

StopGap Sheffield
reg. charity no. 1146601

Minutes of Annual General Meeting
Tuesday 10th February 2026
4pm – St Wilfrid’s Centre, Sheffield

Present –Jo Abbot (Chair), Louise Finnigan (Secretary), Tim Renshaw, Aimee Lowe, Souleymane Bah, Wendy Robson (Trustees), Phil Johnson, Miranda Trojanowska, Dominic Maloney, Keith Dewsnap and Patrick Delamere (St Wilfrid’s centre staff) , Blessan Babu (City of Sanctuary), Tina Powell-Wiffen and Ruth Grayson (former Trustees of StopGap)

Minutes – Liz Grasso (StopGap Administrator)

1. Welcome and thanks

StopGap chair Jo Abbott welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked St Wilfrid’s Centre for hosting the AGM.

2. Apologies

Apologies from Jenny Sewell and Jean Cromar.

3. Minutes of 2025 AGM (25th February)

Accuracy -

P.1 - need to add ‘2025’ to the first page

4. Matters arising

There were no further matters arising from last year's minutes that were not covered by today's agenda.

The Minutes were accepted as a true reflection of the AGM 2025.

5. Annual report 2024/25

Jo presented the Annual report to the AGM. This is now signed and is on our website.

Key points-

- From 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025, we provided a total of 57 bed nights for a total of 20 people, these numbers have decreased from our previous year. One of the reasons behind this are staffing changes at Framework, and their new staff becoming familiar with the StopGap criteria. StopGap has carried out a strict risk

assessment of who can be placed in hotels. This may also have affected numbers of people who have been placed.

- Numbers of National Asylum Support Service (NASS leavers) have increased, and this accounted for 8 out of the 20 people who we placed, closely followed by eviction as a reason for homelessness.
- We continued to face difficulties with a lack of accommodation in the city for rough sleepers to be placed in.
- We once again produced a “Sponsor a Room” campaign and produced a newsletter to update our supporters.
- The Trustees continue to meet regularly via Microsoft Teams, but have transferred over to using Google Meet after some issues with Microsoft Teams.

Questions-

Dominic- What happens to the people who are accommodated by StopGap and then moved on?

Aimee- She can't comment on where people are moved onto, but her team at Framework move them on to longer term accommodation. It used to be the case that her team could find somewhere for them to be moved on to within the 72 hours that StopGap accommodation affords them, but this is now very unlikely, and takes much longer. There is, however, some flexibility in provision of more bednights, and they work on a case by case basis, sometimes extending the number of nights to five.

Dominic- Where is the boundary that StopGap works within?

Jo- It is Sheffield only. During Covid, other councils from the region, such as Rotherham and Doncaster, were using accommodation which caused issues.

Dominic- Do you find the demand for StopGap accommodation is seasonal?

Blessan- It is more dependent upon the political aspect of the current climate.

Jo- There have sometimes seen a spike in numbers of bednights used in the Summer months.

Ruth- Is NASS still last minute notice for people to leave accommodation?

Blessan- It used to be 56 days, and it is now 28 days notice with certain exceptions for vulnerable people, but people with vulnerabilities are covered by statutory duty anyway.

6. Treasurer's report

We continue to manage finances as a Board, and Jo thanked Liz and Louise for all their help with putting together the financial accounts this year.

Key points-

- During the 12th month period 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025
- We started the year with £28,843 in the bank.
- We had £9,306 of outgoings in the year.
- During the year we had receipts of £4,356 from donors and grants - subs of £75, donations £1,491 and grants of £2,790 - from the Queen Victoria and Johnson Memorial Trust and the Harry Bottom Trust.
- We ended the year with £23,893 in the bank.

Thanks were made to Dr Peter Cromar, independent examiner of our accounts.

7. Election of officers and trustees

The following were elected unopposed to serve for the coming year 2024/25

Officers:

Jo Abbott – Chair

Trustees:

Souleymane Bah

Aimee Lowe

Timothy Renshaw

Wendy Robson

Louise Finnigan resigned as Secretary and Trustee. The Board thanked her for her work for StopGap.

There is now a position for the role of Secretary, and this will be discussed at the March Trustee meeting.

7. Membership

Jo reminded all those present that membership of StopGap was open to anyone, or any organisation, that would like to support us by joining. Membership forms will be sent out with the minutes from the AGM.

8. AOB

None

Aimee Lowe gave an overview of the work of the Framework Outreach team

Key points-

- Framework is a Sheffield City Council commissioned rough sleeper outreach team. The team consists of four people who undertake outreach every day of the year.
- The outreach team checks on rough sleepers' welfare, verifies that they are rough sleeping, and signposts them to a number of services such as the Drug and Alcohol Team.
- In the last year, Framework helped 699 rough sleepers, with 155 cases of prevention on top of this. The majority of the people they see are male, and their age range typically between 25-44 years old. Ethnicity is largely white/British, followed by African/British and Asian/British.
- The majority of their work is bespoke to the particular person they are working with, but is focussed on prevention, NASS leavers who have been recently evicted, entrenched rough sleepers, the hard-to-reach cohort, hidden homeless (typically women who are sex workers).
- The Government remit is to end homelessness, halving the numbers of rough sleepers by 2029. By doing more preventative work, they hope to break the cycle of rough sleeping. They hope to build more homes, rebuild the private sector housing, tackle poverty, prosecute anti-social behaviour, but also offer support, switch from crisis to prevention work (and receive more help prior to rough sleeping) and create a better supply of temporary accommodation.
- The Sheffield City Council have agreed changes to their Allocations Policy which includes removing automatic priority for hostel leavers in Council-commissioned supported accommodation, changes on local connection criteria (increased to 3 continuous years of local connection), an annual bidding requirement of applicants in Bands 6 and 7 must place at least one bid every 12 months to remain on the Housing Register. The number of discretionary priority groups are reduced.
- There are concerns that people who have received a positive decision on an asylum application would not have the opportunity to acquire a local connection to Sheffield. There are also concerns that if you refuse accommodation you would drop a band, and the changes in hostel leavers will create a bottle neck in the system.

Blessan thanked StopGap for the work they do.