

# **Access to Accommodation Fund: Creating Housing Solutions in Local Communities**

## **Deadline 5pm, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity is committed to ensuring everyone has a safe place to call home and the support they need.

This new funding programme has been designed in direct response to [evidence](#) and insights from organisations and frontline workers, who continually report that insufficient housing options for people experiencing homelessness is one of the biggest challenges for frontline workers and the people they support.

In response to this need, the purpose of this new fund is to provide funding and support to enable smaller and grassroots organisations to unlock and create housing solutions they have identified within their local communities.

### **Who we are**

St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity exists so that homelessness is prevented. And that if it does occur, people receive the best possible support that enables them to secure and keep a safe place to live.

### **What we do**

We offer funding, for both [individuals](#) and [organisations](#), to help people access suitable accommodation and keep it.

We support frontline workers across the UK who are working to provide the best possible support to people facing homelessness, connecting this community through our frontline networks and training fund.

We share experiences and insights with local and national decision makers – amplifying the voices of frontline workers and the people they support.

### **How we do it**

We invest in emerging and promising solutions to homelessness around the UK, and scale these up where evidence shows they work.

We collaborate with, and invest in, frontline workers in the homelessness sector. And bring frontline workers together creating more opportunities for them to share their insights and expertise about what works best to support people experiencing homelessness.

We share what we learn from our work to encourage greater support for solutions to homelessness.

We engage the public to improve understanding of what homelessness is, how it happens and what we can do to address it. We work with funders, sharing what we know so that they can support effective solutions to homelessness. And we work with decision makers, local and national, to inform the policies and services that address homelessness in the UK.

### **Our funding strategy**

To support our goal that homelessness is prevented, and that if it does occur, people receive the best possible support that enables them to secure and keep a safe place to live, we have three outcome areas that we are looking to support through our funding:

- The identification of emerging practice
- Ensuring promising practice has the opportunity to be tested properly
- Supporting learning-based practice to scale

## Background to the Access to Accommodation Funding Programme

Over the past seven years St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity have undertaken an annual Frontline Worker Survey to identify and address gaps in support for people experiencing homelessness and the frontline workers that provide support. We have consistently heard that there is a need to improve access to accommodation for people experiencing homelessness.

In our [2024 Survey](#), 92% of frontline workers said that they found it difficult or very difficult to obtain 'suitable' housing for the people they are supporting. Frontline workers also told us that helping people to access accommodation is getting harder with 58% of workers reporting their ability to help people access appropriate accommodation had decreased (up from 42% in 2022). In response to our call for insights on this issue, three quarters of respondents mentioned the need for more accommodation and the shortage of affordable housing was repeatedly cited. Strong themes were also identified around community, social integration and connection as foundations that are often missing for those experiencing homelessness.

In response to the insights and feedback shared, our core focus will be smaller, locally embedded charities who work with people facing homelessness and have been struggling to access accommodation for those they are working with and so have been seeking to develop new options. The purpose of this new fund is to test projects and approaches that may have the opportunity for wider scale and impact whilst supporting organisations to create longer term options in the current housing crisis.

Alongside funding, we will convene peer networks to promote good practice and effective housing solutions that are rooted within communities across the sector as part of our wider influencing work. We will also ensure learning and evaluation is embedded within this programme, through an external learning partner, who will work with grant partners to capture the learning and evaluation from this programme. We are committed to reflecting on the learning that emerges to develop, share learning and shape future funding priorities.

## Funding criteria

St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity has made available up to £500k for smaller frontline organisations to fund projects that:

- **unlock or create housing solutions for people experiencing homelessness**
- are **locally led solutions**, developed and delivered by an organisation that is embedded within their community.
- are **needs focussed**, understanding the experiences of those facing homelessness and developing solutions that meet these needs.
- **involve people with experience of homelessness** in the review, design and/or delivery of the project.
- have the potential to create **longer-term impact** for both the organisation and/or local community.
- may have the scope to be replicated more widely across the sector to **help inform best practice**.

Please note that applications will be assessed against the criteria above and we encourage you to make reference to how your project meets these criteria within your application.

We are particularly interested to hear from projects that are working with communities impacted by exclusion and/or discrimination.

**This funding is available for organisations with an annual turnover of less than £2 million per year.**

Funding of up to £100k per organisation will be available which can be spent over a maximum of a 3-year period. We are intentionally not including more detailed guidance on timescales or budget expectations as we want to be guided by your individual needs and projects

The grant can be used flexibly according to the project needs, though it must be clear in the application how the funding will be used and over what length of time.

### **The types of things we might look to fund**

We are looking for projects that either unlock or create accommodation:

**Unlock existing accommodation:** for example making it suitable for a currently excluded demographic (such as adaptations and adjustments for individuals with a disability) or refurbishing an existing space to bring it back into use.

**Create new accommodation:** this might include things like converting existing property, working with a church, landlord or other partners to make new property available to them or developing a community lodgings approach.

We are particularly interested to hear from projects that may offer an effective scalable solution and/or have a strong learning focus. This could be an opportunity to test or pilot a solution in response to an identified local need or scale up an existing project that shows promise and is working well.

We are open to funding access to housing across the homelessness pathway, but please note we will not be looking to fund access through rent and deposit schemes – please see our [VRF fund](#) for more information about the support we provide in this area.

### **Learning and Influence**

We want this fund to be learning-led. That means we will provide support and resources to ensure:

**Learning takes place within projects:** Providing each grantee with the resources and support to gather evidence, reflect and make adaptations as it develops.

**Learning is shared between projects:** Creating opportunities for grantees to regularly connect so they can share the approaches they have used along with insights, challenges and successes that can benefit each other's work.

**Learning is evidenced from projects:** Capturing evidence about what has worked and what hasn't in relation to the fund's overall purpose, so this can be shared across the wider sector and influence practice, policy and future funding decisions.

To achieve this, grantees will be supported by an independent learning partner and evaluator which will be funded by us as part of the programme.

## Who we will fund

We recognise that there are many charities who would benefit from our support but, like any funder, we have a limit to the resources we have available. We want to be open and transparent and make best use of time by being clear in advance which charities and areas we will fund.

**Please note this fund is specifically focussed on supporting smaller, frontline organisations who work with people facing homelessness with an annual income of less than £2 million per year.**

We welcome applications from all parts of the UK. All applicants will need to:

- Be a registered charity (this can be as a CIO)
- Have a Board of at least three unrelated Trustees
- Have its own bank account
- Have free reserves of less than 12 months' operating costs
- Have at least one set of annual accounts published on the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, Charity Commission for England and Wales, Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator websites, having been delivering services for more than a year in the UK
- Have a track record of working with people experiencing homelessness
- Have a safeguarding policy in place – see below.

**Please note that we will not fund:**

- Rent in advance and tenancy deposit schemes. Please see our [VRF fund](#) for the work we do in this area.
- Move on projects that are focussed predominantly on access to the Private Rented Sector.
- Work that has already taken place.
- Organisations that have an annual income in excess of £2 million per year.

## Our approach to safeguarding

St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity is committed to promoting the safety of everyone that uses the services of the charities we fund and so will review your safeguarding arrangements and practice as part of our assessment. We recognise and take seriously our responsibility to promote the welfare of adults at risk and children, where we become aware of any safeguarding concerns. St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity has in place a safeguarding policy and internal processes of our own, to ensure that reported incidents are effectively managed, and our staff are kept safe.

## Next steps

Please complete the application form on pages 6 to 10 of this document, ensuring to include all relevant detail. If your project includes the purchase or refurbishment of a property, please complete the additional details in Appendix A on page 10.

We are working to the following timeframe. Please note that this may be subject to minor changes.

## **Programme Timeline**

**Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September – programme opens for applications**

**Information sessions for potential applicants to clarify funding criteria, talk through the process and answer any questions will be held on:**

**3<sup>rd</sup> October 11am -12am please register [here](#)**

**8<sup>th</sup> October 2pm-3pm please register [here](#)**

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 5pm** - Closing date for applicants. Unfortunately, late applications will not be considered.

**w/c 24<sup>th</sup> November** - Applicants will be contacted and advised on the outcome of their application.

**2<sup>nd</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> December** – Interviews will take place for shortlisted applicants

**23<sup>rd</sup> January 2026** - Final decisions made by St Martins-in-the-Fields Charity trustees

**w/c 26<sup>th</sup> January 2026** - Successful and unsuccessful applicants notified.

If you have any questions on this opportunity, please do not hesitate to contact Heather Sandover at [heather.sandover@stmartinscharity.org.uk](mailto:heather.sandover@stmartinscharity.org.uk)

## **Support during this process**

Please contact us to discuss any support you may need with completing this application form including any accessibility requirements or alternative formats. We will be providing two information sessions to ask any questions about the programme or application process. If you are unable to attend, please contact Heather to arrange an alternative call.