



THE BONAR TRUST

GOSPEL WORKERS  
FOR THE CHURCH IN SCOTLAND

[www.bonartrust.org](http://www.bonartrust.org)

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“The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest” (*Matthew 9:37-38*).

### Key highlights – December 2021

The Covid pandemic has brought many challenges, yet in God’s goodness the work of the Trust continues to grow with many encouragements. Here are some key highlights.

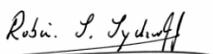
- The Trust has a **new updated website** – <https://bonartrust.org/>
- There are four main areas of the Trust’s work: **funding, development, resourcing and training.**
- **Funding** the training of gifted future leaders, allows them to undertake rigorous training without cutting corners. It allows people to train for ministry who might not otherwise be able to do so. It makes it possible for people to transfer into full-time ministry after working for a number of years.
- In the financial year to 31 March 2021, **training grants increased by 34% to £254,000** (2020: £191,000; 2019: £135,000).
- The Trust is pleased to **fund people training across a broad constituency of churches:** Independents (including a number in the FIEC), Free Church of Scotland, Brethren, Didasko network, 20 Schemes and others. It is also encouraging to see people training for ministry outside the central belt and main cities, for example in Ayrshire, the Borders, Moray and the Western Isles.
- Aligned to this broad constituency and demographic of training churches, is the **range of training providers the Trust partners with:** including the Cornhill Training Course and Cornhill Pastors’ Training, Edinburgh Theological Seminary, Crosslands, Ragged School of Theology, and Generation Church Planting.
- Recognizing that planting new churches is our best hope for the evangelisation of Scotland, the **Trust is committed to supporting church planters in their training.** For example, the Trust works in partnership with Generation Church Planting. Generation exists to build thriving gospel-centred local churches and communities in Scotland’s cities, suburbs, towns and villages. The aim is to plant churches that will plant churches. Generation is part of the Free Church of Scotland, but reflecting the new spirit of gospel partnership, supports a number of churches outside the Free Church. Over half of these new churches are led by people who have been funded through their training by the Bonar Trust. Their ‘story’ is told at <https://bonartrust.org/people-supported-by-the-trust-in-their-training/>
- All of this illustrates the **Trust’s commitment to enabling a national vision for training** based on generous gospel partnership.
- **The development area of the Trust’s work has a number of aspects:** encouraging churches to see training as a priority, developing the partnership training model between local churches and external training providers and developing training pathways and programmes. The Trust’s main focus is on Apprenticeship and Church Leader Programmes. We are working with training churches to develop high quality training across the country. This involves sharing best practice and resources.
- In this regard, **the Trust is building a new on-line resources hub for training churches.** The first phase of this will be completed by 31 March 2022.

- **Leaders in Training funded by the Trust meet together annually for a leadership and preaching conference.** These are peer groups of around 12. This is an important component in fostering the gospel partnership that will create a wider commitment to training. There are now four groups, with a fifth to be added in 2021-22. A growing team shares the leadership of these conferences: Paul Clarke (St Andrews Free Church), Rupert Hunt Taylor (Edinburgh North Church, Didasko), Andy Robertson (Charleston Community Church Dundee, Free Church and 20 Schemes), Roger Day (Chalmers Church Edinburgh), Hamish Sneddon (St Andrews Free Church), Ali Sewell (Haddington Community Church, Free Church) and Robin Sydserff (Chalmers Church Edinburgh).
- Recognizing a growing impetus to the Trust's work, in the year to March 2018 the trustees focused on increasing the Trust's support base by 75% (£166,000 compared to £95,000 in the previous year). From 2018-2020 the Trust reported a consistent level of income (2020: £168,000; 2019: £171,000; 2018: £166,000). **Once again, the trustees have focused on significantly increasing the Trust's support base and are pleased to report income of £302,000 for the year to March 2021, an increase of 80%.** Some of this is due to the timing of some material gifts received just before the year end, but the underlying trend is a significant increase in support.
- Looking ahead to the 2022-23 grant cycle, the Trust expects to see a significant increase in grant applications from quality candidates. **The Trust anticipates making grants of around £360,000. The Trust remains on course to reach its target recurring annual funding level of 100 training grants, totalling £500,000 by 2024-25.**
- The majority of the Trust's support is from Gospel Patrons, individuals, Trusts or Foundations giving at significant levels for 3-5 years. While this is a strategy we will continue to pursue in raising the needed support, we also want to expand our broad base of supporters.
- **The Trust is looking to increase its support base by 100 in 2022, and by a further 100 in 2023-24.** People will be invited to support the Trust as prayer partners and give £25 a month, joining with others in making a significant difference to the spiritual good of Scotland. This will increase annual support by £30,000. For 2022, the launch year, this will be matched by a generous gift from the Souter Charitable Trust. We are calling this the **2 Timothy 2 Appeal. The appeal will be launched in late January 2022.**
- The Trust recognises that scaling-up is not only financial. A comprehensive **'Scaling-up Review'** will be completed by June 2022. The review covers governance, infrastructure, resilience, leadership, staffing and succession.
- **Alan Paterson** was appointed as a trustee in autumn 2021. Alan is an elder in Bellevue Chapel, Edinburgh and was a partner with Baillie Gifford and Co. **David Vardy** retired as a trustee but continues to have a close involvement with the Trust as an adviser. Two other external advisers have been appointed: **Dan McKinlay** (Director, Firstfruits Gospel Foundation) and **David Macmillan** (Chief Customer and Innovation Officer, M&G plc). **Eleanor Dawson** is now working for the Trust three days a week as **Administrator**. **Fergus McCullough** was recently appointed in a part-time **Operations and Communications** role.

Please get in touch if you have any questions or comments. I would be delighted to hear from you. Once again, on behalf of the trustees, thank you for supporting the Trust.

Trusting you will know fresh joy this Christmastime in this glorious truth of Immanuel, God with us.

Warmly in Christ,



Robin Sydserff  
Chair of Trustees  
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