

**stMungo's**

# Frontline

**Spring edition 2025**



**“We prevent long term homelessness and offer solutions towards ending it for good.”**

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**Our street teams:  
The essentials  
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**“I didn’t have to carry on  
sleeping in the cold and rain.  
I said ‘thank you God – I have  
a safe place to stay’.”**  
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A new year has arrived and so have more bitterly cold nights. For people sleeping on the streets, each day is a case of survival. But thanks to your support, St Mungo's remains out there, bringing people into safety and helping them to rebuild their lives.

In this February issue of *Frontline*, we give an insight into what it's like to endure nights on the freezing cold streets.

On page 3 (opposite), find out what our frontline teams pack in their bags so they're equipped to help people they meet. From providing extra warmth to first aid, each item makes a vital difference.

You can meet Hannah Faulkner on page 4. She explains how St Mungo's teams act urgently to save lives – both all year round, and when emergency protocols kick in during severe weather conditions.

There's also one of our incredible clients, Carla, on page 6. She spent three years sitting in cold, wet clothes on the streets, before eventually being helped by St Mungo's into independent living. Carla tells us about the reality of sleeping rough during this time.

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## Working towards progress

Since the general election last year, we've focused on building constructive relationships with the new Government.

In June, we wrote a public letter to party leaders on the need to extend Rough Sleeping Initiative funding. We faced a cliff-edge with homelessness funding, which was due to end in the spring.

### More than 50,000 of you got behind St Mungo's and supported the letter.

Following our campaigning efforts, we welcomed the news of an additional £233 million in the autumn budget towards tackling homelessness and rough sleeping.

### It's thanks to your continued support that this result was possible, at a time when homelessness is at a record high.

There's been lots more activity going on, all to engage the Government in taking urgent action towards ending this crisis.

We've met with the Homelessness Minister, Rushanara Ali. I also represent St Mungo's on the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Expert Group,

where we're contributing our expertise to the development of the Government's new homelessness strategy.

We were delighted to welcome Deputy Prime Minister, Angela Rayner, and Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London to a St Mungo's hub, which supports people directly off the streets.

They met the hub team and clients, who shared why it's so important we continue these essential, life saving services.

### Homelessness cannot end without action from the Government, and your support helps us ensure that the experiences of our clients are heard.

St Mungo's simply couldn't do what it does without your help. I hope you enjoy reading about some of the difference you make in *Frontline*.

Your support is so appreciated as always – thank you so much.

**Emma Haddad**  
Chief Executive,  
St Mungo's

# The essentials unpacked

Every day and night, our street teams are looking for people sleeping rough. We take a look at what vital items they're taking out on shift and the difference they make.

## Contact cards

When someone isn't where we expected them to be, they'll know how to reach us if they return.



## Work phone

To take quick action, make referrals to other services and check a multi-agency database, which stores information about people sleeping rough. Also essential for phoning 999 in an emergency.



## Hats and gloves

To provide essential extra warmth to people sleeping rough.



## First aid kit

To treat minor injuries and prevent infection.



## Torch

For more visibility in places that aren't always lit, like parks and stairwells.



## Foil blankets

When it's bitterly cold outside, a coat, sleeping bag or tent sometimes isn't enough.



## Dog supplies

We provide treats, leads and coats for people's furry friends.



## Naloxone

A life saving medicine to administer in case of opioid overdose.



In London, St Mungo's helps run the StreetLink service. It connects people sleeping rough to support provided by local authorities and charities. The service is also used throughout England and Wales.

If you see someone sleeping rough in your area this winter, visit [TheStreetLink.org.uk](https://www.thestreetlink.org.uk) to create an alert. By doing so, you can help our frontline teams bring people in from the cold and connect them with services dedicated to ending their homelessness.

Supporting St Mungo's means you're there for our frontline teams, who are prepared and equipped in vital times of need.

We show empathy, compassion and are a listening ear to thousands of people each year.





**“It’s a reminder of why we’re here. To bring someone into safety, away from the freezing cold.”**

**When temperatures reach freezing point, Severe Weather Emergency Protocol – better known as SWEP, is activated. Hannah Faulkner, Head of Rough Sleeping Services at St Mungo’s explains how we respond, to act fast and save lives.**

**SWEP is called when temperatures fall below zero degrees, and also in times of extreme heat.**

**Called by local authorities, SWEP is rolled out to prevent harm or death to anyone who is sleeping rough in severe weather, through the provision of emergency accommodation.**

**“We know that sleeping rough is incredibly dangerous. Even more so when temperatures reach freezing point – people can die on the streets.”**

I oversee St Mungo’s rough sleeping services in Greater London, but we work in other areas of England too.

No matter where we’re based, our frontline and hub teams hit the ground running when SWEP kicks in.

During SWEP, local authorities must provide extra emergency accommodation.

This means our teams act quickly and urgently. They’re on the streets day and night, searching for people sleeping outside and bringing them into our safe spaces.

Each day, we see the kindness our staff show towards clients. During SWEP, this certainly isn’t lost.

We treat SWEP as a golden opportunity to reach people who are hard to engage with throughout the year.

**“In 2023/24, we supported 439 people into our SWEP accommodation\*.”**

Our teams see people coming in who, for different reasons, have been reluctant or scared to accept support.

People who desperately need help, who can’t sleep in the freezing cold any longer.

When SWEP’s active and they’re with us, we can provide reassurance, find accommodation and end their homelessness for good.

Everyone is treated as an individual – we look at their needs and offer solutions which are suitable for them.

This could be if we notice someone struggles to walk far, we wouldn’t make them an offer for a third floor flat.

It’s piecing together everything which makes that person ‘them’ and acting in their best interests.

Once they’re with us, our teams work around the clock.

We’re not only giving them a warm drink and food. We’re acting fast to assess their needs and make an offer of accommodation – so the end result isn’t a return to street homelessness.

**“We have safe spaces for anyone sleeping rough and welcome their pets in too.”**

**Each hub also has separate areas for women and people with complex needs.**

**A constant support**

St Mungo’s hubs offer enclosed, warm spaces for people who have been sleeping on the streets.

During SWEP, our hubs are even busier than usual.

We receive a call or message from our frontline teams when they’ve found someone sleeping on the streets.

**“We’re like an A&E for people sleeping rough. We work to prevent long term homelessness and offer solutions towards ending it for good.”**



**Everyone has their story**

There are times during SWEP which stick in my brain, like the Beast from the East storm in 2018. We couldn’t predict it, and we had to act fast.

But if I had to think back to a particular client we’ve helped during SWEP, it’s impossible to choose just one.

Everyone has been through something different. They’ve been so cold they could have died – and that never leaves you.

We don’t stop at bringing people in, making an assessment and an accommodation offer. We stand up for our clients and remind local authorities of the duty they have to help this person.

We’ll make referrals to healthcare services if needed, and St Mungo’s stays by our clients’ side – far beyond SWEP ending.

**It’s supporters like you who make it possible for St Mungo’s to be there for our clients, for as long as they need us.**

\*St Mungo’s Annual Review 2023–2024







**“My life was a cycle of sleeping rough and trying to survive.”**

**Carla lost her job and became homeless. After years of sleeping rough and faced with the dangers that come with it, things finally changed when she met St Mungo’s.**

Five years ago, I had a job cleaning schools and offices. But the work was temporary and came to an end. At the same time, I was asked to leave home, where I was living with my mum and sister. That’s when my life changed, and I became homeless.

After spending the money I had at a hostel, I couldn’t afford any food, never mind a place to live. I remember crying and praying – I needed an answer. It was then I found myself sleeping on the streets.

**Surviving one day at a time**

For years I spent each day doing the same thing: sleeping rough in London and asking for money to pay for a night or two in busy, backpacker hostels. I did this to survive.

Sometimes I’d sit in a shopping center or near supermarkets, asking if people could help me out with some food.

Sleeping on the streets could be scary and dangerous. Especially as a woman and in the winter months.

When it was cold and the rain was coming down, there were times I had to put my dress in the rubbish bin. It wasn’t possible to wash it and make it good again.



**“I came across some kind people, but some days everyone I asked would say ‘no’ and I’d go days without anything at all.”**

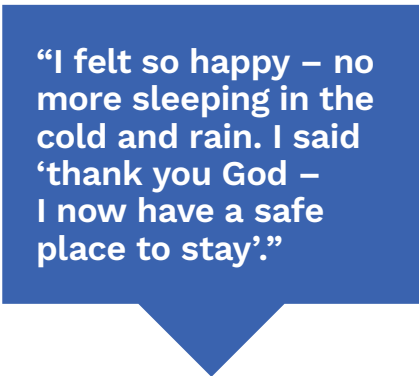
I always had two bags with me – one of them had all my official documentation in there. One day, I put it down and it was stolen. There were some really difficult days.

**Start of new beginnings**

Because it felt a bit safer, I used to sleep outside a busy clothes store which had a security officer at the front.

One day towards the end of 2023, the police came over and asked why I was there. I explained that I was homeless and had nowhere else to go, so they took my details and arranged a call with St Mungo’s.

The turning point came the next day when I spoke to St Mungo’s and they arranged for me to stay in one of their hostels.

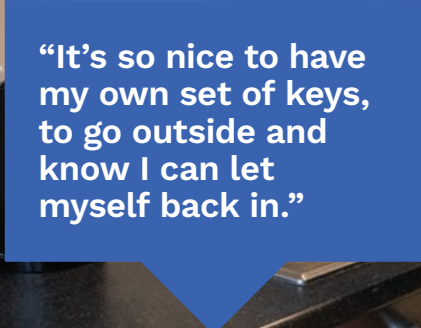


**“I felt so happy – no more sleeping in the cold and rain. I said ‘thank you God – I now have a safe place to stay’.”**

I was at that hostel for three months and then moved to where I am now – a St Mungo’s female only accommodation.

For me, it’s like a big family here. I like being around the other girls and the team are like my aunties.

I have my own room, bathroom and kitchen – I love to cook and do it as much as I can!



**“It’s so nice to have my own set of keys, to go outside and know I can let myself back in.”**

**A place to call my own**

The team supported me by making a housing referral to the local authority. Together, we went to the panel, and my application was approved.

I’m so happy, I’ll have my own home soon! A place I can manage my money for, pay bills, get back into work and build a new routine.

St Mungo’s has encouraged me to start two courses. My first language is Portuguese, so I’m doing an English course

and improving every day – always practicing and listening. There’s also my baking course, which I recently started. I love making flapjacks and cakes, which I give to the team.

**I can now say I love my life. St Mungo’s changed everything for me and will still be by my side for advice once I’ve moved on.**

**By supporting St Mungo’s, you’re helping other people who have experienced the same conditions and situation as me. Thank you.**



**Carla is part of a St Mungo’s female only accommodation service.**

We provide other specialist housing, such as services for LGBTQ+ clients, those with complex needs, pet friendly hostels, semi independent living and more.

Each service takes a people centered, trauma informed approach to supporting clients’ recovery. We work with them to end homelessness and rebuild lives.



# Hike to help end homelessness

Want to achieve something special in 2025? You can get fit, meet new people and take on the challenge of a lifetime!

You'll also help St Mungo's in our mission to end homelessness.

We've teamed up with **Ultra Challenge®**, who organise epic walks, runs and jogs across the U.K and further.

With challenges suitable for all abilities, in locations from the Peak District to the Isle of Wight

(and everywhere in between!), there's a route for everyone.

Every mile you trek and pound you raise will help St Mungo's to rebuild the lives of people facing and experiencing homelessness.



Find out more at **UltraChallenge.com** and don't forget to choose **St Mungo's** as your charity to support!

**For more ways to support us this year, visit [mungos.org/donate-frontline](https://mungos.org/donate-frontline)**

**Thank you for reading this edition of *Frontline*. We hope you enjoyed it. If you have any questions or feedback, feel free to contact us using the details provided.**



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