

StMungo's

**Ending homelessness.
Rebuilding lives.**

Our strategy 2024-2030

mungos.org



A message from Emma Haddad, Chief Executive

Writing a strategy for St Mungo's is tricky because what we really want is homelessness – and therefore our organisation – not to exist.

Sadly, at the time of writing, homelessness is getting worse. We see it in the official numbers with close to **4,000** people sleeping rough across England every night, and almost **80,000** households homeless, or at risk of it. And we see it every day in our services: our outreach teams struggling to respond to the increasing number of people on the streets; our hostels at capacity; the lack of affordable and appropriate housing.

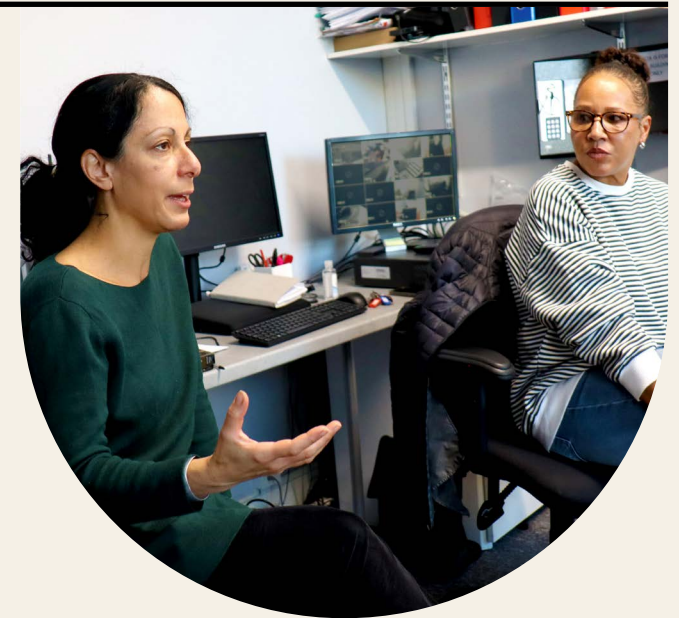
In this context, our new strategy must focus on what we can do to end homelessness and rebuild lives, by working with partners across the system. We have set two key missions:

1. We will play our part in a complex and multi-disciplinary system by providing the best, most individualised support we can, to help people away from the streets and to recover from homelessness, for good.
2. We will use what we see on the ground to influence and push for change – changes in the policies that support people experiencing homelessness, and a change in focus more towards prevention.

The trauma of homelessness damages too many lives. Every time I meet one of our clients, I am both moved by their story and inspired to go further. The passion of colleagues across St Mungo's to help people

and play a part in rebuilding lives is tangible. A key pillar of this strategy for the years ahead is to keep building St Mungo's as a great place to work, where we can all thrive and provide the best support possible to our clients.

“I believe that homelessness can be ended and that, with the right support, everyone can rebuild their lives. We can and must create the change needed to achieve this.” Emma Haddad



A message from John Watts, Trustee

I discovered St Mungo's in 2015 through the merger with Broadway Homelessness Services, where I had been a client for three years. In 2016, I helped create the Client Advisory Board. Two years later I became a Trustee: the first with lived experience.



I am now in my seventh year on the Board. I've been homeless for 12 years, with three No Fault Evictions. I currently live in a hostel in King's Cross. St Mungo's matters to me because it's where my advocacy for my community, people experiencing homelessness, began.

We support approximately **28,000** people every year and they are at the centre of everything we do. We empower our clients in decisions that impact them; decisions that impact St Mungo's; and decisions that have influence beyond St Mungo's. Embracing people's lived experiences is vital, not only in the data it provides, but in enabling us to understand and express the realities of homelessness.

**“And as the old adage goes,
everything starts at home, and
that for me was with St Mungo's.”
John Watts**

We recognise that everyone's journey is different, and everyone has their own skills, experiences and stories. My personal background, for example, is in the creative arts as a writer, actor and musician.

To make the difference we know we can, strategy is crucial. Especially now, with rising numbers of people sleeping rough and in fear of becoming homeless. We must do everything we can to have the greatest impact on people experiencing homelessness and continue working tirelessly to help them rebuild their lives. Only with unity and collaboration from all of us: across the sector; government; and beyond, will this travesty be ended.

And as the old adage goes, everything starts at home, and that for me was with St Mungo's.

Our strategy in a nutshell

Our purpose

Ending homelessness.
Rebuilding lives.

Our missions

1. Working directly with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, providing them with services to find paths away from the streets, for good.

2. Influencing policy makers to make positive change, through the power of our clients' voices and our operational expertise.

Our priorities

1. Keeping clients at the centre of our work.
2. Focusing on our expertise and developing our practice.
3. Collaborating to continuously improve our work and increase our reach.
4. Being impactful and influencing change.
5. Ensuring St Mungo's is a great place to work.

Our values

We are committed.

We are creative.

We are inclusive.

We are empowering.

We are accountable.

Our service ethos

We build initial relationships and trust.

We keep clients safe and empower them to secure what they need to recover.

We help clients develop the skills they need to be independent and resilient.

We provide support that enables and empowers clients to move forward.

Who we are

For the past 55 years, we have been on the ground every day and every night, supporting people to recover from homelessness and advocating for change.

St Mungo's was founded in 1969, when a small group of volunteers decided to do something to help the growing number of people they saw sleeping rough outside Charing Cross station in London. From going out talking to people, offering food and assistance, the group formalised into a charity and secured our first hostel in a former marmite factory in Vauxhall in 1973.

Since then, including through joining forces with Broadway Housing in 2014, St Mungo's has grown into one of the country's leading homelessness charities, supporting tens of thousands of people every year.

Last year, we supported

28,300



people and provided **2,700** people with housing and support on any given night. We ran more than **160** services across London, the South East and the South West of England.

We believe that:

- **Every time someone sleeps rough, it is an emergency.** People sleeping rough experience some of the most severe health inequalities and represent one of the most disadvantaged groups in our communities.
- **A roof is not enough.** People who experience homelessness need time and tailored support so they can lead fulfilling lives in their community and so they don't experience homelessness again.
- **Homelessness can be ended.** The success in bringing people off the streets during the Covid-19 pandemic showed what we can achieve as a sector when we work together. We can and must create lasting change.
- **People should not experience homelessness in the first place.** The trauma of homelessness damages too many lives. Homelessness can be prevented by targeting its causes and investing in prevention as well as response.

Shannel, one of our Recovery Workers, shares what it means to work at St Mungo's: I work with people from all different walks of life, supporting them to live independently. I'm so grateful to St Mungo's for giving me the opportunity to work in this role. It allows me to apply my own lived experience of homelessness to help others. That's what inspires me to keep going.



Who we support

We support people who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness. Our clients come from all walks of life and every person's journey is unique. There are, however, common difficulties that many of our clients face.

Our clients can have **complex needs** and often face a range of interrelated challenges, including poor health, substance use issues, social isolation, unstable family relationships and experiences of trauma.

Our clients face **significant health inequalities**. Health and homelessness are inextricably linked and we support people to access the healthcare they need.

Some of our clients are **ex-offenders**. Prison leavers are particularly susceptible to homelessness and **68%** of people released from prison to rough sleeping reoffend within a year. Our specialist services support people who are at risk of leaving prison with nowhere to live, to help break the cycle of crisis and crime.





We support people from all over the world who have a wide range of ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds. **Minoritised groups** often face discrimination that puts them at increased risk of homelessness. We support people to navigate the systemic and societal challenges they face.

Many of our clients have low levels of literacy, numeracy and/or digital skills which can be barriers to **accessing and sustaining employment**. Our learning, training and employment services support our clients in building their confidence and skills, gaining qualifications and finding and retaining work.

The journey away from homelessness can be long and uncertain. We're there for every step of someone's journey, embracing their strengths and helping them to overcome the barriers they face.

In 2023, Client L went from sleeping on the streets to living in her own flat via one of our Housing First services. This is how her story started: I had an abusive father, and I'd been on heroin since I was seven... When I got away from my dad I was moved into a hostel (not run by St Mungo's). I was trying to get clean, but other residents were difficult. There'd be a knock on my door at 3am, and someone's arm would come through with a tourniquet around it and a needle asking me to do it because they couldn't find a vein. So I left, thinking I'd rather be on the streets – and I was, for seven years.

People experiencing homelessness:



Are more vulnerable to mental health issues.

About

70%

of our clients have a mental health issue that causes distress or hinders recovery. More than 10% of homeless deaths are by suicide.

Are more likely to have a disability.

At least

20%

of our clients have a disability.

Often have serious physical health problems.

For example, having five times the level of heart disease as the mainstream population.

Use drugs and alcohol more often.

At least

40%

of our clients need support for alcohol use and nearly 50% need support for drug use.

Die much younger.

The average age of death for women sleeping rough or in emergency accommodation is just

43 years old.

That's nearly 40 years younger than women in the general population. For men, it's 41.

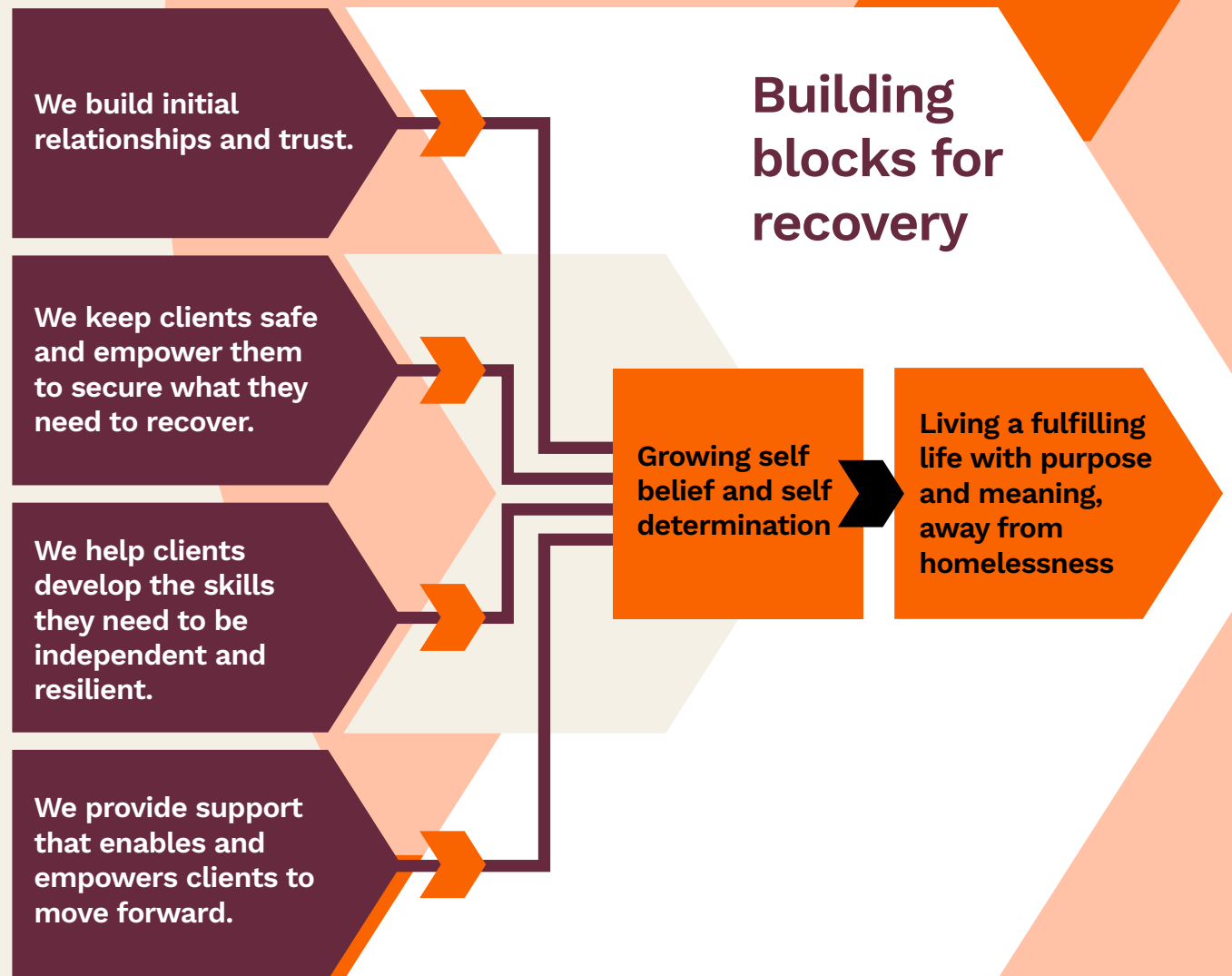
How we work

Our service ethos

At the heart of our services is our commitment to doing everything we can to keep our clients safe, empowering them in their individual recovery journeys and preventing homelessness in the future.

We aim to support each client to live a fulfilling life with purpose and meaning, helping them connect with their friends, families and communities. We make the following commitment to **every client**:

- Work with you to secure a safe place to live.
- Listen to, understand and value your individual experience.
- Focus on your strengths and support you to take practical steps towards achieving your goals.
- Support you to build and enjoy positive, supportive relationships.
- Create opportunities that empower you to learn, thrive and contribute to your community.



With their own lived experience of homelessness and domestic abuse, our Domestic Abuse Navigator Michelle meets people where they are at in their journey away from homelessness:

It makes me smile when I see successes. Even something as simple as, six or so months ago they might have been timid or quiet, or reactive and behind a wall, then you later see them relaxed and having a conversation, having that confidence that they are on that journey, moving forward and growing.



How we work

Our values

Alongside our service ethos, we seek to demonstrate our values in everything we do: from our interactions with our clients, to how we treat each other as colleagues, to how we work with our partners.



We are committed. We don't give up.

- We are dedicated to our purpose. We persevere through challenges and strive to deliver high quality work with a commitment to our cause.
- Our clients see our commitment as we persist in working to meet their needs when others might give up.

We are creative. We find innovative ways to deliver our missions.

- We listen, learn and are open to finding new ways of doing things to overcome obstacles.
- Our clients are supported in ways that work for them. We work with everyone as an individual, tailoring our approach to meet their needs.

We are inclusive. We value people for who they are.

- We all have a voice. We embrace differences and celebrate people's unique strengths.
- Our clients are at the heart of our community. We learn from their experiences, and their voices shape what we do and how we do it.

We are empowering. We support people to reach their potential.

- We have and actively seek opportunities to develop our skills, make impactful decisions and meaningfully contribute.
- Our clients are empowered to shape their time with us and make decisions about their path away from homelessness.

We are accountable. We take responsibility and we strive to improve.

- We take ownership of our actions and decisions, communicate transparently and are responsible for our outcomes.
- We foster trust with our clients by doing what we say we will. When things don't go according to plan, we are honest and take responsibility to improve.

Our Strategy to 2030

Setting the scene

Today, in 2024, we are facing a homelessness crisis.

We know it is possible to end rough sleeping. We also know it takes collaboration across the sector and serious political will. Through huge sector-wide efforts, the 'Everyone In' initiative to bring people off the streets during the Covid-19 pandemic achieved a massive **37%** reduction in the number of people sleeping rough in England.

The ongoing Cost of Living Crisis and the crisis caused by the lack of affordable and appropriate housing, as well as a reduction in public services, is pushing more and more people onto the streets and making it harder for people to move on from rough sleeping. We fear that there will be a growing need for homelessness services and continued insufficient funding from government to address these needs. This means that now, as in the pandemic, we need to come together as a sector and beyond to navigate the challenges ahead and meet the growing needs with the limited resources we have.

Our purpose of **ending homelessness and rebuilding lives** will drive us to transform how we operate to continue supporting some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. As part of local and national ecosystems dedicated to ending homelessness, **our commitment for this strategy is to be a valuable and valued sector partner and to focus where we can have the most impact.** We will achieve this through our two core missions:

Mission 1:

Working directly with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, providing them with services to find paths away from the streets, for good.

Mission 2:

Influencing policy makers to make positive change, through the power of our clients' voices and our operational expertise.

Rough sleeping has increased

120%

since records began in 2010 and

27%

in the last year alone.



The number of households who are homeless or at risk is the

highest

since records began.

Strategic Priority One: Keeping clients at the centre of our work.

Since we began our work in the 1960s, our clients have been the heart of who we are. Their voices and experiences drive what we do and how we do it.

We will continue to empower our clients to be actively involved in shaping:

- **Their own support.** Our clients are experts in their own lives, and we work with them, empowering them to plan and take practical steps to achieve their ambitions.
- **Their service.** Our services are delivered in partnership with our clients. Decisions about the services our clients receive at a local level are made together.
- **The organisation.** Our clients are represented at all levels of St Mungo's. They have opportunities to shape how we operate, helping us to focus where we can make the biggest difference.
- **Their community.** Our clients are empowered to overcome experiences of isolation and build links in the communities where they live as they move towards leading independent and fulfilling lives.

Michael, Client Advisory Board member, captures how our values come to life: St Mungo's provides huge assistance to us, delivered with great kindness, understanding and patience, instilling wonderful confidence to help us achieve our aims. This allows and encourages us, as clients, to provide feedback. St Mungo's do genuinely put the client at the centre of everything to constantly adjust and improve, it is not just lip-service.



We will continue to learn as we work with different communities. We'll build on our achievements, like our award-winning work with the Roma community, to further **tailor our approach** for the communities who need us, now and in the future.

We'll make sure our **service ethos**, which guides how we work with clients, is embedded and understood by everyone, including our clients and others in our sector.

We'll strengthen our impact by **valuing our clients' experiences** and involving them in our service design and operation.

We will strengthen the role of our **Client Advisory Board (CAB)**, a group with lived experiences of homelessness who help us make decisions, increasing their active and meaningful involvement at Board and Leadership level. With the CAB we will develop a new **Client Involvement Strategy**, increasing opportunities for client involvement in all our work.

We will put client involvement at the centre of our **policy and public affairs** work, focusing on issues that matter to our clients and ensuring their voices are heard in conversations about policies that affect them.



Deon, Client Advisory Board member, on what our client-centred approach has meant for her: During the three years I spent in a supported hostel, and since moving on, I have always been impressed by how actively St Mungo's seeks to empower clients. Our voices and experiences are treated as a valuable asset in shaping, delivering and evaluating services. I have been able to influence work that has had an impact from a local to a national level. That has been a vital factor in my recovery journey.

Strategic Priority Two: Focusing on our expertise and developing our practice.

Recent years have been extremely challenging for our sector and the communities where we work. For the initial period of this strategy, we will not look to expand into new regions. We will focus on consolidating where we can have the most impact, while staying ambitious about our reach, influence and resilience.

We remain committed to supporting people who have complex needs through five key areas:

- 1 Delivering street homelessness interventions that help people to move away from the streets, for good.
- 2 Providing assessment and advice services to prevent or address homelessness.
- 3 Providing accommodation and housing support in buildings that are safe and comfortable.

- 4 Helping our clients to address the wider causes and effects of their homelessness by:
 - a. Linking them in with other specialist support services, tailored to their specific needs. Actively working with partners so systems are integrated, easy to navigate and offer the best possible support.
 - b. Directly providing specialist support, but only where we are confident that we are best placed to do so.
- 5 Facilitating care services for people who have experienced homelessness, including directly running care homes.

AMC, Client Advisory Board member and St Mungo's volunteer, shares how her experience has helped develop our practice: I'm getting the chance to have an impact on things that affect clients using the service I once used myself. Liaising with those who have the authority to make changes within St Mungo's is a great opportunity to speak on behalf of people who ultimately are affected most by these decisions.

We will provide high quality services that deliver the outcomes our clients need, focusing on the evidence of what works and our expertise.

We will bring more **consistency** to our services, drawing on our evidence and best practice. While retaining flexibility, we will implement greater standardisation, allowing for more effective continuous improvement.

Far too often, our clients are ready to **move on** and live independently but are prevented from doing so by the lack of decent, affordable and appropriate accommodation. We will continue to **advocate for policy changes** that increase move on options for our clients and for others rebuilding their lives after homelessness.

We will provide safe, comfortable and sustainable homes.

Accommodation is a vital part of many of our services. While we do not provide housing at scale, our properties are our clients' homes. We are committed to providing safe, well-maintained and psychologically informed accommodation that meets their needs. Therefore, we will:

- Continue to own properties where it is sustainable and strategically important to do so. We will reduce the number of properties we own and invest in the quality of the properties we retain.
- Strengthen our relationships with landlords whose properties we use for our services, to ensure our clients are provided with the standard of housing we are committed to.
- Partner with organisations with property management expertise, to help us grow our capabilities and improve the services our clients receive.



We are operating in a global climate emergency.

Extreme weather makes it even more dangerous to sleep rough. Cold, wet and hot weather all impact people experiencing homelessness. In 2020, more than **2,500** people died in the UK because of heatwaves.

Extreme weather across the globe also means we see increasing numbers of people migrating to the UK who need our support.

Housing accounts for **23%** of the UK's carbon emissions. As a housing provider, we have a duty to reduce our impact on the environment and will:

- Invest in the efficiency of our buildings to reduce our carbon emissions.
- Partner with suppliers who have robust environmental standards.
- Create environments where clients and colleagues are supported to reduce their own carbon footprint.

Strategic Priority Three:

Collaborating to continuously improve our work and increase our reach.

Homelessness is not just a housing problem; it is a consequence of problems across a whole range of social policies and systems. These complexities mean we can't end homelessness alone.

To end homelessness, we need a collaborative response coordinated between many partners with common goals. These partnerships must span areas including housing, health, welfare, care and the criminal justice system.

We have built strong relationships across the sector over the years. For the course of this strategy, we will step up our focus on collaboration, embracing its fundamental role in our ambition to end homelessness.

We will work with local commissioners and partners to co-design better pathways and interventions. We will be sensitive to the challenges our commissioners and partners face, especially as their finances continue to reduce and the demands for their services increase. We will speak up where we see issues, or where we have ideas for how better outcomes can be achieved for our clients and their communities.

Jabeen, Homeless Health Project Coordinator, on the essence of collaboration: The Hammersmith and Fulham Homeless Health Project works collaboratively with teams across St Mungo's, and with partners like the NHS, supporting people experiencing homelessness to overcome the barriers they face in accessing health care services. So many dedicated individuals come together at every level, from frontline colleagues to local partners, to senior strategic leads, working in partnership to reduce health inequalities.





Our clients are often marginalised in their communities and isolated in society.

We want to change this. We are embedded in the communities in which we operate and have strong relationships with a range of community partners. Over the period of this strategy, we will increase our connections with community groups and initiatives, signposting clients to services that can support them and working with these local groups to make their services as accessible as possible.

We will focus on collaboration beyond the communities where we work directly.

We will harness the power of convening. We will bring people together from across the sector to solidify our collective understanding of the key issues we all face and to get to the bottom of where changes are needed. Our role in the Kerslake Commission, designed to learn the lessons from the 'Everyone In' initiative, is indicative of the impact we can have as convenors and of the vital need for these conversations to continue.

We will focus on building partnerships with other homelessness organisations across the UK, learning and supporting each other to develop best practice. Through doing this, we will improve our services and help to continuously improve the quality of support provided to clients across the sector.

We will seek to build relationships with likeminded organisations beyond the homelessness sector, seeking mutually beneficial opportunities to deliver our missions, providing development opportunities for our colleagues and increasing the efficiency of our back-office functions.

Strategic Priority Four: Being impactful and influencing change.

Our clients have a unique understanding of the real-life impacts of government policies and local initiatives. We know firsthand what it means to navigate public services and systems.

Our operational expertise from directly supporting over **2,700** people every day and night provides a rich and detailed perspective that is crucial to understanding the causes and impacts of homelessness.

We know what it takes to support someone to recover from homelessness; we know how to prevent someone from returning to the streets and we have clear insights into the changes needed to end homelessness for good.

Over this period, we will hone our focus on what works to ensure we deliver the best possible services to our clients.

We have a wealth of data and insights from our clients and colleagues, which we will use to further refine and develop our services.

We will look critically to see where we have the biggest positive impacts and focus our resources on the areas that make the most difference to our clients. We will be mindful of how our clients are regularly failed by a network of systems that are too rigid to meet their individual needs and we will use our sensitivity, experience and expertise to counteract this issue.



We have a hugely important role in making sure our clients' voices are heard to drive meaningful policy change.

We will give power to our clients' experiences, amplifying their voices to influence policy makers. We will use our extensive data and evidence to demonstrate what we know about the causes and consequences of homelessness, and to illustrate the impact of our interventions and innovations.

To make sure our data and our clients' voices have the impact and influence we know they can, we need people to know who we are and what we do. We will seek to increase our visibility and find ways to have a stronger voice in the national conversation.

Andrew, Client Advisory Board member, on the role of client voice in influencing change: St Mungo's provides opportunities for clients to participate in activities that allow their voices and experiences to be heard. All organisations working with rough sleepers and homeless people need such input to better understand what works and what does not.

We will:

- 1** Systematically analyse information about our services, gathering robust evidence so we can focus on what works and the impact we have.
- 2** Combine the voices of our clients with our operational evidence to identify the growing causes of homelessness and barriers to recovery and suggest data-informed solutions to these issues.
- 3** Work with other organisations and sector partners to bring stronger collective asks to policy makers, building on successes like the Kerslake Commission and the Cover the Cost Coalition.
- 4** Build our brand and increase our visibility, making our expertise known to strengthen our influence.



Strategic Priority Five: Ensuring St Mungo's is a great place to work.

Every day and night, it is the dedication of our colleagues and volunteers who drive our work to end homelessness and rebuild lives.

Without our people, we could not achieve any of what we do. We are proud to have so many colleagues with lived experience of homelessness who both support our clients directly and support our organisation to have an even deeper understanding of the issues our clients face. Our apprenticeship offer for people with lived experience has been incredibly valuable since it was launched in 2009 and has seen almost 200 former clients gain recognised qualifications through working with us.

Our purpose and values motivate people to work with us. We will build on this by ensuring we are offering our teams a great place to work and prioritising developing our positive and inclusive culture.

Kevin Maxwell, Head of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, reflects on his journey at St Mungo's: I joined St Mungo's in 2021. I had a range of roles across the organisation before stepping up as Head of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in 2023, and it's been a huge learning curve. I remain committed to ensuring equity, diversity and inclusion are at the core of everything we do at St Mungo's, so our people feel psychologically safe and can bring their authentic selves to work, in a culture where they belong.

Every year, on average, we have

450 volunteers

80 student placements and have had

200 apprentices since 2009.



Through the course of this strategy, our commitment to our colleagues and volunteers will be shaped by:

- 1** A new **People Strategy** that delivers a holistic offer to attract, retain, support and develop all our people. It will focus on themes colleagues told us were important to them when we co-designed this strategy. We will prioritise:
- 2**
 - Providing opportunities for colleagues to come together to share best practice and form closer connections across St Mungo's.
 - Actively engaging with our colleagues, listening to each other and developing our communications channels; building an environment where all colleagues have a voice.
 - Investing in continuous professional development and career pathways that allow colleagues to develop and progress.
 - Supporting our leaders and managers to lead their teams and the organisation well and with confidence.
 - Recognising and valuing colleagues for their role in ending homelessness and rebuilding lives.
 - Fostering a safe and supportive working environment where colleagues' health and wellbeing is supported.

Keeping great people at St Mungo's:

We have around

1,600

employees. In 2022-23,

384

of our vacancies were filled internally (through internal recruitment, secondments, transfers and redeployment).

- 3** Our continued **commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I)** is central to our values and vital to our work with our diverse range of clients, colleagues and volunteers. Our ED&I Strategy will support us to embed an inclusive culture where we better represent diversity at all levels of the organisation. We will focus on the delivery of our refreshed Race Action Plan, particularly working to increase the representation of colleagues from the Global Majority in leadership roles.
- 4** We know people can only do their best work when they are supported by good tools and processes. We will continue to modernise and improve our systems, to provide the tools our colleagues need to do their jobs well, so they can focus even more of their efforts on the activities that make the most difference to our clients.



When we work together

We couldn't do what we do at St Mungo's without our partners, commissioners and supporters.

Every day, we work closely with a wide range of **partners** and commissioners, including national government, local councils, health and criminal justice agencies, and other statutory and voluntary sector organisations. Together, we support some of the most vulnerable people in society. None of us have the answers alone. So, together, we will continue to find pragmatic and practical solutions to the challenges ahead.

Our **supporters** are here every step of the way. They donate their time and energy, their expertise and their money, they add value to our services and amplify our client's voices. They make a real difference in people's lives and we don't take this for granted. We will continue to create opportunities for our supporters to contribute to our missions in ways that work for them and we will foster lasting relationships.

We are immensely grateful to our colleagues and our clients for the invaluable role they played in developing this strategy and for making us who we are every day.

- Over **1,000** colleagues directly contributed to this strategy by sharing their ideas and insights across a range of dedicated interactive forums.
- We heard from over **800** clients in our most recent Client Feedback Survey and events, helping us to understand how we can best meet their needs.

We would also like to thank our trustees, and particularly Joanna Killian, our Chair until May 2024, Tim Gadd, our Vice Chair until 2023 and Rolande Anderson, our Chair of the Service Committee until earlier this year.



When we work together, ending homelessness is possible. Find out how you can get involved at mungos.org

StMungo's

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mungos.org

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