

# Impact Report

2024



Small grants,  
big impact.



# Welcome

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We are delighted to present Church Homeless Charity's annual Impact Report, showcasing the difference we've made over the past year.

This report highlights the impact of the personal grants we give to people who are homeless: grants that meet essential needs and unlock opportunities for a brighter future.

We are now one of very few organisations giving personal grants to homeless people, at a time when they are needed more than ever. People can get caught in the cycle of homelessness – all for the want of ID papers, access to the internet, or a rent deposit.

Our grants are given within a week of an application and are tailored to provide the practical support individuals need to rebuild their lives.

We give grants to people of any faith (or no faith), and from all backgrounds – according to their needs. We know the names and circumstances of everyone we help, and this report presents the stories of some of them.

The challenges of tackling homelessness are ever evolving. The rising cost of living and an increasing demand for support means we must work harder than ever to ensure no one is left without the help they need.

We are a small and efficient charity. We receive no government funding. Nor do we receive any funding from the Church of England, despite our strong historical links. We are reliant on the generosity of our donors.

Our commitment to those we serve remains unwavering. Guided by our values, we will continue to respond with compassion, determination, and a focus on lasting change.

None of this would be possible without the generosity of our donors and supporters. Your kindness and trust enable us to extend hope to those who need it most.



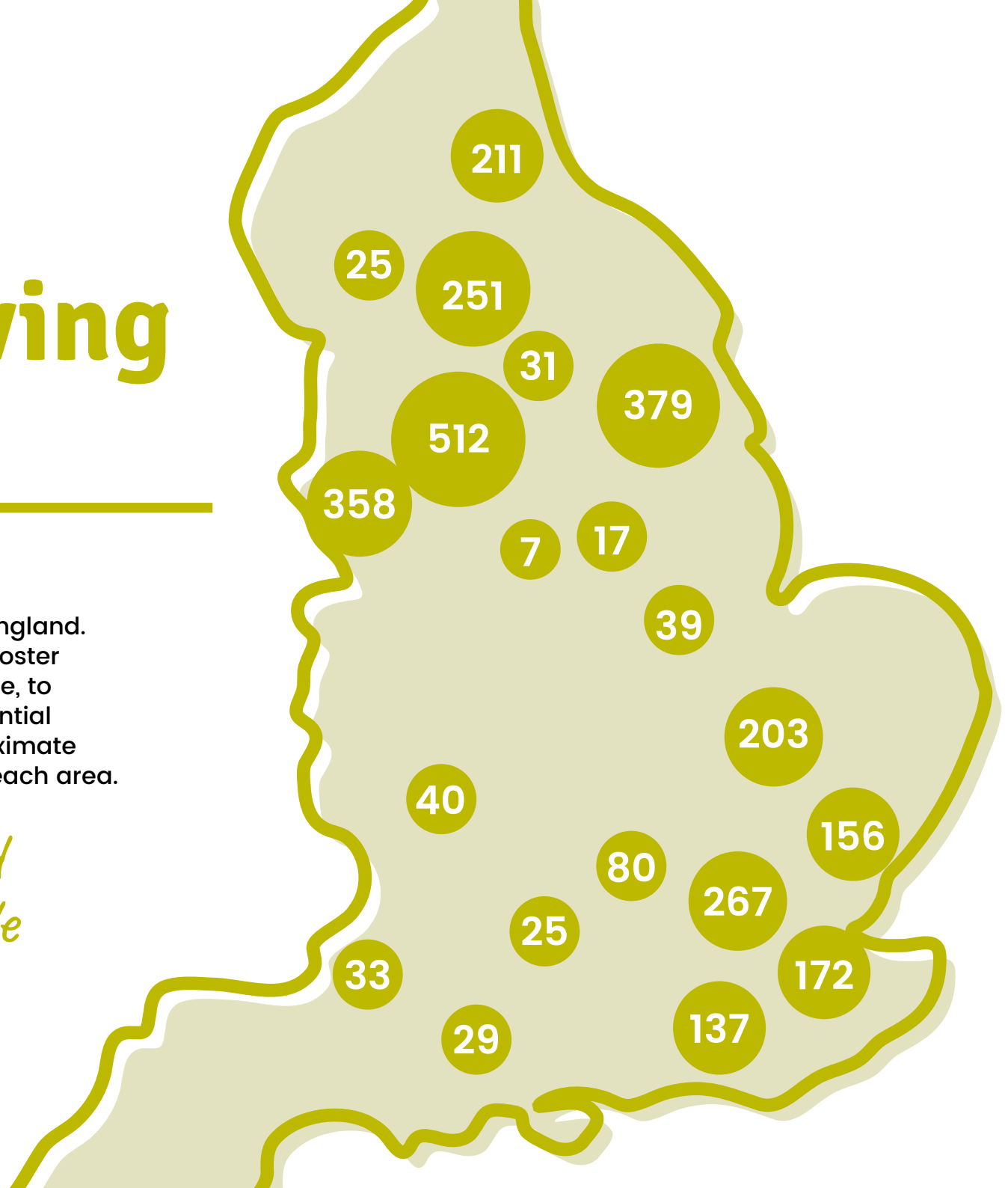
Executive Director of  
Church Homeless Charity

# Grant giving this year

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In the past year, we've made a real difference in communities across England. From funding group activities that foster a sense of companionship and hope, to providing individual grants for essential support, this map shows the approximate number of people we've helped in each area.

*In total, we helped nearly 3,000 people over the year.*



# Zahra's story

After escaping an abusive situation with her 13-year-old daughter, Zahra\* found herself living in a hotel room provided by social services. With no access to benefits, the financial pressure of covering even basic needs became overwhelming. She had to borrow money just to keep afloat, increasing the strain on her already challenging circumstances.

When we became aware of Zahra's circumstances, we provided her with a grant to cover immediate essentials. "**The grant allowed us to manage our situation a bit better,**" Zahra says. She used the funds to pay off some accumulated debt, purchase hygiene items, and cover the travel expenses for her daughter and herself as they had to move between temporary accommodations.

*\*When we share feedback from people we help, we change their names to preserve their anonymity.*

**The support has made a huge difference. People like you make a real difference in this life.**

# Rooted in history, growing in impact



Portrait of Rev'd Wilson Carlile

Our roots go back to 1880 when the Rev'd Wilson Carlile began to provide shelter for homeless people on the Thames Embankment. In 1882, Carlile set up the Church Army to provide accommodation and job opportunities to homeless people as part of its wider mission.

Rev'd Carlile founded Church Army Housing in 1924, setting up alcohol-free hostels and work opportunities for people trying to stay off the streets and improve their lot in life. In the aftermath of WWII, Church Army Housing provided shelter for 300,000 people. Later, many more hostels were set up all over England.

Over the decades, our charity has evolved, adapting to meet the changing needs of society, becoming what we now know as Church Homeless Charity. While our structure has changed, we remain connected to our origins, continuing to support initiatives like the original hostels set up by Carlile.

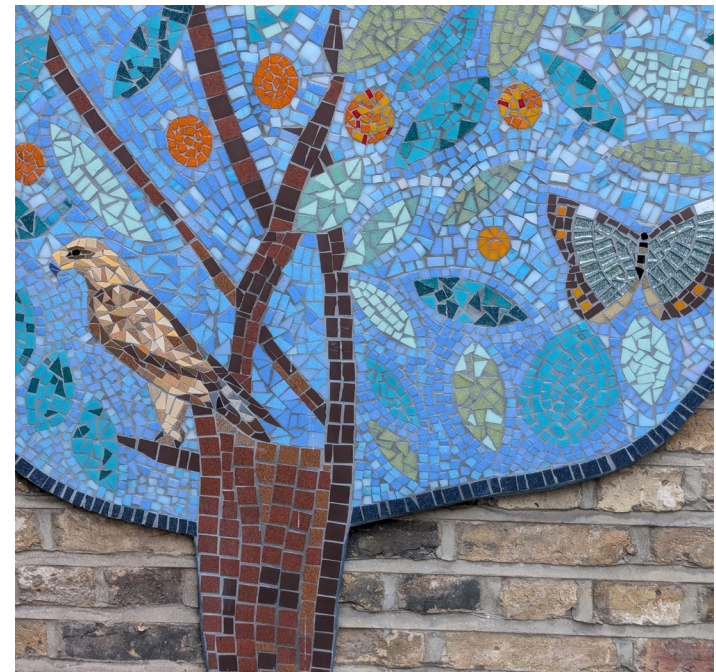


Women in a Church Army shelter, on the site of Queen Mary's Hostel



Residents of Queen Mary's Hostel, enjoying the therapeutic garden

We are a small and efficiently run team. At the time of writing, this consisted of five dedicated individuals. Our base of operations is Queen Mary's hostel, near Victoria station in London. Opened by Wilson Carlile in 1926, it is home to 48 women who would otherwise be homeless. We are proud to fund the hostel's ongoing therapeutic gardening sessions. These sessions offer female residents a chance to connect, nurture a shared space, and enjoy the beauty of their hard work. The garden (pictured here and on the cover), supports their mental well-being, providing a restorative environment amidst their challenges.



# Taj's story

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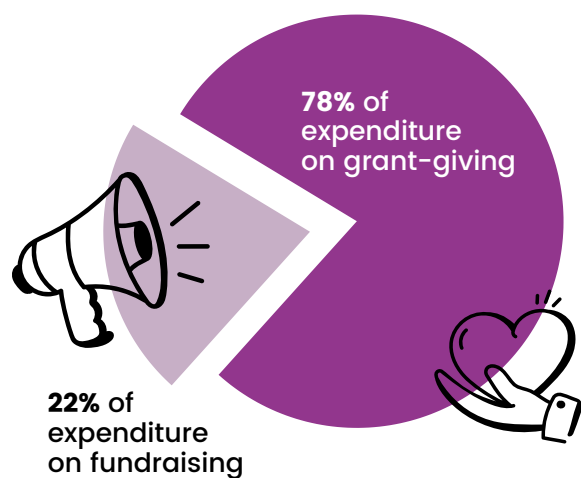
When Taj\* had to leave his mother's home due to overcrowding and a strained relationship with his stepfather, he was suddenly faced with being homeless. A place in a hostel was found, but the hostel required a move-in fee - an amount simply unaffordable on Taj's young adult's Universal Credit payments.

Thanks to a timely grant from us, he secured a room - removing a significant hurdle to starting anew. The hostel offers not only a room but also essential support services, creating a positive environment for him to thrive.

Now, Taj is working as a part-time teaching assistant with children with special educational needs, building a future he had not thought possible.

# Our year in numbers

In 2023-4 we gave **£301,000** in grants to people who were homeless.





# How our grants work

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## Our Partnerships

We distribute our grants through partnerships with 105 registered schemes across England. This ensures that our support reaches those who need it most and is used effectively. It also means beneficiaries can access tailored support to help them in their unique circumstances.

## Timely, tailored grants

We help people secure essential items when there is nowhere left to turn. Unlike many charities, we receive detailed applications that allow us to understand each person's unique story. This personal approach helps us see every individual we support as more than just a number.

We also ask for feedback from grant recipients, giving us real insight into the impact of our support on their lives. Within just a few days of applying, the grant is in their hands, empowering them to take their next steps with confidence and hope.

# Stewart's story

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Following a relationship breakdown, Stewart spiralled into alcoholism, depression and homelessness.

With only two sets of clothes, he struggled with self esteem. As the chance for a life-changing detox program approached, he felt embarrassed and unprepared.

A Church Homeless Charity grant provided Stewart with new clothes and underwear, giving him the confidence to work toward a brighter future.



**If I look good,  
then I feel good.**

# Personal grants

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Our personal grants are designed to be as flexible as possible, tailored to meet individual needs.

Our grants are small, usually a maximum of £175. Applicants price up specific items and request amounts that suit their specific circumstances.

## Starting over

For someone just coming off the streets, grants may cover basic essentials such as clothing, toiletries, or obtaining photo ID.



## Building self esteem

We recognise the importance of hobbies in building a sense of purpose. Our grants can fund art materials, musical instruments, cameras and more, empowering people to reconnect with their passions.



## Unlocking potential

As people progress, we can support training, education, or volunteering opportunities - opening doors to new skills and future employment.

## Reconnecting with loved ones

For many, rebuilding family connections is a crucial step in their journey. We provide grants to help people visit estranged family members, or reconnect with children. For those attending the funeral of a loved one, we can cover clothing and transport costs.



## Moving to independence

The ultimate goal for most of the people we help is to move on from temporary accommodation into a home of their own. Our grants can cover rent deposits, advance rent, utilities and removal costs, making this transition possible.



## Physical and emotional wellbeing

Good health is fundamental to building a stable life. Our grants can help with health-related needs such as dental treatments and foot care. Often people choose to attend a gym or fitness classes for their mental health. And we can also fund 1-2-1 counselling sessions.



## Staying connected

Access to the internet is essential in today's world, yet the cost of a smartphone or ongoing data is beyond the reach of many homeless people. Our grants can provide basic smartphones - or laptops for those pursuing education, training or work.



## Creating a home

We can provide grants for carpets, curtains and white goods, as these are often missing from the housing provided. A comfortable and welcoming space creates stability, helping people take their next steps in life.

# Group grants

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Our group grants support a wide range of activities within the schemes we work with, providing meaningful opportunities for residents to engage, connect, and grow.

## A positive focus

At their core, these activities offer residents something constructive to do during the day, helping to reduce the risk of returning to the streets or engaging in harmful behaviours such as begging or drug use.





## Breakfast clubs

offering a warm meal and a chance to connect with others.



## Gardening projects

providing a therapeutic way to nurture and grow.



## Music therapy

helping residents express themselves and heal through creativity.



## Trips to the seaside

offering a much-needed change of scenery and sense of escape.



## Film and book clubs

fostering discussion and shared enjoyment.



Each activity provides a stepping stone towards a brighter future, empowering individuals to build resilience, engage with others, and take positive steps forward in their lives.

# Alice's story

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Alice\* was forced to flee her long-term partner after he became violent towards her and threatened their children. With nowhere else to go, they relied on family for a temporary home. With the family squeezed into one room, they were unable to experience normality or move on from the past.

After so long in limbo, the offer of a flat meant a chance to put down roots. A small grant for decorating helped Alice turn it into a real home. The children chose their own colours, unpacked their things, and, for the first time in so long, finally felt secure.



**My life is finally starting to change for the better, and I am excited for the future.**



# Get involved

We are passionate about empowering others to help people who are homeless. Together, we can raise compassion and understanding of homelessness – something which affects people from all walks of life.

We're often asked about practical ways to help homeless people. We understand that a lot of people fear 'getting it wrong'. There is so much we can all do to support the wellbeing of someone experiencing homelessness.



Our guide 'How to Help Homeless People' is a great place to start.

Download it here:

<https://churchhomelesscharity.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/How-to-Help-Homeless-People-Everyone.pdf>

## Fundraise!

And every penny that you can raise through fundraising helps us to support those who need it most.

You can fundraise for us by setting up a JustGiving page

[www.justgiving.com/churchhomelesscharity](http://www.justgiving.com/churchhomelesscharity)

## Need some ideas? How about:

- Hosting a tea or coffee morning
- Joining a sleep out with colleagues
- Organising a woolly hat day (great for remote workers who meet over video calls)
- Taking part in a physical challenge, like a triathlon
- Taking a fundraising tin along to your regular yoga/martial arts/crafting class



# Dean's story

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Five years ago, Dean lost his job and this led to mental health problems, and sadly his children were taken into care.

He spent time street homeless, sleeping in parks, before finding accommodation in supported housing.

Now, Dean can access regular counselling, funded by Church Homeless Charity.

**I have someone I can speak to when I'm low.**



## Sarah's story

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Sarah developed mental health issues during her time in the military, including PTSD, anxiety, and depression. Relationships, including the one with her partner, became difficult for her. Following the breakdown of her relationship, Sarah was left with significant debts in her name, including car finance and council tax arrears.

Whilst in supported accommodation, Sarah applied for council housing closer to her family. Sadly, her application was suspended due to previous debts.

Church Homeless Charity covered the arrears, giving Sarah vital support to move forward.



**The funding has given me a new start, and the ability to live an independent life.**

# What our partners say about us



Thank you again to CHC for being such an excellent resource. We, and those we support so appreciate the lifeline that the £175 can sometimes be!

Received from a Support Worker who works with women aged 18-25 in prisons and after prison.

Prison leavers face unique challenges as they reintegrate into society, but with the right support, they can look forward to a brighter future and a fresh start.

The grants from Church Homeless Charity clear the fog from the eyes of our veterans – so that they can focus on the future with a positive outlook and hope.

Due to CHC grants, we are able to provide real-time examples of success stories to other veterans just coming off the streets. This helps them believe that they can rebuild their lives, and prevents them from falling back into negative coping mechanisms, such as drugs and alcohol. This has been a game-changer for me and my team.

**CHC are a group dedicated to giving people a chance.**

Written by the Manager of a homeless scheme for veterans in the North East. Many veterans face challenges that make maintaining a stable home difficult. With specialised support, veterans can obtain the right tools to rebuild their lives.

**Church Homeless Charity grants continue to make a positive impact on young adults struggling with homelessness. Each grant has the potential to turn someone's life around.**

Received from a Support Worker within a specialised housing service for single people in London who are experiencing homelessness.

Services such as these can help rough sleepers into accommodation, but hostels often require a move-in fee. Our grants step in to remove this burden, which can be a significant obstacle for someone with limited or no resources.



**Some residents have complex needs, have been abandoned by their families and have suffered mental and or physical abuse during their short lives. So we try to make a difference by offering activities, events and distractions when we possibly can. But as you know we are all struggling with budgets, so with CHC's funding we can engage the residents with some fun activities and we are very grateful, as are the residents.**

Received from a Support Worker at a temporary, supported accommodation service for young people aged between 16 and 21.

Young people in supported accommodation are at a critical turning point in their lives. With our support, they can move beyond crisis, develop their potential, and build the skills and confidence needed for their next steps.





# Looking ahead

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The year ahead brings both challenges and opportunities. We are deeply concerned about the unprecedented levels of family homelessness across the country.

At the time of writing, 164,040 children are homeless in temporary accommodation – a 15% increase in a year.

Families are spending increasing amounts of time in B&Bs and hostels, where their wellbeing and stability are at risk.

That's why we're committed to expanding our support – and helping more people access the essential resources they need to break the cycle of homelessness.

We're incredibly grateful to our supporters. Your generosity drives everything we do. Together, we can rise to the challenges ahead and bring hope and opportunity to those who need it most.

We also deeply appreciate our partners, whose collaboration ensures our support reaches the right people at the right time – making a real difference when it matters most.

We hope you've found the information in this report useful.

If you'd like more details on anything contained in this report please feel free to reach out to us via phone, email, or social media (details on the last page).

# Ways to donate

## Make an online payment

To make a one-off donation, or to set up a monthly gift, please complete our donation form:

[www.churchhomelesscharity.org.uk/donate](http://www.churchhomelesscharity.org.uk/donate)

## Make a bank transfer

**Church Homeless Charity**  
Account number: 90305189  
Sort code: 20-67-37

## Send a cheque

**Please address to:**

Church Homeless Charity,  
Queen Mary Hostel,  
28 Greencoat Place,  
London, SW1P 1DX



## Suggested donations

### £10

Will help with **transport costs** for someone looking for work.

### £30

Will cover the cost of an **ID card** - enabling a homeless person to access health care, benefits, housing and more.

### £50

Will pay for **new school uniform and shoes** for a child in emergency accommodation.

### £100

Pays for **toiletries and clothes** for a person coming off the street.



[www.churchhomelesscharity.org.uk](http://www.churchhomelesscharity.org.uk)

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Registered charity number 802801. Registered address:  
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