

IMPACT REPORT

2023 - 2024



National
Benevolent
Charity

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Improving lives & strengthening communities

As we move through 2024 and into 2025, rising costs continue to place the heaviest burden on the most vulnerable and least resilient members of our society. With welfare benefits losing value against inflation, many are being pushed into deeper poverty. Even those in employment are facing financial strain, with insecure jobs and tightening household budgets.

The impact is also being felt across the charity sector. Increases in National Insurance, rising operating costs, growing demand for support, and greater competition for funding from trusts and foundations are stretching many organisations to their limits.

As a small grant maker, we recognise the importance of strong governance, careful investment decisions, and a willingness to collaborate. These principles help us maximise the funds we can distribute to those most in need and ensure our support makes the greatest possible difference. While we cannot meet every need, the stories and testimonies from our beneficiaries demonstrate that we are making a positive impact in improving lives.

ALI RUSSELL, CEO



Grants to organisations

We make grants to predominantly local, frontline organisations and initiatives that are alleviating poverty through: supporting people in destitution/ crisis, providing opportunities for employment, education and training, strengthening families and communities, and equipping people with greater financial resilience. Our preference is to give unrestricted grants, which can be awarded for two years.

To reduce the administrative burden of reporting for the organisations that we support, our board often visits them, to see first-hand the impact of our grants. In May 2024, Trustees visited Gloucestershire Nightstop and gained insight into their emergency accommodation services for young people. In September, they visited Nelson Trust's Bristol Women's Centre, where survivors of domestic abuse receive tailored support. Both visits deepened Trustees' understanding of grantee organisations and their beneficiaries.

Grants to organisations

We awarded grants worth £424,713 across 43 not-for-profit organisations in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Swindon and Bristol; this was an increase of 12% on the previous year.





Wiltshire & Swindon

Promoting financial resilience in Wiltshire

HEALS of Malmesbury advocates for local residents and families who are vulnerable, disadvantaged, or experiencing poverty, delivering 780 hours of casework and over 400 hours of face-to-face contact with local people in need in 2024.

They issued 342 food bank vouchers, helping 962 people (606 adults and 356 children) to access emergency food; and helped a further 26 families access emergency food outside of food bank opening times. They also helped 17 families with small hardship grants, engaged 114 families in school holiday sports and cultural activities, processed 8 Personal Independence Payment (PIP) applications, and worked with local Neighbourhood Housing Officers to support several families with housing repairs and rent arrears.

"This work was very much enabled by the National Benevolent Charity's generous grant" Trustee, HEALS of Malmesbury

We also made grants in Wiltshire and Swindon to: [Salisbury Women's Refuge](#), [Home-Start North Wilts](#), [Youth Adventure Trust](#), [Growbaby](#), [Swindon Carers Centre](#), [Doorway](#), [WAY Swindon](#), [Crosslight Swindon](#), [Big Breakfast Plus](#), [FoodCycle Swindon](#), [FearFree](#), [The Kelly Foundation](#)

Providing a lifeline for young adults in Gloucestershire.

Gloucestershire Nightstop provides safe, emergency accommodation for young adults aged 16-25 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Their Daystop service provides a warm safe space to relax, use the washroom and laundry facilities, and access support, advice, befriending, training and wellbeing and enrichment activities. In 2023-24, their volunteer hosts provided 69 young people with 381 nights of emergency accommodation. 85% of young people moved onto stable long-term accommodation. Many former service users return as volunteers or peer mentors for new young people using the service.

"I would tell them about the facilities here, how kind and easy going everyone is, that it's a respectful environment, and a good place to take your mind off your struggles...Nightstop do everything they can to help"
Young person when asked if they would recommend Nightstop

We also made grants in Gloucestershire to:

Paganhill, Monkscroft Pastoral Care Project, Age UK Gloucestershire,
PPNP, Brockworth Link, Cheltenham is Growing, Creative Sustainability, The Rock, The Churn, Gloucestershire City Mission,
Home-Start Stroud & Gloucestershire, The Door, Hesters Way Partnership, Home-Start Cotswolds, Home-Start North & West Gloucestershire, The Nelson Trust, Fair Shares, Stroud Kids Stuff



Gloucestershire

Helping people to find housing stability in Bristol.

Housing Matters help people in housing crisis in and around Bristol to navigate the path to a safe and secure home through advice, support, and advocacy.

In 2023-24, they supported 1,993 people, of whom 92% relied on benefits, and were living with a physical or mental health condition. After receiving support, 94% said they have a better understanding of their rights and responsibilities, 88% were more able to manage their affairs, and 33% felt less stressed and overwhelmed. Where clients were threatened with homelessness, this was prevented for 49%.

"Faith was really struggling as a single mum of two, with chronic back pain and limited mobility, living in a private rented flat up eight flights of stairs, where she also faced regular harassment and anti-social behaviour. With our support, the council has now acknowledged that she is a priority for social housing and is very close to moving."

We also made grants in Bristol to:

One25, Talking Money, CSE, Severn Vineyard, Babbasa, The Nelson Trust, inHope, Unseen, Citizens Advice Bristol, St Pauls Advice Centre





Individual grants

We provide individual grants to help people buy food and clothing, essential household necessities and white goods and get on top of priority debts.

The majority of our applications come from women under 40 years of age with caring responsibilities. Many have experienced a life changing event or personal set back, are suffering from physical, and/or mental ill health conditions, and are claiming Universal Credit. Typically, an application to us is a last resort, having tried all other avenues, and people rarely apply to us more than once.

Before 2021 we received slightly more grants from individuals than from people with families, but this has now switched around, and we now receive more applications from families.

Individual grants in numbers

We awarded grants worth a total of £270,841 to 715 individuals and families in 2024, which is an increase of 10% on the previous year.





Amaya, single mother of two is a survivor of domestic abuse. Amaya had struggled to read all her life, which held her back at school and with work. She lives with diabetes and several other physical and mental health conditions that have further impacted her ability to work. We made a grant of £267 to purchase a dyslexia pen, a handheld portable device that can assist individuals with dyslexia and other reading difficulties.

"Thanks very much from the bottom of my heart. This will help me in a big way. I can finally help the kids with their homework too."



Jacob fled a civil war and arrived in UK as an asylum seeker in 1997. He was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and PTSD shortly after arrival. He was granted leave to remain by the Home Office, but due to his mental health he is unable to work. We provided him with a grant of £400 to help with rent arrears.

His Mental Health Worker who referred him wrote to us to let us know:

"Jacob is now in credit with his rent account. He was not evicted, and he continues to reside at the property. Thanks ever so much to National Benevolent Charity for your generosity!! Your award was very timely and opened the floodgates of positive news and outcomes for Jacob. Thanks ever so much !!!"



Samantha moved into supported accommodation as she became estranged from her family at age 16. At aged 19, while studying for her A-levels, she was offered a property, but with no family support and limited savings she needed help to buy essential items to make her flat feel like home, such as curtains, curtain rails, fridge/freezer, oven, a washing machine and a bed.

We gave her £400 towards these items.

"We successfully helped Samantha to move into her beautiful new flat and set it up. She is forever grateful for the support; the vouchers enabled her to buy items for her home to make it happy and comfortable. Samantha is now at university studying to become a paramedic and will complete her first year this year. Samantha is a credit to all of us who have worked with and supported her. The help that we receive from yourselves is priceless and we appreciate it so much. Samantha continues to thrive, and we all look forward to her updating us in the future on graduating and living her dream life. Thank you once again"

Project Worker, East Kent Young People Services

What the support workers say

"I would like to say a big thank you to the National Benevolent Charity. You cannot underestimate the huge impact of your grants for my clients.

For example, a grant enabled one of my clients to buy kitchen essentials which meant she and her family could have a cup of tea, a slice of toast, and use a microwave again – this might seem like very small things to some people, but for her family who had experienced trauma and lost their home, it was a huge relief and a light in the darkness.

I have many more clients like this that have been helped by the National Benevolent Charity."

Financial Wellbeing Manager,
Sage Homes





"Due to the nature of our organisation, most of the people I have referred to your grants have needed help with rent arrears.

Thanks to your tremendous work, we have helped many of our clients who were in financial hardship and experiencing threats of eviction and repossession, to stay in their homes.

This work has also helped us to build a stronger relationship with the local council as they are now more willing to work with us to reduce rent arrears instead of going straight to court proceedings."

Housing Services,
Shelter Cymru

Collaborations

A photograph of a woman with dark, curly hair holding a young child. The woman is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The child has light-colored hair and is looking down. They are indoors, with a brick wall in the background.

To deliver better impact for people living in poverty we look for opportunities to work with other funders and VCSE organisations, to share knowledge, support applications, and jointly fund initiatives, including through our regular attendance at Funder Network meetings in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Swindon, and Bristol.

Home is Where the Harm Is

Each year more than 75,000 people in the UK are at high and imminent risk of being murdered or seriously injured through domestic abuse. Around two-thirds of individual applicants to the National Benevolent Charity have experienced domestic abuse. We partnered with Lightning Reach, Crowdfunder, and Cash Perks to deliver a new campaign - Home is Where the Harm Is - offering victims of domestic abuse fast access to cash grants via cash machines to help them rebuild their lives. As numbers of UK domestic abuse incidents typically spike during international football tournaments, we launched the campaign during the Euros in June 2024, with British Airways as a key sponsor.

In 2024, the campaign:

- raised £28,933
- was supported by over 600 people
- made grants of £200 to 136 individuals

Most applicants are women in receipt of benefits, living in social housing with children; two-thirds lived in a house with a disabled person.

"Two years ago, I fled domestic and controlling abuse from my partner who I was with for seven years with my two children. It was the hardest choice I've ever made as we moved from one city to another where we do not know anyone at all, and have had to start all over again. Starting again with two children has been really difficult, from providing them a safe room and bed to sleep in, to making sure they have suitable clothes, and everything is so expensive like shopping and gas and electric. I have done everything in my power to make sure me and my kids are safe and out of danger. The grant would take a little bit of pressure off and help me rebuild the life me and my children deserve." Sarah

We will....

- deliver financial support to people living in poverty or financial hardship through a programme of individual and organisational grants with the aim of enhancing wellbeing
- deliver better impact for those living in poverty by collaborating with other organisations and co-producing with experts, including those with lived experience, continually evaluating, learning, and improving
- support organisations campaigning for change in policy, practice, and public opinion by amplifying the voice of those with lived experience
- strengthen our governance and oversight by working within the Charity Governance Code
- deliver greater impact by maximising our assets and securing new income
- ensure the principles of diversity, equality and inclusion are at the core of everything we do





National
Benevolent
Charity

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*The quotes and stories in this Impact Report are real, but the images are representative