



MANNA HOUSE
Housing Advice, Advocacy, Support



Impact Report 2025

Holistic • Compassionate • Boundaried • Honest • Courageous
in all we do

Intro from the Chief Officer

Andrea Aldridge



MANNA HOUSE
Housing Advice, Advocacy, Support

Manna House provides a community of support to meet the physical, social and emotional needs of people who are homeless and those struggling with the impacts of poverty in the Kendal area.

Housing, Benefits and Client Support staff journey with our clients through the challenges of bureaucracy and paperwork required to manage a tenancy, stay healthy and become financially viable. Programmes such as our Skills Café, Women's Group, Conversation Café and Learning Kitchen invite clients to build stronger life skills and build resilience.

Read on about how our staff team of 10, our volunteer team of 53 and our 10 Trustees put our values into action in 2025.



A note from Charles Cowling Chair

"I am privileged to be associated with this wonderful organisation, with its amazing team of professional staff and dedicated volunteers. Every day they go the extra mile to ensure that there is a friendly welcome, delicious hot food and vital support provided to those who need it most."

Strategic plan



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Underpinning all of our work is honesty, courage, clear boundaries, compassion and a holistic view of individuals' needs.

Our mission is to provide advice, advocacy, food, learning and drop-in support for people who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, lonely or needing help.

We prioritise the wellbeing of staff and volunteers through CPD, supervision, generous policies and flexibility, ensuring a safe and healthy team.

We are a genuinely person-centred service, and treat all people with respect, build on people's strengths, focus on helping people to move forward and work with people's real-life experience to shape what we do.

Our good governance honours best practice.

Consistent finances and a diverse fundraising base accompany a well-planned and frugally managed strategy.

Impact



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2025 Quick Stats Year To Date 31/10/2025

435



unique visitors to the Drop In

275



Skills Café participants in 43 sessions

7,051



delicious, free meals served

715



Housing & Benefits appointments

936



one-to-one sessions

75

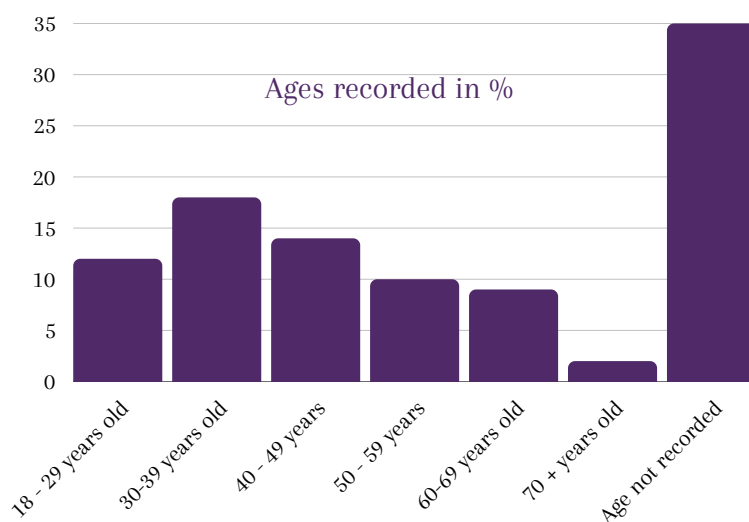
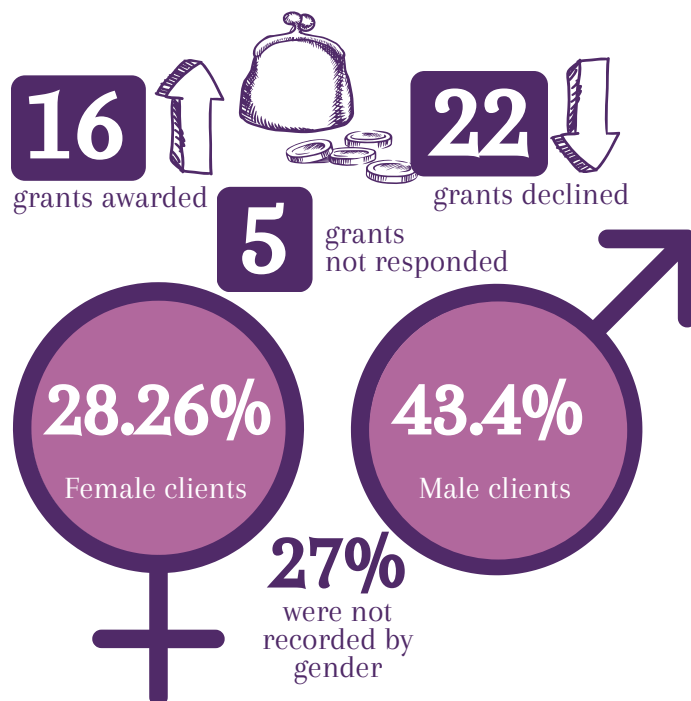
homeless people were served

17

of these stayed in our pod for 158 days



On average, our NP sees people a month



44

people have joined in the Conversation Café

24

women have participated in our Sew What? Women's Group

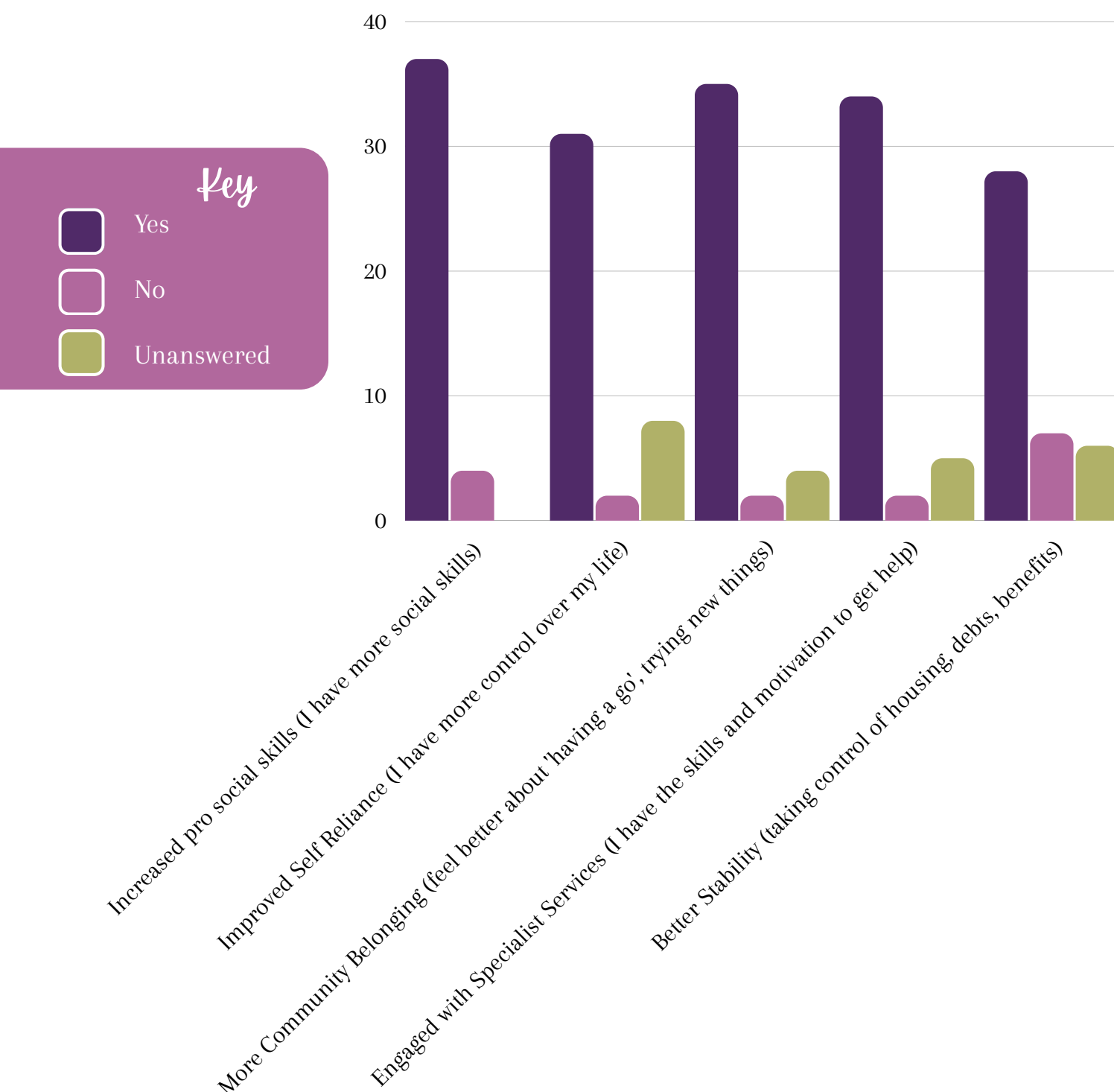
555

Food Bank referrals



Manna House client survey February 2025

As a result of coming to Manna House, do you feel you have:



Impact



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From 01 October 2024
to 30 September 2025,
Benefits Advisors assisted clients
to receive a combined total of

£45,000 in back dated benefits.

We have administered
the Household Support
Fund to

32 families

Those supported to claim their benefits are now able to heat & light their homes, buy food and travel to appointments. This translates into less visits to A&E and the ability to purchase specialist services and equipment.

Our combined client group

received over £200,000 of annual income.

mainly in health related benefits.

We deliver £30 of fruit and veg for the Fresh Pound Project every week in partnership with the Food Bank—

that's 520 bags distributed in 2024/2025.



Case studies

Some of our services



Housing



When C came to Manna House, she was being discharged from a mental health unit in Carlisle. The Council refused to accommodate her because she was “non-priority”. We challenged this decision with evidence from mental health professionals, and she was eventually given emergency accommodation. During the week of uncertainty, C was supported by our Housing Advisor, Benefits Advisor and Client Support Worker. She was stabilised on methadone and supported holistically. C is now in supported accommodation, engaging with a creative arts café, and managing her mental health and drug-related needs. She credits Manna House with “saving her bacon”.

Learning Kitchen & Skills Café



D, in her late forties, had never held a tenancy before. After receiving a private rented flat, she felt overwhelmed by decorating and spending money. Wednesday walks with Manna House helped her clear her mind. Workshops helped her create household items from recyclable materials, saving money and boosting confidence. She enjoyed food-focused sessions like “all things eggs,” popcorn, dips and mocktails. She decorated her flat for Christmas with items she made in a workshop.

Volunteering



E retired early from nursing and needed a way to continue giving back. With personal struggles and a deteriorating health condition, she found a safe and clearly defined role as a kitchen volunteer at Manna House. She describes Manna House as her lifeline, giving her purpose, community and encouragement.



The Pod

“You have been really kind to me, putting me in the Pod the other night. I was exhausted and really, if I’d spent another night outside I think I would have gone mad. Cheers, Manna House. I think I’ll be alright.”

A Pod Guest

Sew What? women's group:



The Sew What? group for women offers crafting, stitching and a safe place to share confidences. Here's what the women have to say about this weekly drop in...

Port
in a
storm

Cultivating
a sense of
community

Food,
nourish,
treats

Consistently
great food and
company

Inclusion is one of
our highest
achievements

Understanding
and kindness

Brings safety,
joy, love, laughter,
companionship,
acceptance

Free
happiness

Hand massages
make the human
touch welcome

Making all
people feel good

Friend
ship

Education for life –
learn to sew, crochet,
make soup, but maybe
more importantly, learn
to like ourselves again
and move on

Life
savers

Outstanding
mental health
support, but also
holistic

Amazing
company

Case studies

Some of our services



Conversation Café:

“I feel better having talked about it” said M. “I do, as well, “ said P “it won’t do to bottle things up inside.” “I didn’t think it would help to talk. I come from an old school of men don’t have feelings. But we do” added K.

This is but a sliver of the conversation from the weekly peer support group known as the Conversation Café, where Manna House clients can gain experience identifying their emotions and learn more about how to share them safely with others so as to ease their burden.

Participants say they are surprised to find others experience the same feelings about similar circumstances and realise they are not alone. The drop in nature of the session allows people to share without the responsibility or commitment to return to the group again, but many do anyway.



Benefits Advice

B, an autistic woman, came to Manna House because her PIP and ESA had both been reduced and she was struggling to pay her rent. As Universal Credit is the only benefit providing housing allowance, she was assisted to ring the benefits department of the council. As no housing benefit was in place, B had been in the property for a year and self-funding the rent the whole time! Our Advisor suggested B needed to make a claim for UC and assisted her to do so. Thereafter they looked at PIP and ESA and asked for a reconsideration; it turns out B’s benefits had been unfairly reduced; the outcome of this work is B has a fair benefits award and is able to live independently with a degree of financial stability.



Case studies

Some of our services



Client support

During his first visit to Manna House, L was closed up and bad tempered and struggling with alcohol dependency. He would spend most of the time on his own, unwilling to communicate with anyone or contribute to the activities on offer. He had moved to Kendal as a result of breakdown of key relationships in a nearby town. We arranged for L to meet with the Well and arranged a viewing for a flat which L initially appeared very positive about. However, he did not attend the viewing as arranged, nor did he make the most of the opportunity to join the Well. L agreed to work with the Manna House Client Support Worker who he felt comfortable with, to tackle the obstacles preventing him from moving on. L is currently having grief counselling, is known to Recovery Steps and has recently moved into his own flat within a supported housing project. L is enjoying his own place and has started volunteering in the kitchen.



What our partners say about us



Tim Farron.

MP:

"Manna House is an integral, charitable part of our wider, local, social care services. They make people feel part of the community, not ostracized. We all need someone to understand us, and Manna House are in the best position to provide this welcoming community. I can vouch for the positive impact Manna House has had on my constituents and have seen first hand the profound effect this charity has had on people's lives. It is a pleasure to see people fulfil their potential through the support and care bestowed by the staff and programmes at Manna House. We all have a duty to change the world, and make it a better place. It is our moral responsibility to support this charity."

Michelle Brunskill.

Cumbria Youth Alliance:

"Manna House provides a safe, warm and welcoming space where people feel accepted. Access to meals, crafts and social opportunities helps reduce isolation and build confidence. Their advice on housing and benefits gives people vital practical support."

Gail Jenson.

CADAS Interim CEO:

"It truly is a safe haven, giving people hope and demonstrating kindness. Manna House is not only a lifeline for vulnerable people but also provides office space for Cumbria Addictions: Advice & Solutions, enabling us to support people with substance use and addictions."

Laura Woodley.

Social Prescriber, Kendal Primary Care Network:

"Manna House supports the wider community of Kendal. The ripple effect is vast. As a Social Prescriber within the 3 Kendal GP surgeries, it has become a vital line to ensure equal opportunities and rights are met. Many of my clients are in poverty and unable to navigate systems independently. Manna House bridges gaps within statutory services to meet the needs of our population. Without this we would have people back in poverty, struggling with poor health, education and employment outcomes. Manna House are a welcome safe space for many, with so many strings in their bow. Any investment in Manna House is directly investing in our local population."

Sinead McCann.

Manager, Kendal Growing Well:

"Manna House is well-known in Kendal and across the South Lakes area. It is a warm and welcoming place, offering safety and acceptance for all, providing advice, practical support, social connection and opportunities for change. Growing Well has worked with Manna House for many years. We often signpost people to them and receive referrals from them. In an area where housing and mental health needs are often underestimated or overlooked, Growing Well is glad to know that Manna House is there."

Barrell.

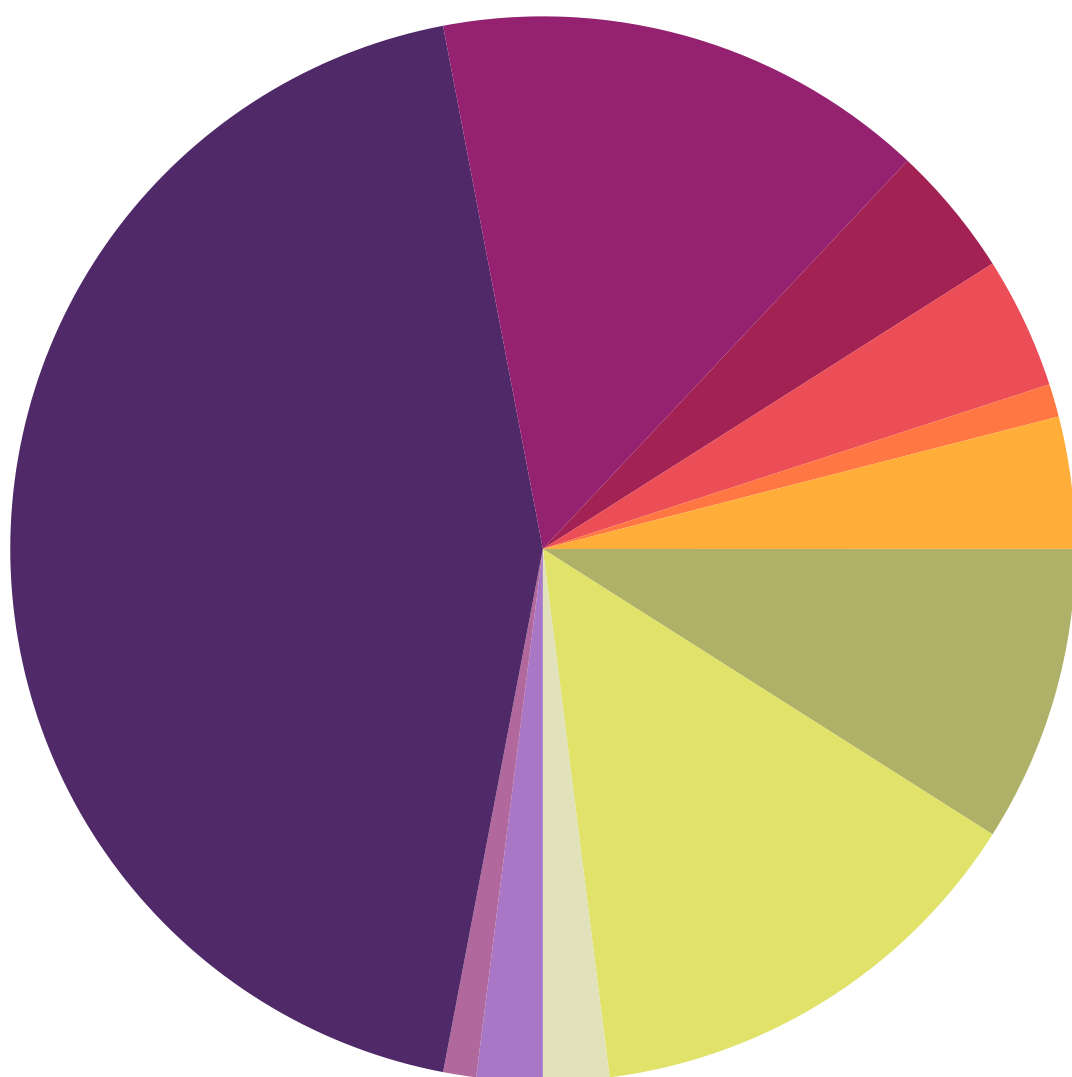
The Well Communities:

"I was immediately taken aback by the energy at Manna House. It was clear that 'Manna' means much more to the people who access services there than simply another organisation."



Income from 01 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 =£244,864

Here's where it's from...



Key

- 44% Grants received
- 15% Grants received from LA
- 14% Donations- Individuals
- 9% Donations Churches and Community Groups
- 4% Interest received
- 4% Fundraising income
- 4% Rental income
- 2% Donations-Business
- 2% Gift aid tax Recoverable
- 1% Bequests and legacies
- 1% Solar feed income

Thank you Supporters



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Churches - heroes, all!
Lloyd's Bank Foundation—for
both funding and development
support

Hadfield Trust
W & F Council
Kendal Town Council
Stephenson Trust
Marsh Charitable Trust
Albert Hunt
Lupton Tower Trust
Yorkshire Building Society



Foundation
National Lottery Awards for All
Souter Charitable Trust
Friends of Manna House
Frieda Scott
Grocer's Charity
Aperta Mente
Oliver Borthwick Memorial Trust
CRH Charitable Trust
Cumbria Community
Foundation
Plumb Base
Cortillo Lounge
I Luv Me Most
Northwest Electric
Kendal Calling
Cartmel Races/Holker Group
Kendal College
Hazelmere Bakery
Aldi
Sainsbury's
Plants on the Green
Morrison's
M & S

ASDA
Home Instead
Castle Green Hotel
Queen Katherine School
K 9to5
ISL
Common Ground
Crosscrake WI
Nat. Philanthropists
Sawrey PCC
St Mary's PCC
Hope Church
Winster PCC
Kendal United Reformed
Stricklandgate Methodist
St Thomas' PCC
Churches Together
Crosscrake PCC
Brian Lancaster's Trust
1St Church of Christ
Kendal Holy Trinity & St
George
Levens PCC
King's Church
Christians Together
Parr Street Church
Coniston PCC
Sandylands Methodist
St Mark's
Lancaster Quakers
Kendal Unitarian Chapel
K Shoes Male Voice Choir
Kendal Lions
Kendal Choral Society
Heron Hill Free Church
Parr Street Church

We have **53**
regular volunteers.

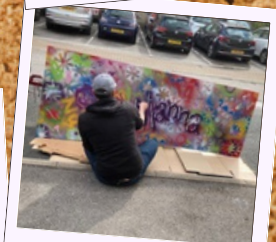
They give us approximately

6850

of their time per year!

Thank you to

Alan, Andrew, Andy, Anne, Bert,
Catherine, Charles, Charles C,
Charlotte, Chris B, Chris C, Chris
M, Chrissie, Clare, Clare C, Colin,
Dave M, Dave N, Dee, Fiona, Gail,
Glenys, Grace, Gundi, Janice,
Jane, Janette, Judith, Judith R,
Jules, Karen, Katharine, Lee,
Linda, Liz, Lorna, Margaret,
Marilyn, Matt, Michael, Mike,
Ned, Nick, Nina, Pam, Patricia,
Rebecca, Ron, Roy, Ruth, Steph,
Steve, Stuart.



Donation options:



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JustGiving (via website)

BACS:

Sort code 16-52-21

Account number 53190423



Scan
to
donate

Gift Aid

form available at www.manna-house.org.uk

PayPal Giving

Manna House is registered with PayPal Giving

Manna House (Cumbria) Registered Charity No 1147785

Company Limited by Guarantee No 08041948

01539 725534 or info@manna-house.org.uk

Visit www.manna-house.org.uk





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Contact Information

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The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service

Manna House is a registered charity (No. 1147785) and Company Limited by Guarantee (No. 08041948).
Rooted in Westmorland and Furness, we have a long track record of compassionate, professional service.

