

Charter House responds to the crisis



2024-2025 Annual Report

A Message from the Executive Director

Vermont's housing crisis is no longer a distant problem – it is here, and we see its impact every day at Charter House. Our community depends on us to meet that crisis with compassion, creativity, and persistence. This past year, we chose to put people first – our guests and our staff – even as federal and state funding held flat or declined. That decision meant operating at a deficit. While reserve funds allowed us to cushion that budget impact, sustaining our mission will require new, reliable funding sources to match the scale of the crisis.

At the same time, we can take heart by recognizing the good, hard work of our guests, staff, and volunteers. Every day we are reminded of Eleanor Roosevelt's wise words: *"You must do the thing you think you cannot do."* In a year defined by challenges, we have leaned into that philosophy – staying focused on the needs of people, not the politics of the day – and we've witnessed life-changing outcomes.

Behind every number in this report is a story. One guest, after 600 days in shelter, worked full time, met all criminal justice requirements, and still faced closed doors in the rental market. Together with our staff, they pursued a new path: a first-time home buyer's mortgage. The day they left our shelter was the day they moved directly into their own home. Two others found housing in just 27 days, discovering new possibilities they hadn't imagined before.

Our staff, too, embody persistence and creativity. One conceived the idea of building a greenhouse on our property to expand our vegetable garden's growing season. With the help of a private foundation grant and funding and physical labor provided by our local Rotary Club, the greenhouse now stands ready to provide fresh produce, therapeutic activity, and community – we plan to be digging in the dirt, even in March.



Detail of painting by Jacqueline Lore

And we continue to invest in our people. For years, staff worked without benefits. Step by step, we changed that – first medical coverage, and this past year the addition of dental, vision, retirement, and Employee Assistance Program services for staff and their households. Supporting those who carry the weight of trauma work is vital to our mission.

All of this is part of a larger story. Charter House has grown into a million-dollar operation, driven by the sharp increase in homelessness across our state. Our professional staff and volunteers expanded services in shelter and street outreach that literally saved lives. We responded to emergencies, but we also pressed forward toward long-term solutions – models of housing and services that lift people out of homelessness altogether.

It has been a challenging year, but it has also been one of deep accomplishments. We are grateful for your partnership, your trust, and your generosity. Together, we are building a community where no one is left outside.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Heidi Lacey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Heidi Lacey
Executive Director, Charter House Coalition

Board of Directors

Mary Jane Nottonson, President
Stephen Diehl, Vice President
Walter Stugis, Secretary
Grover Usilton, Treasurer

Judi Ellwood
Nathan Hayes
Jason LaRocque
Amanda Mowle

Riley Nebolsine
Wendy Warren
Vicky Wideman

How We Help People

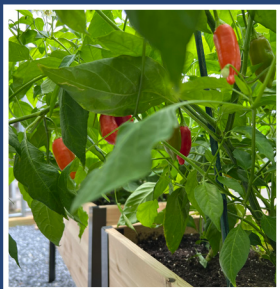
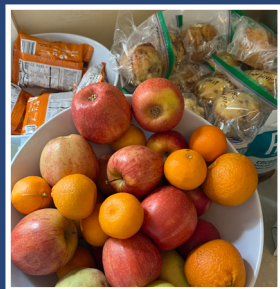
We operate an **emergency shelter** for adult men and women who have no other options for a safe place to sleep. We actively support those who stay with us in the search for a stable, affordable home.

Our **community meals program** serves a nutritious meal every day of the week to anyone who comes to our door, 365 days a year.

We offer **employment** support and guidance, helping people find and keep a job.

We focus on **individuals**, developing a personalized action plan that lets each person move forward with confidence and hope for long-term success.

We are a **communication hub**. Our phones are answered 24/7 with a dedicated staff member on call at all times. We coordinate with local partners for referrals and services. We do regular street outreach to connect with individuals in need.



How **Much** We Help People

The number of individuals served in the emergency shelter increased to **188** this year, up from **144** in FY24, and **88** in FY 23. The total number of people served by all programs was **597**.

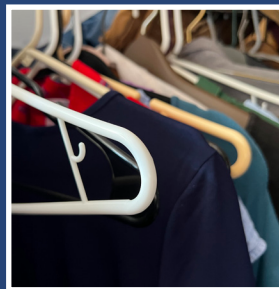
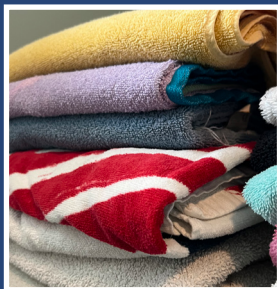
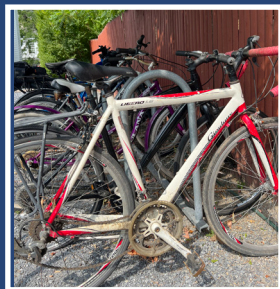
We served **28,000+** meals to people staying at the shelter or coming to the door for take-out.

42 people from the shelter and outreach programs secured permanent housing.

30 individuals secured employment within **28** days of entering the shelter.

People with disabling conditions, such as substance abuse disorder or mental or physical health conditions, increased to **102** this past year, up from **58** the previous year.

We answered **1,700** calls outside of normal business hours.



We Are a Community Partner



"When the town of Middlebury was experiencing health and safety challenges from a homeless encampment, Charter House executive director Heidi Lacey led a team of stakeholders to draft a humane camping policy for the town. Heidi and her staff have helped us make progress on a seemingly intractable problem, and done so with care for this vulnerable population. We're so grateful for their expertise, their compassionate leadership, and for what they've accomplished to make Middlebury a healthier and more pleasant place to live, work, and play."

Brian Carpenter
Chair, Middlebury Selectboard
President, Champlain Valley Equipment

"I've been fortunate to serve on a number of boards with Heidi Lacey and see her leadership in action. Charter House is a critical community resource and Heidi's team has mentored many of our students who are interested in learning more about how to address homelessness."

Amy Carlin,
Director of Community Relations, Middlebury College



Financial Statement

Fiscal Year July 2024 through June 2025 Budget Revenue and Expenses*

Fiscal Year 2025 finished with a shortfall of \$65,484, due to the State of Vermont not being able to award \$118,000 of our operating costs.

Revenue

Individual Donors	\$219,841	24%
Government Grants	\$605,312	66%
Private Foundations & Corporations	\$73,584	8%
Other Revenue	\$15,089	2%

Expenses

Administration & General Operations	\$424,823	43%
Programs	\$543,481	56%
Food Program	\$82,439	
Shelter Program	\$404,145	
Outreach Program	\$56,897	
Fundraising	\$11,006	1%

\$913,826

\$979,310

Reserves

As of August 2025, our various cash accounts for operations totaled **\$271,092**.

Our long term invested Endowment "rainy day" fund was **\$410,275**.

**All budget numbers subject to final audit.*



27 North Pleasant Street, Middlebury, VT 05753 | www.chcvt.org | 802-989-8621