

# Introduction to Church Homeless Charity



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# Introduction to CHT

**Church Homeless Charity is a grant giving charity that helps thousands of people affected by homelessness to rebuild their lives each year.**

There are so many reasons someone may end up sleeping on the streets. It may be the breakdown of a relationship, the result of domestic violence, abuse, problems with addiction, mental or physical health issues; the list goes on.

Even more people end up homeless but are invisible to us; sleeping on friends sofas, in hostels and shelters, and insecure temporary accommodation. Approximately 1 in every 200 people in England are homeless. Every homeless individual's story is unique, and at Church Homeless Charity we have learned that anyone could - at some point in their lives - end up homeless.



**So what are we doing about it? At Church Homeless Charity, our grants are as unique as the people we help; assessed to give tailored support where it's most useful.**

That may mean paying for a single-mother's new oven so she can make healthy, nutritious meals for her children. It may mean paying for an art class for veterans, to help them readjust to civilian life and receive much-needed support. It could be something as simple as putting clean clothes on the back of someone who's spent years on the streets. It could be as complex as providing a Christmas present for 3000 people living in supported accommodation.

Church Homeless Charity has been supporting homeless people for over 130 years. We have always believed that a home is more than a roof over ones' head, it is a place to belong. We would like to make this year the year we help more people than ever, and we can do it with the help of people like you.

## A few special stories...



Following a traumatic childhood, Phil has had a long history of substance misuse. It grew worse throughout the years until it began to affect every area of his life and eventually it led to the breakdown of his marriage. His mental health continued to decline and he ended up homeless with nowhere to turn.

Years later, and Phil is now on the road to recovery, and is no longer sleeping rough. It is so important to him now to see his children and rebuild his relationship with them. He is an active guy and when Phil asked for a bike to visit his family more regularly, CHC were happy to provide one. Now Phil gets to see his children more and without worrying about the cost. *“It’s one less worry, and that really helps.”*



After a fall out with his parents, Malcolm was made homeless at a young age. A shy young man, he found the transition into supported living very hard. This was made all the more difficult by a spinal injury that led to him spending a lot of time alone in his room.

After he had surgery on his spine, Malcolm regained some mobility and lost a lot of weight. His Universal Credit payments of just £58 a week were not nearly enough for fitting clothes, which he was in desperate need of.

CHC purchased new clothes for Malcolm. Now he’s feeling more confident, and has managed to make friends. This grant took away a lot of worry for Malcolm, and now he’s focusing on finding a place of his own and a job.



John, resident at King George’s hostel

At King George’s hostel in London, residents have been making a lot of noise about how much they enjoy music therapy.

Jassen, a facilitator in the studio, thinks it makes a big difference: *“Someone can be having a really tough day, then they come down to the studio and they can work on their music. It gives them a sense of purpose and joy.”*

Church Homeless Charity got to see first-hand the positive impact music therapy has. John, a new resident that CHC supported to get a new passport, came down to the studio for the first time during our visit. It was incredible watching him open up and express himself, along with making some excellent music with the help of Jassen and a volunteer.

# Reasons to be cheerful

Although these are difficult times, there are still so many reasons to be cheerful. Over recent years we've seen innovative art, some amazing fundraising, and so many beautiful gardens at homeless services across the country.



Gardening at Wigan-based scheme

At a Wigan-based scheme for former rough sleepers, residents have found solace and engagement in a group gardening project. The initiative, funded through a grant from Church Homeless Charity, has helped to reinforce a sense of community and purpose among the participants.

The grant of £300 was used to purchase gardening tools, seeds and plants, facilitating a four-week program of gardening sessions. This hands-on activity began with clearing unkempt flower beds and has evolved into a communal effort to beautify their shared space.

The results have been amazing; transforming a messy environment into a source of pride, and uplifting the mental health of the residents. The joy of gardening has often proven therapeutic, encouraging confidence, creativity and bonding among participants at this scheme and elsewhere. This is especially crucial for those without traditional family support to rely on.



Grace at Lindsey Court

At Lindsey Court - a supported housing service in Suffolk for young parents - residents have been getting stuck in and learning how to prepare delicious, nutritious meals for themselves and their children.

Grace had always struggled to cook for herself, and would always panic that meat wasn't cooked through or that she was doing something wrong. After getting cooking lessons from the staff at Lindsey Court, she's now feeling much more confident. Grace recently cooked her first ever shepherds pie and it's already become a firm favourite in her household.

To support her new found passion for cooking, CHC funded a slow cooker and other kitchen appliances for Grace. It's made a big difference to her, and she can't wait to try out all sorts of new recipes in it. Helping young mums like Grace to be more confident in their skills is so important, particularly when they may not have family support to fall back on.

*"They are all very grateful for the funding, as are we to make this possible for our scheme."*



Riverside staff member taking part

A whopping 70 staff members at the Riverside group stepped up to the plate this June for their annual "Stretch for CHC" challenge. The challenge is now in its third consecutive year. It was first launched in June 2020 as a way of getting people out and about during lockdown, all while raising money for a good cause. In the last three years it has raised thousands of pounds for Church Homeless Charity.

From individual workouts to team fitness activities, the month was brimming with energy and enthusiasm. Participants paid £10 to enter, and supporters could donate towards the cause throughout. Whether by running, walking, cycling or otherwise exercising - participants "went the extra mile" for the cause.

This show of solidarity confirms that we can achieve great things when we join hands - or in this case, stretch our limbs! You too can help us to keep changing lives by taking part in your own fitness challenge. If you prefer a more sedentary way to make a difference, there's lots of ways you can fundraise. Visit our website for more information.

# How are we using your donations?



## Art and music workshops

Over **1000** hours of classes, from painting, to dancing, to making music.



## Outreach

Training and support to enable formerly homeless people to work with rough sleepers.



## Resettlement

**829** homeless people were helped to move into their own home.



## Therapeutic Gardening

More than **5,000** hours of therapeutic gardening, including how to grow food at home.



## Life Skills Classes

**3,819** hours of life skills classes including cooking and budgeting.



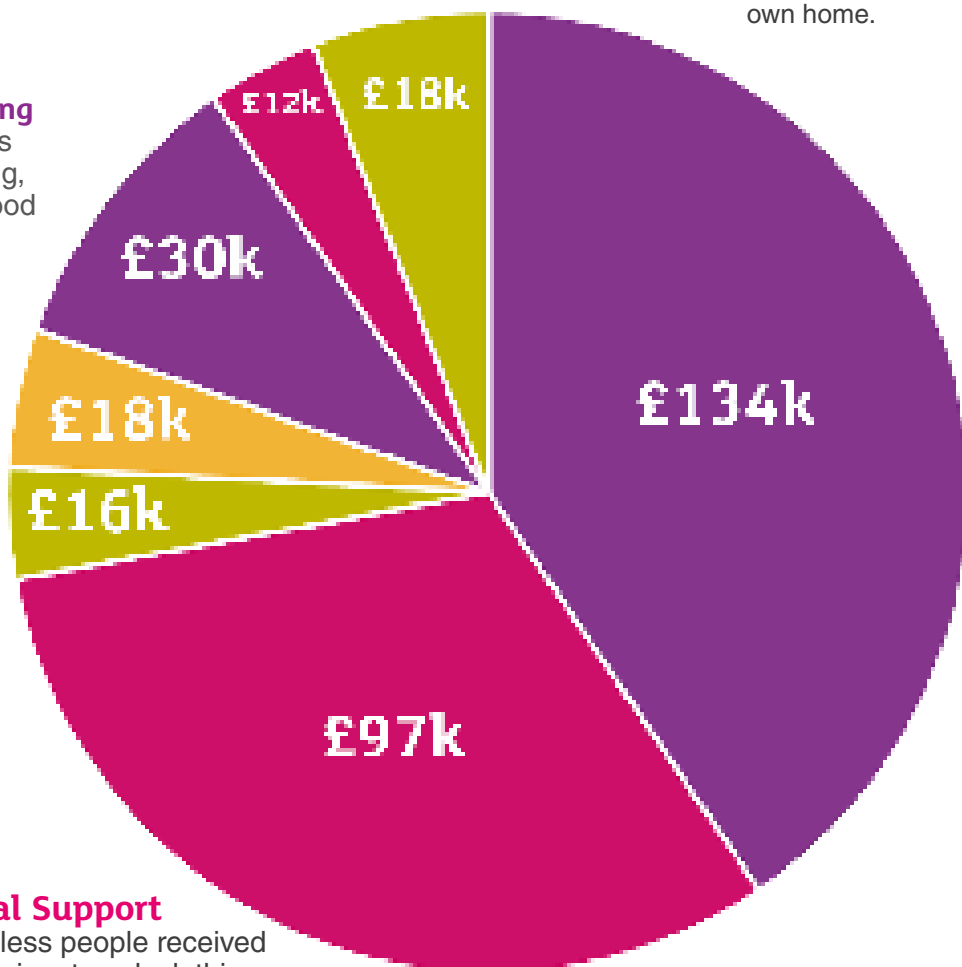
## Counselling

Over **350** hours of one-to-one counselling sessions with qualified professionals.



## Personal Support

**1213** homeless people received grants for training, travel, clothing, identity papers, toiletries etc.



Thanks to the support of our donors, Church Homeless Charity gave away over **£300,000** in grants in 2022/23. This represents thousands of lives changed for the better, whether that be helping someone move into their new home, purchasing essential items, learning new life skills or taking part in events which build confidence and friendships.

# WORLD HOMELESS WEEK

8-15 October 2023

**World Homeless Week is 8-15th October 2023** and its significance is paramount this year, with countless homeless individuals needing extra help after the challenging times we've all endured. Across the country, people have been feeling the squeeze of the cost of living crisis.

Continuing our endeavour to assist churches, businesses, communities, and individuals in supporting homeless people, we offer a pack of free resources for those willing to help.

The World Homeless Week pack can be obtained either in print or in a digital format, and it includes a variety of posters, leaflets, activities, worship guides, and informational booklets.

To get your pack, or to read more about World Homeless Week, please visit:  
[www.churchhomelesscharity.org.uk/WHW](http://www.churchhomelesscharity.org.uk/WHW)



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or charge my Visa / Mastercard / CharityCard / Maestro

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Card number

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We need your postcode to process card donations



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**We'd like to send you information about our work up to three times a year.**

**If you would prefer not to receive this tick here**

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**Gift Aid. I want to Gift Aid my donation today, and any future donations I make to Church Homeless Charity.**

I confirm that I am a UK taxpayer. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_