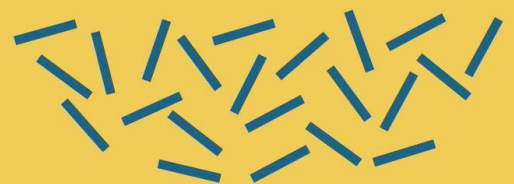




THE NEST PROJECT

2024 IMPACT REPORT

the
nest
project





“

IT HELPS YOU TO FEEL NORMAL, LIKE YOU AREN'T LOWER THAN OTHERS JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO BUY A BEDFRAME OUTRIGHT OR JUST NEED SOME MORE CLOTHES FOR THE LITTLE ONE. IT HELPS ME FOCUS ON FOOD, AND OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS WITHOUT FEELING LIKE I HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN ONE OR THE OTHER.

”

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01 OVERVIEW

OUR STORY THIS YEAR...

We have had a very busy 2024 at The Nest Project. While it was a challenging year for us as our overseeing charity, Vineyard Bath, closed down, we have ended on a high. We are very proud of all we have achieved, culminating in becoming a charity in our own right in September 2024!

The ending of our partnership with Vineyard Bath led to some natural changes to the plan for the project but we still continued to serve the families in need in BANES. Much of my time was spent working towards the new charity status, and all that has come with that, plus finding a new office space for us to work from. And in November 2024 we moved into our new office space in Corston.

One of the main changes was the end to running our toddler groups as of July 2024. These both naturally came to an end and in turn led to us thinking through how we could still best serve our community.

In place of this, in September 2024 we started in-person consultations for expectant parents. Together over a hot drink, we go through the list of items they may need (many arrive having prepared nothing yet for their baby's arrival), and help them to choose items from what we have in stock. It has been wonderful to welcome in nervous parents to be, and see them relieved and excited with all the items they have to take away, feeling less daunted and more prepared for their baby's arrival.



We planned to hire a new staff member earlier in the year, but again due to the closure of Vineyard Bath and the uncertainty of whether our funding would carry over to the new entity, had us pause this plan. With things more settled and clear now, we plan to hire in early 2025. This role will aid our links with the community and support the running of our team - which currently only consists of two part-time paid staff members.

We have a fantastic board of Trustees whose expertise include safeguarding, accounting, and law. We believe this strong team will serve the project well.

Despite the tumultuous year and some pauses in our service due to the office move, being one staff member down, and the end of our toddler groups, we have continued to provide for those in need within BANES, helping hundreds of children, and also been a training space for health visitors, Norland nannies and a University intern who spent a whole year with us. We have signposted families to other services in Bath and, supported by our great team of volunteers, we have continued to work within our principles of re-use, recycling and sustainability.



From the surveys we sent out to clients and agencies, we have pages of quotes from families that our service has helped. We only have space for just some of those here, but it's humbling reading and reminds us of the difference we are making.

We are incredibly grateful to everyone who has supported us during this year, and enabled us to continue to provide this invaluable service to families and young children in BANES.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Vix Blythe'.

Vix Blythe
CEO, The Nest Project





02 WHAT IS THE NEST PROJECT

AND WHAT DO WE DO?

Our Aim: *to serve families who are experiencing financial pressure by providing free clothing, equipment and toiletries to children under the age of five in BANES.*

Up until July 24, we provided free and warm community spaces by running drop-in toddler groups in two different areas of the city where families with young children can socialise, take time out, find support and order/ collect items. At these groups, we lent a

“ listening ear to families, many of whom are struggling financially, or facing other hardships such as having fled their home due to abuse. Through building trust and a safe environment we have been able to signpost them to other services, refer them to food banks, and take orders for items they need for their children. We partner with other services in the City who visit our groups to promote what they do.

THE DIFFERENCE THE NEST PROJECT MAKES TO FAMILIES IS IMMENSE AND THE SERVICE THAT IS PROVIDED IS VALUABLE TO ALL THAT USE IT. THEY ARE FRIENDLY AND COMMUNICATE WELL AND ALWAYS HELPFUL IN SUPPORTING THE FAMILIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY, THE DIFFERENCE THEY MAKE CANNOT BE MEASURED.



For those who couldn't attend a group in person, or who now can't collect from our offices, we continue to offer a delivery service.

New since Sept 24, we also aim to provide support and items to expectant parents at our in person consultations.

With an emphasis on recycling and reusing, the items we distribute are donations of mostly second hand items, given to us by other families in the area who no longer need them.

Why: *We believe that every child deserves to be warm and provided for. We want to give children the best start in life possible, and to ease the financial stress on families to provide for their children.*

According to the 2022 Report
'It Takes a Village':

1.3 million of the 4.2 million children in poverty in the UK are babies and children under the age of five... We know that poverty can have a devastating impact on the health, development and prospects of both adults and young children. Poverty in a child's earliest years can mean children go to sleep hungry, wear ill-fitting clothes, develop respiratory issues as a result of damp, poor quality housing, develop mental health difficulties, or struggle to concentrate while learning.



WE ARE WORKING WITH A FAMILY WHO HAVE FOUR CHILDREN WHO ARE SLEEPING ON A MAKESHIFT BED ON THE FLOOR OF THEIR LOUNGE, INCLUDING THE BABY. WE WERE WORRIED FOR THE SAFETY OF THE BABY AND THE NEST PROJECT HAS BEEN ABLE TO PROVIDE A COT FOR THE BABY AND FRESH CLEAN BEDDING FOR THE OTHER CHILDREN.



In BANES specifically 19.3% of children under the age of 15 are living in poverty but specifically in Twerton, 36.5 %. (information from BANES council, facts based on tax credit data and 'End Child Poverty'.)

How: We receive donations of items from local businesses and individuals who find out about us via our website, social media, agencies, events, schools/nurseries, or by word of mouth. Individuals and families in need of items can self-refer or be referred by an agency. During the referral process we identify the items that the family needs and place an order which can be collected from a toddler group in person or delivered to BA1 and BA2 postcodes. We also offer in-person consultations for expectant parents.

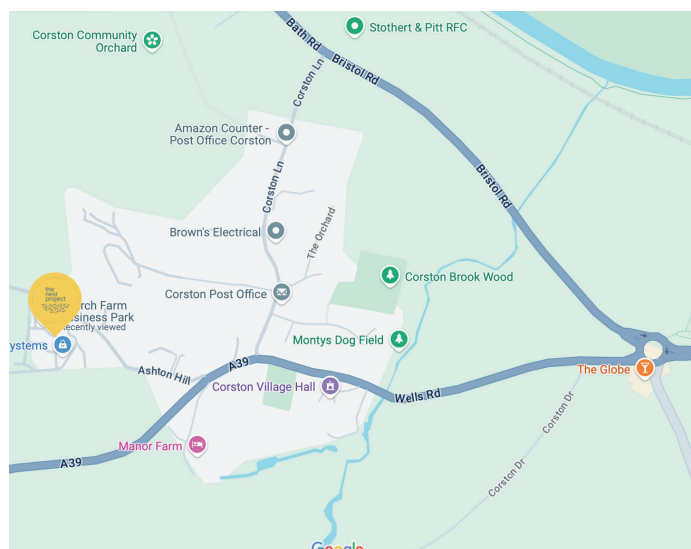


For seasonal events (such as Christmas/Easter/Mother's Day), we run appeals to give families extra gifts to help them at those times.

Our team of volunteers help to make it all happen, including our bakers who baked cakes each week for our toddler group in Twerton, and Norland Nanny students who come to gain experience with us.

We endeavour to ensure that those families we come into contact with have the information they need to access the services and support they need. We use our website and share on social media things going on in the City that might be of benefit, such as Henry courses, Future Bright, Women's Work Lab, parenting courses, safety tips for children and other services that BANES provide.

Where we work: From our administrative office and storage base - previously at Brassmill Enterprise Centre but we have now moved offices to Church Farm Business Park in Corston.



03 THE IMPACT

OF OUR DELIVERY

Case Study:

'Mum has had a history of alcohol misuse due to both adult and childhood trauma/. Her pregnancy was unplanned and she concealed her bump due to becoming homeless. Her accommodation at the time was not safe or appropriate for a baby at 37 weeks. Mum was placed into temporary supported living, she moved in with a bin liner of possessions. The Nest Project donated all the items needed for both mum and new baby, including a cot, prams, nappies, clothing, blankets and toiletries. Their help and support during a crisis was invaluable. The referral was made and was responded to immediately as it was vital that mum had these items at short notice. My usual practice is to submit a referral when requesting items, on occasions during a crisis I call and explain the risk/need and the amazing staff always help and assist in supporting families. Since the birth of baby and the wrap around support that mum and baby have had, she is now abstinent and her housing situation has improved.'



GIVE



GET



GROW

NUMBER OF ORDERS AND BENEFICIARIES

807 orders fulfilled from families needing items for their children.

Through this we supported **1,090** children.

- **156** of these orders were made as a referral from a professional.
- **257** of these orders were made at our in-person groups.
- **394** of these orders were made from clients getting in contact directly.



CONSULTATIONS FOR EXPECTANT PARENTS

Since September 2024 we have been trialling consultations for expectant parents. So far we have welcomed **9** expectant mums and helped them get completely prepared for their new arrival - kitting them out with everything they need.

On average an expectant parent will take away with them over **100** items including a cot, pram, maternity clothes, baby toiletries, baby clothes, bottles and feeding equipment, maternity toiletries, steriliser, baby bath, sling, a play mat, a bouncer and so on.



OUR DIRECT REFERRALS FROM PROFESSIONALS IS LOWER THAN SELF-REFERRALS, HOWEVER WE KNOW THAT MOST FAMILIES ARE INITIALLY REFERRED OR TOLD ABOUT OUR SERVICE VIA AN AGENCY. IN OUR SURVEY TO AGENCIES, 88.9% OF THEM SAID THEY ENCOURAGE CLIENTS TO REQUEST ITEMS THEMSELVES. THIS EMPOWERS FAMILIES TO BE ABLE TO KEEP REQUESTING ITEMS FOR THEIR CHILDREN AS AND WHEN THEY NEED AND SAVES THE VALUABLE TIME OF THE AGENCIES.'



ITEMS GIVEN OUT

We distributed **13,842** items, including **79** buggies, **92** cots, **34** highchairs and **10,452** items of clothing and shoes, **46** stair gates, **152** items of maternity clothes/toiletries, and **2,937** other items ranging from bedding, weaning equipment, sterilisers, breast pumps & bouncy chairs to books and blankets.

This has saved families thousands of pounds on essential items for their children, helping them to prioritise being able to afford clothing and heating, and lifting the huge financial pressure that comes with providing for growing children.

Case study:

'I am the health visitor of a vulnerable mother who is due to have her second baby next week. Mother, child and unborn baby will be homeless as of next week and have no items prepared for the baby due to very low income. Mum currently has £600 a month benefits and pays her friend £300 a month to stay at her flat. Mum has no friends/family in the UK, and the ex-partner father of children has ended all contact with family and is not supporting them financially.'

We were able to quickly provide everything this mother needed to be ready for her new baby's arrival.

SEASONAL EVENTS

Christmas

For Christmas 2024, we adapted our usual Christmas Gift Bag appeal and raised funds to buy discounted vouchers from The Entertainer toy shop. We raised over £3000 which enabled us to purchase 186 x £20 gift cards so that families could choose a gift for their children.

This made sure 186 children had a gift given to them this Christmas.

We distributed these to families we work with as well as via agencies that refer through us, to make sure they got to families facing the most financial hardship.



Running a Christmas appeal continues a wonderful way to give to the families we work with, and is a great way for the local community to feel a part of what we do, as well as finding out more about our service for future donations.



**I'D LIKE TO SAY A HEART FELT
THANK YOU TO THE NEST
PROJECT
FOR ORGANISING A CHRISTMAS
ENTERTAINER GIFT CARD FOR
MY SON. HE REALLY LOVES HIS
NEW TOY AND IT IS SO
APPRECIATED.**



A HUGE THANK YOU TO



Mother's Day and Easter

On Mother's Day we provided **11** mums with gift bags and **40** mums with flowers, prioritising mother's that we know may not receive another otherwise.

At Easter, thanks to donations from local businesses, we gave away around **100** Easter eggs to families we work with.



THE GIFTS BRING LIGHT TO OUR CLIENTS WHO OFTEN DON'T GET ANYTHING FOR THEMSELVES AND IT MAKES THEM FEEL VALUED.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THE MOTHER'S DAY GIFT BAG. IT'S MADE ME FEEL REALLY SPECIAL.

Toddler Groups

SOCIALLY THE GROUP GOT ME THROUGH SOME REALLY LONELY PERIODS, GETTING ME OUT EACH WEEK. THEY ALSO PROVIDED ITEMS FOR MY SON THAT I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO AFFORD. IT HAS HELPED SO MUCH WITH MY MENTAL HEALTH AND MY FINANCIAL SITUATION.



THE NEST PROJECT PROVIDED US WITH A LOCAL HUB TO MEET OTHER PARENTS. THEY HELPED ME IN MY TIME OF NEED AND MADE ME FEEL SUPPORTED AND WELCOME.

04 INVOLVING PEOPLE

FROM OUR COMMUNITY IN THE WORK WE DO...

The direct contact we have with the people who access our services - either through the delivery of items or by attending a toddler group - provide us with the opportunity to gain important feedback from local families in the area. Conversations give us insight into communities and enable us to be responsive to need - for instance our understanding of areas of deprivation in the City has led us to want to expand our locations, allowing people to self-refer at a group or via our online booking system.

We have been located in Twerton, Mulberry Park and Central Bath and we deliver to peoples' homes making it as accessible as possible to receive support from us, even for those without transport.



Sharing our purpose and experiences with individuals who donate items helps to increase understanding of the challenges facing those living in poverty. We primarily do this via social media and our impact reports.

As well as being a great source of support and knowledge our local volunteers are advocates for our services, sharing what we do with their own communities and contributing their time to help other local people.

Volunteers

OUR VOLUNTEERS CONTRIBUTED 742.5 HOURS TO MAKE OUR WORK POSSIBLE.

We have approximately **10** regular volunteers who volunteer on a monthly basis, and in addition to this, we host groups of volunteers from GoodGym, individuals from local businesses who have volunteer days, and have welcomed groups of children from Prior Park School.

One of our beneficiaries has also started volunteering with us, as when the toddler group ended in July, she wanted to continue to benefit from decreased social isolation and support from us. She says that being able to come and volunteer and chat with us, as well as receive items for her daughter she says is a 'lifeline' for her.



We have also continued to provide work experience for Norland Nannies and Health Visitors in training.

We hosted a one year-long University placement student, providing insight, experience and training in the charity sector, working with children and in fundraising and reporting. She says:



"During my internship at The Nest Project in Bath, I had the privilege of contributing to their meaningful work supporting families in need. I was actively involved in supporting toddler groups, which provided a warm and welcoming space for parents and children to connect, share experiences, and build a sense of community. Additionally, I was involved in the Christmas Bag Appeal, helping to prepare and distribute festive gift bags filled with thoughtful items to bring joy to families during the holiday season. These experiences allowed me to witness firsthand the positive impact of The Nest

Project's work and the difference it makes in the lives of so many. Working with this charity was an incredibly rewarding and inspiring experience. I feel truly fortunate to have been part of such a dedicated and compassionate organisation."

Donors and supporters

We are mainly funded by The National Lottery Community fund, a grant that will support us for two more years. We are grateful for their continued support!

Additionally, we have been supported by one off donations, monthly giving, fundraising events by local schools, businesses and community groups.

We had 17 runners at Bath Half run for us, raising awareness for The Nest Project, as well as raising over £11,000.



We have been supported by SouthGate shopping centre who raised money for us with a Mother's Day event, we were also one of their four chosen charities on their 'Giving Box' this year, which raised awareness and funding for us.

Our wide network of contacts throughout the city continues to grow. We have links to a wide range of organisations who refer families to us, share



local knowledge with us and to whom we can signpost those we work with. On occasion we can share safeguarding concerns with relevant agencies.

This year we have strengthened relationships with schools, nurseries, churches, and community hubs across Bath who have advertised our services

in their newsletters, held toiletries donation drives for us, volunteered with us and got involved in our Christmas Appeal.

In addition, we are in contact with a range of donors in the City who provide one off financial gifts, products from our Amazon wish list or second-hand items. We would not have items to give out if it wasn't for these donations and they are central to what we do. Many donors comment on how they love that they are helping local families whilst also contributing to environmental sustainability.



Organisations in the city that refer to us

We are regularly in touch with the following organisations that refer families to us. We also distribute Christmas gifts via these connections, and share our experience of what the need is for families with younger children in Bath.

SOCIAL SERVICES	FAMILY INTERVENTION	BANES WELLBEING SERVICES	EARLY INTERVENTION	VOICES (DOMESTIC ABUSE CHARITY)
CHILDREN'S CENTRES	FOOD BANKS AND PANTRIES	ROSECOTTAGE IN TWERTON	CONNECTING FAMILIES	THE SALVATION ARMY
HEALTH VISITORS	ACTION FOR CHILDREN	BATH WELCOMES REFUGEES	FAMILY SUPPORT PRACTITIONERS	CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY
FOOD BANKS AND PANTRIES	BATH YFC	JULIAN HOUSE	GENESIS TRUST	THE NELSON TRUST
PERINATAL MENTAL HEALTH NURSES	HOME FOR GOOD AND FOSTER CARERS IN GENERAL	MIDWIVES ESPECIALLY THE LOTUS MIDWIVES	HOUSING FOR YOUNG MUMS - PETRA HOUSE AND LIGHTHOUSE	the nest project

Wider groups

We are members of the following networks, in order to share resources, training, advice and for networking.

- The Baby Bank Alliance
- 3SG
- CYPN Network



I LOVE VOLUNTEERING AT THE NEST PROJECT. IT PROVIDES SUCH A VITAL SERVICE IN BATH, SUPPORTING PARENTS AND THEIR CHILDREN IN SO MANY WAYS. THE TEAM ARE SO PASSIONATE ABOUT WHAT THEY DO AND IT SHINES THROUGH EVERY ASPECT OF THEIR WORK. THANK YOU, THE NEST PROJECT TEAM!



We want to thank all of our supporters, donors, funders and volunteers, who have enabled us to continue serving families in need in Bath - reducing financial anxiety and poor mental health, increasing community, reducing poverty, providing essential items to under 5s as well as having a positive impact on our environment.





05 LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

OUR IDEAS, HOPES AND DREAMS

We are looking forward to settling into our new office and new ways of running as our own charity.

We hope to recruit a new member of staff in early 2025 and to link with the community more.

We hope to see an increase in new parents using our consultation service.

We would love to grow our base of supporters and regular donors, safeguarding the future of the project for years to come.

We hope to have a new university intern with us for September 2025.

We want to look at what we can do for a Christmas appeal this year, with our office space being smaller.

We would love to have a new website this year.

We are proud to provide this invaluable service and to be well regarded in the City of Bath by professionals that we have had the pleasure of working alongside. It has been a challenging year to navigate with all of the changes happening behind the scenes but we are proud now to be our own charity with incredible trustees and support from the community.

06 CONTACT US

GET IN TOUCH IF YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW MORE OR GET INVOLVED

DONATE

We rely on donations to have items to give to our clients. We love that we are reusing and recycling clothing and equipment that are already in our community and are able to pass them on to those who need them.

If you have items to donate please email donations@thenestproject.co.uk. You can also check out our socials to find a list of what we're looking for at the moment or donate directly via our Amazon Wishlist.

SUPPORT

If you'd like to support us in running this essential service for local families in need, please consider financially contributing to the work that we do. You can give as a one-off or set up regular giving by scanning the QR code or heading to www.thenestproject.co.uk/give.



VOLUNTEER

The Nest Project relies on incredible volunteers! If you've got some time to spare we have a number of volunteering opportunities, get in touch with us to find out more - vix@thenestproject.co.uk.

For more information about the project visit our website or follow us on social media. Alternatively, scan the QR code.



@the_nest_project



@thenestprojectbath

WWW.THENESTPROJECT.CO.UK



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