

# Together we're Recycling Lives

Recycling Lives Charity & Social Enterprise  
Impact Report 2024/25

Our **impact**  
Your **opportunity**



  
recyclinglives™  
charity

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# Changing lives

## Creating social value

### Changing lives

Changing lives is our reason for being. It's our privilege to work with individuals and communities who trust us to guide and support them.

The difference we make shines through in their stories and testimonials. It's priceless for people like **Danielle** and **Jo**: *"They've made me see that people can and will help."* And vital for community groups like **Roccoco** and **Village Larder**: *"We couldn't do all that we do without the Charity's help."*

Our work is increasingly valuable for commercial partners too; employers like **Helmrig** or suppliers like **Baxi**: *"The Charity helps us to reach our sustainability targets."*

### Creating social value

Each year, we quantify the social value of our work; to show the value of investing in, sponsoring or partnering with our programmes.

These impact figures help to demonstrate how our programmes benefit businesses, prisons, funders and communities as much as people with histories of offending, addiction, homelessness or unemployment.

In 2024, our work created **£27.1m social value\***, comprising:

**£13.2m through our rehabilitation programmes**, including:

- **£11.8m** by supporting ex-offenders
- **£604k** by supporting people in recovery
- **£722k** from our specialist support offering
- **£209k** from our residential programme

**£13.8m through our food related programmes**, by redistributing food, feeding communities and preventing waste, water use and emissions

### Our impact. Your opportunity.

The difference we make for individuals and communities can make a difference for businesses and statutory services too. Read on to see how our impact can become your opportunity.

**£27.1m**

social value created

**5%**

reoffending rate

**63%**

employment rate

**1.29m**

items recycled

**3m**

meals delivered

**1,261t**

food diverted from waste

**150**

groups supported

\*Social value looks at the social and financial benefits created by our programmes. Our social value calculations take into account the costs to individuals, systems and society of reoffending, homelessness, addiction, mental illness, food waste and food poverty, and calculates the savings created for local and national government, retailers, and communities by tackling these challenges. All figures are calculated conservatively, using national metrics.

# Rehabilitating people

## Reducing reoffending

Our rehabilitation programmes deliver unrivalled results each year. The team reduce reoffending rates to well below the national average while increasing employment rates amongst participants, all creating significant social value. Their priority, though, is the value they create for men and women they support.

Like **Iddy** and **Mandy**, many of the people we support already have vast life and work experience but need a second chance. Others, like **Danielle** and **Mike**, need more intensive support to adjust to a new way of life, having had the odds stacked against them for too long.

We support people to overcome whatever it is that puts them at risk of reoffending, using substances, or experiencing mental illness or homelessness. Those can include short-lived but sharp-felt challenges, systemic failings, or life-long habits – or a mix of all three.

We work with people on every area of their life; securing paid employment and stable housing, improving mental health or maintaining abstinence, rebuilding relationships, managing finances, and much more in between.

In prison we focus on skills development through meaningful work, and access to a savings scheme. After release, we can meet people at the gate when they're released and provide all the essentials they need, like a phone, toiletries, food parcels and household goods. We then find housing, help to manage finances, and signpost to specialist services, all with a view to supporting through job applications and interviews and into work and independent living.



Danielle at work

No matter each participant's background and goals, our aim is always the same - **to empower people through support, skills and opportunities that will improve their lives.**



## Danielle's story

# “It’s the little things they do for you that are really a Godsend.”

**Danielle** says Recycling Lives has given her the tools - and tickets - to finally make her way in life.

*“They’ve made me see that people can and will help,” she says.*

*“Yvonne, Harriet, Hayley, and Faye, they’ve done everything for me. They give you the stepping stones you need for whatever path you want to take.”*

She joined our workshop in **HMP Styal** towards the end of a 5-year sentence, the majority of which she spent struggling with mental health problems.

*“For a while in prison, I was quite poorly. I didn’t get any help until I got to RL, though. Yvonne helped me to get therapy which turned out to be the best thing I’ve ever done. It gave me coping strategies, so I’ve learned how to deal with things.*

*“Before that, I hadn’t dealt with grief, I had PTSD, and I’d had psychosis. I’d turned to drugs, got myself into some debt, and did something to clear the debt - and got sent to prison.*

*“Recycling Lives help you to make a change. Most of the other jobs in prison get you nowhere and there’s no support afterwards.*

*“Harriet picked me up at the gate, got me food, a phone and a TV. Then two days later, they got me a job interview. And that phone, RL kept it topped up for six weeks. Little things like that are a Godsend.”*

Now Danielle is working full-time as an operative for Global Ardour Recycling Ltd, at its metals processing site in Preston.

*“They’re brilliant here,” she says. “They’ve been flexible with me for probation appointments or understanding if I’ve had a tough day. But I’ll do extra days and cover breaks - they know they’ll get it back from me.*

*“I’m just progressing. I joined with my Forklift Truck ticket that I got in the workshop in prison. Now I’m getting other tickets for bigger plant. They’ve trained me up on the frag too - a £40m machine, and they’re trusting me on it!”*

## Employer partner & Sponsor

### “Our partnership allows us to put our values into practice.”

Employing participants like Danielle is just one of the ways **Global Ardour Recycling Ltd** supports our work.

The business also makes monthly donations to support the running of our Food Redistribution Centre’s work across Lancashire.

*“We are passionate about supporting the Charity in all aspects of what they do,”* says **Sanjay Singhal**, Associate Director.

Bringing in skilled, loyal and keen team members helps the metals recycler to deliver on its business aims directly too.

*“Our partnership is part of our ethos and about putting our values into practice,”* Sanjay adds.

*“We are privileged to see firsthand the great work the Charity does through our employees who have come to us with the support of its programmes.*

*“We see the positive impact had on people’s lives, and gain some wonderful employees.”*



## Prison partner

Helping people like Danielle to turn their lives around typically starts within one of our 11 partner prisons.

**HMP Kirkham** was our first prison partner. We opened our first HMP Academy – a recycling workshop – within its grounds back in 2012. In the years since, hundreds of men have been supported there and we've grown and improved our wrap-around support offering.

*"Recycling Lives has created a model that others have followed,"* says **Rob Hawes**, Head of Reducing Reoffending & Employment, Skills & Work for the prison. *"They offer fantastic real-life work experience coupled with wrap-around care for release - work, skills and support are key to rebuilding prisoners' lives."*

*"We've seen other employment or charity providers adopt a similar approach to Recycling Lives over the years, but they don't have the same infrastructure in the community to provide the through-the-gate support that the Charity offers."*

As well as influencing other providers, our Kirkham Academy also paved the way for a dozen more workshops and partnerships, including opening our second workshop there in 2024.

And as a Category D prison offering open conditions, we also support eligible prisoners to go out on work placements under release on temporary license (ROTL).

Now prison bosses hope to see more employers explore these kinds of opportunities to take on ex-offenders.

*"The prison population is vastly underestimated as a resource for recruitment,"* Rob adds. *"Not all offenders are bad people. A large proportion will resettle in the community and live law-abiding lives, they just require a chance to prove themselves."*

*"We would welcome employers to visit HMP Kirkham to see what we offer and chat to the prisoners themselves, to get an understanding of what they have to offer."*



HM Prison &  
Probation Service

Our impact:

**95%**

rehabilitation rate

Prisons like HMP Kirkham are improving their outcomes by partnering with our programmes. We work in 11 prisons running our own recycling workshops, offering wrap-around support in prison-led workshops, offering through-the-gate support in release hubs, and delivering our training courses and cookery classes.

Your opportunity:

**Partner with our rehabilitation programme** in your prison, probation or local authority team. Working together we can further reduce reoffending rates, increase employment rates, and improve outcomes for offenders.

**See how you could get involved:**

[www.recyclinglives.org/our-impact/partner-with-us](http://www.recyclinglives.org/our-impact/partner-with-us)

**“Prisoners are vastly underestimated – they just need a chance to prove themselves.”**



**“Work, skills and support are key to rebuilding lives.”**



Dave Gallagher from Helmrig Ltd is one of the dozens of employers to take on participants from our rehabilitation programmes, including Jason (left)

## Employer partner

# “Employing people through the Charity’s programmes is win-win.”

Employer partners are central to our offering and impact. **Helmrig Ltd** welcomed four men from our rehabilitation programmes to its team in 2024.

The business, based in Lancashire, delivers landscaping, tree works and invasive weed management services for the construction sector and has grown by 60% in recent years: *“When I was on the lookout for good people, it was natural for me to reach out to RL,”* says Managing Director, **Dave** Gallagher.

He was familiar with the Charity’s work, having previously been Head of HSE for the former Recycling Lives Ltd business: *“I’d seen first-hand the power of the RL model and worked alongside lots of great people who had been supported by the Charity.”*

Given the often-challenging conditions of landscaping – *“our work is outdoors and physically demanding”* – Dave was keen to build a sustainable pipeline of talent.

The trusted relationships our Key Workers build with participants are central to this, he says. They put forward participants whose experience, work ethic and ambition are suited to the business then offer ongoing support as they settle into work.

*“We recognise that leaving prison and transitioning into independent living is a big challenge,”* Dave explains. *“The Charity plays a really important role in supporting both the individual and us to understand and overcome any barriers to working.”*

Of the four men who’ve joined Helmrig so far, two have already been promoted. The partnership offers logistical, reputational and social benefits for Helmrig, Dave adds: *“I hope that working with Recycling Lives Charity says good things about us.”*



*“But it’s pragmatic, too. It’s a win-win – the individual finds an opportunity well suited to them, and Helmrig finds people with the potential to become loyal, committed tradesmen.”*

Grounded in excellence  
**HELMRIG**

## Our impact:

**63%**  
participants employed

Employers like Helmrig are key to delivering our reduced reoffending rates. By offering training placements and full-time, paid roles, businesses gain loyal staff and give our participants the opportunity to regain their independence. And both parties receive ongoing, wrap-around support from our Key Workers.

## Your opportunity:

**Find skilled, loyal team members** and create tangible, reportable social value by partnering your business with our rehabilitation programmes. We help businesses to recruit and retain great employees.

### See how you could get involved:

[www.recyclinglives.org/our-impact/partner-with-us](http://www.recyclinglives.org/our-impact/partner-with-us)



## Iddy's story

*"I've always worked, and worked hard, but I had no qualifications or school. I've always wanted a trade behind me. That's why I went for this job."*

**Iddy** joined Helmrig just two weeks after he was released, and when, technically, he should've still had 10 weeks left to spend in prison.

He's one of the thousands of men and women who were granted early release through summer 2024, to ease prison overcrowding.

*"I was meant to be released in October, but I went on a home leave in August and when I got back, I got told I'd be out in a few days. I was happy! Everyone was. The lads I knew, anyway. It was probably hard for those ones that have got no family or anything. With all those people, the people that are there to help them, they couldn't keep up with housing and benefits."*

Iddy had joined our recycling workshop in **HMP Kirkham** towards the end of his sentence: *"I knew it'd benefit me and it's really paid off."*

After release, he was offered three jobs, including to return to his old employer, where he'd been for 17 years before being jailed in 2023.

*"Recycling Lives rang me about this one, landscaping, and I went with it. I'm glad I did. They're setting us up to do courses and asking about other jobs we'd be interested in."*

*"Harriet [Key Worker] would check in with me on other stuff like housing, but I've always had good family support so I'm at my sisters, and then I'll look at getting my own property."*

*"They [the Charity] do a good job. Everyone deserves a chance - once you lot give them that chance it's up to them to take it on board."*

**"I've always worked - and worked hard. Now I've got the chance to get a trade behind me."**



Iddy at work with Helmrig

## Supplier partner

The team in our community-based recycling workshop are maximising recyclability and reuse rates as they complete contracts for **Baxi**.

The partnership was formed following an introduction from the then-Recycling Lives Ltd business, which was handling waste removal for the heating and hot water solutions manufacturer.

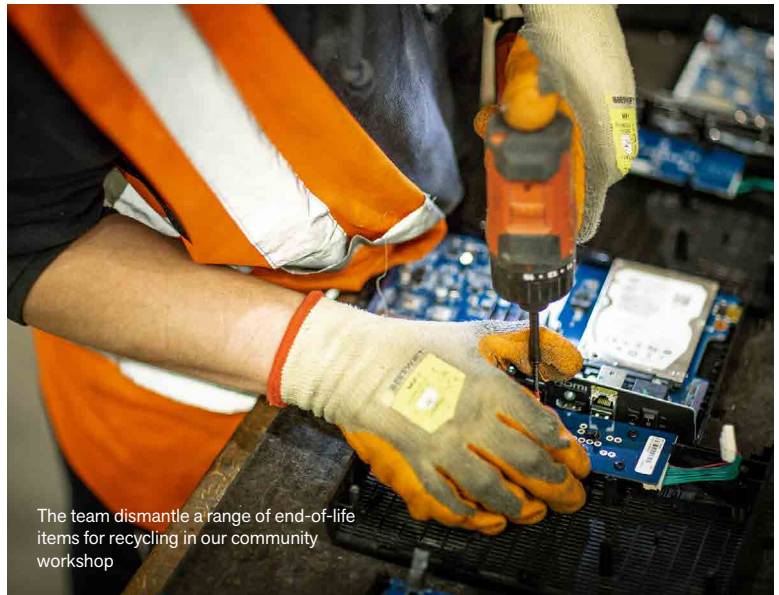
*"Working with Recycling Lives is very rewarding," says **Darren** Ingram, Operations Director for Baxi Heating UK Ltd. "Their work rehabilitating ex-offenders is a very ethical concept and one which Baxi is proud to support.*

*"It is a commercial relationship though, as the Charity processes our engineers returns, helping us to manage scrap and waste efficiently, and reach our environmental and sustainability targets."*

Our team sort and separate waste and strip and refoam cylinders for Baxi, helping to prevent waste.

*"In theory, we could do this without the Charity," Darren adds. "However, they are the right partner for us because they not only have a focus of sustainability - which is one of our core values - but also a focus on people and rehabilitating ex-offenders, reestablishing their purpose and the value they can add back into society. The concept is inspiring and working together is part of our social responsibility."*

# BAXI



The team dismantle a range of end-of-life items for recycling in our community workshop

### Our impact:

# 1.29m

items processed or recycled

Businesses like Baxi ensure our workshops are productive for all involved. Commercial contracts to sort waste and recycle commodities create meaningful, skilled work for ex-offenders and keep our rehabilitation programme financially sound.

They also allow suppliers to directly create tangible, reportable social value.

### Your opportunity:

**Outsource your processes to our workshops** to deliver on social and environmental aims. Partner your business with our recycling workshops to increase your recycle rates and support our rehabilitation programmes. We operate our own workshops in prisons and the community across the North West, Yorkshire and the Midlands.

**See how you could get involved:**

[www.recyclinglives.org/our-impact/partner-with-us](http://www.recyclinglives.org/our-impact/partner-with-us)

## “They’re the right partner for us because they focus on both sustainability and people.”



Our Academies Operations Manager Carly works with our supplier partners to sustain employment opportunities within the prisons



## New programme

# “I didn’t need to be nervous – now I’m confident in my new skills.”

Training has always been central to our rehabilitation offering. Courses and certifications give participants self-confidence, knowledge, skills and qualifications that can help them to progress into employment.

However, for many of the people we support, classroom environments and training can be overwhelming or off-putting. With this understanding, we continued to expand our in-house training offering through 2024.

Having an in-house instructor – Keith – has made courses more flexible and accessible for participants.

**Rebecca** completed training within HMP Styal through the social enterprise Remade with Hope. Her Forklift Truck licence will support her as she progresses in work in Remade with Hope’s prison-based clothing and textiles recycling workshop.

She said: *“I was quite naive before the training and slightly nervous about learning to drive a Forklift Truck too.”*

*“Keith was very good at talking in a way that we could all understand – I felt very safe with the knowledge he was giving us. He made the sessions easy to follow and we were comfortable asking questions.”*

*“Now I’m very aware and confident in what I’ve picked up.”*



## Our impact:

**194**  
people trained

Rebecca is one of the 194 people who received training from our in-house instructor through 2024. We delivered 50 training sessions or courses for our own participants and team members, for other charities working in prisons, or for local employers. Participants achieved an overall pass rate of 95%.

## Your opportunity:

**Partner with our training programme to fill skills gaps or upskill staff.** Our qualified training instructor delivers a wide range of courses for operational roles, including Forklift Truck training and First Aid, Banksman, Fire Marshall and Manual Handling classes. The courses are accredited through ITSSAR and NUCO, equipping successful participants with recognised certifications.

### See how you could get involved:

[www.recyclinglives.org/our-impact/partner-with-us](http://www.recyclinglives.org/our-impact/partner-with-us)



## Andy's story

*"Evolving is probably the best word for what goes on here," says **Andy**.*

*"We're giving people opportunities to evolve. And we're always trying to evolve how we work too, working with the likes of Baxi and British Gas to try new things and adapt, to help them to improve how they do things.*

*"That means I'm evolving in my role too. It creates new administrative elements to the job. But I like being on the shop floor and having those interactions with the guys.*

*"Ultimately, as an Academy Manager, my role is to use the contracts to give people the right opportunities. It's about showing people, you can get a job and have some peace and control in your life instead of just being in chaos."*

Andy has led our community-based workshop since Spring 2022, overseeing a team of up to 12 participants at a time to complete recycling work for commercial clients.

He's recently seen one of his team Jimmy – whose story we shared in our 2023/24 Impact Report – promoted:

**"I put my trust in Recycling Lives all those years ago and they've never let me down since."**

*"It's great to see him getting more comfortable and more confident.*

*"I get a lot out of the role because I can remember being where some of these guys are now."*

Andy first joined our team in 2017, while serving a nine-year sentence. Using skills picked up in our prison-based workshops, he went on to work for another charity on release before being offered a role with us.

*"Recycling Lives Charity showed me a different way," he says. "In the workshop, I got paid for a hard day's work. I'd never experienced that before.*

*"I started in HMP Wymott then got transferred to HMP Thorn Cross. When I arrived there, Shaun got me straight into the workshop. It was a good feeling to know they wanted to help.*

*"I put my trust in Shaun back then and he's never let me down since.*

*"It feels like this job was me coming home."*



Andy (right) with his manager Shaun

## Mandy's story

# “Having people who cared meant so much.”

Life still doesn't feel real for **Mandy**. She's come such a long way in just a few years.

Today she's a mentor for women who've been through the criminal justice system. Two years ago, she was where they are now.

After being jailed as a result of a violent relationship, she lost her job, home and support network. The prospect of release was daunting.

Knowing Mandy was likely to be released without family support, a prison officer suggested she sign up to work with Recycling Lives Charity to be able to save up ready for release.

*“Those funds were helpful for getting back on my feet,”* Mandy says. As was the mobile phone Jan, her Key Worker, gave her the day she was released from **HMP Foston Hall**.

And the homewares she took down when Mandy was later able to move out of a bail hostel: *“She drove all the way down, bringing bedding, duvets, cups, a kettle, and a microwave. Otherwise, I wouldn't have had anything.”*

It was the emotional support that mattered most to Mandy, though: *“I was so isolated, just on my own with no friends and family. Both Jan and Matt maintained regular contact, though. Jan would come to visit and that would get me out of the house. And Matt, my Specialist Support Worker, is really good at making you see things in a different way and helping with techniques to manage anxiety and confidence.”*

The pair also supported Mandy to manage ongoing court hearings and bail conditions: *“They attended every court appearance with me.”*

## Our impact:

# 68

people given specialist support

Mandy is one of dozens of people to work with our specialist support team through 2024.

She was one of those who the team attended nine parole hearings on behalf of. They also represented participants at 10 MAPPA meetings (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements). Additionally, 62 people were supported to address substance misuse problems – 20 of whom went on to stop using substances – while 43 were supported to improve their mental health.

*“To have that constant in my life, two people who cared and wanted to help, it meant so much.”*

Over time, Mandy grew in confidence and got herself a work placement that soon led to full-time work.

*“I worked on my mental health, got myself into shared housing, and started working part-time.”*

*“Now I'm in my own flat and working as an employment advisor with a charity, supporting women with convictions to get back into work. It's so fulfilling and rewarding.”*

*“It doesn't feel real, all this. It's been hard but I've had a lot of help along the way. That empathetic and understanding approach RL offers can really help people.”*



## Andrew's story

**“I’m  
getting  
closer to  
seeing  
my son.”**



Key Worker Bethan &  
Specialist Support Worker Matt

Each of the people we support has their own, completely personal end goal.

For **Andrew**, it's all about his son. He wants nothing more than to be able to rebuild their relationship. To do so, he's working to rebuild his life first.

*“Recycling Lives have been the biggest help with my son,” he says. “It'd been three years since I properly saw him. Faye, my specialist support worker, helped me to get things lined up to see him, though.”*

*“I'd tried social services, mediation, Cafcass [children and family court advisory and support service]. None of it worked.”*

*“This time Faye's been there every step of the way. She's given me the confidence to do bits myself, and helped with the paperwork. It's given me hope.”*

Andrew started accessing our **specialist support** offering while working with us in **HMP Lancaster Farms**.

*“I heard they could give you help and I knew I needed to change my life,” he says. “I've been in and out of prison since I was 16, mostly from drug addiction.”*

*“Recycling Lives did offer me the residential [programme] but I decided to go into recovery homes after release. They got me onto courses and into volunteering.”*

*“I do NA meetings, I've got a car sorted, I've got good people around me and I'm working towards getting my own place. And with Faye's help I'm getting closer to seeing my son.”*

## Funding partner

# “Safe, stable housing gives a platform for people to rebuild their lives.”

*“Without a stable base to go to, the challenge of moving on – whether that is away from crime, or away from substance use – is made much more difficult. If someone is immediately faced with being on the streets or sofa-surfing, they are in many ways set up to fail.”*

**St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity** works to prevent and tackle homelessness. One of its solutions is distributing emergency grants for people experiencing homelessness or insecure housing.

Our team regularly access these grants, passing them on to participants to cover deposits or initial rental payments to move into their own homes.

*“Housing is vital for people leaving prison or rehab,” says **Rebecca Pearce**, Communications Manager for St Martin-in-the-Fields.*

With applications typically turned around within five days, the grants help to quickly resolve crisis situations.

*“At St Martin-in-the-Fields Charity, our goal is that homelessness is prevented. When it does occur, though, people should receive the best possible support to secure and keep a safe place to live,” Rebecca adds.*

*“Our grants break down the cost barrier of moving away from homelessness and are a part of the package of support often needed.*

*“A safe, stable home provides people with the platform to rebuild their lives.”*

St Martin-in-the-Fields also delivers support and project-based funding for frontline workers and charities, and advocates for changes around policy and attitudes with the public, funders and policymakers.



Our Housing Officer, Hayley



## Peter's story

*"I met Rick and I liked the way he was speaking, he seemed genuine, and it turned out that he was," says Peter. He was supported by our team in one of our National Lottery-funded prisons, **HMP Wealstun**.*

*"Recycling Lives put £10 a week in savings for me and Rick would come on the wings to see me.*

*"I did a traffic management course in prison, which gave me a basic ticket to be a trainee with a company."*

The course helped Peter to secure his parole and, later, a job, with Rick supporting him to navigate both.

*"Rick said the support doesn't end with the job, though. He said, if you ever need help, just ask.*

*"I was in a bail hostel at first. When I'd got the job, because I'd set up my child maintenance, to then get a flat at £600-700 a month, it would've really squeezed me. But I found this en-suite room with bills included, and RL helped me to get me the deposit for that."*



Our Employment Worker, Rick

**"I wanted to do right and sort my child maintenance but that left me with no money for my own place."**

Peter's Key Worker, Lizzie, accessed a £500 emergency grant from St Martin-in-the-Fields to cover his deposit.

*"That really helped me out," he says.*

*"Although I'd saved about £700 up from that £10 a week, I'd used that to get my car back on the road to travel to work. After that, I didn't have nowt.*

*"I appreciate all the help that I got.*

*"Now I've got money, I've got my own place, a new girlfriend, my kids are in my life. Everything's perfect. I'll never forget that when I really needed it, you guys helped me."*

## Jo's story

# “With Recycling Lives you're moving forward, you're not looking back.”

*“People used to say to me: ‘Sort yourself out lad, you’d be great at this,’”* Jo reflects. And they were right.

Jo\* is one of our support workers. He mentors, advises and advocates for people who want to overcome histories of homelessness, addiction, offending or trauma. He's well-liked and trusted by the men and women we support and able to easily relate to people. His bright smile and Scouse accent help. But it runs deeper, too.

*“Because I've got a background of suffering with my mental health, with drug and alcohol addiction, being homeless, and being in and out of prison, I can relate to people and people can relate to me,”* he explains.

It's in his nature and something Jo passed down to his son too. He's also a support worker, for young adults with learning disabilities: *“It was my son who wanted me to come to Recycling Lives,”* he explains.

Jo faced his lifestyle head on when his partner died in June 2022: *“That sentence was the final straw for my family. I don't even know the exact amount of time I'd been in prison. After my partner died, it gave me more drive. My son was only 17, he didn't want me to fall back into my old way of life.”*

So when he was released in 2023 – on what would have been his partner's 50th birthday – Jo moved into our residential facility. He'd already been working in our workshop in **HMP Buckley Hall**: *“I wanted structure as well as support. The thing about RL is you're moving forward; you're not looking back.”*

Initially sceptical about Jo moving areas, his probation worker soon supported the move after visiting the residential – *“they were blown away by the place.”*

As he wasn't eligible for 'day release' though, Jo couldn't visit and view the residential himself beforehand: *“It was even better that what I thought it would be, though.”*

*“Kat [now-manager for the residential] picked me up when I was released and when I went in, I thought, this can't be where I'll live? It was so nice. I've lived in hostels – they're dumps.”*

*“The thing about the residential is, it's a lovely environment, you've got all your food, it's spotless, but it's the staff what make the place. You want boss people like that around you.”*

While settling in Jo worked in our recycling workshop, offering some continuity from the prison-based workshop, before moving over to volunteer at the Food Redistribution Centre: *“Then Kat asked what work I'd like to do, and I said I'd like to be a support worker.”*

Set up with his own laptop, Jo started completing courses online and in-person – *“Safeguarding, Information Advice & Guidance, Mental Health First Aid, Understanding Challenging Behaviour, those kinds of things,”* – and volunteering alongside our ACE team.

*“All the services what I've accessed over 30 years, all the staff would say, ‘you'd be great at this’. And that's what I do now as a Key Worker.”*

*“I help to bring in and manage the volunteers and I've got a caseload of people I support. Although it doesn't really work that formally here – we all support one another's caseload. When you're dealing with complex people who need help, you can't turn someone away if their worker's off for the day.”*

*“I take my responsibilities seriously now. I've got my own place and I love the peace and quiet of it. I love coming to work, too. I've got purpose.”*

*“The best thing about it all is the relationship I've got with my family.”*

*“This year, on what would've been my partner's birthday, I went to her grave with my kids then I took them out for a meal – I wouldn't have been able to do any of that if it wasn't for where I'm at now.”*

# “Probation were blown away by the residential and what it offered.”



Andy (pictured) and Jo are two of eight team members to join us having come through one of our rehabilitation programmes



## Nathan's story

# “Work’s been a massive part of my journey.”



Recycling work helped **Nathan** to turn his goals into reality. He was determined to get a job ready for release and our workshop in **HMP Kirkham** gave him that “*progression*”.

His first step, though, had been joining a therapeutic programme in prison: “*I’d done prison before, but something just clicked inside me on this sentence,*” he says. “*A lot of stuff I’d not dealt with before, got dealt with – it had a big effect on the way I behaved and my decision-making.*”

“*From there, I made a plan – to do some courses, move to an open prison, get a job and get released with a job. And that’s what I’ve done.*”

*“I was working in a factory in prison at first, but I thought Recycling Lives would give me a better progression route. It’s been hard work along the way, but it’s been worth it.”*

After starting out dismantling TVs in the workshop, Nathan was approved to go out to work under Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL). In summer 2023, he travelled to work in our community recycling workshop each day, earning his Forklift Truck licence and completing a banksman course during the placement.

With the skills, certificates and experience he’d built up with the Charity, Nathan was put forward for a Warehouse Operative role with Recycling Lives Services soon after his release: “*The job wasn’t immediately available, though,*” he explains. “*So, Alasdair let me stay on in the community workshop in between, still being paid too. Otherwise, I’d have had nothing to do with my days.*”

Since then, he’s secured additional licences, to operate telehandlers and mini diggers: “*Work’s been a massive part of my journey - it’s your routine and structure. The team I work with is sound, too.*”

Now Nathan’s giving back too, volunteering at our soup kitchen every Wednesday: “*I’d like to work for the Charity one day, like a Support Worker, so I’m keeping up with helping out at the soup kitchen for now.*”



## Employer partner & Sponsor

**Recycling Lives Services** is our longest-standing employer partner. As well as taking on ex-offenders like Nathan, it manages some of its waste electricals recycling through our seven prison-based workshops, and makes regular donations to support our Food Redistribution Centre. We support the business to deliver its own ROTL programme too, employing men on day release from HMP Haverigg.

*"At Recycling Lives Services, we use our business as a force for good,"* says **Adrian** Murphy, Group CEO.

*"We're proud of our roots in helping to establish and nurture the Charity and Social Enterprise and continue to support its programmes by creating work opportunities and giving back to communities."*

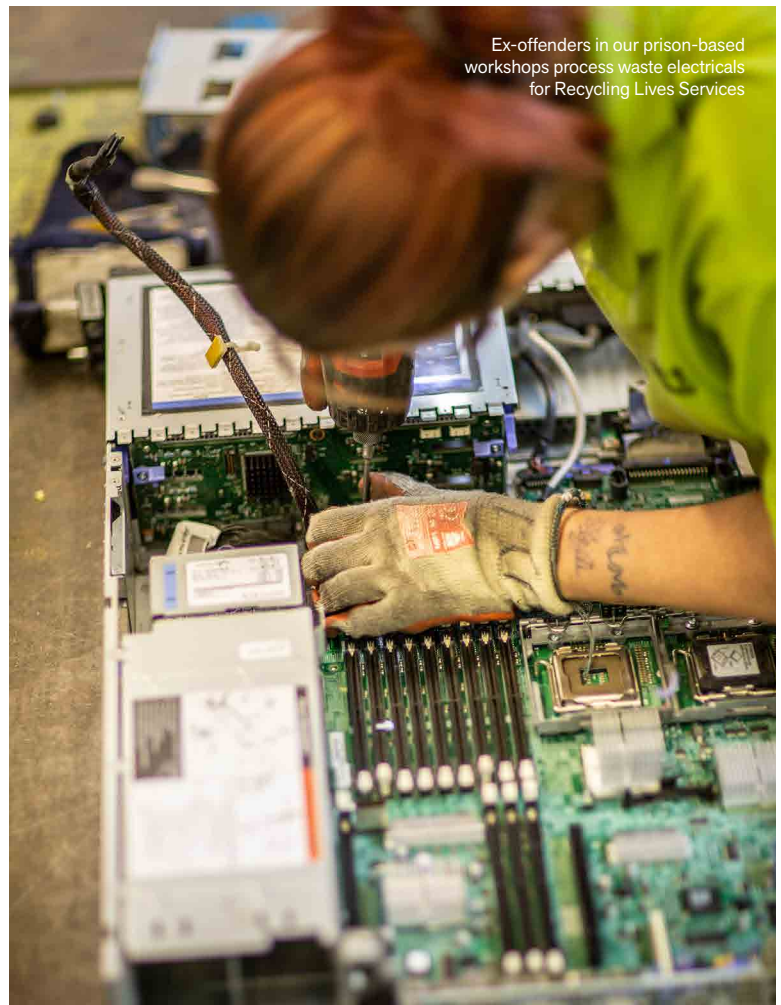
*"Working in partnership with the Charity supports our business in a couple of different ways."*

*"Processing waste electricals in the Charity's prison workshops expands our own site operations to process more materials. Offering 'day release' and full-time work opportunities to ex-offenders helps us to recruit great people. And donating to the food redistribution work across Cumbria allows us to give back to communities."*

*"In this way, we're delivering services that change lives."*



# "We're proud of our roots in nurturing the Charity."



Ex-offenders in our prison-based workshops process waste electricals for Recycling Lives Services

## Kayleigh's story

**Kayleigh** knew being released from prison would be a "test", but she hadn't anticipated the number of obstacles she'd face just on day one.

*"Probation assured me they'd find me somewhere to live," she explains. "But I was released homeless, so I landed in Preston with nowhere to go.*

*"Probation sent me to the council; they sent me to a homeless hostel; and they sent me to another hostel. I stayed at that place for two days, then got moved to Liverpool for two weeks in another hostel, then back to the first hostel for another week, before I eventually got a call from a worker at some recovery housing.*

*"I knew when I got released that it would all be a test of how strong I am. But in those weeks, I really proved that to myself."*

Finally able to settle, Kayleigh started looking for opportunities.

*"While I live there, I'm not able to do paid work so someone suggested volunteering at Recycling Lives café," she says. "I'd been a barista and worked in cafés before so thought it'd be a natural fit."*

Now Kayleigh volunteers three days-a-week and has wrap-around support all our team too: *"Stuart and Rick (the employment team) are helping me with finding future employment. Hayley (the housing officer) is helping me with eventually getting my own place.*

*"There's someone here for every part of what I need. And there's no judgement here - that goes a long way for me."*

Kayleigh's set herself a timeline and goals – to live with her children again: *"If I really put everything into it ... I know I've got all the support I need here for it.*

*"Recycling Lives has been very important for me. It's not worth thinking about where I would've gone otherwise, knowing how easy it can be to slip back into your old ways."*

**“It’s not worth thinking about where I could’ve ended up.”**

### Our impact:

# 202

people supported by ACE

Kayleigh and Mike are two of the 202 people to be supported by

ACE's team through 2024. For the majority the primary need was for support with housing. For others, overcoming addiction or substance misuse issues or managing mental health problems were the priorities. ACE's team also supported 14 people with volunteering, training and, later, employment opportunities.



Mike meeting one of his Key Workers from the ACE team



## “I was only comfortable in chaos.”

### Mike's story

*“I want to help people - help youngsters to not make the same mistakes I made.”*

**Mike's** goals extend beyond his own home and family life. He wants to use his experiences to influence others. The dad-of-three says he was “*raised in the streets*”, started using drugs and first landed in prison as a teenager: “*That was the cycle then, for years and year and years.*”

Tragically, his “catalyst” came when his wife passed away: “*We'd been together 30-odd years. She's my kids' mum. I had to do some deep soul searching.*”

*“I'd just been throwing life away. I'd get out of jail and wouldn't feel comfortable in my skin. I was only comfortable in the chaos of prison.*”

*“I did nine months of counselling and was able to unpack all those little demons in a safe place.*”

*“Ever since, I've lost that need to take drugs.”*

Mike's journey hasn't been straightforward since, though. A transfer to **HMP Thorn Cross** brought him up North, where he was released to a “dry house” on release and was recommended to visit our **ACE team**.

*“I came along and I said, 'I want to help people'. Charles put his arm around me, and said, 'you've come to the right place'.”*

But on a technicality a move into a new place breached his licence conditions and Mike was recalled to prison: “*ACE's team had helped me to get a nice house but the police came for me a few days later - I got recalled for changing my address, not committing a crime.*”

With ACE's ongoing support, Mike was granted an executive release: “*ACE -*

*Charles, Amy, Jon and Gary - have been tremendous, they've done so much for me. They did a wicked write-up for me for my papers.”*

Mike's been out of prison for three years now – “*with no crimes,*” he adds. “*This is the first time I've ever finished a sentence and got off license [from probation].*”

*“I've had to be humble. At the moment, I'm in supported housing and on the dole.*”

*“I've got my FLT and CSCS cards with Recycling Lives, and I'm doing my counselling levels 1 and 2 now.*”

*“I volunteer with ACE at the Release Hub at HMP Preston and I do the talks too. That's cathartic.*”

*“I've done a lot of harm and a lot I'm not proud of, but I'll tell my story to caution kids and, hopefully, help others.”*

# Redistributing food

## Supporting communities



Volunteer Euan and our Food Redistribution Manager Laura at work

Our food redistribution programme delivers far-reaching impact. The team prevent food waste and tackle food poverty and reduce costs for charitable groups, all by redistributing surplus stock to communities. This creates savings and benefits the environment, and communities and society.

First and foremost, the food is feeding people in need. It stops hundreds of people from going hungry each week. It also gives families, like **Pauline's**, breathing space between paydays, or communities, like **Village Larder's**, shared space to come together.

Often it goes beyond just feeding people, too. At **Roccoco**, the food is a tool, underpinning work opportunities for adults with learning disabilities.

Members range from school breakfast clubs to lunch clubs for the elderly, 'social supermarkets' and soup kitchens, women's refuges and homeless shelters.

As the Lancashire & Cumbria arm of FareShare, we have access to the national charity's network of suppliers and supporters, alongside our own regional relationships.

All working together, redistributing surplus stock from the food retail supply chain and getting it out to households, we jointly prevent food waste and tackle food poverty.

The food supplied is just the beginning for these groups too. Our Food Redistribution team also connects members with opportunities for extra resources, equipment or funding.

However they use the food, our aim for our members is the same – **to equip groups with the resources and opportunities they need to lower their costs, expand or enhance their provision, and feed people in need.**



## Pauline's story

# “This food is invaluable to our family.”

*“The Sharing Shed has become invaluable to our family,” says mum-of-one **Pauline**.*

While she and her husband both work – Pauline is an administrator in the NHS, and Lee is self-employed – they find it increasingly tricky to cover their bills each month.

*“Life is a constant struggle to pay bills – the cost of living has risen sharply and inflation has now outstripped my wages. I've taken on two extra, informal jobs to help – babysitting, plus gardening for elderly neighbours.”*

Pauline also volunteers at her son's school, Shap Primary on the edge of the Lake District, helping out at the **Sharing Shed**. The initiative was set up by parent volunteers, to receive deliveries from our **Food Redistribution Centre** to redistribute to families in need and help bolster stock in the school's kitchen.

*“I'm both a user and a volunteer,” says Pauline. “The delivery each week is amazing. There is a mix of useful, long-life products plus fresh fruit, veg and bread. I select a few products and leave a small donation for the school, then, if there are leftovers, I let my elderly neighbours know to pop down too – they are happy to support the school.”*

*“We'll all compare who's making what with the surplus food.”*

The Sharing Shed also redistributes pre-loved school uniforms – *“that's saved me a lot of money too,”* – and makes up food parcels for families in crisis.

*“I've found a friendly community amongst the other volunteers, and it feels good to contribute to school life in a way that's cost free and flexible.”*



Volunteer Elizabeth allocating food at another of our member groups, New Day Church

Rebecca helps to serve food at Roccoco Coffee Lounge and Bakery



## Roccoco's story



Hazel and Kate serve coffees to customers at Roccoco Coffee Lounge and Bakery

# “We’re increasing the opportunities we offer and helping to stop waste too.”

There’s something incredibly uplifting about Roccoco - and it’s not just the coffees served up by Kate.

The Coffee Lounge and Bakery is a true community hub. It welcomes families and older people and supplies food to other community groups, largely delivered by a studious team of adults with learning disabilities.

Under the gentle guidance of staff like Hazel, they each have opportunities to develop catering and customer service skills, earn qualifications, and meet new people.

Kate and Rebecca greet customers, while in the kitchen, a team of a dozen or so more make up packed lunches and food parcels to be sent to school breakfast clubs or local people in need.

Much of the food is sourced from our Food Redistribution Centre.

*“The impact of this food on Roccoco, and indeed the wider Day Services, is profound.*

*“Receiving food from FareShare means our services users can work with different ingredients while we still keep our prices low for our customers or even give out free food to those who need it,”* explains **Robert Owen**,

Food Retail Manager for **Brothers of Charity Services**, which runs the cafe in Leyland. *“The vast variety of items we receive allows us to evolve our menu and our learning objectives, so the impact on the people we support is immeasurable.”*

Roccoco also hosts talking tables and chatty café schemes for older people and people living with dementia and runs a pay-it-forward food scheme.

The group is just as invested in helping to prevent food waste, as helping others, too.

*“Being members has allowed us to expand our menu and also connect with other opportunities, while helping to stop waste.*

*“As well as the food, we receive a lot of personal hygiene products which allows us to make up dignity boxes for our users. And we’ve received donations of new kitchen equipment via Recycling Lives’ partners.*

*“The support we receive from Naomi at the Food Redistribution Centre is second-to-none.”*

## New programme

**“The soup kitchen is somewhere I can get all my needs met.”**

Seeing the difference made by groups like Sharing Shed and Roccoco, our team set up a weekly soup kitchen in central Preston in 2024. Supper's Up offers 'dinner, community and opportunity' for people in need.

It welcomes a wide range of people including young families, older people, asylum seekers and refugees, and people who are street homeless.

For Dan and Frank, the food served is just the start, or a nice bonus, to all the other support on offer.

The connection and community Supper's Up offers is as important as the meal for widower **Frank**.

*“Since my wife died I have been on my own. Often, I am very lonely, but when I come here, I'm not,”* he says.



Our impact:

**16,000**  
meals served

**2,400**  
food parcels given

Dan and Frank are two of hundreds of people to visit Supper's Up in its first few months. Visitors receive a hot meal and hot drinks and can take away boxed up hot food, food parcels, and toiletries too. We also handed out 596 care packages, 32 tents, 33 sleep pods and 20 sleeping bags, and signposted people to our programmes or other services for extra support.

*“I can meet people and have a chat somewhere warm. It's good to get a proper meal too, and it's always delicious.”*

**Dan** and his young family now visit every week: *“Supper's Up allows me to breathe on a Wednesday, instead of wondering where our next meal will come from,”* he says.

*“It's a lifeline.”*

*“It's a really welcoming, warm atmosphere – everyone knows our names. I've never seen a soup kitchen like it, where I can basically get all my needs met in one place.”*

*“I've benefited from all the support on offer. I'm now working with the Charity doing a traffic management course, too.”*

*“My life is moving forward now.”*



## Funding partner

Supper's Up has been made possible thanks to support and funding from a number of partners, including **The Cumberland Building Society**.

It has continued its Kinder Kind of Kitchen initiative through 2024-25, making a second donation of £223,000 to cover costs for our members operating in and around the communities the building society's branches serve.

This funding allowed for Supper's Up to register as a Community Food Member (CFM) and receive goods from the Food Redistribution Centre each week, to make up hot meals and food parcels.

**Claire** Deekes, Chief Customer Officer for the Cumberland, said: *"This year it has been clear once again that many people are struggling to afford the basics, and demand remains high, so we*

# "Looking out for the communities we serve is really important to us."

*took the decision to continue the Kinder Kind of Kitchen initiative and extend its reach.*

*"We know that groups have been able to use our funding not only to expand their provision, but in some areas, it has also facilitated the creation of new initiatives.*

*"It's been a humbling experience to have met many of the volunteers who run such important community groups, and so many have also welcomed our colleagues as volunteers to help get food out too.*

*"Kindness is in our nature here at the Cumberland. We are a mutual, owned by our members, and looking out for the communities we serve is really important to us."*

Supper's Up is also supported by Crossgate Church, Recycling Lives Services, Smart Solutions, and Preston Council.

**The Cumberland**



Volunteers from The Cumberland have spent time helping out at our food redistribution warehouse

## Food supply partner



The food we redistribute comes from the food retail supply chain – farmers, producers, manufacturers, wholesalers and supermarkets. Their surplus stock would typically otherwise go to waste.

We work with national suppliers as part of the FareShare network, as well as local and regional suppliers we have forged our own relationships with.

**James Hall & Co**, which supplies SPAR stores across the North of England, is one of these.

The family business, based in Preston, sent us 57,709kg of food in 2024 - the equivalent of 137,405 meals.

*“Reducing food waste is an important focus for our business,”* explains **Barry** Widdowson, Fresh & Frozen Stock Manager. *“So it’s great to have FareShare on the doorstep of our SPAR Distribution Centre in Preston to help us with this.*

*“They have excellent links with grassroot community organisations across Lancashire and Cumbria. We know the food we provide them with to redistribute is gratefully received by people who need it most.”*

**JAMES HALL & Co. LTD**  
— ESTD · 1863 —

### Our impact:

**3m**  
meals delivered

**1,261t**  
food diverted from waste

**150**  
groups supported

### Your opportunity:

**Redirect your surplus stock** to be redistributed to communities and prevent food waste. Partner your food business with our redistribution programme to prevent your surplus goods from going to waste, and instead use it to feed communities. We can accept deliveries or make collections of stock from food retailers, manufacturers and suppliers across the North West.

#### See how you could get involved:

[www.recyclinglives.org/our-impact/partner-with-us](http://www.recyclinglives.org/our-impact/partner-with-us)

**“Having the Food Redistribution Centre on our doorstep helps us to reduce food waste.”**



## Village Larder's story

For the team at **Village Larder**, membership has given them more than just food to share – it's helped to keep a roof over their heads.

The group joined our Food Redistribution Centre in March 2024, not long after starting out as a community pantry in a small village in rural Cumbria. But that May, they suddenly lost access to their original venue: *"Quite unexpectedly, the village hall where we'd started up withdrew use of the hall to our group,"* explains **Fiona**, a Founder Member & Membership Secretary.

*"Naomi was incredibly supportive and immediately offered to help us to find a new venue, supporting us to move, at speed, to a neighbouring village's hall."*

Village Larder has gone from strength-to-strength since. Open on the first and third Friday of each month, it offers its members large bags of groceries for just £3 and, last winter, added a Warm Spot café to its offering.

*"All are welcome, but it tends to be families, older people, and low-income households or jobseekers. It's brilliant to see people coming together,"* says Fiona.

*"Ours was previously a mining and industrial area and I'd listened to lots of people saying how they missed the sense of community that used to be here. There's no shop or pub in the village where we first started up, and food is a great way of getting community spirit going."*

*"We receive a huge variety of food - cupboard staples, tinned foods, lots of vegetables and spices, cakes, biscuits and bread, and seasonal items too."*

*"Our members just love it. They say it offers a change from what they might normally buy and appreciate that it allows them to contribute to making sure nothing goes to waste."*

*"We've certainly come a long way in a short time - we really couldn't have done any of this without the support from Recycling Lives Charity."*

**“When we suddenly lost our venue, RL’s team immediately offered to help us find a new one.”**



Fiona sorts through supplies from our Food Redistribution Centre

**“I was a bit awed at first, to see all this food that would’ve gone to waste.”**



Euan continues to help out at our Food Redistribution Centre every week



## Euan's story

Volunteering led graduate **Euan** into not one, but two paid jobs.

He met Vivienne, our Volunteer Coordinator, at a volunteers' fair in Preston in summer 2024: *"She told me about FareShare and stopping food waste and I thought that's really important and really interesting, and that it would also be a good way for me to get out to meet people and make a difference."*

It turned out to be a pivotal meeting for Euan, who had been out of work since leaving university. He started volunteering at our Food Redistribution Centre, and also Preston Volunteer Centre, soon after.

*"I started off just doing the warehouse stuff here," he says. "I was a bit awed by it at first - all this food that would've gone to waste."*

*"Now I deal with admin, inducting or recruiting new volunteers. Vivienne has been really great, giving me all sorts of different tasks and inviting me to networking events. I've gained lots of connections with different organisations, learnt a lot of new skills, and it's really helped my confidence."*

*"I didn't have much purpose before volunteering. Now I feel I'm making an impact and helping people. It's a good feeling."*

Euan has continued to volunteer at FareShare even since securing two new roles, one part-time with Preston Volunteers and another with a community mapping project: *"It really changed the trajectory of my life meeting Vivienne. Her background as a careers advisor really helped me."*

# “Volunteering has changed my life. Now, I’m making an impact.”

Our impact:

100

volunteers welcomed

14

supported into employment

Euan and Mark are just some of the dozens of volunteers regularly giving their time at our Food Redistribution Centre. Volunteering anything from one afternoon to 4-5 days each week, they come from all walks of life – job seekers like Euan, retired professionals like Mark, along with refugees and asylum seekers, people resettling in the community after experiencing addiction, homelessness, or mental illness. We also welcome corporate volunteers for one-off days or regular slots.

Your opportunity:

**Give your time to help redistribute food** to

communities, develop skills or meet new people, and learn about food waste and grassroots charities. We welcome corporate volunteers for structured, educational days, helping to allocate food and learning about food waste.

**See how you could get involved:**

[www.recyclinglives.org/our-impact/partner-with-us](http://www.recyclinglives.org/our-impact/partner-with-us)

## Mark's story

Mark delivers food to our members across Cumbria and collects donations from supermarkets



**“In an ideal world we shouldn't need food banks but they're a necessity.”**

For **Mark**, volunteering keeps him active and allows him to make a difference for others in his retirement.

He's been part of the team since 2022, working as a driver once- or twice-a-week, typically collecting food donated by shoppers at local supermarkets: *“Sometimes I'll drive up to drop food off with the charities in Cumbria, too. It's nice to see the people getting the food,”* he says.

*“You think the Lakes is such a lovely place to live but when you see these old mining communities, it's not all millionaires in houses overlooking the hills, there's quite a bit of deprivation.*

*“In an ideal world we shouldn't need food banks but unfortunately, they're a necessity.”*

While he knew about the needs communities can have – *“I've seen first-hand how communities can struggle - I grew up in the North East in the 80s,”* – being part of Recycling Lives Charity has been eye-opening in other ways.

*“The warehouse is really positive, there's all sorts of volunteers,”* he adds. *“You're working with people who are working to turn their lives around through the Charity's other programmes and it changes your opinion of people. It's an eye-opener.*

*“I feel like I'm making a difference and I'm doing something positive through volunteering.”*



## Prison partner

# “The cookery classes gave prisoners soft skills and confidence in their own abilities.”

Through 2024 we adapted our Training Kitchen offering to create tailored courses for public sector partners.

Working with prisons, NHS teams and local councils, we delivered sessions equipping people with a range of skills around cooking, budgeting, understanding nutrition, and managing health conditions.

At **HMP Styal**, working with the prison's Education, Skills & Work team, we developed tailored cookery classes for women on the Mother & Baby and Young Adult units.

We have been working within the women's prison for 10 years, running a recycling workshop within the establishment in Cheshire.

*“The classes have been really beneficial,”* says **Nicola** Thomas, Head of Education, Skills and Work. *“They've allowed our prisoners to develop a greater understanding of food, nutrition and cooking, as well as work together on a joint project and feel part of a group.”*

*“Soft skills have often been absent from people's lives until they come into custody. And formal learning or classrooms environments can be daunting or trauma inducing for some. So, to have an interactive session where the softer skills are embedded is invaluable.”*

*“Recycling Lives' trainer, Linda, was passionate and enthusiastic and able to adapt to different prisoners' needs and capabilities.”*

*“The Charity's team worked closely with us from designing and planning the sessions, through to delivery, including having the prisoners involved in planning,*



*making them feel part of the process and more engaged.”*

*“Their team were friendly, supportive and understanding throughout.”*

The women participating said classes gave them confidence in their skills or a newfound love of cooking.

One woman said: *“The session was light-hearted; it wasn't serious or boring. It made me realise I can cook.”* While

another added: *“I'm really looking forward to cooking with my children, when I get out.”*



# Our programmes

## Reducing reoffending

We're **rehabilitating offenders** by:

- ✓ Running eight workshops across six prisons and one community setting
- ✓ Offering additional wrap-around support for prison-led workshops in five prisons
- ✓ Working alongside probation services in the community
- ✓ Delivering professional, personalised support and advocacy for all areas of each person's life
- ✓ Offering meaningful work and 'day release' work opportunities in prison, including paying enhanced wages in our own workshops
- ✓ Connecting people to opportunities for skills development and paid employment on release
- ✓ Helping people to find, pay deposits for and move into independent housing
- ✓ Supporting people to engage with services and navigate systems, including probation, courts and healthcare

## Supporting people in recovery

Our ACE team (Assisted Community Engagement) is **improving wellbeing and increasing independence** by:

- ✓ Offering wrap-around support for every aspect of people's lives – health and wellbeing, housing, finances, family, and personal growth
- ✓ Creating a supportive community of like-minded peers in our weekly, mutual aid group
- ✓ Supporting men through-the-gate following release from short sentences at HMP Preston
- ✓ Connecting people with volunteer placements, training opportunities and employability support
- ✓ Delivering inspirational and educational talks for public sector workplaces, education settings or youth projects

## Specialist support

Our specialist support team is **empowering people** by:

- ✓ Offering one-to-one, confidential support from qualified mental health professionals
- ✓ Supporting people to engage with services and navigate systems, including probation, courts, social services, and healthcare services



## Residential support

We're **preventing homelessness** by:

- ✔ Offering supported accommodation for men to regain their independence after time spent in prison, rehab, or experiencing homelessness
- ✔ Connecting people to training courses, volunteering, and work placements with a view to progressing into paid work
- ✔ Delivering support and advocacy to secure bank accounts, ID and certifications, access services, reconnect with families or form new, positive relationships
- ✔ Offering practical and professional support to eventually move into independent housing

## Training programmes

Our Training Kitchen is **improving skills and wellbeing** by:

- ✔ Giving participants the confidence and skills to cook fresh, nutritious and budget-friendly meals
- ✔ Tailoring training courses to suit partners' aims, and continuing to deliver Jamie Oliver's Ministry of Food programme

Our operations-focused Training offering is increasing **skills and employability** by:

- ✔ Delivering accredited training courses, including plant training, including for FLTs and MEWPs, and First Aid training

Our wellbeing-focused Training offering is **increasing awareness and understanding** by:

- ✔ Offering accredited or tailored courses to better understand mental health and trauma, and improve wellbeing

## Redistributing food

We're **preventing food waste and tackling food poverty** by:

- ✔ Collecting surplus stock which would otherwise go to waste within the food retail supply chain
- ✔ Providing regular deliveries or collections of fresh, frozen, ambient and chilled produce along with toiletries, personal care items and pet food
- ✔ Supporting groups including food pantries, community groups, schools, hospices and homeless shelters
- ✔ Connecting groups with local supermarkets and suppliers to source short-dated produce, or funding opportunities to cover new equipment or extra food
- ✔ Welcoming volunteers to develop or share their skills, including students, job seekers and retirees, along with care leavers, asylum seekers and participants of our rehabilitation programmes

# “The impact our team makes is incredible. We couldn’t do it without our partners, sponsors and funders, though.”



“It is a strange feeling writing this as it’s the last time I will do so. After 23 years working for Recycling Lives – first for the business and then the charity - it’s time to move onto new things.

“The last eight years as Chief Executive of the Charity and its Social Enterprise have been incredible. It is, without doubt, the most rewarding job I have ever had, but equally the toughest.

“The impact that our small team, both staff and volunteers, make is unbelievable. As you have read in this report, **we truly change lives for the better**. There are no tick box exercises here. We do what it says on the tin – we help people. Truly help them. No half measures. We’re all in to make people’s lives as good as they can possibly be.

“The charity sector is too often taken for granted and doing work which government and commissioned services should be doing. We pick up the pieces which should already have been sorted.

“And **it is financially tougher than ever to do our work**. Like everyone else, our costs have gone up while funding and support is tougher than ever to get.

“That’s why I am so grateful to our supporters – the businesses, corporates, funders, commissioners, and private individuals without whom we could not exist.

“Our work is not going to go away any time soon. More and more people need our help, and, with support and funding, we can do even more to change society and lives for the better.

“So, my final ask as Chief Executive of this wonderful organisation is this...

“**Please do whatever you can to support our work**. Whether that’s by considering us for contracts which will bring in funds while giving people opportunities, or simply funding, sponsoring, or donating to our work. That support will be well used to change lives.

“I leave you in great hands. The new Chief Executive, Victoria Blakeman will be a great asset and take the organisation to the next level. And I leave behind a wonderful team who are utterly dedicated to helping others.

“Thank you to everyone who has helped me on this journey. You are all heroes in one way or another.

“I look forward to seeing what comes next for this great charity.”

**Alasdair Jackson OBE**

Victoria Blakeman will take up post as Chief Executive of our Charity & Social Enterprise in June 2025.





# Together we're Recycling Lives

Our **impact**  
Your **opportunity**

Get in touch to learn how you can **work with,**  
**support, or benefit** from our programmes:

**Visit:** [recyclinglives.org](http://recyclinglives.org)

**Email:** [changelives@recyclinglives.org](mailto:changelives@recyclinglives.org)



All photography by Rob Whitrow.

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Charity no: 1116562

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A graphic logo for Recycling Lives Charity. It features three stylized human figures in white, holding hands and forming a triangular shape. The figures are simple line drawings with no facial features. The text 'recyclinglives™' is written in a lowercase, sans-serif font, with the trademark symbol. Below it, the word 'charity' is written in a smaller, lowercase, sans-serif font.