

stoll housing and
helping Veterans

Our year in review and our plans for the future



Annual Review 2024

stoll.org.uk



Welcome

Tina Fairbrass served in the Royal Navy for seven years and was stationed in the UK, Naples and the Falkland Islands. When she left, she had a successful career, but following a relationship breakdown Tina and her young daughter found themselves in debt and homeless.

After years in unsuitable accommodation and many failed attempts to be housed by the local authority, Tina was put in touch with Stoll.

We were able to offer Tina a two-bedroom flat, which is where she has raised her daughter who is now 18.

“Stoll gave me a place to live when I had nowhere else to turn and when it seemed like no one else could help me. Having a stable place to call home makes such a difference. It means you can start looking forward and making plans, you can become independent and be active in the community. You can find purpose and feel like somebody again. Every veteran deserves that.”

I’m so grateful for the support Stoll has given me and my daughter, and for everything the charity has done over the years. I will soon be moving into one of Stoll’s new homes and I’m excited about what’s in store, and what Stoll’s plans for the future will mean for the whole veteran community.

Thank you for reading this report about Stoll’s legacy, achievements and vision. And thank you for supporting Stoll in whatever way you can.”



Why we're here

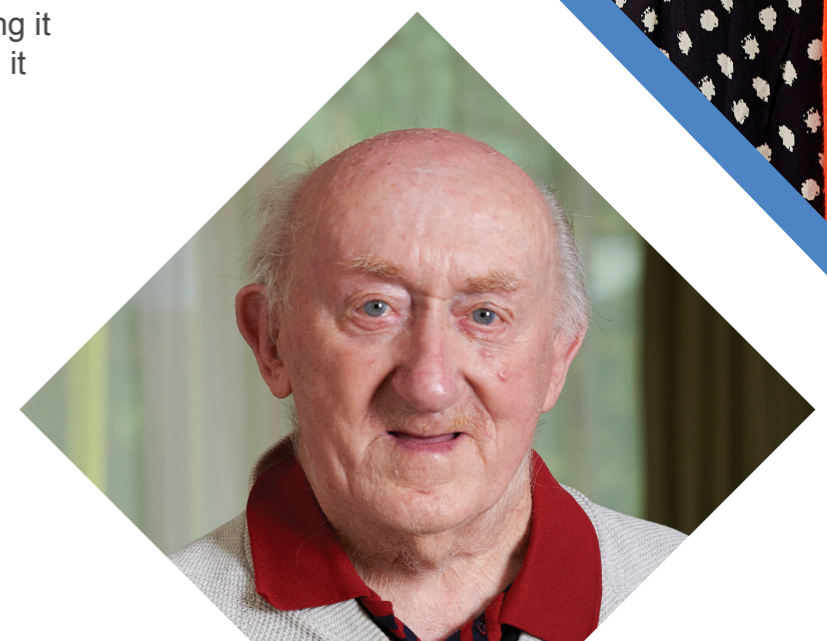
Most veterans make a smooth transition from military to civilian life, but some struggle to adapt. In recent years, organisations supporting veterans have seen a rise in mental health needs, addiction issues, and more complex vulnerabilities.

And it’s still the case that despite commitments in the Armed Forces Covenant, too many veterans end up in inappropriate accommodation, in hostels which aren’t suitable for their needs, or at risk of homelessness.

“We’re here to ensure that people who have served our country can lead fulfilling, independent lives.”

We provide high-quality affordable housing and support to 300 vulnerable veterans at our sites in London and Aldershot, and we work with housing associations and local authorities across England to find homes for hundreds more.

We help veterans rebuild their lives, live independently and flourish. We’ve been doing it for over a hundred years, and we’ll be doing it for the next hundred.





Message from
our Chief Executive

Will Campbell-Wroe



Over a century on from our inception the mission of The Stoll Foundation, to support and empower vulnerable veterans, is as relevant today as it was in 1916. When the first 16 residents moved into Stoll Mansions in December 1918, just days after the end of WWI, over 1,000 potential beneficiaries had been identified. Today, our understanding of the mental and physical challenges veterans face has increased significantly as medical science has progressed, but there are still a significant minority who need our help and support.

The cornerstone of our work is to provide high quality and effective housing that meets the needs of veterans. We are proud to be a registered provider of social housing and adhere to the high standards that this demands. It is in this context that we took the difficult decision to sell our flagship site in Fulham. It has served veterans so well for over a hundred years, but in order to meet the needs of current and future generations we need modern, safe and adapted homes. We have found this within a few hundred yards of our historic home at the King's Road Park scheme, and we look forward to making the move there in 2025 and creating a new veterans' community.

A safe and secure home is the first step for all our residents in being able to recognise and respond to their wider needs, both those relevant to their military service and those from before and after their service. Only by taking this holistic approach can we help transition veterans back into long-term independent living.

We are rightly proud of the impact we have on the lives of veterans and we're as much an organisation focused on people as property. Having secured the future properties to support residents we are now undertaking a review of our support services. We want to make sure our services meet the needs of veterans and we have the greatest impact for the most people as part of a wider veterans' charitable and statutory network.

These are important times for us and important times for the veterans' sector. The difficult decisions we have taken over the past year will ensure we remain a key part of the sector for the next century.



The past year:
A snapshot



300

veterans are housed



96%

of residents increased
or maintained
their independence



54

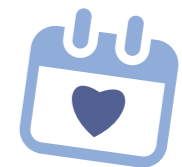


veterans have been housed
through our Veterans'
Nomination Scheme



359

social events and
wellbeing activities were run
throughout the year





In April 2024, we turned a corner.

After a great deal of work, careful consideration and thoughtful discussion, we sold the majority of our site in Fulham to the Ownership Group of our neighbours, Chelsea Football Club.

We have housed and supported veterans, and based our operations, at Sir Oswald Stoll Mansions on Fulham Road for over a century, so this was not a quick or easy decision.

Stoll Mansions stands as a powerful reminder of our duty to those who have served our country. It embodies the remarkable and life-changing impact of philanthropy.

However, the property is old and in need of costly maintenance. And if we are to continue meeting the needs of veterans, our charity must look forward, not back. Which is why we are buying 128 properties in a major new development at King's Road Park in Fulham.

The sale of Stoll Mansions marks a transformational moment for us, securing our future and enabling us to house and support many more veterans. The move to King's Road Park means that we can offer residents a higher standard of living, a more comfortable home and enhanced support services.

Ultimately, as we turn the page and enter this exciting new chapter, we are confident that we can sustainably provide the very best in supported housing to veterans for generations to come.





Our 100 year legacy



Message from our Chair of Trustees

**Air Vice-Marshal
Ray Lock CBE**



Stoll was founded in 1916 by theatre impresario and philanthropist Sir Oswald Stoll. At the end of the 19th century Sir Oswald, who was already running a successful theatre business, co-founded Moss Empires, a chain of variety theatres and music halls. By 1905 the enterprise had established a venue in most large towns, including the London Coliseum, Bristol Hippodrome and the Hackney Empire.

When injured British troops began returning home from WWI, Sir Oswald used his standing and his contacts to help wounded veterans. In 1916 he set up an “old soldiers’ home”, funded through the sale of the war seal, a stamp which cost 1/2d, and set up the War Seal Foundation to provide vital support to disabled veterans and their families.

In 1919 he was knighted by King George V and in 1937 the War Seal Foundation was renamed the Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation in his honour. Stoll has continued to house and support veterans at the charity’s original site in Fulham, expanding more recently into new locations as veterans’ needs have changed.



If 1916 marked the start of Stoll’s journey to house and support vulnerable former members of the Armed Forces, then 2024 provided the key strategic decisions that will enable us to continue delivering our mission for at least the next century.

Our Chief Executive has described Stoll as having ‘turned a corner’, and I couldn’t put it more aptly. Faced with deteriorating conditions in Fulham and an increasing financial strain on the whole charity, the Board of Trustees, supported by a phenomenal effort from all our staff, was determined that Stoll should provide homes of a quality our residents deserved.

The sale of Stoll Mansions at Fulham, and the purchase of King’s Road Park, are the transformational points that will provide outstanding accommodation within a Stoll community and ensure our future financial sustainability. Indeed, once the transition has been completed and our forecast costs have been tested by reality, we hope to improve the independent living of even more veterans, whilst continuing to rely on generous funders to assist our support services.

But for now, we are focused on the unprecedented albeit short move of most of our Mansions residents across the Fulham and King’s Roads. And the Board will not overlook the needs of our other sites, where half of Stoll’s residents live, and which have inevitably received less attention in recent months.

There is much to do, but also much to be grateful for. Thank you all.



Focus on: Housing

We have 287 supported housing units across six sites in London and the South East. This includes four townhouses in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, and five significant schemes outlined here along with the new development at King's Road Park.

Across our sites, regular activities for residents include coffee mornings, art, massage, meditation, walking groups and community gardening. There's also archery, boxing, muay thai and chair yoga, as well as opportunities for day trips and longer breaks.

“Being part of the walking club and leading the group on occasions has definitely increased my confidence levels.

It feels like I am a valued member of a group and like I am part of something again.”



Chiswick War Memorial Homes, Chiswick: 36 homes

These cottages, originally built in 1940, were renovated in 2010. There are one- and two-bedroom flats, along with a bright, modern community room which is used regularly for coffee mornings and wellbeing activities, and a large garden which is popular among residents.



Centenary Lodge, Aldershot: 34 homes

Our first site outside London was opened in 2018. It contains one-, two- and three-bedroom properties and is home to veterans of various ages, their partners and families.

The lovely communal gardens, which back on to a designated nature reserve, are very popular with residents, many of whom grow vegetables every year on the allotments. These purpose-built homes won the Inside Housing Award for best social housing development in 2019.



Banstead Court, Acton: 20 homes

Opened in 2006, these one-bedroom flats are spread across three small blocks on an estate managed by London and Quadrant Housing Association (L&Q).



Sir Oswald Stoll Mansions, Fulham: 157 homes

Our original site, dating back to 1916, contains 157 flats. The property has a large communal garden, a library, a gym and a community hall for events and activities.

One block, with 20 apartments, will remain, while residents living in the other flats will begin to move into new accommodation during 2025, including into our new site at King's Road Park.



Countess of Wessex House, Hounslow: 36 homes

This site was opened in 2014. It contains a mix of one-, two- and three-bedroom homes, including flats designed specifically for disabled residents. As well as a large community room, there are spacious gardens and allotments.



King's Road Park, Fulham: 128 homes

We're looking forward to opening up our newest site in 2025. This is just a few minutes' walk from Sir Oswald Stoll Mansions, but is a brand new affordable housing development, part of the Fulham Riverside Regeneration Area. We're delighted to be taking on this site, which is close to the Thames, easily accessible, attractive and modern.

The overall development is set within a park and a new public square, and will include private homes, offices and restaurants, and the restoration of three listed buildings. We will have two buildings, one containing 40 homes and another with 88, many of which will be suitable for wheelchair users.



Focus on: Partnership

Much of what we do for veterans is made possible because we work in partnership.

We have always believed that housing and support services are greatly enhanced through a coordinated, collaborative approach. This is as true today as it was when we were formed, and will become even more vital in the future.

The Veterans' Nomination Scheme

Since 2015 we've run the Veterans' Nomination Scheme (VNS), a resettlement service for veterans who are ready to live independently but are in need of affordable housing. Through our partnership with councils and housing associations across England we find appropriate accommodation, mainly for single people and couples without children. Over the past year, we placed 54 veterans through the scheme.

On average, we receive five VNS applications a week, but only one new property every two weeks. We're actively seeking new landlords to help meet demand and this will remain a priority for us over the coming months and years.

Working with the Poppy Factory

We are part of the Navigator programme, which is coordinated by the Poppy Factory and supports veterans who are socially isolated, have complex health needs, long-term mental health issues or addiction problems. Working with both residents and non-residents, we help people build a network of support, develop resilience and access appropriate services.

Part of NHS Op COURAGE

Op COURAGE is the NHS mental health service specifically for veterans. A member of Stoll's staff is part of a multidisciplinary team within Op COURAGE, working with veterans with complex needs who are referred through the scheme.

Veterans' Drop-In

We're involved in a drop-in service for veterans at St Pancras Hospital in London, a collaboration between NHS Op COURAGE and a host of partners. At the monthly sessions, veterans have a chance to speak to various support agencies and specialists about housing, employment, benefits, pensions, debt and mental health issues. It's also a social event, with a dedicated area for veterans to chat and play board games.

Cobseo

Our Chief Executive, Will Campbell-Wroe, co-chairs the Confederation of Service Charities (Cobseo) Housing Cluster, which over the past year has continued its work to bring about a sector-wide, national response to veterans in housing need.



Focus on: Support services

For all our residents, we provide tailored support and offer a programme of activities.

Our aim is to enable people to build and maintain independence. This looks different for different people. Some need intensive one-to-one support, while others benefit from group work or specific training or advice.



Health and wellbeing

We provide advice and support based on each resident's personal goals and the level of help they need to rebuild their lives. This can include accessing specialist mental health or drug and alcohol services, addressing health issues, and advocating for veterans when needed.

Practical help

Our team advises veterans on debt and money management, employment and training, and welfare benefits. We also support residents who are ready to move out of Stoll and who would like to find a new home.

Community connections

Vulnerable veterans living in supported housing sometimes need extra help before they're able to take part in activities and become involved in the wider community. We offer a range of initiatives to reduce isolation, build confidence and nurture connections.

Independent Living Service

Through our Independent Living Service, we work with residents to help them sustain and maintain their independence. We help with domestic chores, laundry and shopping, we accompany veterans to medical appointments and on organised trips, and we provide a listening ear.

“Stoll has given me a base, a home. This has been a stepping stone that's helped me build my life back up.”



Focus on: Looking ahead

This has been a difficult few years for many in society, and we've certainly seen increased needs within the veteran community. Our residents have been affected by delays in the processing of housing benefit, and by inflation and interest rate rises. We have offered extra support, and have continued to service and maintain our properties, but because we've also worked hard to keep our rents affordable, there's been a knock-on effect across the organisation.

With an eye on the longer-term, we've also had to invest significantly over the past couple of years in order to complete the sale of the majority of our Fulham estate and secure firm foundations and financial stability for the future.

But throughout this very challenging time, we've stayed focused on what really matters:

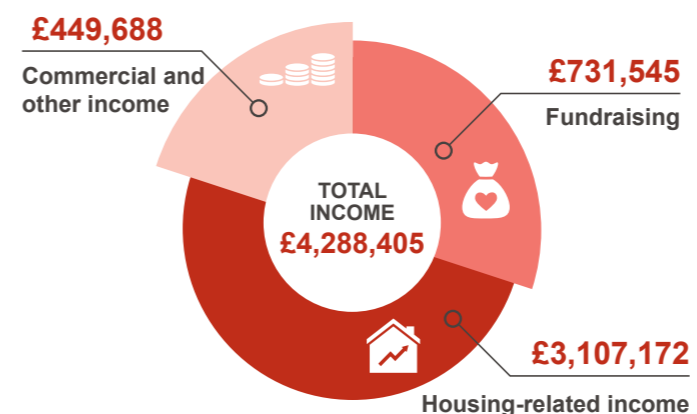
how we can improve our housing and support provision for veterans in the greatest need, now and in the coming years.

We're grateful to those who have worked with us during this time. And we're thankful we managed to secure a two-year grant through the Office for Veterans' Affairs Op FORTITUDE programme for veterans' supported housing, which started in July 2023.

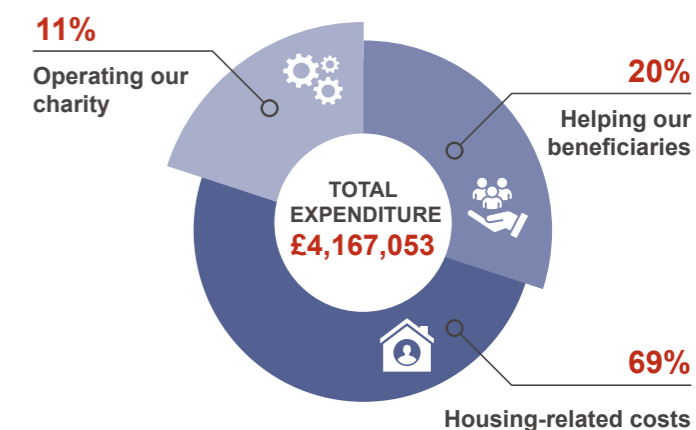


Financial information

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM



HOW WE SPENT THE MONEY - WHAT % GOES WHERE?



Unlocking the future

We can now look forward with confidence and optimism. Our immediate priorities include:

- ✓ Gradually rehousing residents who currently live at Stoll Mansions, providing all necessary support during a time of significant upheaval
- ✓ Opening up the doors of our new properties at King's Road Park, a major redevelopment which offers some outstanding social housing
- ✓ Reviewing our support for veterans to ensure that it meets the needs of veterans of the future
- ✓ Advocating for veterans and the importance of housing and support for vulnerable veterans
- ✓ Working closely with partners in the veterans', charity and other sectors to ensure veterans' needs are met
- ✓ Setting a clear strategy for the future growth of Stoll
- ✓ Ensuring we have the systems and processes in place to provide an excellent service to our beneficiaries
- ✓ Handing over the Mansions site and ensuring that we capture its history for future generations



Thank you

Thank you to our volunteers, including Trustees and committee members, and to our fundraisers and supporters, corporate partners and other funders:

- Office for Veterans' Affairs
- Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust
- Army Benevolent Fund
- Veterans Foundation
- Queen Mary Roehampton Trust
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity
- Scott (Eredine) Charitable Trust
- Chelsea Supporters Trust

- Kevin Poneskis and Caroline Benson – Remembrance Day Gala Dinner 2023
- Alex Korobin, a veteran at Stoll who has been raising funds for us since 2016. Last year he raised £7,000 from collections at London Underground Stations and on Chelsea FC matchdays.





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