

# Complex needs: supporting recovery through specialist care



People experiencing homelessness often have complex needs relating to mental and physical health or substance use, which can make long term recovery more difficult. Our Complex Needs Team – made possible thanks to the support of our donors and partners – offers specialist support to help clients navigate these challenges. Andy, Complex Needs Team Manager, explains more.

“I’ve been part of the St Mungo’s team for 25 years and first joined as a substance use worker.

Now, I lead a team who specialise in supporting clients through mental health challenges, palliative care, bereavement care and more.

For many people, we see how drugs work as a coping mechanism to block out feelings associated with trauma, relationship breakdowns and other problems.

They start as a ‘friend’ to someone. The one that’s reliable and makes them feel like a different person. Eventually, that friend can’t help anymore. But St Mungo’s can be the friend our

clients need to help begin their recovery.

Recovery is also about accepting U-turns and forks in the road. It’s our job to be there when they happen and identify why.

A specific date could bring up traumatic memories and a relapse. We take note of this and ask, “how can we avoid that happening again?”. By working together, we help people to maintain changes they’ve made.

All the time, we see small steps lead to bigger, long lasting changes within our clients. I’ve seen people grow in confidence, get healthy and reconnect with their family. It’s a great feeling.”



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**Andy,**  
**Complex Needs Team Manager**

**Between April 2024 and March 2025, the Complex Needs Team:**

Supported

**629**

clients with complex needs, including health challenges, substance use and independent living skills.

Provided specialist training to

**144**

St Mungo’s frontline staff.