



Charity

# Annual Report

2024/2025



# Our Vision

**St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity is a homelessness charity that works UK-wide and year-round. Our vision is for everyone to have a safe place to call home and the support they need to keep it. Our work extends across all four nations – at the individual, community, regional, and national levels.**

**To achieve our vision, we work in three key areas:**

**We help individuals directly into new accommodation through the provision of grants.**

People who are at risk of losing their homes or urgently need to find a safe place to live often face significant costs at short notice. Through trusted partners, we provide grants quickly to help people secure their accommodation and the ongoing support – personal and financial – they need to keep it.

**We support and champion frontline workers and capture and share learning based on their insight and experiences.**

Key to helping people out of homelessness is the support of a trained and experienced frontline worker. We support, train and champion the role, value and wellbeing of frontline workers. We listen to the insight they offer into the challenges they face. We enable them to develop their skills and knowledge. And we offer opportunities for them to come together nationally and locally for support, solidarity and to share best practice.

**We test, develop and share solutions to key issues and build support for them with the public and policymakers.**

Through investment in a range of projects and sharing our learnings as trusted leaders in our field, we build support for those solutions with the public and policymakers.

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# CEO's Foreword

**In my first full year at St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity, it has been gratifying to see the impact of our work.**

**We awarded a record number of emergency grants, helping people into new accommodation, with 87% reporting that they now had a safe place to live and nearly three quarters saying they now don't worry about being evicted or forced to move.**

**We championed frontline workers, not only through our networks but significantly increasing our advocacy and influencing with and for them.**

Our Frontline Survey, always sobering in its assessment of the role and value but also challenges and concerns facing frontline workers, was a key tool to help influence the expansion of the Blue Light Card initiative to include homelessness sector workers.

We achieved significant media coverage of the survey findings and shared them with politicians and civil servants making the case for change. I was asked to co-chair a group of sector experts to provide advice directly to the homelessness minister on how to better support the frontline homelessness sector workforce.

Through the reach, expertise and understanding of our programmes and partnerships, we could take insight directly to the corridors of power in Whitehall and Westminster and through our Frontline Network partners to Governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and local councils.

Our work investing in charities and projects tackling key issues, causes and consequences of homelessness has developed, in particular around better tackling mental ill-health and homelessness together and a highlight was meeting the team in Wales to hear first hand how they were helping people in mental health crisis tackle housing issues they faced.

This is all possible thanks to the wide range of partners we



are privileged to work with and the support of those who fund and donate to us, particularly through our cherished partnership with BBC Radio 4. It has been heartening to visit and meet with many partners this year. The St Martin's Trustees and staff team have navigated a number of challenges this year but we are now in a stronger place to move forward on a stable and sustainable basis as a charity.

Together we are able to ensure that thousands of people across the UK have a safe place to call home. Thank you for your support, and please do read on to find out more about what you have helped us to achieve.

# 2024/25 Objectives – What We Achieved

## We committed to:

- Spending £2m on emergency grants to enable people to quickly access new and more suitable accommodation or staying in their existing homes.  
**We provided 4,164 grants to people to access accommodation, and 819 to prevent evictions. That's a total of 4,983 emergency grants that prevented or alleviated homelessness. The total spent on Vicar's Relief Fund (VRF) last year was £2,006,412.**
- Investing in projects that focus on providing specialist mental health support.  
**We have continued to fund three projects directly focused on providing mental health support in each of London, South Wales and Edinburgh helping them deliver and develop their approaches.**
- Continuing to support and champion frontline workers, their role and value, ensuring we are seeking opportunities to showcase the impact of the work they do and identifying ways to support their wellbeing.  
**Through our network of partners we brought together frontline workers to network, share, support and learn from each other through a range of events in local areas and nationally through our annual conference. Our training programme provided a range of sessions and support to help frontline workers develop their skills and improve their wellbeing.**
- Providing support and access to subsidised training to frontline workers to enable them to keep abreast of best practice and apply their work.  
**In 2024-25, 849 people attended free training through our training programme, resulting in more highly skilled frontline workers, who have been able to develop in their roles. This means better outcomes for the people they work with.**



- Using the findings from the Annual Frontline Worker Survey to deliver more activity to advocate on behalf of frontline workers to ensure the Government decision makers and funders are aware of the challenges and solutions available to support people experiencing homelessness.  
**We disseminated our Frontline Worker Survey widely, securing national media coverage, speaking at conferences and sharing via newsletters and social media and directly with politicians and civil servants. The findings around the pressures facing frontline workers informed the expansion of the Blue Light Card to include homelessness sector workers. Our statistics were used in a joint letter to the Chancellor making the case for investment in homelessness services. Our CEO was invited to co-chair a group of homelessness sector experts to make recommendations directly to the homelessness minister on how to better support the homelessness sector workforce as part of the Government's new homelessness strategy.**
- Support the development of a new Frontline Fund informed by learnings from Annual Frontline Worker Survey  
**As our Frontline Fund grant comes to an end, we have been developing proposals for a new funding programme, which aims to unlock new accommodation for people who have experienced homelessness. The focus of this funding opportunity is directly influenced by what we have heard from frontline workers through our survey and programmes around the challenges in accessing accommodation. It launches in the Autumn of 2025.**

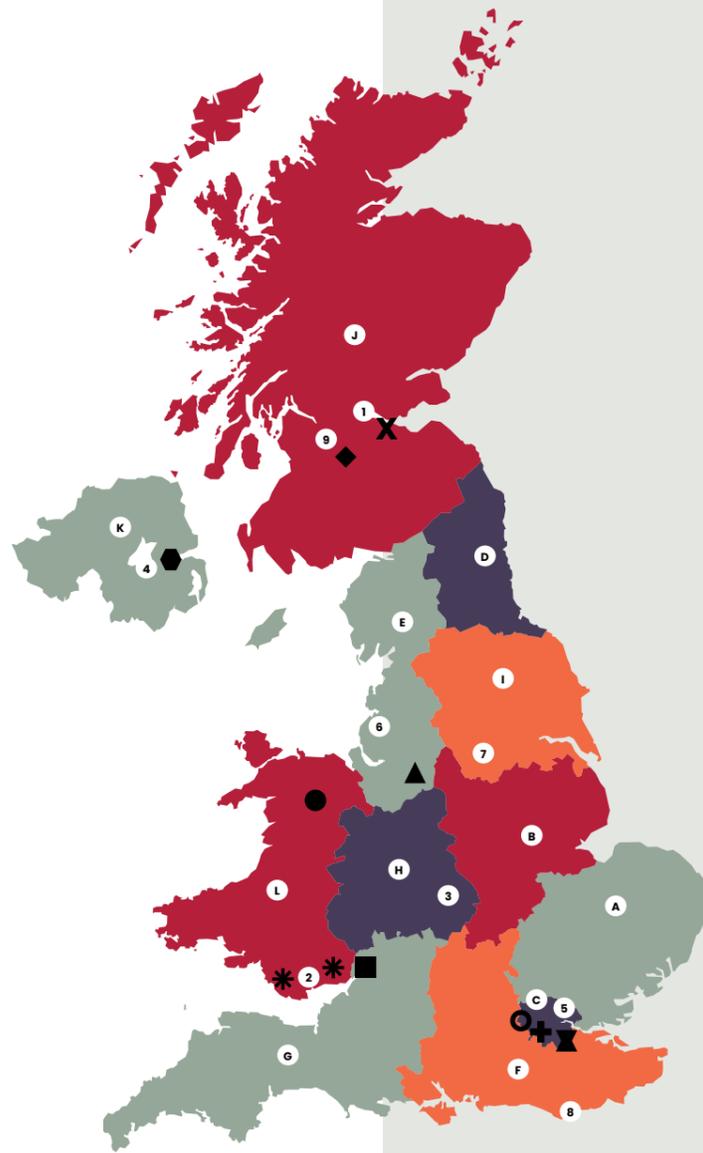


# Our Reach

**We support people across the UK – including both frontline workers and the people they support.**

**Our emergency grants can be accessed in all four nations, ensuring people can access a safe place to call home when they need it the most.**

We bring frontline workers together through our local Frontline Networks, which span England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. We fund projects in partnership with organisations across the UK, each working in innovative ways to tackle homelessness and change lives.



## Frontline Networks and partners facilitating them

- 1. Scottish Frontline Network**  
*Cyrenians*
- 2. Frontline Network Wales**  
*Cymorth Cymru*
- 3. Coventry Frontline Network**  
*Coventry Citizens Advice*
- 4. Northern Ireland Frontline Network**  
*Homeless Connect*
- 5. Migrant Homelessness Frontline Network**  
*Praxis*
- 6. Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde Frontline Network**  
*Streetlife Trust*
- 7. Leeds Womens Homelessness and Housing Frontline Network**  
*Basis Yorkshire in partnership with Together Women and Leeds Womens Aid*
- 8. Brighton and Hove Frontline Network**  
*Justlife*
- 9. All in for Change**  
*Cyrenians, Homeless Network Scotland and Scottish Community Development Centre*

## Funding to Organisations through our Frontline Fund

- Caring in Bristol in Bristol
- TGP Cymru in Wales
- ◆ North west of Glasgow
- ▲ akt in Manchester
- ✕ Pathway in London
- Extern in Northern Ireland
- ✚ The Connection at St Martin's in London

## Mental Health Fund

- ✕ Rowan Alba in Edinburgh
- MAC-UK in London
- \* Platform in Cardiff

## Emergency grants regional breakdown

Emergency (VRF) grants breakdown:

- A East of England £145,584
- B East Midlands £220,505
- C London £84,612
- D North East £70,371
- E North West £259,594
- F South East £50,144
- G South West £310,345
- H West Midlands £245,105
- I Yorkshire & Humber £177,230
- J Scotland £64,692
- K Northern Ireland £59,428
- L Wales £92,567

## PROJECTS

# Helping Individuals Directly Out of Homelessness

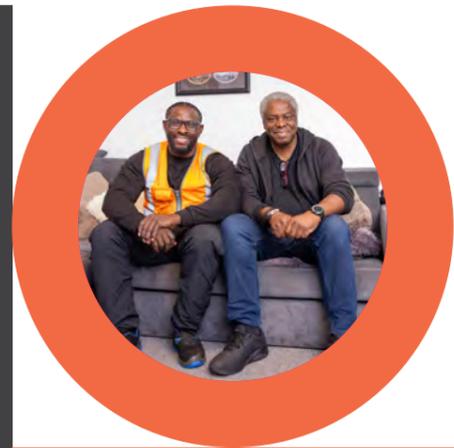
## Emergency Grants

The cost of accessing new accommodation can be a huge barrier for people, that could otherwise leave or make them homeless. Saving for a deposit for people who may be unable to find work, or simply in a low-paid role can be next to impossible, with living costs soaring at the same time. And with high demand for housing, when a suitable property is found, deposits and rent in advance are needed quickly to secure it.

That's why we provide emergency grants across the UK through our VRF programme, to enable people to access homes. Removing the cost barriers means that people can find safety and stability more quickly. Often, people are ready for independent living, but may be stuck in temporary accommodation, sofa-surfing, or even rough sleeping, due to a lack of funds. Frontline workers all over the UK can apply to us for an emergency grant of up to £500 on behalf of the people they are supporting, to help them to move into new accommodation. We will turn the application around within 5 days. Frontline workers could also apply for grants to prevent evictions, and this is included in the figures in this report.

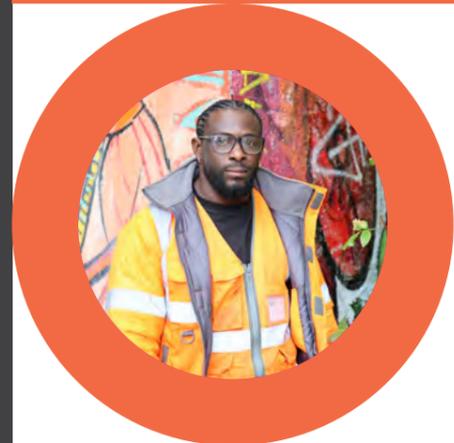


**"This grant has been life changing. It meant that our client could move off the streets and into safe, stable accommodation at a very critical time. Without it, he would still be rough sleeping with no access to basic facilities or safety. Having a roof over his head has given him a sense of dignity and stability, which is already helping him take positive steps forward. He is now attending English classes and has started the process of reuniting with his family. For us as a support organisation, the grant also filled a crucial financial gap that we couldn't otherwise meet. It's made a lasting difference not just in housing someone vulnerable, but in giving them hope and the tools to rebuild their life."**  
A frontline worker in Manchester



**In 2024-25, we spent £2,006,412 on 4,983 emergency grants, benefitting a total of 7,660 people.**

**This compares to £1,780,676 spent in 2023-24, on 4,508 grants.**



# Improvements to Our Emergency Grants Programme (VRF)

In our previous report, we committed to reviewing and developing our emergency (VRF) grants programme.

At the end of the 2024–25 year, our team made some improvements to the programme, reshaping it to ensure that we are maximising the impact of each grant.

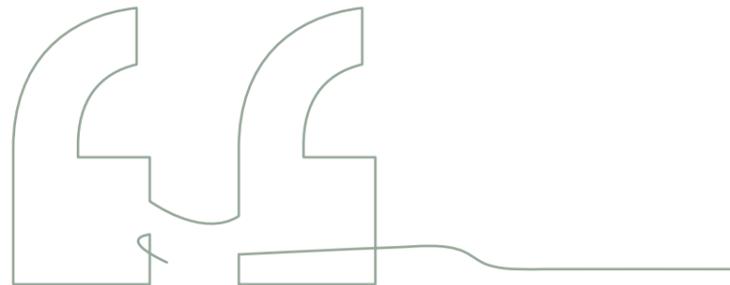
As part of the changes, going forwards in 2025–26 and beyond, we will focus on providing grants to enable people to access accommodation.

In parallel we plan to pilot a new approach to supporting people who have experienced homelessness to keep and sustain the accommodation they are in.

We have also made some changes to our eligibility, evidence and payment processes, to further ensure that our funds are allocated as effectively as possible.

## Longer-term impact

Feedback we collected from people supported in the last year illustrates that 87% of those helped felt they had a safe place to live, thanks to the grant.



**“My client was extremely grateful for the support from the VRF. He was unable to pay the full deposit and was at risk of losing the opportunity for this tenancy. He has now secured it and has a safe, secure home for him and his children, and he feels that he can now focus on his future.”**

A frontline worker in Northern Ireland

## PROJECTS

# Investing in Solutions to Homelessness

## The Personal Grants Project

We partnered with the Centre for Homelessness Impact, and other charities, to run The Personal Grants project.

The project is a ground-breaking trial, that is testing direct cash transfers as an intervention to support people out of homelessness. Key to the project is that it is the decision of the individual how to allocate or spend their resources.



We are funding this project as part of our commitment to invest in new and innovative solutions to homelessness, building on our long-standing emergency grants programme which provides funding via a frontline worker.

Direct cash transfers have a strong evidence base as an effective route out of poverty, but not many programmes have tested the impact of giving personal grants to people experiencing homelessness.

2024–25 saw the completion of the first phase, with the second phase beginning in July 2025. Phase two will see learnings from the initial phase implemented, such as a larger sample size to draw definitive conclusions.

Findings from the first phase show early positive benefits for participants. One beneficiary used the grant to pay off debts that were escalating as a consequence of non-payment. In their words:

**“It was such a relief – I don’t owe anybody anything. It was brilliant, such a great feeling. I hadn’t felt that way for ages...The money came just at the right time, just when I needed it, because I just wanted to get better. I am really motivated to get myself back to normal...I am much better now and have not had a panic attack in God knows how long, probably since then to be quite honest. About a week before the money came in was probably my last panic attack where I couldn’t control my breathing. I could feel it instantly just lift off my shoulders. When I saw that money in the account I was just – oh my God – and then I went and paid all the debts off. It just felt like – freedom!”**

## The Frontline Fund

We funded six projects on a three year basis, within charities working regionally, across the four nations of the UK, to develop and provide specialist support to key groups of people experiencing homelessness.

Most of our Frontline Fund partnerships came to an end in 2024-25, but the funding they received has enabled the organisations to embed new approaches that will be sustained into the future. These charities developed and provided services tackling key issues and challenges facing people experiencing homelessness, such as legal support, counselling, support for groups such as young people and people who have recently left prison.

**In 2024-25, 471 people were supported across the six projects:**

<p>Caring in Bristol in Bristol, supporting young people</p>  <p>Caring in Bristol</p>	<p>TGP Cymru in Wales, working with young people and mental health issues</p>  <p>PLANT A THEULUOEDD CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</p>	<p>Legal Services Agency in Scotland, supporting people leaving the criminal justice system</p>  <p>LSA Legal Services Agency Doing the Right Thing, the Right Way</p>
<p>akt in Manchester, to develop new approaches to supporting trans individuals</p>  <p>akt</p>	<p>Pathway in London, to improve healthcare for people experiencing homelessness</p>  <p>Pathway Homeless &amp; Inclusion Health</p>	<p>Extern in Northern Ireland, helping people with mental ill-health and experiences with the criminal justice system</p>  <p>extern CHANGING LIVES EVERY DAY</p>

## Spotlight on Lsa in Scotland

**Funded by St-Martin-in-the-Fields Charity's Frontline Fund, LSA's Disrupting Cycles of Disadvantage: Early Intervention in Homelessness Project sought to establish weekly outreach clinics in HMP Greenock and HMP Low Moss, providing specialist legal assistance on housing issues for those entering prison and those preparing for their release.**

Some of LSA's clients, like Fred\*, are unable to pay their rent whilst in prison, causing eviction proceedings to be raised. Fred accessed LSA's services whilst in prison and facing eviction by his landlord, a local authority.

Given the length of his sentence, Fred's Universal Credit payments stopped, and he accumulated rent arrears. Fred lived alone, and had no one on the outside who could help him with his arrears. He also had mental health issues.

LSA's team met with Fred in prison and agreed to represent him. A decree for eviction had already been granted, so they submitted a minute for recall of decree which argued that it was unreasonable to evict Fred. LSA explained that he was due to be released soon and would reclaim Universal Credit and Adult Disability Payment to repay his arrears.



**"Through bringing early legal advice and representation into secure settings, we've been able to reach people before crisis becomes catastrophe. These outcomes were made possible by the funding from St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity, whose belief in this work enabled real, meaningful results."**

Staff team at Legal Services Agency, who we fund through the Frontline Fund

Further, they explained that if Fred were to be evicted, he would be homeless. He would then need to apply to the local authority for accommodation as a homeless person, which they would be legally obligated to provide.

The decree for eviction was recalled, and the case was continued. This meant that Fred avoided homelessness upon his release and had an opportunity to pay back his rent arrears.

\*Name changed to protect privacy



## Elvira's Story

**Elvira, supported by Rowan Alba, volunteered to take part in our BBC Radio 4 Christmas Appeal in 2024. We were honoured to share her story, which shed light on the importance of psychological support to enable people to move towards independent living.**

Three years ago, Elvira's relationship with her partner broke down after she suffered threats and abusive language by him. She contacted her council and was able to move into a women's supported accommodation home run by Rowan Alba, where she stayed for a couple of years.

When Elvira first moved in she was "very scared, because obviously I wasn't used to living in this type of environment". She could not leave her room due to fear. She tiptoed around if she did need to leave her room, as she was worried something would happen. She even got scared when a staff member knocked on her door.

Now a year later Elvira has moved out from the supported accommodation and has moved into a flat of her own.

She has already made friends with her neighbours who have helped her settle in to the new flat and area. She is really appreciative of the support she got from Sarah, with their support she has worked through so much of her trauma and has reached a place where she can live independently, she is leaving the house and in her own words she can 'just breathe'.

Elvira has also been able to travel abroad to see her family, something she wasn't able to do before due to the control that she faced in her previous relationship. She is now looking forward to travelling a lot more. She is looking forward to Christmas and will spend it with her parents. She is excited about spending as much time as she wants at her parents and enjoying the day with her friends and family.

In the future, after she's settled and spent some time in her lovely new flat, she has goal of training as an English teacher, so she can teach English as a foreign language abroad, hopefully in either Korea, Japan, or China!



**"This works because we're bringing psychology to where it's needed. The nice thing about this post is that I'm really embedded here. I'm coming in and I'm getting to know them very gradually – sitting having cups of coffee, playing games with them, maybe going for a walk with them. We're building trust, and engaging more."**

Sarah, Clinical Psychologist at Rowan Alba's Psychology project

## Mental Health Fund

**We heard continuously from frontline workers that additional mental health support for people experiencing homelessness was needed.**

So, we established the Mental Health Fund to provide multi-year grants to three organisations, to develop innovative and targeted support around mental health and homelessness together and outside of healthcare settings.

### **This year we invested in:**

- Rowan Alba (Scotland): to embed a clinical psychologist in two supported accommodation services to deliver mental health support to people with long-term experience of homelessness and trauma.
- MAC-UK/Look Ahead (London); to provide an integrated team of psychologists, practitioners, youth workers, and academics in two of Look Ahead's supported accommodation services for homeless young people aged 16-25.
- Platform (Wales): to provide one-to-one coaching support (including advocacy and connection to relevant services and community resources) for people transitioning from 24 hour staffed mental health crisis houses, back into the community.

## The Homeless Practice Incubator

**Homeless Link continue to identify emerging practice and explore and provide practical resources for the sector to platform and/or embed new or proven approaches and innovations to tackle stubborn issues.**

In 2024/25 Homeless Link identified 138 emerging practices (through proactive and reactive methods) bringing the total recorded practices to 186, all of which have guided and shaped broader work.

Homeless Link have also delivered two Innovation Forums on Move on/PRS access and Staff Wellbeing and explored in depth seven practice themes (including modular housing, AI, prison release, compassion-informed practice, care provision, legislative theatre and critical time intervention).



## Carla's Story

**After two decades of rough sleeping, Carla found safety and stability at a women-only hostel with the support of her key worker, Chloe, and The Connection at St Martin's.**

Carla came to The Connection at St Martin's after twenty years of on-and-off rough sleeping. She was sleeping in a tent near the Strand, strategically placing her tent outside of restaurants with heaters, to try to get a bit of warmth.

She first became homeless due to a relationship breakdown, which led to a spiral of drinking and drug use. And from here, she faced two decades of instability.

Rough sleeping as a woman comes with its own specific set of dangers. As a woman alone, Carla was unfortunately well aware of this, and had to have her own safety on her mind at all times.

"I was constantly having to be alert. I used to drink a lot back then too, I was blocking a lot of it out."

This lack of safety was a catalyst for Carla in approaching The Connection for support. When she did, she was assigned a key worker, Chloe. Chloe's immediate priority was to get Carla off the streets, and into a safe, secure home. It took some time to build up trust, and build a relationship with Carla, and during this time she used The Connection's services. She was able to access hot food and drinks, use the laundry room, and use the showers. She also attended The Connection's women-only group on Wednesdays, a safe space for women to access support.

Once Chloe was able to gain Carla's trust, she secured her a room in a women-only hostel in central London.

"If it wasn't for Chloe, I wouldn't be where I am now."

At the hostel, Carla found safety and stability. With her own space, she was able to look after herself, and crucially, have access to showers, cooking facilities, and a warm bed. She also enjoying taking part in activities at the hostel, provided by staff at The Connection, particularly the art classes and gardening classes.



Carla also volunteered to take part in our BBC Radio 4 Christmas Appeal in 2024. As of late 2025, Carla will soon be taking the next exciting step in her journey - moving into her very own flat. She's delighted to have her own space and with the independence this will bring. Carla says the thing she's looking forward to the most is the peace and quiet.

Carla will be supported by Genevieve, a Solo Homes support worker from The Connection. Genevieve has already helped Carla get to know her new area in East London and connected her to local support services.

Carla is happy, positive, and excited about the future - and we're so proud to celebrate this new beginning with her!



## The Connection at St Martin's

**Rough sleeping across the UK is at an all-time high, with Westminster having the highest number of people sleeping rough compared to other local authorities in the UK.**

That's why we continued to support our partner and neighbour, The Connection at St Martin's, in 2024-25. The Connection is a day-centre in central London, that works with people as they recover from life on the streets and move towards a meaningful, fulfilling future.

With our support we are helping The Connection to develop new responses and services to help engage and support rough sleepers. These services exist to improve access to healthcare and accommodation, and to help people to move away from life on the streets.

With our help, The Connection have been able to:

- Provide 1,075 health appointments to people sleeping rough, including dentistry, podiatry, substance use, access to a tuberculosis van, Homeless Health Service (provided by the NHS) and counselling. People who sleep rough are far more likely to have additional health needs.
- Provided 152 psychological support sessions for clients. 70% of people experiencing homelessness face mental health issues.
- Provided 271 staff support sessions. Frontline homelessness work can be tough, and over time, staff can face vicarious trauma and burn-out.
- Support 99 people into new homes.
- Support 67 people to keep their homes.



# Supporting Frontline Workers

**We know that key to helping someone out of homelessness or to prevent it in the first place, is having a skilled frontline worker. They reach out, engage, build a supportive relationship and work with other agencies to ensure they provide the support their clients need. This is only possible when frontline workers are valued and supported to do their jobs, but too often this is not the case – that is why we champion frontline workers across the UK, directly and by working with our Frontline Network partners.**

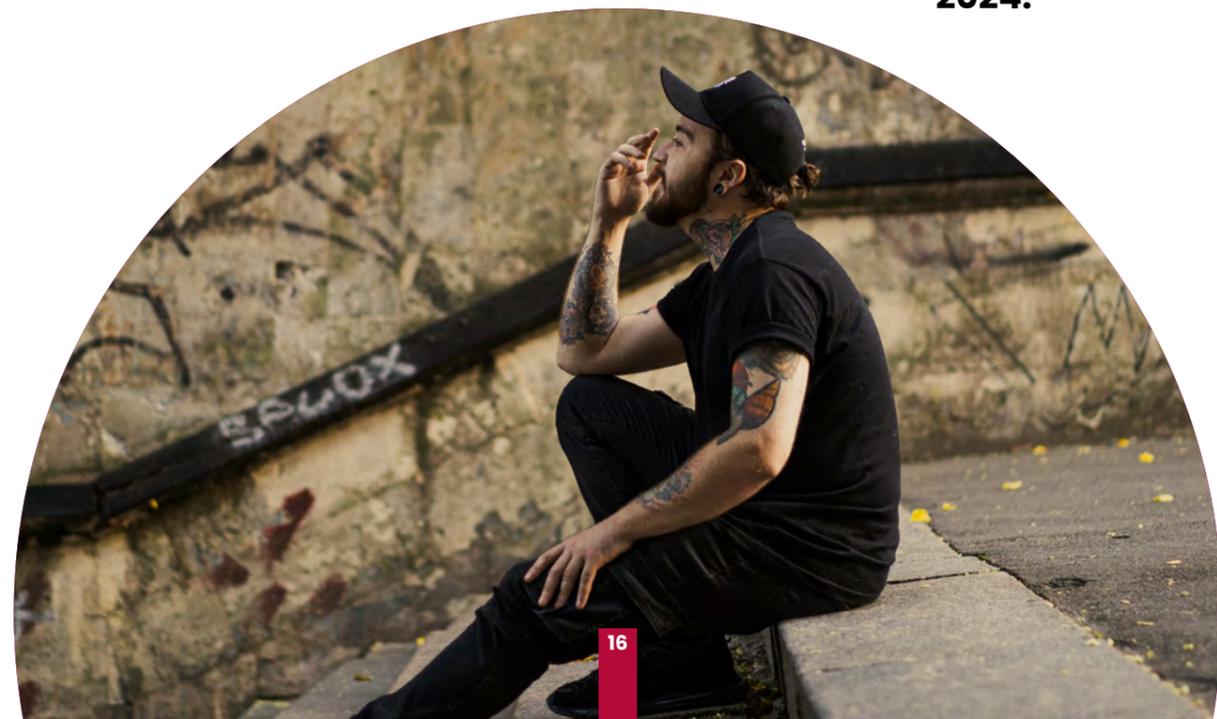
## Key figures

**1,006**  
attendees  
at Frontline  
Network events  
across the UK

**849**  
Training fund  
and outsourced  
training  
attendees

**370**  
Conference  
attendees,  
compared  
to 350 in the  
previous year

**1,100**  
Frontline  
Worker Survey  
respondents,  
report  
published  
September  
2024.



## Frontline Networks

**Through our Frontline Network, we partner with organisations across the UK to facilitate local networks that bring frontline staff together to share resources, network, and provide training.**

We also work with them to use their knowledge to influence decision makers and funders in their nation or region to understand the issues facing frontline workers and to make the case for changes in funding, support, training, recognition and pay so they are better able to do their jobs and improve their wellbeing.

Frontline staff across the UK work hard and tirelessly to achieve the best outcomes they can for people, and they do it because they really care. This work can often be isolating and exhausting. We believe that through networking with other frontline workers in your area, it is possible to break down the silos that frontline workers all too often find themselves working in.

Local Frontline Network training topics have included:

- Gambling Harm and Homelessness by The Scottish Frontline Network, facilitated by Cyrenians.
- Suicide Prevention Training, by the Blackpool, Wyre & Fylde Frontline Network, facilitated by the Streetlife Trust.



## Bringing Frontline Workers Together – Our National Conference

**Every year the Frontline Network Conference brings together hundreds of frontline workers from across the UK, for a day of interactive sessions, run by a range of expert speakers from across the sector. Our 2024 conference's theme was Strength in Community, and was attended by 370 people.**

Our conference is shaped directly by the first-hand knowledge and expertise of frontline workers, as highlighted in our Annual Frontline Worker Survey.

It is an opportunity for frontline colleagues to get together, learn, share and access training resources that they otherwise might not be able to. Our 2024 conference included sessions on topics such as health inclusion and exclusion, mental health and housing, and hoarding.



**“It has given me hope that I am not so alone and there is work being done out there to stand up for the sector and value of our roles within housing and support.”**

FLN conference attendee



## Access to Training

**Having skilled frontline workers, who have had access to professional development, is crucial to the outcomes achieved for people experiencing homelessness.**

Accessing training though, can be tricky. Our Training Programme provides free, high-quality taught courses, skills development grants and subsidised accredited training to support frontline worker skills development. Many frontline homelessness organisations are under-funded, and have very little budget for professional development. So, through our training programme, staff in the sector can access training for free.

### We offer:

- A training fund, where frontline workers can apply for grants to cover training for themselves or for their wider team.
- An outsourced training programme, covering topics such as psychologically informed environments, trauma-informed care, support options for people with no recourse to public funds (NRPF), and drug and alcohol awareness.
- A 50% subsidy to Homeless Link's Level 3 Certificate in Providing Homelessness Services



**"I think the Training Fund is a fantastic fund, one that I encourage others to use. We have smaller services in Northern Ireland, with ever-increasing expenses in the Community and Voluntary Sector that could not cover the costs of training otherwise."**

A frontline worker who attended Conflict Management Training



## Training fund spotlight: Strengthening Lived Experience Leadership in Northern Ireland

**Nikki, a lived-experience coordinator at Homeless Connect used the Training Fund to strengthen lived experience leadership in Northern Ireland.**

After completing the OCN Level 3 in Housing Advice, Nikki is now better equipped to support service users, influence policy, and ensure that the voices of those who've experienced homelessness are at the heart of decision-making.

"I have lived experience myself, having used a few of these services when I needed support. I joined Homeless Connect as a participant in a peer support project for people experiencing substance use. From there I began working part time as a peer support worker and gradually made my way up to the role of co-ordinator."

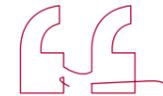
Nikki explained that the training has greatly improved her knowledge of the housing sector in Northern Ireland, empowering both staff and participants to better understand and respond to the sector's challenges.

"Working with people with lived experience is a new way of working and thinking. When supported appropriately we can turn negative life experiences around and begin to seek creative solutions to reoccurring issues that we see across the sector."



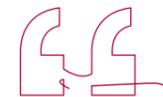
**"Frontline Network having this fund enables workers in homelessness to access training that otherwise they wouldn't be able to access. The process was quick, and simple - not onerous at all."**

A frontline worker who attended Conflict Management Training



**"Thank you. The entire process was simple which is a bonus when so much in this line of work feels heavy! We need every penny we have so the fact that you have lightened the load for us is huge."**

A frontline worker who attended Conflict Management Training



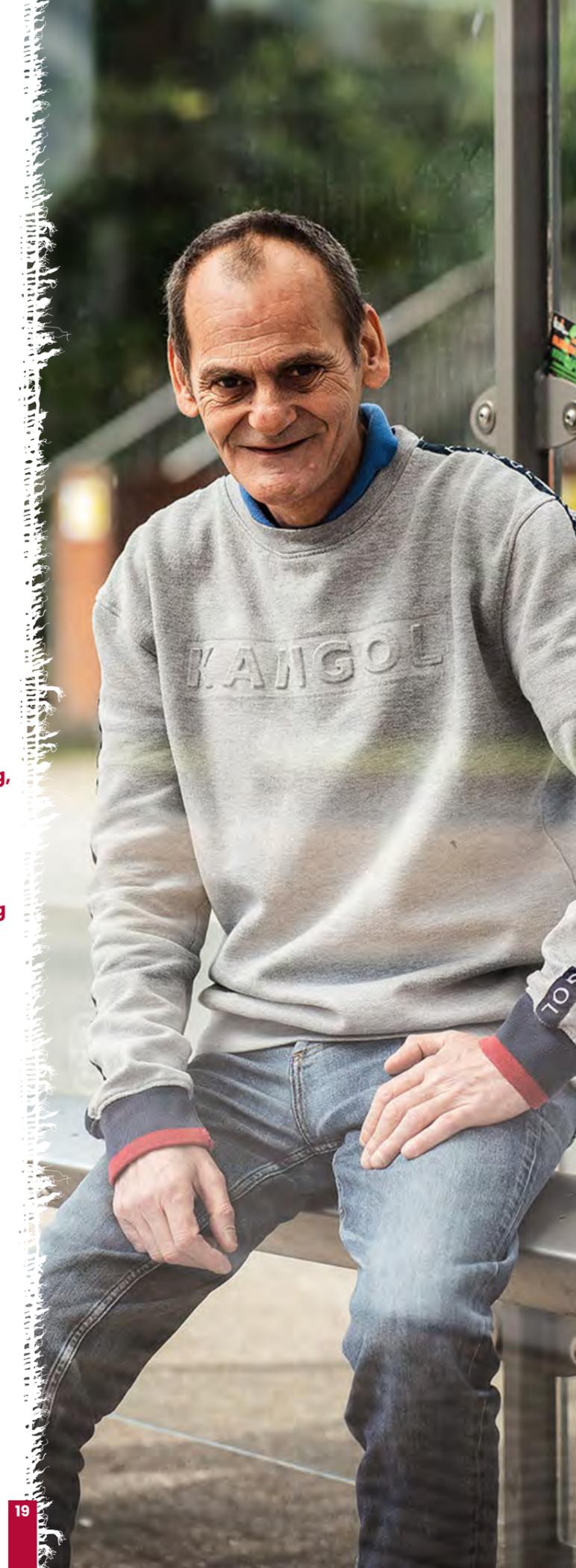
**"The funding received from the Frontline Network was pivotal in providing this training, as without it we would not have the funds to have provided it. Also with the funding the team could attend the training together and we were also able to make the training bespoke by adding specific examples and scenarios related to the experiences of young people that the service supports."**

A frontline worker who attended Strengths Based Approaches Training



**"Many of the staff here are new to the sector and needed crisis management and de-escalation training urgently to run our drop in safely. They now feel safe and confident to deal with verbally or physically aggressive situations and have a deeper understanding of some of the issues people we see may present with and what the processes and protocols around these are internally."**

A frontline worker who attended Conflict Management Training



# Advocating for change

**We use our reach and the insight we gain from our programmes and partnerships to advocate for change, capturing learning and sharing it to improve practice and policy across the sector, and to raise concerns with local and national governments in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales.**

Our Impact Team gathers and analyses data, learning and insight from our Frontline Network partners and our other programmes and the team also runs our Annual Frontline Worker Survey, the largest collection of frontline worker data, insight, and experience in the UK.

Over 1,100 frontline workers responded to our survey in 2024 from across the UK, with key findings including:

- 84% of homelessness workers reported an increased demand for their services over the previous 13 months
- 92% reported finding it difficult or very difficult to obtain 'suitable' housing for the people they are supporting
- 47% said their ability to prevent homelessness had decreased (up from 33%)
- 64% reported their role has a negative impact on their wellbeing (58% in 2022)
- Over half of homelessness workers were struggling to pay their bills and nearly a quarter (23%) worried about becoming homeless themselves

The findings on the cost of living and other pressures impacting on the wellbeing of frontline workers were particularly important and we worked with the Royal Foundation and other partners to expand access to the Blue Light Card discount programme to homelessness sector workers to help reduce their living costs as well as demonstrate how they were valued.

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We secured coverage of the survey in the Independent, Express, Inside Housing, the Big Issue and local radio. And we shared the survey findings and the issues raised with civil servants, MPs, the All Party Parliamentary Group on homelessness and presented at conferences across the UK. Using the findings we joined with charities across the homelessness sector to call for the Chancellor to invest in homelessness services in the Budget, and further lobbying in advance of the Spending Review.

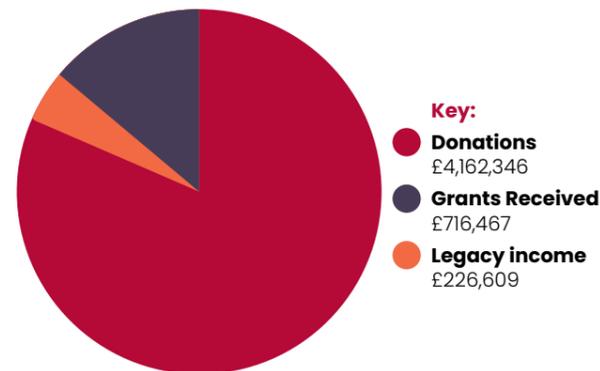
We also raised with MPs the homelessness implications of other government policies, particularly proposed cuts and changes to disability benefit to ensure they were understood and the case for mitigations considered. As a result of our Frontline Survey, and our wider work supporting and championing frontline workers, our CEO was invited to co-chair a Task and Finish group of sector experts looking at how better to strengthen and support frontline workers. The recommendations were shared and tested with our Frontline Network partners and then presented them directly to the homelessness minister to inform her work developing the Government's new strategy for tackling homelessness in England.

In addition to our own influencing our Frontline Network partners seek to influence policy and practice in their own areas. In Wales our partner, Cymorth Cymru, gathered feedback and insight from over 100 frontline workers' experiences of supporting people experiencing mental health problems. This information was collated into a report and submitted to the Welsh Government to help shape their Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and another project was central to a report of the Senedd highlighting the important of supporting frontline workers.

The findings of the Frontline Worker Survey and our other insight informs and shapes the programmes and support we offer ourselves to frontline workers, particularly our training and the sessions we organise at our Annual Conference, which brought together over 400 frontline workers from across the UK to network, share and discuss issues and learning.

# How We Raise Our Funds

Everything we achieved this year was only possible thanks to the generosity of our supporters. Their commitment continues to drive our mission: ensuring that everyone has a safe place to call home.



## The Christmas Appeal

The BBC Radio 4 St Martin-in-the-Fields Christmas Appeal has been running for nearly 100 years, making it one of the longest-standing partnerships dedicated to supporting people affected by homelessness.

The theme for the 2024 appeal, 'My Wish – A safe place to call home should never be too much to wish for,' reflected the hope of those wishing for a Christmas different from the one they were facing.

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the appeal raised over £2 million to support people facing homelessness.

"My wish for the new year is to keep my home and live here forever. I'm very happy here." John, emergency grant (VRF) recipient

## Our Philanthropic Partners

We are fortunate to work with a number of valued partners whose support strengthens our work across all areas.

### We extend our particular thanks to

The Julia Rausing Trust  
 Ali and May Mosawi  
 Oak Foundation  
 Sir Howard and Lady Stringer  
 Trevor Fenwick  
 The George Michael Fund  
 Frances Jacob

We also recognise the generosity of supporters who chose to leave a gift in their will. Legacy giving continues to be an important source of income, allowing us to build a more secure future for the people we support.

Over the past year, legacy gifts have had a lasting impact, helping to improve the lives of people experiencing homelessness now and in the future. We are deeply grateful to all who supported us in this way. To remember St Martins-in-the-Fields in your will please visit our website: [smitfc.org/leave-a-gift](https://smitfc.org/leave-a-gift)



# Objectives for The Next Year

In the year April 2025 – March 2026 we will continue to deliver against our five-year strategy. In this period, we commit to:



1. Reviewing and developing our emergency (VRF) grants programme, drawing from our learning and evaluation, to ensure it continues to best enable people to quickly access new accommodation or sustain their existing homes.
2. Supporting new ways of helping individuals who have experienced homelessness to develop and progress through investing in the Personal Grants project which is testing the effectiveness of personalised cash grants for individuals to help them exit homelessness permanently.
3. Continuing to support & champion frontline workers, their role and value, directly and through investing in our Frontline Network partners and our national conference, and through providing subsidised training to frontline workers to enable them to keep abreast of best practice and apply it in their work.
4. Developing approaches to supporting the wellbeing of frontline workers through a test and learn grants programme.
5. Capturing the role, value, views and concerns of frontline workers through our survey and using it to influence policy and practice to better prevent and resolve homelessness and support frontline workers.
6. Continuing to Invest in projects that focus on providing specialist mental health support alongside homelessness assistance, ensuring learning is captured and shared.
7. Developing and launching a new funding programme to help charities unlock sources of accommodation for people experiencing homelessness, drawing from the learning of our previous Frontline Fund, the Frontline Worker Survey and ours and others' work.
8. Developing the charity, our income, programmes, systems and people so we can deliver our mission as efficiently and effectively as possible.

St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity is a homelessness charity that works UK-wide and year-round. Our vision is for everyone to have a safe place to call home and the support they need to keep it. Our work extends across all four nations – at the individual, community, regional, and national levels.

To achieve our vision we work in three linked areas: We help individuals directly into new accommodation through the provision of grants.

We support and champion frontline workers and capture and share learning based on their insight and experiences.

And we test, develop and share solutions to key issues and build support for them with the public and policymakers.



St  
Martin  
in  
the  
Fields

Charity

**St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity**

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