AT HOME IN GSY

Supporting those at risk of homelessness

At Home in Guernsey

Association of Guernsey Charities Conference 2026

Charlie Cox

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Specsavers

Homelessness in Guernsey

AT HOME IN GSY

Supporting those at risk of homelessness

2020

- Concerns over anecdotal reports of a rise in number of rough sleepers

2021

- Research project carried out by the Guernsey Community Foundation (GCF), part-funded by Maison St Pierre (MSP)
- Objective:
  - (1) Determine scale and nature of homelessness in Guernsey
  - (2) Recommend ways to fix the problem

2022

- Publication of Homelessness in Guernsey
- 1000 men, women and children "insecurely housed", at risk of homelessness, or homeless. This translates as **1 in 60 people**
- 'Sofa surfing' and people sleeping in cars, bunkers, North Beach, Candie Gardens is common
- Led to reprioritisation of housing/homelessness within government



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At Home in Guernsey

Following this extensive research by the Guernsey Community Foundation, the need for a charity dedicated to ending homelessness in Guernsey was established. In February 2024, with the support of Specsavers, the Guernsey Community Foundation launched At Home in Guernsey.

At Home in Guernsey's vision is to end homelessness.

We believe that everyone living in Guernsey in entitled to somewhere secure, affordable and adequate to live.

What is your favourite thing about your home?



What is Homelessness?

- A person is experiencing homelessness if they have no accommodation available or it is not reasonable to occupy the accommodation
- In the UK, the statutory definition of homelessness extends beyond rooflessness or sleeping rough and can include situations where people are sofa-surfing or where their current home is unaffordable. Guernsey has no statutory definition of homelessness.

Lack of a safe & stable place to call home



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Rough Sleeping
Temporary Accommodation
Sofa Surfing
Poor conditions /
Over crowding
At risk of
experiencing
homelessness
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What pushes people into homelessness?

Rare that 1 thing pushes people into homelessness, every journey is unique and complex.

Who is at risk of experiencing homelessness?

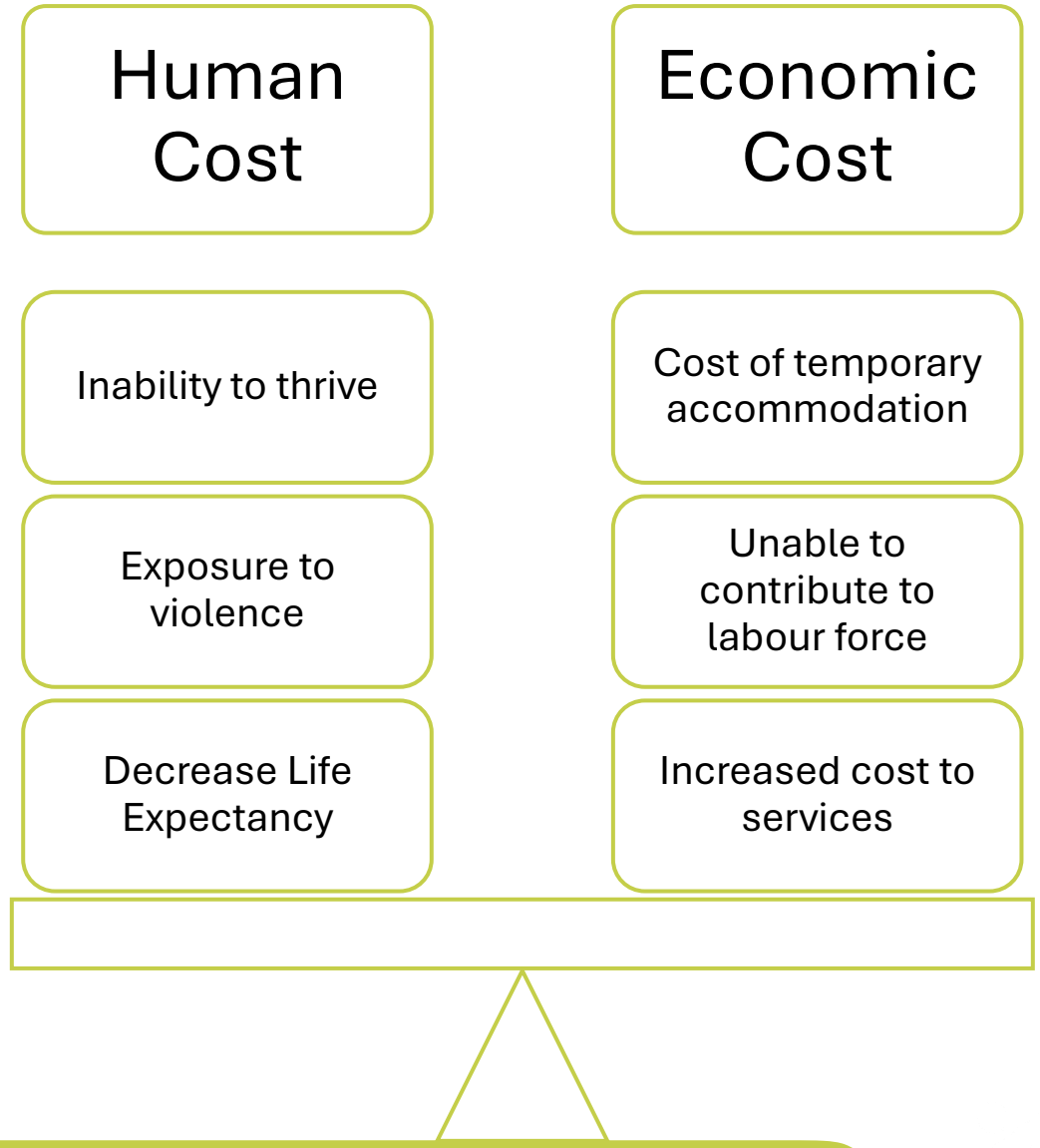
- Lack of affordable and social housing
  - Not enough being build
- Pressures of private rental
  - Breakdown in tenancy
  - No fault evictions
  - Rental increases
- Life events
  - Job loss
  - Domestic abuse
  - Relationship breakdown
  - Physical and mental health
  - Substance misuse
- Inequality and discrimination
  - LGBTQ+
  - Leaving prison
  - Leaving care
  - Global majority

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What is the cost of homelessness?



Who is responsible for homelessness?

- Who would you contact in Government?
- What would you ask for?
- What should be the single biggest priority?

Framing

Police officer filmed dragging homeless refugee on ground to have punishment reviewed

Video also shows policewoman stepping on man's stomach as he lies on pavement

Gift this article free

Will Bolton
Crime correspondent

06 March 2024 3:32pm GMT





Charities criticise treatment of homeless man by security guard in London

Organisations call for more action to get people off streets after footage showed McDonald's guard soaking man's bedding



McDonald's security guard soaks homeless man's sleeping bag in London – video



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Supporting those at risk of homelessness



Water thrown at homeless man at Sutton station

Three station staff members are being investigated after they were caught on camera soaking a homeless man with dirty water.

The footage, which was taken outside Sutton station on Sunday, shows a member of staff pouring a bucket of water onto the man as he lay on the ground.

The staff can be heard telling him to "get up and go".

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If you were pushed into homelessness, where would you go?

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At Home in Guernsey's vision is to end homelessness.

We believe that everyone living in Guernsey in entitled to somewhere secure, affordable and adequate to live.

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July 2024

Where to begin...

We couldn't do everything. So, what did we do first?"

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Theory of Change

Where we are now....

We know that not every adult has somewhere affordable, adequate and secure to live in the Bailiwick.

Through our three year research project, we have gained a deep understanding of Homelessness in Guernsey.

We understand the local landscape of services, the challenges individuals face and are well placed to galvanize a community response to this "hidden" issue.

How we will work...

We will listen to our clients and value them as individuals

We will treat people with dignity and respect

We will build trust with clients, stakeholders and the community

We will use our expertise to influence and improve services

We are ambitious for our clients and system change

We will...

Provide direct support to clients through advocacy, signposting and emotional support

Raise awareness of homelessness and our services to de-stigmatise homelessness in our community

Campaign for a statutory definition of homelessness and associated statutory obligations

Collate data to increase our understanding of homelessness and collaborate with partners

Become local experts, with our clients in all aspects relating to homelessness

Secure funds to sustain our work for as long as it is needed

So that individuals feel....

More able to manage...

1. Where they are living
2. Caring for themselves & their space
3. Their money
4. Their Friends and relationships
5. Their health
6. Their well-being
7. How they spend their time
8. Alcohol and drug use
9. Safety and crime
10. Trust and hope

And ultimately...

Clients feel happy where they live

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Objectives

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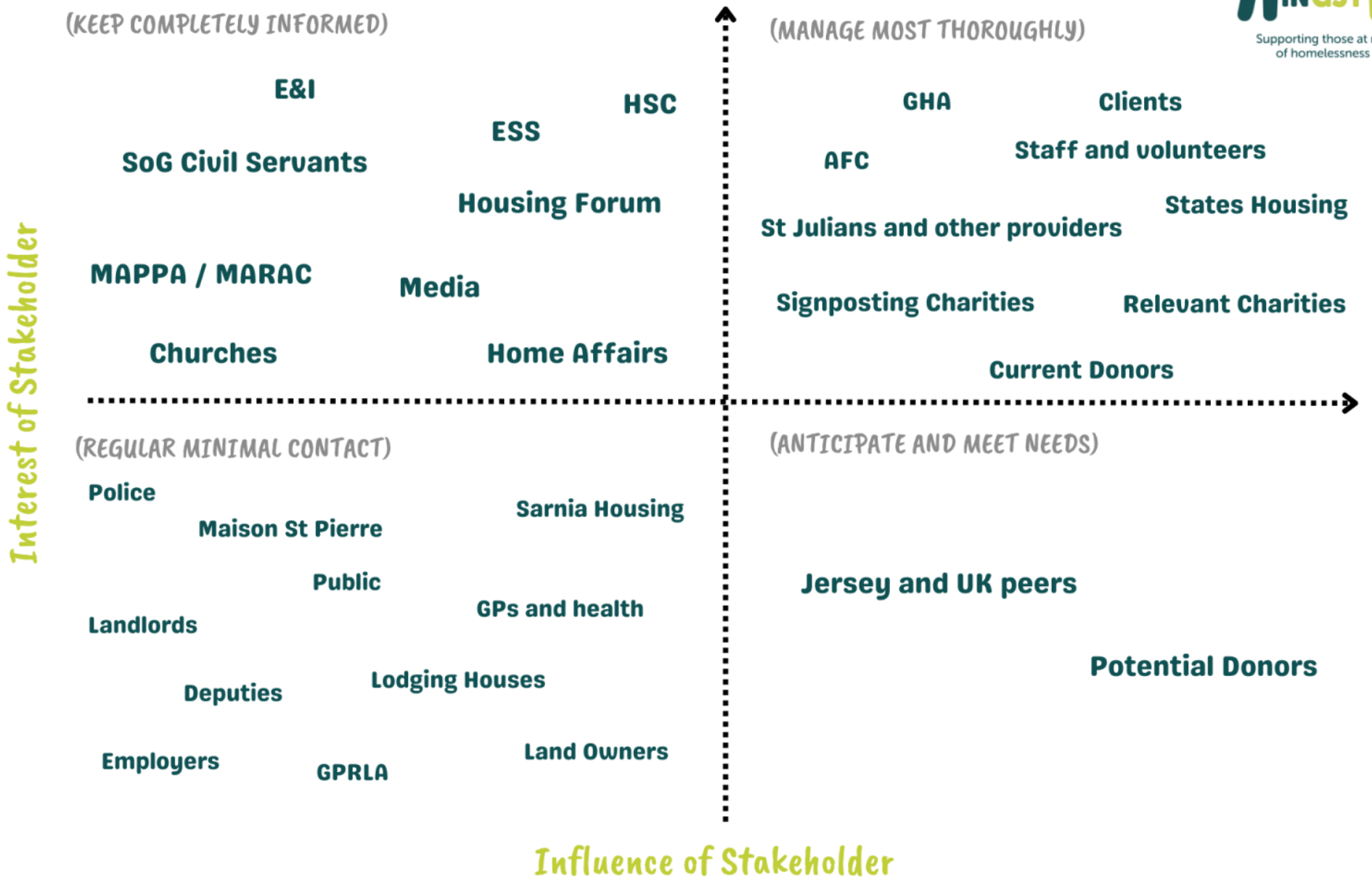
1. Provide direct support to clients through advocacy, signposting and emotional support
2. Raise awareness of homelessness and our services to de-stigmatise homelessness in our community
3. Campaign for a statutory definition of homelessness and associated statutory obligations
4. Collate data to increase our understanding of homelessness and collaborate with partners
5. Become local experts, with our clients in all aspects relating to homelessness
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Stakeholder Map

July 2024



Matrix

July 2024

Impact

Quick Win

Reinstate Housing Forum
Recruitment
Safeguarding Policy
Operational Delivery
Direct payments to landlords
Social Media platforms
Visual Designs
Passage Support

Major Project

Tenancy re-form
Symposium
Pre election campaign
Simplifying Information
Universal Carpet Policy
Volunteers
Premises
Prevention Model
Deposit Scheme
Statutory Definition of homelessness
Day Centre Provision
Website Content
Accommodation Provider
Campaigns

Fill Ins

Merchandise
Finance

Thankless Tasks

Deputy disputes / social media chat
Planning IDP

Effort

Client's Journey

July 2024

ONLINE RESOURCES

Self referral | **Professional referral**

FACT FINDING

Onboarding, Home Star, Data Sharing, Risk Assessment
Client agreement, Expectations Management

Signposting
Referral
Ad-hoc problem solving
Day Centre*

person centred approach



Safeguarding
Crisis Support
Intervention / Mediation
Advocacy

Practical Support | **Emotional Support**

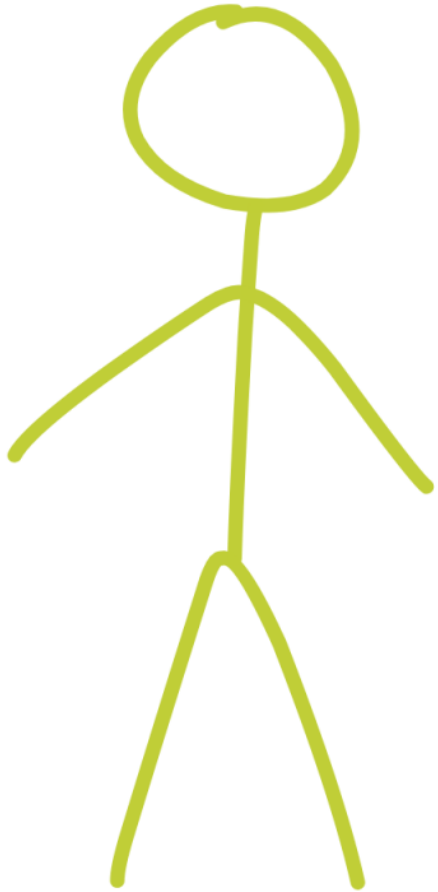
ONGOING SUPPORT

CLIENTS ARE HAPPY WHERE THEY LIVE

Exiting a client. Home Star, Risk Assessment

*safe space, internet, printing, phone, hot meals, washing, showers

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Supporting those at risk of homelessness



Our Values

LISTEN
RESPECT
TRUST
EXPERTISE
AMBITIOUS

Soft launch of our support services

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September 2024

- Launched the Homelessness Forum Quarterly
- Embedded our data management system
- Build partnerships and awareness with established agencies
- Started to try to understand pathways and support available
- Developed our understanding of housing stock
- Supervision from Director at The Passage in London
- Trips to UK, Jersey etc

Ready for our official launch in January 2025

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Support Service

2025

- 125 people supported in our first year
- Started our Drop Ins with Guernsey Welfare and Edward T Wheadon House
- Reactive Outreach
- Partnered with Housing Justice in the UK to develop a Supported Lodgings Model



Spare a room to help tackle homelessness

Charity's new Supported Lodgings scheme offers 'dignity and respect' for the homeless and £10,000 tax-free for householder

by Georgie Rowbrey

A LOCAL charity is hopeful that islanders will open their homes to a lodger in need, and help it to tackle housing insecurity.

At Home in Guernsey is launching a Supported Lodgings scheme today, inviting people to turn their spare room into a lifeline for someone. The scheme, inspired by the UK's Housing Justice project, involves renting out underused rooms to lodgers – providing a safe, stable, and supportive temporary home for people experiencing homelessness or at risk of it.

'Although we can provide emotional and practical support, we realised early on that we wanted to be part of the solution in terms of finding that physical home as well,' said Charlie Cox, CEO of At Home in Guernsey.

'Being in somebody's home provides a lot more dignity and respect and gives people that chance to move forward and see a brighter future, rather than being in a B&B, sofa-surfing, or lots of the other situations we know people are currently in.

'We're really excited and think it's perfect for Guernsey. There are lots of people with spare rooms and we know with the cost-of-living increase that actually a bit of extra rental income will be really welcomed by lots of local households. We've already had about four or five people show interest.'

Unlike conventional hosting, resident landlords under this scheme could receive up to £10,000 tax-free rental income each year from taking in a lodger.

Ms Cox said the scheme was not like fostering – landlords are not expected to provide anything more than a room to rent.

'We want it to be a mutually beneficial arrangement,' she said.

'The lodger will be working and living completely independently. We know from experience in the UK that reduction in isolation and engagement in the wider community often builds from this – but there is no expectation of that.

'People could go and rent their room privately, but I'm hopeful that people will choose to do it through us – that the compassionate side of it is as important as the financial side.'

Ms Cox said that launching the scheme through the local charity enables it to have personal control.

It will get to know both the landlords and the lodgers, and make appropriate matches.

She said each party would have the chance to meet virtually, and again in person before making their decision. Either party can change their minds at any time.

Through a gradual introduction – where household rules, boundaries and dynamics are set out – the charity aims to ensure a smooth transition.

'The lodgers will be really low risk,' she said. 'They are people who have just fallen on difficult times.

'The scheme isn't for people who need lots of additional support or who've done awful things. We want to make that clear, because there is a stereotype of homelessness that is still a barrier for people. We'll have a contingency plan if there's a crisis, but – touch wood – we'll have intervened long before that stage.'

Continued on page 8

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Election Campaign

2025



4 NEWS | FRIDAY 6 JUNE 2025 GUERNSEY PRESS

Charity puts homelessness issue on the election agenda

Home in Guernsey writes open letter to all candidates asking for their support

A NEW local charity is putting the issue of homelessness on the election agenda.

At Home in Guernsey was launched in February last year by the Guernsey Community Foundation with financial backing from Specsavers.

Its aim is to support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including 'sofa surfers' who are living temporarily with other households, and adults trying to leave inadequate accommodation.

It has written an open letter to all candidates inviting support for four specific pledges – to provide practical and emotional support to homeless people; to create enough 'emergency' housing; to work to eradicate the social housing waiting list; and to support a homelessness delivery and implementation plan that the charity is working on with the States.

The charity has said that it will promote and publicise candidates who pledge support to commit to end homelessness in all its forms in the island.

'There is a lot of discussion about a "housing crisis", the struggle for first-time buyers, and a lack of key worker accommodation,' said Charlie Cox, the charity's CEO.

'More importantly, we know that over 1,000 islanders are at risk of or experiencing homelessness – not having somewhere affordable, adequate and secure to live.

'What would you do to end homelessness in all its forms?'

'Everything that we probably had feared is true'

by Tom Porter

tporter@guernseypress.com

MORE than 50 islanders have been assisted by At Home In Guernsey since it started accepting referrals at the end of last year.

But the charity said it was still learning the full extent of Guernsey's homelessness problem.

'Everything that we probably had feared is true, but in terms of articulating the need and meeting that need of a dedicated homelessness charity, I think we are absolutely doing that,' said chairwoman Jane St Pier.

Much of the charity's first 12 months focused on information gathering, research and recruiting staff, with former Youth Commission CEO and Sexual Assault Referral Centre manager Charlie Cox appointed as CEO last summer, alongside two support workers.

Their roles primarily involve providing information, advice, guidance and practical and emotional support to the charity's clients.

'If you are experiencing homelessness or the risk of homelessness, often the last thing you can cope with mentally is having to make sense of the benefit system, having to make sense of the social housing process, having to engage with multiple other agencies and tell and retell your story,' said director Jim Roberts.

'The practical and emotional support that the support workers give is part of what At Home In Guernsey can do.'

Clients in contact through the referral process represent a mixture of demographics, situations and backgrounds, said Mrs St Pier.

Some are seeking information, while others had been signposted to the charity by GPs or other charities.

But she said that underpinning everything was a cohort of people living in their cars and moving between car parks.

'We thought there were a few people doing this, but actually our fear is that this cohort is in the tens of people, rather than single numbers.'

Mr Roberts said a kind of 'modern homelessness' existed in Guernsey, where someone with a 9-5 job was living in their car night to night and not staying in one place for too long.

'I'm not confident we've got to all those people yet,' he said.

People on the States' most urgent waiting list for housing were facing a wait of 12 months plus.

'I don't think that means that these people are homeless, but that they are living somewhere that is truly inappropriate to their needs,' Mr Roberts said.

The pair agreed it was important to be realistic about what the charity could achieve for people in need but it was attempting to take a holistic approach.

'What we don't want to do is dissuade people from coming to us,' Mr Roberts said. 'Even if we can't give you the keys to a new place, there are other ways we can help you.'

Jane St Pier and Jim Roberts of the charity At Home In Guernsey.

(Picture by Peter Frankland, 34024752)

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Homelessness Delivery and Implementation Plan

2025

- Signed agreement with the Committee for E&I to co-produce the Homelessness Delivery and Implementation Plan
- Since transferred to the Committee for Housing
- Resource from Government and At Home in Guernsey

- November 2025
  - Launched the Homelessness Notification form
  - To date has received 215 referrals

The frustration...

2026

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Business as usual

2026

- Supporting people at risk or experiencing homelessness
- Creating the Homelessness Delivery and Implementation Plan
- Developing a small supported lodgings scheme

- World Homelessness Day 2026



Accommodation

Why did a charity initially focused on advice and support decide it needed to become an accommodation provider?

2026

- February 2025 – Paper to the Board to consider becoming an accommodation provider. It was agreed at the stage we would start exploring opportunities but continue our focus and energy on support work.
- June 2025 – An opportunity to secure Brockside began. Unfortunately, the charity responsible for Brockside went into voluntary solvent liquidation, however, we are still the benefitting charity once the process has been finalised.
- January 2026 – At Home assumed responsibility for the operational management of Victoria Homes, providing 34 units for people over 55 years.
- February 2026 – Proposal for the acquisition of La Grande Lande.
- October 2026 – work developing with private landlords to be able to offer accommodation to our clients
- October 2026 – a substantial private donation for the future purchase of a property was received
- Ongoing work which will see At Home become an accommodation provider by 2027

What this means for us

- Have we got the right skills?
- Is our Governance Structure sufficient?
- Do we have capacity?
- Does it align with our vision?
- Is it sustainable?

2026

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AT HOME IN GSY

Supporting those at risk of homelessness



Jon, 49

Head chef
Sea swimmer
Dog lover

Only three payslips away from being pushed into homelessness.

In Guernsey, everyone knows everyone, but not everyone knows that around **1 in 60 people are experiencing homelessness.**

That's why we're calling on the States of Guernsey to commit to ending homelessness in all its forms. We're asking election candidates, should they be voted in, to use their influence to help:

1. Provide practical and emotional support to those experiencing homelessness
2. Create sufficient emergency housing
3. Eradicate the social housing waiting list
4. Support the Homelessness Delivery and Implementation Plan

AT HOME IN GSY

Donate here

Support for those at risk of homelessness

At Home in Guernsey is a local charity supporting those of us in Guernsey who are at risk or currently experiencing homelessness.

Get in touch with our team for information and support

Seeking help

If you are currently experiencing homelessness or if you're at risk of losing your home, you should seek advice immediately. **Please register for support through our Notification Form.**

At Home in Guernsey can provide emotional and practical support as well as connect you with other agencies and services who can help.

We are working with the States of Guernsey to end homelessness and your experience is important for



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Seven things we've learned from building At Home in Guernsey

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1. Start with the need, not the solution.

2. You cannot do everything, especially at the beginning.

3. Relationships are your greatest asset.

4. Build your foundations before you need them.

5. Be prepared to change direction without losing sight of your vision.

6. Look after the people doing the work.

7. Celebrate progress, even when the problem feels overwhelming.

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If you were starting your charity again tomorrow, knowing you couldn't solve the whole problem... where would you begin?

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