



# 2024 GRANTS IMPACT REPORT

Building a Brighter Future for Scotland

Published  
January 2026

# OUR CHAIR REFLECTS ON OUR FIRST YEAR OF GRANTS

Although this report focuses on the achievements and impact of our 2024 grantmaking, it is published in January 2026 to ensure it reflects the fullest and most accurate picture of the difference our funding has made. Throughout 2025, charities supported through our 2024 programmes submitted detailed evaluations, providing rich evidence, learning and insight into the outcomes achieved through our new approach. By waiting until all evaluations were received and analysed, we are able to present a comprehensive account grounded in real experiences, robust data and the voices of the communities we exist to support.

2024 was an exceptional year for Bank of Scotland Foundation. Guided by our bold new strategy, **Building a Brighter Future for Scotland**, we set out to transform the way we support charities, and the results have surpassed all expectations. This report does more than celebrate a successful year; it evidences the enduring impact of a strategic shift that is reshaping how charities can plan, innovate and deliver.

We have championed grassroots charities tackling Scotland's most pressing and complex challenges, from mental health and disability support to poverty and family breakdown. By providing multi-year, unrestricted funding, we have given charities supporting people living in vulnerable circumstances the freedom to think long-term, act with confidence and respond directly to what matters most in their communities.

The 2025 evaluations from our 2024 grantees reinforce the strength of this approach. Charities tell us that our funding model - simpler processes, greater flexibility and trust-based relationships - is enabling them to focus their energy where it has the greatest impact: delivering life-changing support.

The stories that follow demonstrate the power of this shift: lives transformed, services strengthened, and communities better equipped for the future. Our partnership with Lloyds Banking Group has further amplified this impact, with employees across the Group providing mentoring and expertise that create a powerful force for good.

As we look ahead, we are energised by the opportunities before us. The success of 2024, reinforced by the insights gathered throughout 2025, confirms that our strategy is working. With the continued support of our sole funder, Lloyds Banking Group, and the exceptional charities we work alongside, we are determined to build on this momentum - driving positive change and strengthening communities across Scotland.



**Donald MacKechnie**  
Chair,  
Bank of Scotland Foundation

# ONE YEAR ON FROM OUR 2024 GRANTS

Bank of Scotland Foundation is an independent charity, funded solely by Lloyds Banking Group, with a clear purpose: to strengthen communities and create lasting positive change across Scotland. Through our bold strategy, Building a Brighter Future for Scotland, we champion grassroots charities working tirelessly to support those most in need.

Our approach is different - and deliberate. By offering multi-year, unrestricted funding, we give charities the stability and flexibility to innovate, plan ahead and deliver services that transform lives. This is trust-based philanthropy in action.

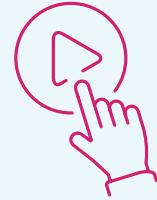
Our Impact Report celebrates the achievements of our 2024 funding - the first year delivered under our ambitious five-year strategy, **Building a Brighter Future for Scotland**. It shows how bold, flexible funding is working in practice - making a tangible difference across Scottish communities. Following our grant awards in May, June and November 2024, we received detailed evaluations in 2025 that reveal the real impact one year on.

Within these pages, you'll find stories of lives changed, services strengthened, and communities empowered. This report demonstrates what happens when charities have the freedom to respond to what matters most - and why our commitment to long-term, unrestricted funding is driving meaningful change across Scotland.



# EMPOWER GRANTS PROGRAMME

## Year One Impact



In 2024, charities with an income of £150k - £500k could apply to Empower for a grant of £150k (£50k per year) over 3 years.

The first year of our Empower grants programme has delivered bold, measurable change for charities across Scotland.

By committing to **multi-year, unrestricted funding in May 2024** we invested **£2.1 million** across **14 charities**, each receiving a **three-year grant of £150,000 (£50,000 per year)**. This model was designed to provide stability and certainty, freeing charities to focus on what matters most: transforming lives.

**Our first year evaluations received in May 2025 tell us that Empower is more than funding - it's a catalyst for change, giving charities the freedom to plan, innovate, and deliver life-changing services for Scotland's most vulnerable communities.**

**79% of charities reported stronger financial security and operational resilience.**

**72% of funds were invested in staffing, supporting over 50 essential roles and ensuring services continued without interruption.**

**93% of charities reported increased adaptability as a result of our unrestricted funding.**

**71% felt more resilient and confident reporting that our multi-year support enabled predictable income, long-term planning, and reduced time on grant applications.**

**93% of charities confirmed significant improvements in the lives of those they serve including children and families, older adults and those living with disabilities.**

**71% of charities formed new partnerships.**

**43% secured an additional £598,000 in total from other funders, using the Empower grant as a mark of credibility to attract future support**

*"We simply would like to thank Bank of Scotland Foundation once again for this award - it has truly made a big difference to our organisation and the vulnerable people we support, particularly as it's enabled us to offer new and increased services."*



Family Addiction  
Support Service

*"The grant you are providing is of such fundamental, real-world importance to ensuring the continuation of delivery of support to hundreds of families and children in need across West Lothian"*



Home-Start  
West Lothian

# ENERGISE GRANTS PROGRAMME

## Year One Impact



In 2024, charities with an income of £150k or less could apply to Energise for a grant of £20k (£10k per year) over 2 years.

In **August 2024**, we awarded **£1.26 million** to **63 charities**, each receiving a **two-year grant of £20,000 (£10,000 per year)**. This funding model was designed to empower small, grassroots charities to plan with confidence and deliver life-changing services where they are needed most, such as supporting people facing homelessness, abuse, or financial hardship.

Our evaluation forms are proportionate for each grant programme and in the first evaluations of Energise received in August 2025, our charities confirmed that our strategy of Building a Brighter Future for Scotland is delivering real impact. By providing security and certainty through unrestricted, multi-year funding, charities told us they valued the freedom to allocate funds where they were most needed. This flexibility was transformative, enabling them to plan and deliver support without compromise.

**52%** of funding was allocated to staff costs, sustaining and growing teams and supporting over 76 roles within the Third Sector.

**86%** of charities reported significant improvements in the lives of those they support, and almost all achieved their objectives.

Charities leveraged Energise funding to secure an additional £982,000 from other funders, with many reporting that the grant enhanced their credibility and strengthened their ability to attract future support.

*"Thanks to Bank of Scotland Foundation, this is our first paid member of staff. We've felt the benefit of being able to train and induct volunteers faster and have a regular point of contact available daily for those who need our services"*



Glasgow Street Aid

**70%** of charities rated our application process shorter and simpler than others.

**75%** said the same about our evaluation process.

*"The funding from Bank of Scotland Foundation has given us reassurance that we can continue, knowing our utility costs and increased food costs can be covered, making planned decisions rather than reactionary ones dependent upon monies"*

Grangemouth Old People's Welfare

# ENABLE GRANTS PROGRAMME

## Year One Impact



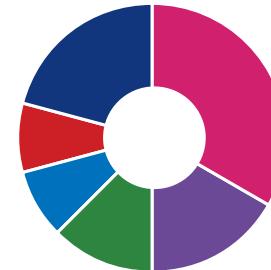
In 2024, charities with an income of £500k or less could apply to Enable for a grant of £30k - £90k (£10k - £30k per year) over 3 years.

The first year of our **Enable Grants Programme** has delivered vital support to smaller charities working at the heart of Scotland's communities. In **November 2024**, we awarded **£1.4 million to 24 charities**, with grants ranging from **£10,000-£30,000 per year** (up to **£90,000 over three years**).

This funding model was designed to give smaller organisations the stability and flexibility they need to grow and deliver life-changing services.

Delivered in partnership with Lloyds Banking Group, Enable strengthens community volunteering. Our funding supports volunteer costs and projects, while Lloyds Banking Group employees will contribute their time and expertise in 2026 and beyond to make a real difference.

### Our Enable charities are tackling a wide spectrum of vulnerabilities, including:



**Mental health and emotional wellbeing** (8 charities)

**Support for older people** (4 charities)

**Financial hardship** (3 charities)

**Refugees and asylum seekers** (2 charities)

**Family-related challenges** (2 charities)

**The remaining 5 charities** are addressing physical health, personal harm, employment difficulties, ethnicity, and food poverty.

Charities hailed Enable as a **"genuine catalyst for growth" - Group Recovery Aftercare Community Enterprise (GRACE)**

- increasing volunteer engagement and supporting some of Scotland's most vulnerable people.

One year on, our first year evaluations were received from our Enable charities in November 2025. Evaluations highlighted that applying for funding in the Scottish Third Sector can often be time-consuming and overwhelming. Through Enable, we've changed that experience. Charities

consistently praised our clear, simple, and efficient application and reporting process, allowing them to focus resources where they are needed most.

Our Enable charities have indicated a range of volunteering opportunities for the Group's employees this year, including digital skills support, befriending, volunteer driving, administration, and wider community engagement. Our joint approach ensures charities receive not only financial support but also practical help to build capacity and deliver greater impact across Scotland.



## Empowering Change The Lighthouse for Perth

In May 2024, The Lighthouse for Perth was awarded a three-year, unrestricted Empower grant of £150,000. In May 2025, we received their first annual evaluation, which highlighted the profound impact of our funding - enabling the charity to deliver life-saving support to young people in crisis across Perth & Kinross.

During their first year of funding, the charity supported 385 young people and around 200 parents and carers. Every young person faced severe mental health challenges, including risk of suicide and self-harm. Many also experienced additional vulnerabilities such as poverty, exposure to drugs and alcohol and learning disabilities.

The charity told us that the flexibility of our unrestricted funding allowed them to respond to individual needs on a case-by-case basis and that this personalised approach enabled truly transformative outcomes.

[Watch The Lighthouse for Perth's testimonial here.](#)

### **Our 2024 Empower grant also strengthened the charity's operational capacity:**

- **Out-of-hours crisis line continuity:** By employing sessional staff, The Lighthouse for Perth avoided waiting lists and ensured immediate support for every young person in crisis.
- **Organisational resilience:** Our funding enhanced financial stability, staff retention, and strategic planning, giving the charity confidence to innovate and build partnerships.

Beyond direct service delivery, the charity expanded mental health ambassador training into schools and youth organisations. Their work has gained national recognition, winning two awards at the Mental Health & Wellbeing Awards Scotland.

Together, we're not just funding services - we're helping to build a future where every young person in crisis has hope, support and the chance to thrive.

## Capacity Building Through Our Grants Programmes

We believe that funding alone isn't enough to create lasting change - charities also need strategic support to thrive. That's why, alongside our grants programmes, our partnership with Lloyds Banking Group enables us to provide expertise and guidance that goes beyond financial assistance.

Through our Enhance Mentoring Programme, we pair employees from the Group with Foundation grantees. Currently, 15 of our 2024 grantees are matched with experienced mentors who share their knowledge and skills.

### **This collaboration is mutually beneficial:**

- **Charities** receive strategic advice and practical, hands-on support to strengthen their operations and build resilience for the future.
- **Employees** witness first-hand a genuine insight into the challenges charities face and offer a fresh perspective on everyday scenarios.

## The Benefits of Multi-Year, Unrestricted Funding

Our five-year strategy embraces best practice as highlighted by the Institute for Voluntary Action Research (IVAR). By providing unrestricted, multi-year grants, we give charities the freedom to plan with confidence, respond quickly to emerging needs and invest in long-term resilience.

This report reinforces what we see in action: trust-based funding models, combined with lighter reporting requirements, deliver stronger outcomes for communities. They reduce administrative burden on charities, ensuring more time, energy, and resources go where they are needed most - supporting people and driving real change.

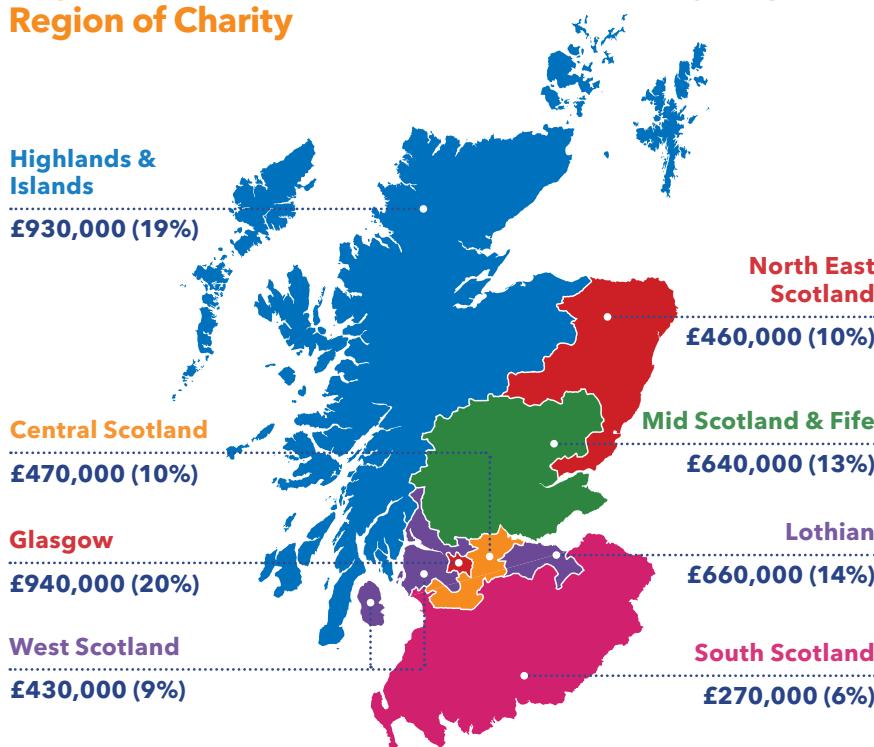


## Our Reach

In 2024, we invested £4.8 million in 101 charities across our Energise, Empower and Enable grants programmes – driving impact where it matters most. These grants helped to support people living in vulnerable circumstances across Scotland, tackling urgent challenges such as household poverty, family breakdown, and alcohol addiction.

Our footprint spans the length and breadth of Scotland. Charities serving 57 constituencies benefited from our support – from the Shetland Islands to Cunninghame South, and from Aberdeenshire East to Galloway and West Dumfries – ensuring that communities in every corner of the country feel the benefit of our work. This is more than funding – it's a nationwide commitment to building resilience, reducing inequality, and creating brighter futures for Scotland's most vulnerable people.

### Regional Breakdown of our 2024 Grants by Registered Region of Charity



## Driving Meaningful Change Across Scotland

Our 2024 analysis highlights how Bank of Scotland Foundation funding is delivering impact aligned with our core purpose: supporting charities that address some of the most pressing vulnerabilities in Scottish communities. Guided by our Building a Brighter Future strategy, we ensure resources are reaching those facing the greatest challenges.

The vulnerability themes we've funded reflect the charity sector's frontline work to tackle disadvantage and improve lives. Every grant strengthens charities working at the heart of communities, creating lasting change where it's needed most.

### Key Areas of Impact:

- **Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing** – Almost a quarter of all 2024 grantees provide vital support for mental health, responding to the urgent need for accessible services.
- **Disabilities** – One in five grants fund inclusive services for people with additional needs, from learning difficulties to physical disabilities.
- **Older People** – These grants helped address mobility and transport challenges, reducing isolation.
- **Family-Related Challenges** – Grants provided to support families facing complex issues.
- **Financial Hardship** – Grants helping to tackle poverty and financial vulnerability.

Alongside these areas, we continue to fund work addressing physical health, refugee support, food poverty, personal harm, and sexual abuse demonstrating the breadth of our support.

# OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

The charity evaluations received in 2025 demonstrate the success of 2024 and have set a powerful foundation for what comes next.

Our evaluations confirm that trust-based, unrestricted funding works - it strengthens charities, amplifies impact, and transforms lives. But we're not stopping here.

## Looking Ahead, We Will -

- Scale our ambition by continuing to invest in multi-year, unrestricted funding that gives charities the confidence to plan for the long term.
- Deepen our partnerships, leveraging the expertise and commitment of Lloyds Banking Group employees to provide mentoring and skill sharing that build capacity beyond funding.
- Support charities to adapt to emerging challenges and seize new opportunities for growth.
- Maintain our reach, ensuring that communities across Scotland - urban and rural, large and small - benefit from our support.

## Our Vision Remains Clear -

To build a brighter, fairer future for Scotland by empowering charities to do what they do best - change lives.

Together, with our sole funder Lloyds Banking Group and the incredible charities we support, we will continue to drive positive change and create lasting impact.

Thank you for being part of this journey as we continue to **Build a Brighter Future for Scotland**.



**Jillian Baillie**  
Chief Executive,  
Bank of Scotland Foundation



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