



Festival^{*} of^{*} Kindness[😊]

2025 Impact Report

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Executive Summary

Festival of Kindness is more than a UK-wide relief effort – it is an annual celebration of compassion, generosity, and community spirit. At its heart is a simple belief: that kindness has the power to support and uplift people who are homeless and vulnerable during Christmas and the long winter months.

In 2025, our mission was to share the gift of kindness across the UK by providing more than 300,000 Christmas dinners, winter meals, essential items, and gifts to people experiencing homelessness and poverty.

Supporters across the country helped make this possible. Many donated towards meals, accommodation, gifts, and essentials. Others brought items from wish lists to our Trees of Kindness in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, London, and Birmingham. These donations were distributed through a network of grassroots charity partners, each working closely with people in need in their local communities.

Volunteers also played an important role. They did shifts at the Trees of Kindness, helped to count and sort donations at our distribution hub, and offered a warm welcome at our Christmas lunch services in Scotland and London.

Thanks to this collective effort, we exceeded our target. In total, we provided **310,443** Christmas dinners, winter meals, gifts, and essential items supporting **704** projects in **329** towns, villages, and boroughs across the UK.

Thank you for making Festival of Kindness 2025 such a powerful reminder of how compassion and generosity can change lives across the country.



Actor Adrian Lester CBE lending his support at the Tree of Kindness in Birmingham

Thanks to your kindness, donations of £5 funded a warm meal, opening the door for someone to come in from the cold, and know they are not alone.

Festival of Kindness in numbers



254,858

FREE CHRISTMAS AND
WINTER MEALS FUNDED

for homeless and vulnerable
individuals and families

*these figures are initial calculations and may vary slightly

over **310,443**

meals and gifts provided



37,344

itison vouchers
purchased

704

Projects supported
across the UK



CHARITY PARTNERS

helped to
deliver meals,
gifts and
essential items
across the UK

54,705

GIFTS AND
ESSENTIALS

distributed in time
for Christmas to
children, families
and individuals
most in need



785
VOLUNTEERS

GAVE



2,073 HOURS

of their own time to make
Festival of Kindness
happen

You helped reach people who were
homeless and vulnerable in

329 TOWNS, VILLAGES AND
BOROUGHES ACROSS THE UK

thank you x

Thanks to your kindness, over 184,000 people all over the UK received a meal, a gift, an essential item or a bed for the night, which made winter a little brighter for the most vulnerable people in our society.

Thousands of acts of kindness

Thanks to your support, real impact was seen in communities throughout the UK

Almost **54,000 gifts** from a wish list were dropped off by kind-hearted supporters alongside generous donations of stock from our corporate partners.

We funded an estimated **1,477 nights** of emergency accommodation with wraparound support for people who, without this help, may have had to sleep rough.

Social Bite grew the campaign's reach to **329 towns, cities and communities** – sharing the gift of kindness further across the UK than ever before.

We supported a network of **704 grassroots projects** throughout the UK, helping them to offer Christmas cheer. Not only did this provide gifts and meals it provided love, hope and comfort to some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

960 hot Christmas dinners with all the trimmings were served in Social Bite coffee shops in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen, alongside a Christmas meal in London and a celebratory meal for our Edinburgh village residents.

724 backpacks with warm clothing, toiletries, gifts, and emergency essentials were distributed at our Christmas lunch services.

'We are writing to thank you for your very kind Christmas donations. Your support is very much appreciated and brought so much joy to children and families across the community.'

Govan Help



Thanks to your kindness, people experiencing homelessness were welcomed to the Social Bite coffee shops and partner venues on 23rd Dec, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day to share a hot meal with others in loving company.

About Social Bite

We are a charity and social business providing homes, jobs, food, and support to help people transform their lives and leave homelessness behind for good.

We began life as a sandwich shop on Edinburgh's Rose Street in 2012 and we became dedicated to ending homelessness when a Big Issue seller named Pete plucked up the courage to ask for a job. We now have a network of coffee shops and social impact programmes that provide people with food, support, housing and employment opportunities to help break the cycle of homelessness.

By supporting the Festival of Kindness campaign, you've helped drive meaningful, long-term change during winter and beyond.

COFFEE SHOPS WITH A DIFFERENCE



Enjoy good food for a good cause at our social enterprise coffee shops in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen or London. Our coffee fuels more than just your day: every purchase helps provide jobs, homes, food and support for people experiencing homelessness.

In each venue, we employ people with lived experience of homelessness and we invite customers to 'pay it forward' which helps to fund the coffee shop's free food services for people in need.

JOBS FIRST

Jobs First is our unique supported employment programme that places people affected by homelessness into mainstream jobs, providing tailored support to both employee and employer for long-term success. We're breaking down barriers to employment for people affected by homelessness, and helping them thrive at work with supported roles in empathetic environments. To date we've supported 120 people into meaningful, lasting, fulfilling work.

SOCIAL BITE VILLAGES

Social Bite Villages are an innovative alternative to unsuitable temporary accommodation (such as B&Bs), which are costly and ineffective, with poor social outcomes. We provide dignified, high-quality living spaces in a stable and supported environment, offering the right conditions and opportunities for people from situations of homelessness to build independent lives.



UK-WIDE IMPACT

In addition to our own support programmes, we partner with more than 800 grass roots projects providing vital support for people experiencing homelessness across the UK.



These projects all share our mission and values, with the aim of reaching people in need with tangible immediate and long-term support.



Thanks to your kindness, children living in emergency or temporary accommodation opened presents on Christmas day and shared a joyful moment with their families.

Social Bite's Festival of Kindness



Thank you from Josh Littlejohn, MBE



On behalf of all of us at Social Bite, thank you so much for supporting 2025's Festival of Kindness.

When we launched this year's campaign, we hoped to deliver 300,000 Christmas dinners, winter meals, gifts and essential items to people experiencing homelessness and hardship across the UK. Because of your support, we went even further, reaching **310,443** meals and items delivered.

With this year's campaign included, this UK-wide effort has now provided more than 1.7 million meals, gifts and essentials to people in communities across the country.

Behind those numbers are people and families facing another winter under real pressure, with the housing emergency and cost of living continuing to hit hard. At a time that should bring warmth and comfort, too many are instead dealing with cold, hunger and uncertainty.

We know we can do something about this.

For more than a decade, Christmas at Social Bite has meant opening our doors in Scotland to offer meals, warmth and company to people who might otherwise go without.

Festival of Kindness grew from that simple idea in 2020, and every year since I've been moved by the generosity behind it. It has become a way for people across the country to come together and provide meals, gifts, essential items and urgent support to people who need it most.

This year, Trees of Kindness stood in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and London, and for the first time in Birmingham, where homelessness rates are among the highest in the UK. Supporters donated wish-list items including warm clothing, toiletries and toys for families in emergency accommodation, which were then distributed with the help of local grassroots partners.

Because of your support, help reached people in **329** towns, cities and communities. Whether you donated, volunteered, dropped off a gift or paid it forward, you helped make winter a little easier for people who needed it most. From the bottom of my heart, thank you.

J. Littlejohn

Josh Littlejohn MBE, Founder



**Meals, trees,
gifts & shelter**

Christmas meals

This year, we provided Christmas dinners with all the trimmings, a gift, and loving company for people who are homeless and vulnerable, in our coffee shops and partner venues in Scotland and London on the 23rd Dec, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

In addition to the hot food in a safe and warm space, this provides an opportunity for someone to make friends, access support, and begin their journey towards ending homelessness.

For many people, these moments of connection can be life-changing. Cherie is one of those people.

Everything changed for Cherie when she developed schizophrenia in her 20s. She describes Social Bite, and Development and Support Worker Paul, as her connection to reality since then. "They didn't treat me any differently. They encouraged me, they didn't judge me, and they were all really friendly."

Cherie's background is in retail and hospitality – certainly handy when it comes to volunteering at Social Bite's free food services! Cherie used to work at music festivals all over the country. She'd do around 10 a year, managing dozens of staff, as well as washing dishes and generally looking after the crew who built the stages and sound systems.

Cherie explains that she was never one for staying in the same place: she grew up in foster care and moved around a lot. It was hard to make friends, but she found stability came from meeting people and making connections. Now, when she volunteers, she applies her natural ability to forge connections as she serves teas and coffees and chats to guests. "I help people open up who aren't good at talking," she reflects.

Whether it's volunteering year-round, or at Christmas time during Festival of Kindness, Cherie believes it's important to care about other people and show kindness. She says, **"you never know until you try – but your actions matter. There's always a butterfly effect." Kindness at Christmas can make a real difference. When she volunteers at Christmas services, Cherie likes to be in the kitchen.**

Of course, she's good at washing dishes. "And I only burned the turkey once!" she jokes.



On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, Social Bite Aberdeen opens its doors to provide free Christmas dinners to anyone who needs it. Cherie describes the atmosphere as joyful: people are looking for companionship and to enjoy themselves, and they find it at Social Bite. Much like her days working at the festivals, Cherie enjoys feeding people and seeing them relaxed and happy. But it's even more significant over the festive season. "I've spent Christmas by myself, so I know it's really nice to turn up and see a friendly face," she explains. "People say, 'thank you, you've made my day,' and they really mean it."

Cherie recommends that everyone should experience making a difference within their local community, especially if they're struggling themselves. "Volunteering is gratifying, humbling, and empowering," she says. "Christmas can be the loneliest time of year, but you can make a real difference in someone's life by making them smile."

To find out more about the difference our free food service makes to people experiencing homelessness, go to [page 38](#) to read Jasmyn's story.

Trees of Kindness

This year, we once again installed our spectacular 10-metre Trees of Kindness in Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Glasgow and London, and for the first time brought one to Birmingham. With more than 5,000 households in Birmingham currently living in temporary accommodation—the highest number in the UK outside London—we aimed to spread kindness even further by placing a Tree in the heart of the city.

Throughout December, the trees were open seven days a week, giving supporters and members of the public the chance to drop off gifts and essential items from a wish list, donate funds to provide meals and support, and volunteer in shifts to help with the campaign. All the gifts collected were then distributed in time for Christmas to people experiencing homelessness and hardship in the area.



Thanks to your kindness, gifts including warm clothes, toiletry sets and children's toys were gifted to people and families who are homeless and vulnerable during the winter.

Edinburgh Tree of Kindness

We were thrilled to return the Tree of Kindness to St Andrew Square in Edinburgh, and we were wonderfully received. Over 3,600 gifts were donated here in one day alone, and there are countless stories of amazing acts of kindness and empathy.

Sadly, homelessness in Edinburgh is rising, with over 6,000 households currently living in temporary accommodation, with an average of 68 people sleeping rough in the city.

With your help, we responded to this, collecting warm clothing, sleeping bags, toiletries, and blankets to help people through the harsh winter. This was alongside our wider support to ensure help for the most vulnerable people to find longer-term solutions to break the cycle of homelessness.

'Working with a vulnerable group, it was especially lovely to see families be able to enjoy a meal together and enjoy the day. That meant a lot to the people we support and your kindness played a big part in making that possible.'

We Are With You, Edinburgh

YOU SHARED KINDNESS BY...

Donating
£17,534.19
at the Tree



Volunteering
244 hours
at the Tree



Donating 24,332
gifts and
essential items
at the Tree



and funding
7,507 more



Thanks to your kindness, the Bethany Christian Trust in Edinburgh, which runs a winter overnight welcome centre for people rough sleeping, was able to employ two night-shift workers to support guests, offering much-needed company and care.

Glasgow Tree of Kindness

The Glasgow Tree of Kindness returned to the West End to spread the message of Kindness. The people of Glasgow are wonderful supporters of the tree and have generously donated gifts and essential items for us to share with people experiencing homelessness and poverty in the city.

Glasgow is still in the grip of a housing emergency, with over 4,700 people living in temporary accommodation and most expected to stay for around 8 months until longer-term accommodation is found.

Through Festival of Kindness we donated sleeping bags, warm clothing and toiletry kits, alongside children's toys and selection boxes for families, bringing hope and joy to vulnerable people at a really difficult time.

'Your support is very much appreciated and brought joy to children and families across the community'

Govan Help, Glasgow

YOU SHARED KINDNESS BY...

Donating
£4,588.85
at the Tree



Volunteering
264 hours
at the Tree



Donating
3,351 gifts and
essential items
at the Tree



Thanks to your kindness, we supplied ingredients to grassroots projects, so over 1,700 people in Glasgow could enjoy a community Christmas meal — a hot, comforting dinner shared with family, along with access to wider support.

Aberdeen Tree of Kindness

Located outside the Bon Accord centre in Aberdeen, the Tree of Kindness again brought warmth and hope to the city.

From 2024-2025, Aberdeen saw a 127% increase in homelessness. Although there is no rough sleeping issue, as in other cities, Aberdeen is still struggling with a lack of decent housing stock, which means many people are in unsuitable accommodation that does not meet their needs or in temporary accommodation awaiting a more permanent housing option.

This year, charities in the city partnered with us to distribute items donated to the tree. All of these are experts in the needs of their local community and support people with dignity and kindness at the heart of their work.

'When many were facing impossible choices between food, heating and other essentials, your support helped ensure that no one felt forgotten this Christmas.'

Somebody Cares Scotland

YOU SHARED KINDNESS BY...

Donating
£4,712.86
at the Tree



Volunteering
60 hours
at the Tree



Donating
2,482 gifts and
essential items
at the Tree



Thanks to your kindness, clients of Somebody Cares Scotland in Aberdeen were given new home starter packs to help people settle into accommodation and begin a new life.

London Tree of Kindness

Our Tree of Kindness returned to its prime location on the Strand outside Charing Cross station and The Clermont Hotel, to spread kindness in the capital.

Located in Westminster, the local area has the highest level of rough sleepers in any part of London, with the autumn 2025 rough sleeper count identifying 360 people bedding down within the borough on a single night. Sadly, many people become entrenched in rough sleeping due to frozen housing benefits, a lack of affordable housing and complex health needs; according to Crisis, rough sleeping has become “normalised”, and 9 out of 10 people experience violence or abuse while sleeping on the streets in London.

The tree spread hope and joy, partnering with six local charity projects to support some of the most vulnerable people in the city.

'The support ensured that our service users could experience Christmas with dignity, enjoying good food, a welcoming environment, and a sense that they are valued and not forgotten.'

Manna Society, London

YOU SHARED KINDNESS BY...

Donating
£3,796.67
at the Tree



Volunteering
244 hours
at the Tree



Donating
10,768 gifts and
essential items
at the Tree



and funding
3,228 more



Thanks to your kindness, Robes in London was able to provide safe, warm hotel accommodation and support for people experiencing homelessness over the Christmas week – giving people security, comfort, and companionship during the hardest week of the year.

Birmingham Tree of Kindness

This year marked the first time the Tree of Kindness arrived in Birmingham, appearing outside New Street Station as part of our commitment to expanding our impact across the UK. Local businesses, community groups, and partner organisations came together – volunteering their time, donating gifts, and sharing acts of kindness with people across the city.

Homelessness remains a significant and growing challenge in Birmingham and the surrounding region. Recent statutory data shows that 8,780 households across the wider West Midlands are currently living in temporary accommodation, including 16,380 children.

Despite the scale of this issue, the Festival of Kindness made a meaningful difference in Birmingham – bringing gifts, essentials, Christmas dinners and winter meals to people experiencing homelessness in the city.

'I appreciate your kindness by helping with the extra food that is helping in changing my life.'

Hope Projects, Birmingham

YOU SHARED KINDNESS BY..

Donating
£1,318.10
at the Tree



Volunteering
118 hours
at the Tree



Donating
1,558 gifts and
essential items
at the Tree
and funding 615
more



Thanks to your kindness, the Salvation Army in Birmingham brought people together to share a Christmas meal and receive the gifts you donated to the tree.

Gifts of kindness

This year, we distributed over **54,705** gifts and essential items to people in need throughout Scotland and across London. We did this through our own services and through our network of **85** grassroots community projects. These organisations were chosen because they align with Social Bite's mission and values and work within the following areas:

- **Homelessness and housing support**
- **Poverty and food insecurity**
- **Accommodation support**
- **Addiction**
- **Employability**
- **Mental health**

[Click here](#) to explore a map of charities supported through the Festival of Kindness

We ask the people we support and our grass-roots project partners to provide a 'wish list' of items that people experiencing homelessness and poverty need and value over the Christmas period, with dignity and lived experience being at the heart of the campaign. Supporters and members of the public are then invited to donate gifts and essential items from the wish list at our Trees of Kindness in the run-up to Christmas.

Watch: [the 'journey' of a gift donated at a tree](#)



The Trees of Kindness form a crucial part of the campaign, one that wouldn't be possible without the support of the following partners:

- Bon Accord
- Capital Building
- Essential Edinburgh
- Grosvenor Hotel Glasgow
- Livi Self Storage
- Network Rail
- NSL
- Red Torpedo
- Robert Mackie of Scotland
- Royal Society of Edinburgh
- Sky Cares
- The City of Edinburgh Council
- Thorntons Solicitors
- Visit West End
- M&D Green Pharmacy Group
- KAO
- The Clermont Group
- Scottish Book Trust
- Shaftesbury Capital

Thanks to your kindness, over 20,000 people benefited from the Social Bite Trees of Kindness, bringing comfort and hope to people who would have otherwise gone without at Christmas.

Sharing the gift of kindness

Gifting an item at a Tree of Kindness marks the beginning of its exciting journey! Donated items are then sent to a storage facility, where they are sorted and packed. Volunteer drivers then collect and deliver the items directly to our local project partners for them to distribute to people in need in time for Christmas.

Barbara Haig (Babs), Innovation and Distribution Lead at Social Bite, reflects on the importance of the Festival of Kindness campaign:



"This is not just a physical gift, it makes people feel valued, they feel a sense of dignity, care and hope, reminding them that they are not forgotten and offering a moment of warmth and connection during a time that can feel particularly isolating."

At Social Bite, we ask that donations are new items. When people ask us why, we explain that it's about dignity and equality; alongside this, we do not have the facilities to dry clean or repair donations; the turnaround time is very quick! Sometimes, just hours between gifts being donated to the trees and going on to a charity partner who will place it in the hands of someone in need. But fundamentally, we believe that everyone has the right to receive something new purchased with someone in mind, and it underlines our belief that 'there is no them and us, only us.'

We would like to thank the companies who provided significant quantities of gifts and essentials by donating stock:



Thanks to your kindness, people experiencing homelessness in Glasgow were given warm food, a new sleeping bag and a hot drink: a lifeline for people rough sleeping in sub-zero temperatures.



Festive backpacks

We distributed 724 backpacks to people who came along to our Christmas dinner services in Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Glasgow.

We wanted to ensure that the items were practical and useful to the people receiving them, so we collaborated with people who regularly attended our Social Bite 'Scran' food service to make a wish list of items.

Thank you to office pooch Rodney, who checked every single backpack was stacked with gifts and essentials!

Thanks to your kindness, each backpack included a handwritten gift tag and a Christmas card with lovely messages sent in with your generous donations, offering people warmth and the feeling that they're not alone.

Emergency winter accommodation and support



'Thanks for your support, it's because of you I'm alive now, it's because of you I'm able to smile again, you gave a place to stay when I was alone. Thank so much for your support I really appreciate it.'
Glass Door guest

Our accommodation partners for 2025 were:

Scotland:



Bethany
Christian
Trust



Simon
Community
Scotland

Kindness
Homeless Street Team Glasgow



London:



GLASSDOOR
A route out of homelessness

Birmingham:

St Basils
Works with young people

One of the objectives of Festival of Kindness, alongside distributing meals and gifts, is to provide shelter and support for people in need over the winter months.

Thanks to your support, since 2021, we have partnered with grassroots charities to fund:

- Emergency accommodation
- Winter night shelters
- Support for people who are sleeping rough during the harsh winter months.

This winter, Social Bite has funded **1,200** emergency nights of accommodation for people in Scotland, London and Birmingham.

Social Bite not only funds a bed for the night but also the essential support that goes alongside it, working with our grassroots partners to help people move forward. This includes casework, housing and benefits advice, and support to navigate the immigration system, all of which play a vital role in breaking the cycle of homelessness.

By fundraising for this support you are truly saving lives. Go to [page 39](#) to read Claire's story.

Thanks to your kindness, charities in Scotland were able to 'spot purchase' emergency rooms for the most vulnerable people in our communities, providing them with time, space and safety.

Beyond crisis support: winter housing and tenancy support

For someone who has experienced homelessness, moving into a tenancy is not an ending — it is the beginning of a fragile new chapter. The journey from the street to a safe, stable home can be long and deeply challenging, particularly for people who have slept rough and carry the trauma that comes with it. These are individuals who have often faced exploitation, domestic abuse, addiction, and significant mental and physical health challenges, all while enduring the instability and stress of homelessness.

Simply receiving the keys to a home is not enough to undo this experience. Without the right support in place, a tenancy can quickly become overwhelming. When this support is missing, the risk of people slipping back into homelessness is heartbreakingly real.

This is where your support is transformative.

Thanks to your generosity, Social Bite is able to fund a network of local projects across Scotland that work with people during this critical period. Your donation helps provide warm, practical, person-centred support that turns a house into a home, offering reassurance, stability and dignity at a time when it is needed most. Your fundraising has directly supported people in Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire, Dundee and Perth to sustain their tenancies through the harsh winter months, when household costs soar and the margin for crisis is at its thinnest. At a moment when one unexpected bill or setback could push someone back into homelessness, your support has been there to prevent that fall.

While some of the items and interventions you've funded may appear small on their own, when delivered alongside dedicated support they are life-changing. They provide comfort, security and the practical foundations needed to break the cycle of homelessness for good.



Emergency electricity
and gas vouchers



Bedding packs



New home packs including
hot water bottles, blankets
and electric heaters



Warm clothing
and underwear



Kitchen starter packs to
give people the
confidence to cook
independently



Pre-loved
furniture

**Our winter housing
and tenancy support
partners for 2025 were:**

 **positive steps**



Thanks to your kindness, Somebody Cares Scotland was funded to provide furniture for people moving into a new tenancy. Because of your fundraising, children in Aberdeen will sleep in their own bed tonight, many for the first time.

Festival of Kindness across the UK



Purfleet Trust, Kings Lynn - 234 meals funded

This winter, Festival of Kindness became a lifeline for communities across the UK. Together with **105** grass-roots partner organisations, we supported **704** projects reaching thousands of the most vulnerable people. From delivering gifts and essential items that brought dignity, relief and joy, to funding Christmas and winter meals that turned cold nights into warm moments of hope, Festival of Kindness ensured no one was left behind.

We helped people stay warm, stay fed, and stay safe, providing emergency accommodation and support for those who might otherwise have faced the harsh reality of sleeping rough. Every project, every meal, every parcel delivered was a reminder that kindness isn't just a feeling, it's action.

And none of this would have been possible without you. To see a full list of our grassroots partners across the UK, go to [page 40](#).

Thanks to your kindness, in Brighton, people living in YMCA accommodation came together for the first time to share a Christmas meal. This was so successful the charity intends to offer more community meals to bring their residents together to make friends and provide peer support.

Christmas and winter meals across the UK

Social Bite extends its mission by partnering with remarkable grassroots projects throughout the UK, enhancing our outreach and impact while nurturing a culture of collaboration.

Our extensive network reaches diverse locations in over 330 towns, cities and communities across the UK. Each local organisation is chosen because it aligns with our mission and supports people in the local community experiencing homelessness or living in poverty. Thanks to our amazing supporters, this year we donated over **221,000** Christmas dinners and winter meals throughout the UK. Go to [page 26](#) to see the local impact of free meals delivered through the Festival of Kindness in your local area.

This Festival of Kindness, we funded Christmas and winter meals through [26 local project partners](#) for the people they serve, fostering opportunities for individuals to access vital support and strengthen community bonds:

"Food is far more than nourishment. A hot meal can be the gateway to community, safety, and human connection. It brings people together, reduces isolation, and helps individuals re-engage with support networks. With your help, we have continued offering this lifeline to people across Sheffield who would otherwise face Christmas alone." - Homeless and Rootless at Christmas, Sheffield



Jimmy's, Cambridge – 5,100 meals funded

Tim receives support from The Purfleet Trust in King's Lynn, for which Social Bite funded over 3,900 winter meals. Tim shared the difference this made to his life:

"Getting these meals was a real game changer for me. It was a relief knowing I'd be eating, but I also started to look forward to coming in and seeing people. I'd lost contact with almost everyone. Sitting down for lunch gave me a chance to talk but it didn't feel forced."

Honestly, it's changed my life and it all started over pasta and a cuppa. Sitting and eating together made it easier to open up. I'm starting to feel like myself again. I'm now looking at doing a course to get into plastering."



The Connection, London – 1,400 meals funded

Thanks to your kindness, Breakfast Buddies in Kent was able to provide people with a packed lunch. One client said, "the packed lunch means I have something to eat later in the day. Otherwise, breakfast might be the only meal I have."

Real people, real impact throughout the UK

Here is a snapshot of the difference your fundraising has made in people's lives, accessing the support of our grassroots partners in their local communities.

Sarah* in Norfolk and the power of a community meal

St Martins in Norfolk have shared Sarah's story. She is a guest at 'Under 1 Roof' a training and development centre for people experiencing homelessness in the city.



For months, Sarah had been living in a small tent tucked on the edge of the city. Winter nights were long, cold and quiet. Days were spent trying to get by. Food was whatever she could find or afford that week. She had grown used to feeling invisible. An outreach worker told her about Under 1 Roof, a project with free food funded by the Festival of Kindness. Sarah attended and was welcomed to a safe place, with a hot meal and this became a lifeline. She could count on one nourishing meal every day, no matter what else fell apart. It meant she didn't have to go to sleep hungry. But the impact reached far beyond food. Each visit slowly drew her out of isolation, she began chatting with volunteers. **Quiet hellos turned into familiar faces, shared laughter and conversations that reminded her she belonged somewhere. She found a community, something she hadn't felt in a long time.**

*name changed

Graham* in Manchester and the importance of community connection

The Booth Centre in Manchester shared how offering routine with a warm meal, Graham was able to engage with other activities and build a new, brighter future.

"Graham first came to the centre around six months ago for support with housing issues and to access meals in our café. Initially, he was quite shy and hesitant to join activities, feeling overwhelmed in a new environment.

In January, while spending some quiet time in the garden, he noticed a woodwork session where we were making bird boxes. We invited him to join, which sparked his interest.

With some guidance, he quickly got involved—this was the first of many activities he has since taken part in.

Since then, Graham has developed a routine, completed training courses, and started volunteering with us. He has also decided to work towards gaining qualifications and is now enrolled in Maths and English GCSE courses.

He says that having structure and purpose has helped him recognise his potential and feel motivated to build a brighter future."



*name changed

Festival of Kindness across the UK

Here is a snapshot of the difference your support has made throughout the UK.

📍 The red pins show where Christmas dinners and winter meals were provided.

🎁 🍴 The icons show where gifts and essentials and accommodation were also provided.

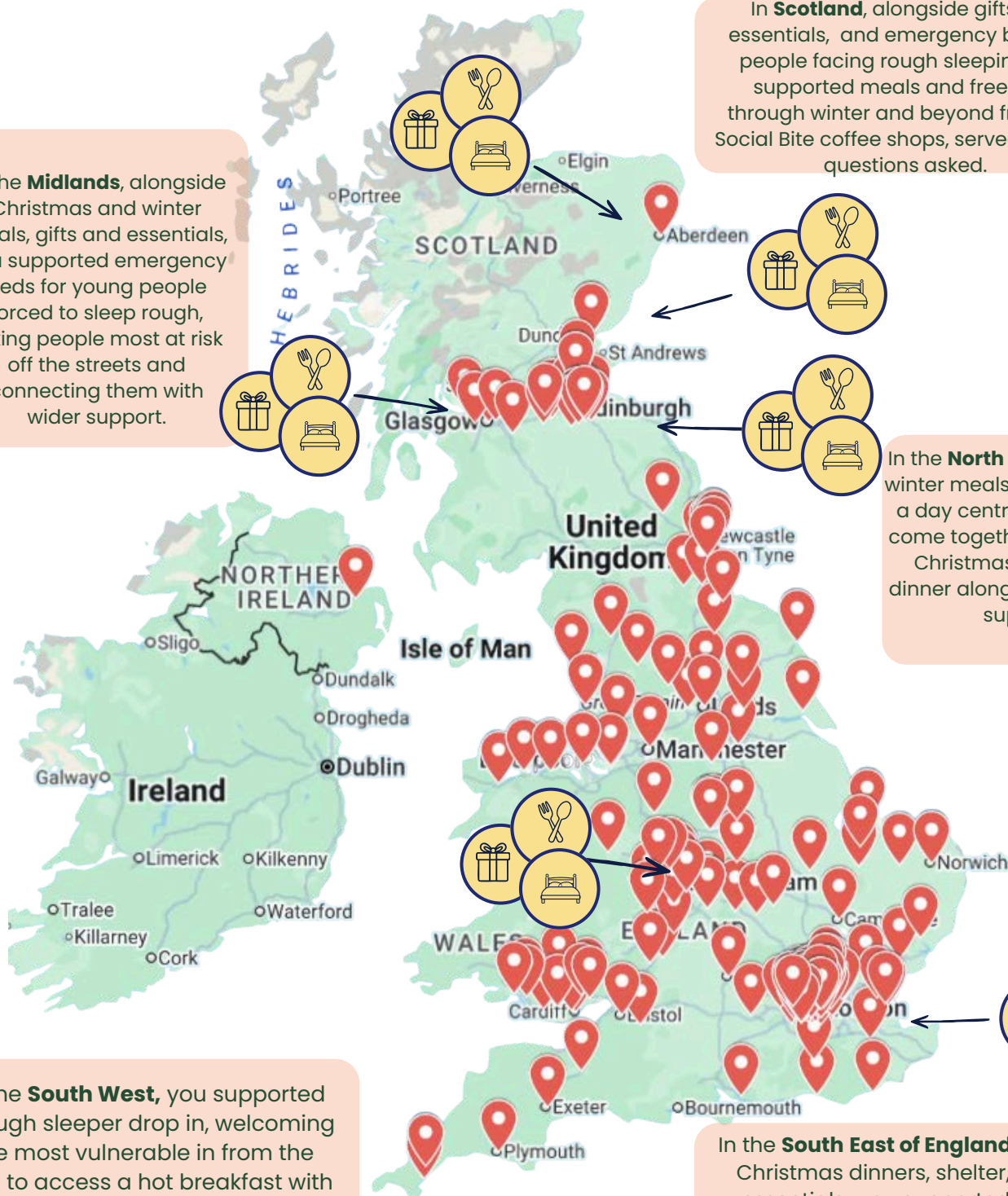
In the **Midlands**, alongside Christmas and winter meals, gifts and essentials, you supported emergency beds for young people forced to sleep rough, taking people most at risk off the streets and connecting them with wider support.

In **Scotland**, alongside gifts and essentials, and emergency beds for people facing rough sleeping, you supported meals and free food through winter and beyond from our Social Bite coffee shops, served with no questions asked.

In the **North East**, alongside winter meals, you supported a day centre for people to come together and share a Christmas community dinner alongside crisis food support.

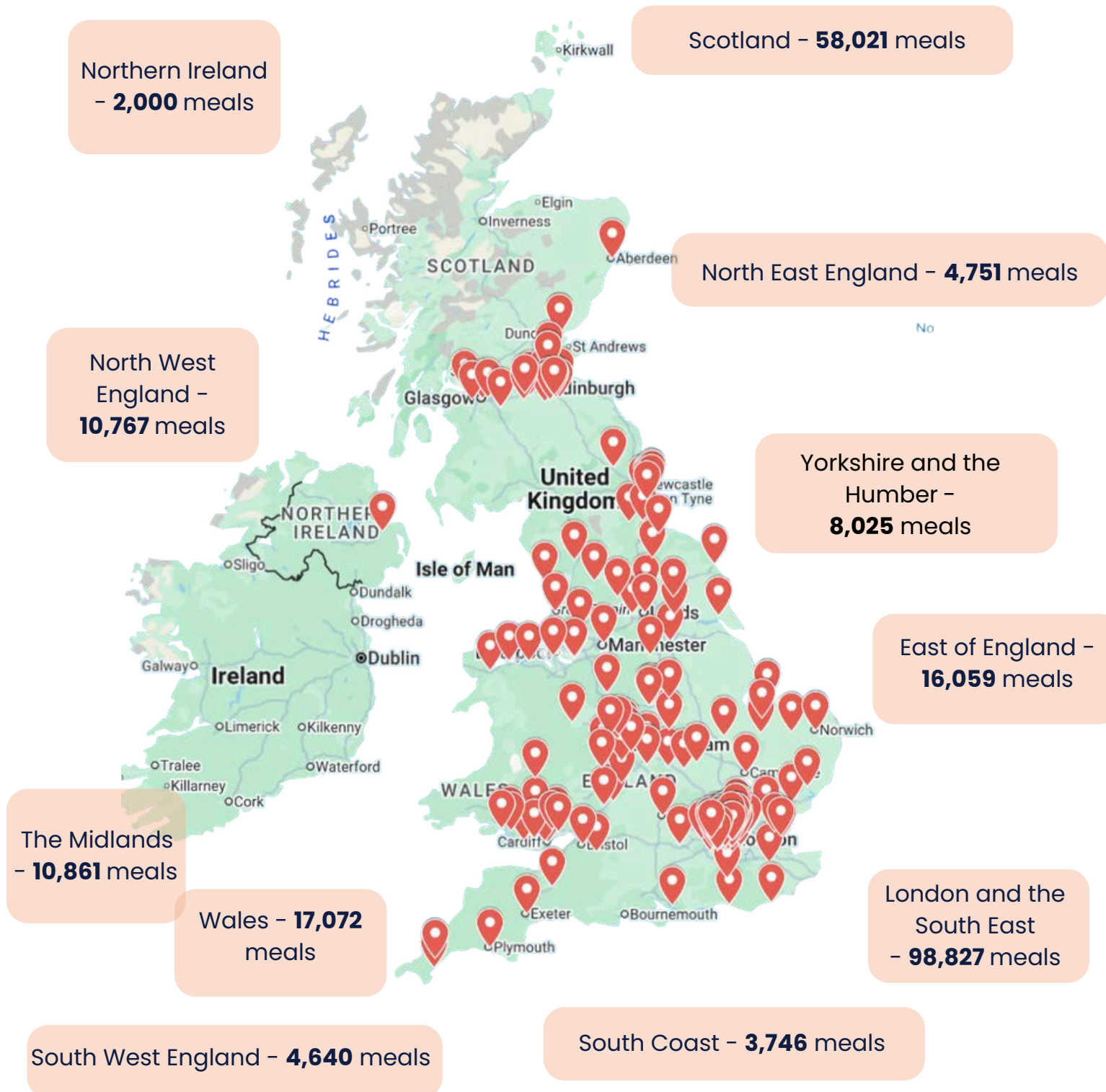
In the **South West**, you supported a rough sleeper drop in, welcoming the most vulnerable in from the cold to access a hot breakfast with wrap around support.

In the **South East of England**, alongside Christmas dinners, shelter, gifts and essentials, you supported an open access homelessness drop in service where anyone can receive a hot meal with loving company.



Festival of Kindness across the UK

Your fundraising has reached all corners of the UK. Here's a breakdown of the impact in your local town, village, and London borough. This includes Christmas and winter meals delivered through grant funding, alongside our meal and ingredients services in Scotland, Birmingham and London. Thanks to your support, people received a warm meal not only during the festive season but beyond, along with a vital connection to community and wider support, helping to break the cycle of homelessness.



Where have you seen Festival of Kindness?

Festival of Kindness brought together people from all over the UK to bring support, comfort and hope to someone they will never meet, a sign of togetherness during difficult times. We are so grateful to everyone who shared the campaign in their business venues, through their social media channels, or through stories in local press or national news. Here are a few highlights...



Where you may have seen Festival of Kindness

In print and online...

HUFFPOST

THE NATIONAL



We received amazing press coverage highlighting the campaign and the wider issue of homelessness

At your local...

Mitchells & Butlers, leading UK restaurant and bar group, encouraged guests to 'pay it forward' by adding a donation to their bill in around 1,700 venues



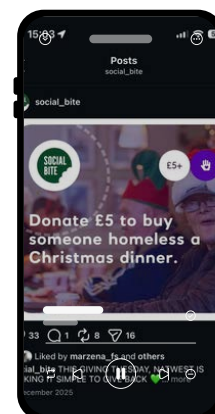
Through your letterbox...

We are so grateful to over 10,000 people who generously responded to the Festival of Kindness postal appeal



Via your bank...

NatWest Group enabled customers to donate their rewards on their Customer Rewards App



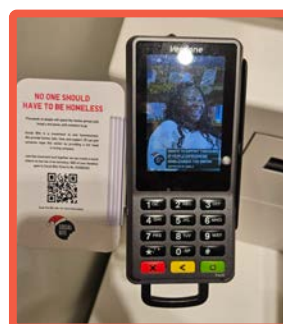
At the theatre...

Thank you to Moulin Rouge the Musical who held collections during some December performances, raising over £6,000



Whilst doing your Christmas shopping...

Uniqlo enabled customers in their Edinburgh and Glasgow stores to add a donation at checkout

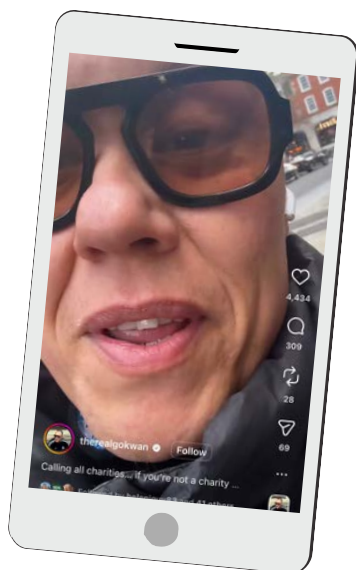


Thanks to your kindness, 380 community projects across London and the South East of England received fresh food, helping to support people experiencing homelessness and food poverty in a region where, in London alone, one in every 21 children is growing up in temporary accommodation.

Where you may have seen Festival of Kindness

Online and social media...

Thank you to all the influencers and celebrities who joined Festival of Kindness and encouraged their followers to support the campaign. There are so many we could mention, here is just a snapshot:



Thank you to Gok Wan who donated a special Christmas gift via the Tree of Kindness in London

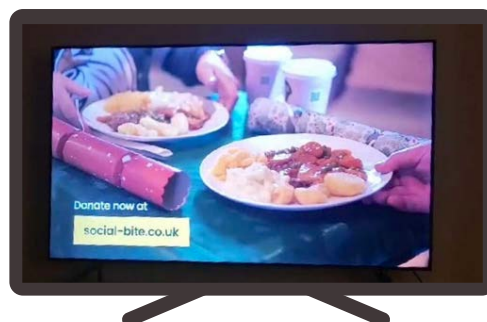
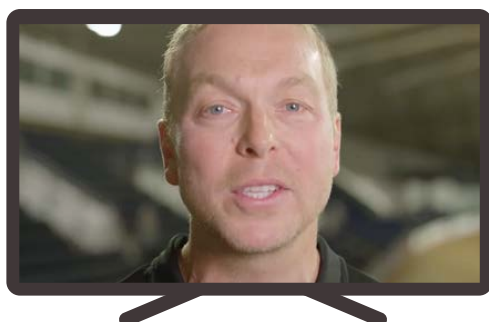


Thank you to itison who promoted buying someone homeless Christmas dinner or a gift on their voucher site, resulting in over 37,000 people donating



Thank you to actor Adrian Lester who supported and promoted the Birmingham tree of Kindness

And on your tv...



Thank you to Sir Chris Hoy who starred in the Festival of Kindness ad campaign on STV

Thanks to your kindness, a charity in Birmingham who support people living in destitution was able to offer crisis food vouchers. These vouchers offer vital comfort and support to people in real need.

How you supported Festival of Kindness



Festival of Kindness 2025 was a success thanks to Social Bite supporters. Whether you helped with fundraising, volunteering, logistical support, liking a social media post, buying a coffee in our shops or making a donation of any kind, we're immensely grateful to you for your generosity.

We couldn't have done it without you!

Community support for Festival of Kindness

It's been wonderful to see so many individuals, community organisations and local businesses joining the mission to end homelessness by supporting the Festival of Kindness. Here are a few special stories that we'd like to highlight.

Community stories

Working out for a good cause

Holisium Gym held an open workout day to bring gym members together to raise money for Social Bite's Festival of Kindness. Holisium chose to support Social Bite at Christmas knowing the winter months can lead to people experiencing homelessness to face even more severe challenges. The fundraising day was a great success, raising vital awareness and £1,500 in donations.

Alana from Holisium said: *"We were blown away by the generosity and enthusiasm of everyone involved and proud of what we were able to achieve together while raising funds for Social Bite."*



Orla leads a family fundraiser

Keen craft enthusiast Orla brought her family together to help fundraise for the Festival of Kindness. With Aunt Kate's coffee shop planning a Christmas Fayre, Orla took on the challenge of making candles with Grandma Sheila to be sold. After a couple of lovely Grandma/Granddaughter days of candle making the Fayre came and Orla turned into a sales supremo - selling every single last candle!

Altogether Orla (with the great support of her Aunt and Grandma) was able to raise £140..



Thanks to your kindness, women and children escaping domestic abuse in Midlothian were provided with emergency food hampers, providing comfort and support at a really difficult time.

Community support for the Festival of Kindness

Community stories continued...



Bagpipe busking for Social Bite

13 year old Cailean decided to use his Bagpipe busking to make some noise for Social Bite in December. Cailean said, *"I busk regularly in the centre of Edinburgh and it really bothers me to see the amount of homeless people. I often donate to the people who are homeless on our streets, but decided to carry out a busking session and donate all my earnings on 23rd December 2025 to provide a hot meal on Christmas day to those in need through Social Bite."*

Raising over £80 in just an afternoon's work, Cailean can't wait to do it again next December!

Advent Challenge for Social Bite

To support the Festival of Kindness we asked people to take on the Social Bite Advent Challenge to run 5km every day from the 1st December to the 24th December. Runners pushed on through icy cold weather and tired legs to complete their kilometres each day to raise funds and awareness for Social Bite.

One runner noted, *"whilst out running, which is mainly mornings, it re-enforces how much help is needed for people finding themselves in this horrible situation."*

A total of 20 runners took on the epic festive running challenge, raising over £6,000 including gift aid to support the Festival of Kindness.



Thanks to your kindness, Big issue vendors, supported by 40 projects across the UK, were offered crisis food vouchers to feed them and their families during the cold winter months, offering dignity and choice at a really difficult time.

Corporate support for Festival of Kindness

Each year, our corporate partners go above and beyond to play a key part in Festival of Kindness. Their contribution raises not only significant funds, but vital awareness amongst colleagues, customers and suppliers.

Their support includes:

- Corporate financial donations
- Donating gift-in-kind (such as stock or space)
- Colleague fundraising
- Customer-facing campaigns to raise funds and awareness
- Volunteering
- Gift drives

Over **190** businesses (from nationwide groups to local branches) lent their support during Festival of Kindness 2025. We would like to extend a huge thank you to every company who backed the campaign, your efforts made a real difference to people experiencing homelessness during the festive season and beyond.

Here are just a few highlights:

- **Mitchells & Butlers** (with brands including Toby Carvery, Harvester, Browns, Miller & Carter, All Bar One and many more) placed tent cards on tables in their 1,700 restaurants and pubs throughout the UK, inviting guests to add a donation to their bill to buy someone experiencing homeless a Christmas dinner. They raised over an incredible £917,000!
- **itison** invited their members to buy a voucher that would pay forward a Christmas dinner, or dinner and gift, for someone experiencing homelessness. An amazing 37,334 vouchers were purchased, bringing the total to over 946,000 since the partnership began a decade ago.
- **UNIQLO** customers were invited to donate £1, £3 or £5 at tills in stores across Scotland. The company also donated thousands of items of thermal clothing from their HEATTECH range.
- **NatWest** Rewards customers were encouraged to donate through the app, where every £5 donated could buy someone homeless a Christmas dinner.
- **M&G plc** and **Vivo Defence** gave generous corporate donations to fund Christmas dinners and winter meals for people experiencing homelessness and food poverty across the UK.
- **Sky Cares** and **NSL** (part of Marston Holdings) provided free transport and volunteer drivers to help distribute thousands of donated gifts across Scotland and London, getting them to people in need in time for Christmas.



Thanks to your kindness, people experiencing homelessness were gifted hygiene packs with shampoo, soap, toothpaste, and female hygiene products, restoring dignity and making that person feel cared for.

Volunteers at the heart of Festival of Kindness



How volunteers supported the campaign

Thank you to all our volunteers who took on a variety of roles including:

Volunteering at our five Trees of Kindness to engage with the public, take donations, share Social Bite's mission and thank people for their donations.

Dropping gifts to charities and community organisations in Scotland, London and Birmingham.

Sorting gifts donated to the trees and matching them with requests from charity partners.

Collecting donations at the trees and driving them to our central distribution hub in Livingston – thank you to NSL and Sky for your support with this.

Organising and packing gifts and essential items into backpacks for distribution at our coffee shops on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Volunteering at our coffee shops on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, welcoming guests and supporting with our free food service, and at our first Christmas meal service in London.

Lynell, a volunteer at our Edinburgh coffee shop, shared the importance of volunteering over the Christmas period:

"The best bits were moments spent chatting with people – everyone was so warm and engaging. I now find myself smiling and wanting to take the time to share a few words when I see someone on the street who may be experiencing homelessness. Everyone has stories that led them to where they are today, and I'm more compassionate now. My whole perspective has changed and I'm truly grateful to have learnt the lesson of never judging a book by its cover."



Thanks to your kindness, people discharged from hospital back to rough sleeping were offered an emergency hotel room, providing comfort, warmth, dignity and hope at a time it is really needed.

Thank you from all of us

Everyone at Social Bite would like to thank you for being part of Festival of Kindness. Your generosity has provided people experiencing homelessness with meals, gifts, essentials and shelter at a time when they need it most. However, your support will continue to have an impact beyond Christmas and the coldest months of the year.

Your kindness comes at a time when more people than ever are facing the harsh reality of homelessness.

One in every 153 people in England are now homeless, an 8% increase since 2024.* More people are impacted and are remaining in a situation of homelessness for longer. We see the impact of this every day within our communities, and heartbreakingly, on our streets. In Edinburgh alone, on an average night, around 68 people will sleep rough. Over 17,000 are stuck in temporary accommodation, often for long periods. A couple with a child will spend an average of 386 days in temporary accommodation—62% longer than a single person in the same situation. These numbers are stark, but each one represents someone simply trying to survive.

Your kindness helps us respond to this situation, not just at Christmas, but throughout the year. Thanks to you, we can continue running vital long-term programmes, including:

- Building new Social Bite Villages, an innovative, dignified alternative form of temporary accommodation, helping break the cycle of homelessness.
- Employment opportunities through our Jobs First programme, supporting people who have experienced homelessness into meaningful work.
- Providing wrap-around support, helping people work towards security, independence, and a brighter future.
- Offering free food in our coffee shops year-round, no questions asked, with every meal or hot drink also creating an opportunity for someone to access life-changing support.
- Partnering with grassroots projects to provide free food during the summer months too, bringing people together in their communities in 329 towns, cities and boroughs throughout the UK.

We are truly humbled by your generosity and the compassion you've shown.





Jasmyn's story

"Believe in people and go above and beyond"

Jasmyn shares her experience of rough sleeping, coming to Social Bite for free food, and how she overcame addiction.

When Jasmyn was homeless, people she met rough sleeping recommended she try Social Bite. The first time she came to check it out, she was hesitant. "When I looked at the building, I was like, am I in the wrong place?" she reflects. "It looked like a normal cafe – like a Starbucks."

A 'normal' coffee shop where everyone is equal

When Jasmyn was homeless, people she met rough sleeping recommended she try Social Bite. The first time she came to check it out, she was hesitant. "When I looked at the building, I was like, am I in the wrong place?" she reflects. "It looked like a normal cafe – like a Starbucks."

Social Bite's 'normality' was a real contrast to the other free food services Jasmyn had visited. They could be chaotic and stressful. They made her feel nervous.

But the vibe at Social Bite was completely different. "You could take your time. There was no rushing. I didn't feel on edge at all. The staff were really friendly, asking how are you, what do you want [to eat]."

The food quality impressed Jasmyn too. "It tasted really good. Sometimes you eat things just because you're hungry, but it did taste really nice."

Jasmyn found that Social Bite wasn't just about food. The whole environment created an experience where people were welcomed with respect. She found the mix of paying and free food customers particularly meaningful. "You're treated like you're human – you're not just stigmatised," Jasmyn explains.

Free food provides choice and a different path. After a relationship breakdown and struggling with postnatal depression, Jasmyn found herself on the streets, facing the challenge of rough sleeping. She recalls the nightly discomfort and extreme vulnerability. "I was sleeping in a bin shed. Rats were crawling around me."



With no stable income and battling addiction, free food was a lifeline. "Otherwise, I'd need to build up a criminal record," Jasmyn states candidly. Coming for food at Social Bite meant that Jasmyn not only had a meal, but she was also able to connect with other people, too.

A near-fatal overdose became her turning point. "My heart stopped," Jasmyn shares. "One more minute, I would have been dead." Fortunately, instead, Jasmyn decided to try and make a change for herself and her family. "I was sick of getting up and doing the same thing all day, every day. I thought about my mum, my son. I wanted something different for them." For Jasmyn, recovery wasn't just about stopping drug use; it was about rebuilding her life. "I never thought I'd get to [where I am now]," she admits. "I thought I'd just die as an addict." Today, she's studying psychology and counselling, as well as volunteering and actively participating in community support panels.

Show people that there's hope

Jasmyn's approach to recovery is deeply personal and compassionate. "Recovery is a nice thing," she explains. "The community has each other's back. There's no stigma." She emphasises the importance of individual journeys. "You can't pressure people into wanting it. You have to want it yourself." Sometimes Jasmyn sees her past support network, from when she was rough sleeping. She always says hi. By keeping in touch, she hopes to inspire others. "I want them to see that change is possible. When they see me at my worst, and now at my best, it can be infectious."

A positive attitude to change is something we can all channel. Jasmyn's advice is to "believe in people and sometimes go above and beyond, just to show them how much you care."

To anyone considering supporting organisations like Social Bite, Jasmyn has a clear message. "Donate. They're giving people a voice. When you're on the street, you don't have a way out. Social Bite is showing people there is hope."

Joseph's* story

Thank you to Huggard in Cardiff for sharing this story about how, by supporting Festival of Kindness, you are supporting people in real crisis to access free food which will help to break the cycle of homelessness.

'Joseph' came to us street homeless for 18 months, he had no recourse to public funds, living in a park, having to fend off rats and other vermin, never knowing where his next meal would come from. He felt sick at the thought of another 'sausage roll' on arrival to our centre, he was quiet, clearly under weight and malnourished along with dirty clothes and only a small carrier bag of personal possessions.

For a couple of weeks, he ate, sat and didn't speak - then he started to come out of himself. In addition to food,



we provided him with clean clothing and toiletries, eventually he accepted an emergency bed space. Joseph started to volunteer in our kitchen, it was clear he had many skills. It took around seven weeks of hard work from the team to obtain him financial support, which led him to move into one of our hostel rooms. He is still being supported to manage the change. Our staff member Joanne said, "without the support of this grant, we may not have seen Joseph and been able to start working with him to move him out of homelessness."

*name changed

Claire's* story

Thank you to Glass Door in London for sharing this story about how, by supporting Festival of Kindness you have funded a place of safety, security and support for some of the most vulnerable people throughout the UK.

Claire is in her late 30s and stayed at the Glass Door women's night shelter for three months. When she came to Glass Door Homeless Charity, she had been street homeless for a number of years and had limited contact with frontline homelessness services. She presented as withdrawn, reluctant to engage and malnourished following a significant amount of time spent rough sleeping and isolated from other people. She had long-term mental health problems and had been sectioned and hospitalised within the last year. Unfortunately, as is the case for a number of Glass Door's guests, she was discharged back into homelessness from hospital, as she had nowhere else to go. After a few weeks in the night shelter, she became more talkative and willing to speak with the Casework Team and engage in support.

Claire was helped to connect with the homeless mental health team who supported her in making a homeless application. Claire has now been placed in temporary accommodation and is known to mental health services. Her time in the night shelter was vital in being the bridge to get her into stable accommodation and off the street.



*name changed

Edinburgh, Fife and the Lothians Charity Partners



- Calder Residents Association
- Companions Of The Order of Malta
- Dunedin Harbour Hostel
- Knightsridge Adventure Project
- Lanthorn Community Association
- LIFT
- Missionaries of Charity
- Rainbow Daycare
- Settlement Projects
- AUGB Edinburgh



Dundee and Perth charity partners



Glasgow charity partners



- Baltic Street Adventure Playground

Aberdeen charity partners



Birmingham charity partners



London charity partners

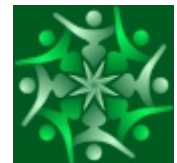


- Zenoch Community Hub
- Chelsea Methodist Church
- Companions of the Order of Malta

UK wide food charity partners



Caring in Bristol



Breakfast Buddies



Imagine a World Without Homelessness



St Vincent de Paul Society
England and Wales
Turning Concern into Action