

# Prince William launches Homewards in Bournemouth

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*A joint statement from BCP Council and the Homelessness Partnership BCP*

Prince William and The Royal Foundation of The Prince and Princess of Wales launched a major UK-wide homelessness programme, Homewards, in Bournemouth on Monday 26 June.

Prince William was in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole on the first leg of a two-day, UK tour, unveiling the six flagship locations involved in Homewards, a five-year programme which aims to demonstrate that homelessness can be ended - making it rare, brief and unrepeated.

Over the next five years, Homewards will give these six regions new space, tools, and relationships to showcase what can be achieved through a collective effort focused on preventing and ending homelessness in their areas.

As part of his launch, HRH visited a community project at the Faithworks Arch Carpentry Workshop, part of the Homelessness Partnership BCP, at St John's Church in central Bournemouth where he chatted to a number of woodwork trainees about this skills training scheme and their experiences of homelessness.

Prince William's visit spotlights a practical example of empowering people with skills that help get them into employment and prevent the cycle of repeat homelessness. Homewards will build on this type of work through the five years.

On launching the Homewards programme, Prince William said: "In a modern and progressive society, everyone should have a safe and secure home, be treated with dignity and given the support they need.

"Through Homewards, I want to make this a reality and over the next five years, give people across the UK hope that homelessness can be prevented when we collaborate.

"I am fortunate to have seen first-hand the tireless work of people and organisations across the sector, the tangible impact their efforts can have and what can be done when communities are able to focus on preventing homelessness, rather than managing it.

“It's a big task, but I firmly believe that by working together it is possible to make homelessness rare, brief, and unrepeatable and I am very much looking forward to working with our six locations to make our ambition a reality.”

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole has been selected as a partner of the Homewards programme after demonstrating ambition, potential and distinctive needs as part of the selection process.

Amanda Berry MBE, CEO of Royal Foundation said: ‘Homelessness is a societal issue and requires a societal response. By joining Homewards, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole underline its determination to prevent and end homelessness in all its forms. We are looking forward to supporting BCP over the next five years to do just that, helping to introduce new partners and create and deliver action plans so that together we can demonstrate that it’s possible to end homelessness.’

There are over 40 organisations involved in the Homelessness Partnership BCP across the region including BCP Council, Faithworks Arch, BCHA, the YMCA, Shelter, St Mungo’s, NHS Dorset. Homewards will build on this work by supporting the area to bring in new partners, from a variety of sectors as well as provide additional funding, capacity and research.

Cllr Vikki Slade, Leader of BCP Council said: “It was fantastic having Prince William in town today visiting the amazing Faithworks Carpentry Workshop project and unveiling Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole as one of the six locations to be part of the Homewards campaign.

“His visit has really put the spotlight on the many different aspects of homelessness and the role we all play in reducing and eliminating it from people's lives. At BCP Council, alongside our partners, we understand the importance of having a coherent and compassionate policy on dealing with homelessness and its consequences.”

Alistair Doxat Purser, Chief Executive of Faithworks and Chair of the Homelessness Partnership BCP Forum, said: “The Faithworks Arch team often tell me that anyone escaping homelessness longs for a sense of being safe, a place of purpose, and trusted people alongside them. And our Carpentry workshop is just such a place – it has such energy, such community, and such hope.

“The extraordinary visit of Prince William and the support of the Royal Foundation feels like the best possible cheer-leading, effectively saying, let’s stand shoulder to shoulder with all these amazing partners in BCP who long to see an end to the causes and pain of homelessness in all its forms.

“Through this support, as we listen, sustain and innovate, more and more individuals and families are going to be able to say: “there is hope, I can do this now”.

Lorraine Mealings, Chief Executive of BCHA: said: ‘I am thrilled that Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, underpinned by the great work of the Homelessness Partnership BCP, has been chosen as one of the areas for this programme.

“This represents a unique opportunity for us to further prevent homelessness across our area. We already have a strong multi-agency homelessness partnership in place which I know will be further strengthened with the support of Homewards and the Royal Foundation.”