

Let's build a strong foundation for a better Bainbridge

For more than half a century, Helpline House has served as a sanctuary for island residents experiencing hardship of every kind; we serve one in ten people on Bainbridge! We provide an open door for neighbors helping neighbors and a clear path through rapidly changing times.

Beyond our existing food bank and counseling programs—both subject to severe space constraints—we're expanding to add youth counseling (ages 5–12), support for seniors, and housing-sustainability programs, all highlighted in a recent Community Needs Assessment.

The Helpline House Board has determined that expanding these programs and services is simply not possible in our current facility, which was built in 1983. Therefore, the Helpline Board has committed to constructing a new building on our existing property at 282 Knechtel to increase our space to approximately 12,500 square feet.



Summary of building-planning activities to date:

- A strategic planning and community/organizational needs-assessment process began in 2022, with an experienced consultant retained to facilitate the process.
- The four strategic services identified were:
 - Food pantry
 - Counseling services for families and individuals
 - Housing sustainability (new)
 - Community leadership and advocacy
- An architect was retained to assist with an inventory of existing space and to identify future needs; it was suggested that we approximately double our existing 5,557 square feet.
- Committees composed of Board members, community members, and consultants are managing design and construction process, as well as project fundraising.



- Approximately 90% of our annual operating budget comes from the Bainbridge community, and at least \$3.35 million must be raised during the community capital campaign for this project to proceed to the construction phase.
- In early 2023, Helpline House hired its first fundraising employee to help with this project. In future years, they will be involved in operational fundraising as we continue to grow.
- In April 2023, Helpline House initiated the Leadership Gift phase of the capital campaign with the assistance of our fundraising consultant and newly hired fund development officer. During this phase we'll be submitting government and foundation grant applications, as well as seeking leadership gifts from the Bainbridge community.
- As of September 2023, the estimated cost of the new ~12,500 square foot building is estimated to be \$11 million, with projected funding sources as follows (in millions):
 - Government grants: \$4M
 - Foundation grants: \$1.75 M
 - Helpline funds: \$1.9 M
 - Community support:
 - Leadership gifts (\$100K and up): \$1.5M
 - Major gifts (\$10K–\$99K): \$1.6M
 - Community gifts (up to \$10K): \$.25M
- Construction is projected to begin in the late 2024 or early 2025, with a projected 12–15 month construction period.

***With your help, we can build a new Helpline House
to serve Bainbridge Island for the next 50 years!***

Helpline House Board of Directors:

- Joan Hemphill, Board President
- Annie Hodges, Vice President
- Mark Siler, Treasurer
- Linda Stanahan, Secretary
- Tom Croker
- Rich Galowski
- Mev Hoberg
- Julie Matthews
- Wandee Pryor

The Board of Directors, volunteers, and employees of Helpline House thank you for 55 years of support for our efforts to provide comprehensive, professional services to any and all Bainbridge residents. **You're a pivotal part of our philosophy of *neighbors helping neighbors!***



Helpline House Highlights — 1968 to 2023

- 1968: Corinne Berg and others formed the “Fishline” food bank in Katie Janofsky’s garage. Employment and transportation services and a telephone-crisis hotline (“Helpline”) were provided by volunteers in these early years.
- 1975: Volunteers and employees provided marital, mental health, family, and personal counseling at 328 Madison.
- 1977: Fishline, Helpline, and Bainbridge Youth Services (BYS) operated under one roof at 115 Ferncliff.
- 1982: The property at 282 Knechtel was purchased and “Helpline House” construction was completed the following year.
- 1980’s: Kitsap County requested that Helpline House provide “community based” services to seniors and people being moved out of institutions.
- 1986: The Hodges family provided initial funding for the Helpline Endowment fund.
- 1988: The old barn was replaced by a new barn funded in large part by the Bainbridge Island Rotary Club.
- Early 1990s: The cost of housing was recognized as a challenge for lower income Bainbridge residents (spoiler: affordable housing is still a big problem!).
- 1991: 400 Ordway Elementary Schools students marched from Ordway to Helpline House on the final day of their first food drive.
- 1996: Services for infants, preschoolers, and their parents was expanded.
- 2002: Project Backpack was started and became an important supplemental food program for kids and families during the summer months. Project Happy Birthday for kids under 12 and the medical equipment lending program were both started.
- 2006: The lobby and food bank were remodeled to support self-service “shopping,” and a legal-services program was launched.
- 2010: The first Turkey Trot Run and fundraiser supplemented Helpline House’s Thanksgiving and Christmas meal and food services.
- 2018: Maria Metzler was hired as Executive Director to build the client-focused services started and nurtured by her predecessors. Helpline House celebrated 50 years of service to Bainbridge communities.
- 2020 and 2021: Helpline House responded to the extreme challenges of COVID by maintaining core services throughout the pandemic.
- 2023: Helpline added 2 new staff positions as identified in the strategic planning process and initiated planning and fund raising for the new building to better support the work of Helpline’s staff and volunteers in the Bainbridge community.