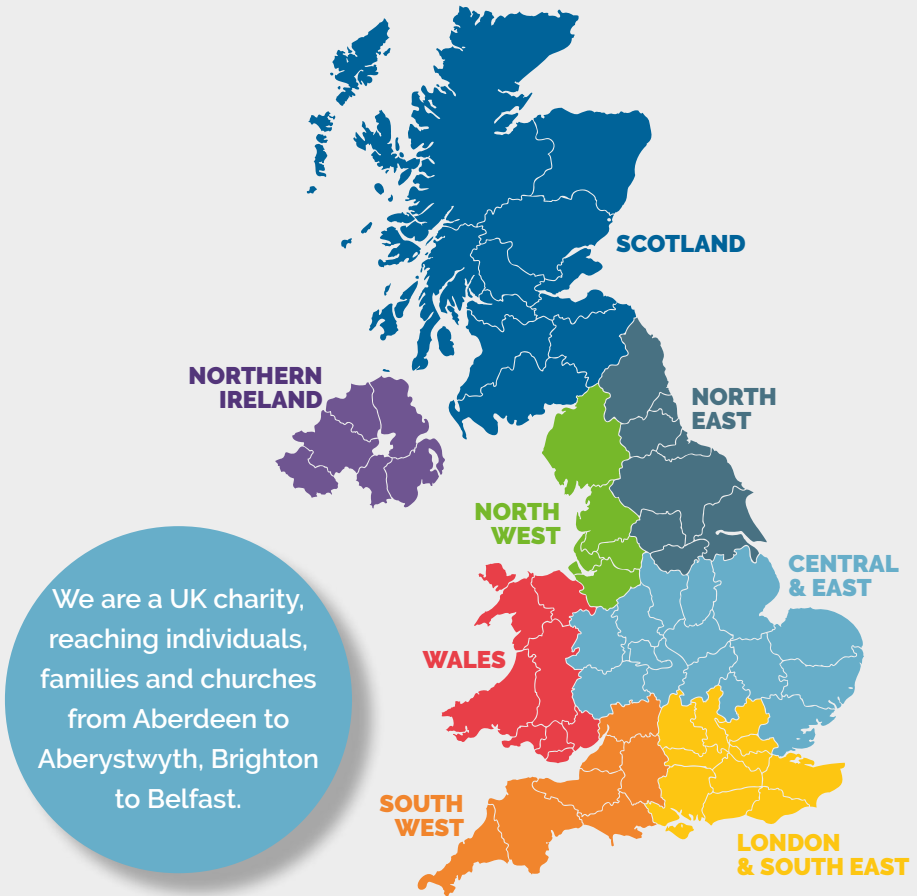
In some of the very first pages in the Bible, we read that God speaks and says that it isn't good for people to be on their own. Our Creator, the One who knit us together and knows every part of who we are, designed us to be connected to one another in relationship. Each one of us is made in the image of a God who loves, welcomes and makes room for every person; especially those who are vulnerable.

**A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families. Psalm 68:5-6a**

God's family is never full. There's always room for more. We often pray, 'Your kingdom come... on earth as in Heaven'. What if God's kingdom on earth looked like our families reflecting His; a place where anyone is welcome, where there's always space at the table?

# How do we find a home for every child who needs one?

IN EVERY CORNER



Our Regional Leads and Local Coordinators cover every corner of the UK, building relationships with churches and local authorities and building bridges between the two through our referral process. They mobilise volunteers and speak at events and conferences, sharing the need and inspiring people all over the country to play their part in finding a home for every child who needs one.

*"It's a privilege to build Home for Good's work across Wales. There is a great need among care-experienced children in this nation, and I believe there are church communities across Wales who are ready to answer the call to open their homes and hearts."*

**Neil Davies, Wales Lead**

*"I am delighted to be working across Central and East of England to inspire and equip individuals and families to step forward. We are finding more and more homes, and our work with local authorities and agencies is growing. The momentum is exciting!"*

**Alisia O'Sullivan, Central and East of England Lead**

*"Local churches across the city are responding to the need they see in the care system, and we are thrilled to be able to connect these communities with local authorities and agencies who need more foster carers and adoptive homes."*

**Stu Dendy, Bristol Local Coordinator**

# Champions

Our volunteer Champions are the hands and feet of Home for Good. These hundreds of passionate and committed individuals serve within their churches and communities to raise awareness of the needs of children in the care system. As our Champions continue to work on the ground alongside our Regional Leads, we are seeing the landscape of the care system transformed as more and more families open their homes to children who are waiting.

*"It is such a joy to combine my heart for fostering and adoption with the word and heart of God. I am more in love with Home for Good every time I have the privilege of being a part of things."*

**Home for Good Champion,  
Scotland**

**To find out what  
part you can  
play, scan the  
QR code.**



# How do we find a home for every child who needs one?

AT EVERY STEP

Home for Good provides resources and services for individuals and churches at every step of their journey.

## For you

From your first moment of inspiration, throughout your journey of exploring caring for children and teenagers, to welcoming them into your home and beyond, the Home for Good team is available to listen, advise and pray. We offer a range of resources to inform and equip, and facilitate peer support through our network of groups throughout the UK.

For more information, scan the QR code.



Our Foundations course is a unique six-session resource that combines Bible study, practical teaching, discussion groups and personal reflection.



**“We’re halfway through the Foundations Course at our church and have found it exciting, challenging, informative, authentic and a little bit scary every week! A whole bunch of us are exploring the possibility of fostering and adoption, and the course has proven to be a brilliant place to ask questions, explore possibilities and listen to God.”**

Foundations course attendee

## For your church

We believe your church is ideally placed to ensure that every child and teenager has the home they need. Home for Good is committed to equipping churches to be supportive communities. Through visiting speakers and our range of videos, resources and training packages, we want every church to understand God's heart for vulnerable children and be able to respond with prayerful and practical support.

Make Room is a four-session interactive Bible study, ideal for small groups or whole churches to explore God's heart for vulnerable children.



# Working strategically to find homes

Home for Good is not a fostering or adoption agency but we work closely with local and district authorities, adoption and fostering agencies and supported lodgings organisations to find resilient and caring homes.

We work strategically across the country, finding homes from among the 50,000 churches in the UK, with a particular focus on finding homes for the children and young people who wait the longest.

*"Home for Good have provided consistent numbers of high-quality referrals, with many resilient individuals and couples being assessed and ultimately being approved as suitable to adopt by our Agency Decision Maker. A number of the adopters from Home for Good have adopted children with complex needs and/or in sibling groups, enabling them to grow up together. We are pleased to recommend Home for Good."*

Voluntary Adoption Agency

*"Home for Good's commitment to children and finding families has been outstanding, and we are very grateful to the team for their support."*

Ann James, Former Director of Children and Families for Bristol City Council



To find out what is happening near you, scan this QR code or visit our website.

# Sparking systemic change

The care system is not a product of conscious design, and current outcomes do not reflect the extraordinary drive, passion and commitment that comes from the professionals, volunteers and families working in the sector.

We know there is much within the system that can be improved, and some of these challenges can only be addressed at the systemic level.

At Home for Good, we refuse to believe the old adage, 'it's just the way it is'. We amplify the stories, experiences and wisdom of care-experienced children and those who wrap around them, and we demonstrate to those in power across the UK that there is a better way of doing things, offering solutions to the most intractable challenges in the system. Our advocacy team builds bridges between those whose voices are too often ignored, and those who have the power to enact real change. **Scan the QR code for more information.**



# A heart for adoption: Jilly & Steve's story\*

*Welcome and hospitality have always been at the heart of our relationship and marriage, and adoption is something we spoke about even before we were married. There was no discussion or debate, we always knew that adoption was a case of 'when' rather than 'if'.*



*Fast forward a few years, and we're married with one birth daughter. It's interesting how comfortable you can get in your 'normal.' We found ourselves asking, "Can we really do this?" But again and again, we would feel that tug on our hearts that told us, "Don't forget. This is something you need to do." So when the time was right, we began a conversation with our local council and started our journey.*



*Our approval panel was really positive. We could tell that they had read our report so thoroughly, and they praised our lovely social worker for writing it. I'll always remember the chairman saying to us, "Just reading through your stories, I am confident that any child who comes into your family would have a wonderful home."*

*Not long after that, we were matched with our son. We had a fantastic family finder who was really proactive, determined to*

*find our boy a home. There was absolutely no reason why he should have waited as long as he did. The placement order had been made before he was born, and he was waiting for two and a half years – his whole life – for his family.*

*Watching him grow and mature since then has been beautiful. When he arrived, he could barely speak at all, and now he uses so many big words to describe and articulate how he feels very clearly. He recently had a familiarisation day at school, and he was really looking forward to it. He kept clasping his little fists under his chin and telling me, "Mummy, I'm so excited!" Another thing that makes me laugh is that when I ask him a question, he's started responding with, "Hmm... I'm thinking..." I love it! What is he thinking? What is going on in his little head? I can't wait to hear what he's going to come out with next!*

\* Names changed for anonymity

**“Watching him grow and mature since then has been beautiful.”**

If you are interested in exploring fostering, adoption or supported lodgings, our team would love to hear from you. We can answer your questions, help you consider your options and support you to work out what part you can play. To start your journey with Home for Good, scan the QR code.



# Home for Good has a big vision. With your generosity, we can make it a reality.

Scan this QR code to make a donation.

Together we can find a home for every child who needs one. What part could you play?



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