Footwear Industry Trust

The Charity for the Footwear Trade



Impact Report

2025/26



A Message from our Chair and President

Welcome to our 2025/26 Impact Report, covering the year to the end of January 2026.

As Chair, I am delighted to report that for nearly 190 years, the Footwear Industry Trust has stood alongside people working in our industry when they need support most. That commitment remains as important today as ever.

Our research continues to show that the cost-of-living crisis is placing significant pressure on individuals and families across the footwear sector, creating financial uncertainty and making everyday essentials increasingly unaffordable. Against this backdrop, the Trust has remained a vital source of practical help and reassurance.

During the year, we supported 139 beneficiaries, providing grants that not only eased immediate financial pressures but also helped people regain confidence, stability, and control over their lives. Behind every grant is a personal story, and throughout this report, you will read how timely support has enabled people to overcome some of life's most difficult challenges with dignity and hope.

I am particularly pleased to report that income increased by 24% to £129,399. This is an outstanding achievement at a time when many of our supporters are facing financial pressures of their own. Thanks to this generosity, the Trust awarded £71,695 in grants, ensuring help reached those who needed it most while maintaining a strong and sustainable financial position for the future. Together with prudent financial management, this has strengthened the Trust's year-end reserves to £1.43 million, an increase of £146,000.

This success would not have been possible without the continued commitment of individuals, companies, and organisations across the footwear community. I am especially pleased to welcome a new three-year funding commitment from the Dr. Martens Foundation, providing valuable long-term support and confidence as we continue to grow our impact.

Alongside our grant-giving, we have continued to strengthen relationships across the footwear sector, raising awareness of the support available and ensuring that more people know where to turn during difficult times. We have also enhanced our communications to ensure our message reaches every corner of the industry.

Our long-standing partnerships continue to play an important role in our success. I would like to thank Drapers for its continued support through the annual Footwear Awards, including the fundraising raffle and the Christmas greetings initiative, both of which make a valuable contribution to the Trust's work. I am equally grateful for our enduring relationships with The Clarks Family Trust and The Sears Group Trust, whose collaboration enables us to provide additional support to former employees when it is needed.

As you read this report, I hope you will see more than financial results or grant figures. You will see a community that continues to care for its own – a community built on generosity, compassion, and a shared belief that no one connected to our industry should face hardship alone.

On behalf of the Trustees, thank you to everyone who has supported the Footwear Industry Trust over the past year. Your generosity continues to change lives, and together we will build on this progress in the year ahead.

DAVID LOCKYER
Chair and President

REMEMBERING OUR COLLEAGUES & FRIENDS

We are deeply saddened to note the passing of former Trustee Janice Donaghue, whose contribution to our fundraising efforts was significant, and of past Presidents John Church and Gordon Smart, each of whom gave many years of dedicated service to the Footwear Industry Trust.



About the Footwear Industry Trust

The Footwear Industry Trust is a UK charity dedicated to supporting people connected to the footwear industry who are experiencing financial hardship. Founded in 1836, the Trust has spent nearly 190 years helping individuals and families across the sector through difficult times.

Our vision is a UK footwear community where no one faces financial hardship alone. Through compassionate and targeted financial assistance, we support people in the footwear sector with practical grants that help them regain stability, independence, and dignity.

Support may include help with essential household items, mobility equipment, childcare costs, or emergency financial relief. Even small grants can make a life-changing difference for someone facing hardship.

Funded by the footwear community, for the footwear community, the Trust reflects a long-standing tradition of colleagues looking after one another. Every application is treated with compassion, discretion, and respect.

The Trust's purpose is simple: to ensure the footwear community continues to care for its own people, today and for generations to come.

Our Challenge

For nearly 190 years, the Footwear Industry Trust has supported those in need across the sector, and we continue to operate in an increasingly challenging environment shaped in part by the ongoing cost-of-living pressures. These financial strains are placing greater demand on practical support that can make a real, life-changing difference. Our aim is not only to relieve immediate hardship but to help individuals regain confidence, stability, and a sense of control over their lives.

As a charity, our fundraising remains closely linked to the health, engagement, and resilience of the industry we serve. Against a backdrop of rapid change and sustained financial pressure, maintaining awareness, relevance, and sustainable funding is an ongoing priority.

VISION

A UK footwear community where no one faces financial hardship alone.

MISSION

We support people in the footwear sector experiencing financial hardship by providing compassionate, targeted financial assistance that helps them regain stability, independence, and dignity during difficult times.

Impact and Results

In 20025/2025 we supported 139 beneficiaries, along with their families, across the breadth of the UK.

The Midlands, home to Northampton and Leicester, is where our support is greatest. This is fitting given Northamptonshire's and Leicestershire's long-standing heritage as the historic heart of the UK's footwear manufacturing industry.

Our beneficiaries span every age group because financial hardship can affect anyone, at any stage of life.

Our research continues to show that rising living costs and ongoing economic uncertainty are impacting people in different ways. Younger people are more likely to experience job insecurity, reduced incomes, and the challenge of establishing financial stability, while those beyond retirement age often find that fixed pensions are no longer keeping pace with rising household and energy costs.

Across every generation, many people are also living with long-term illness or disability, balancing caring responsibilities, or facing housing insecurity. Combined with continued inflation and the increasing cost of everyday essentials, these pressures can quickly become overwhelming.

We deliver a programme of one-off grants to provide support to individuals facing hardship.

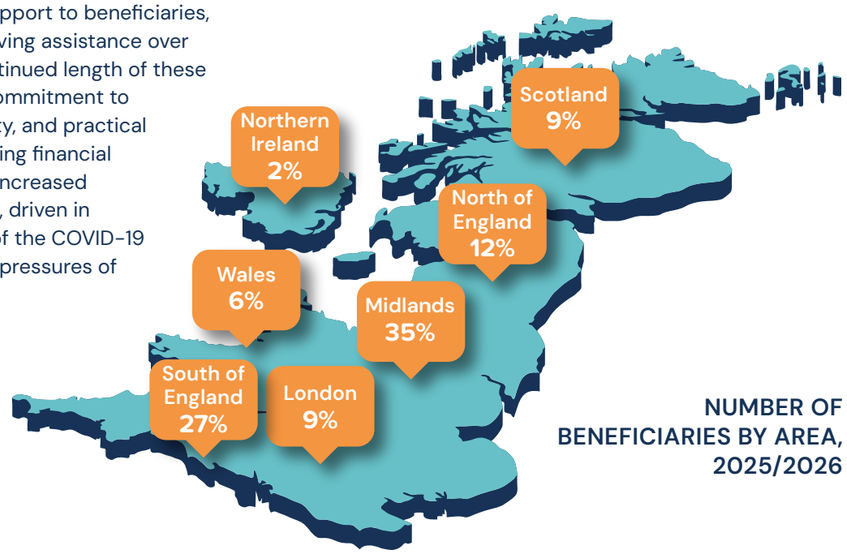
We also provide ongoing support to beneficiaries, with many individuals receiving assistance over a number of years. The continued length of these relationships reflects our commitment to providing stability, continuity, and practical support to those experiencing financial hardship. This number has increased significantly in recent years, driven in part by the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing pressures of the cost-of-living crisis.

For many, the Footwear Industry Trust provides more than just financial assistance; it offers a lifeline, helping people through difficult times and giving them the support they need to regain stability, independence, and hope.

The Footwear Industry Trust exists to support everyone connected to the footwear industry, regardless of their role. From factory floor to shop floor, we are here for people across manufacturing, wholesale, distribution, design and retail. The largest proportion of our beneficiaries come from manufacturing and retail, reflecting the size of these sectors and the UK's proud footwear-making heritage.

Where once a single one-off grant was often enough to resolve an immediate financial difficulty, we are now seeing that moving out of hardship can take far longer. In response to this shift, we have adapted our approach to better reflect the realities people are facing today.

Alongside one-off grants for essential items that individuals are unable to afford, we now also provide annual and bi-annual awards to offer continued support to those experiencing longer-term financial pressure. This more flexible model ensures that help is not only timely, but sustained where it is needed most, enabling people to rebuild stability over time.



NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES BY AREA, 2025/2026

AGE RANGE OF BENEFICIARIES



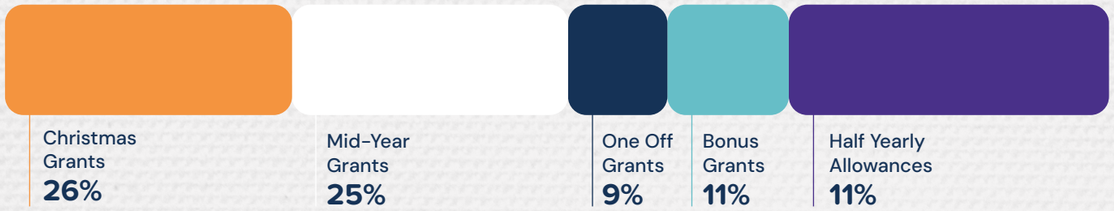
SECTOR OF BENEFICIARIES



ONE-OFF GRANT CATEGORIES



2024/2025 GRANT SPLIT



Performance Highlights



The Trust remains committed to ensuring that every donation is used wisely and delivers the greatest possible impact for people across the footwear community. Strong financial stewardship has enabled us to continue providing timely support to those facing hardship, while maintaining the resources needed to respond to future demand.

The following summary highlights our financial performance for 2025/2026 and the continued generosity of those who make our work possible.

2025/26 v 2024/25

TOTAL INCOME
£129,399
up from £104,045

↑ **+24%**

Total income increased by 24% compared with 2024/25, largely due to a major three-year funding commitment, strengthening the Trust's ability to support those in need.

TOTAL EXPENDITURE
£104,549
down from £111,780

↓ **-6.5%**

Total expenditure fell by 6.5% compared to 2024/25 as a result of Grant Payments decreasing slightly, reflecting the timing and nature of applications received.

FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD
£1,457,770
up from £1,311,758

↑ **+11%**

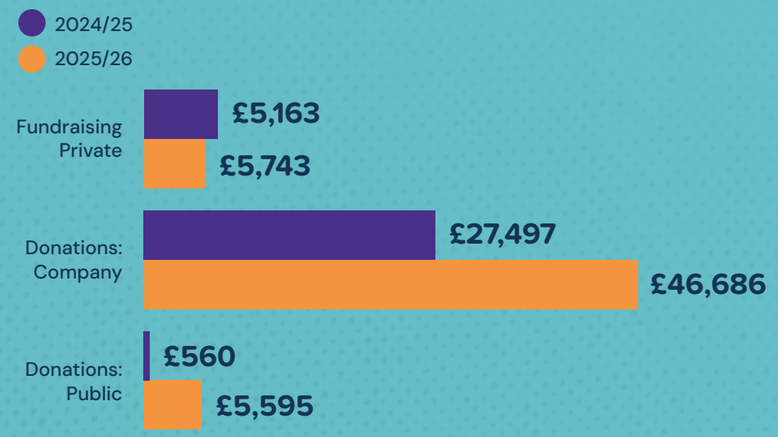
Total income grew in 2025/26 by 11% which was as a result of good performance from investments.

BENEFICIARIES
139
down from 152

↓ **-8.5%**

There was a small reduction in beneficiaries receiving support reflecting the profile of applications during the year, with the Trust continuing to prioritise support for beneficiaries facing the greatest need.

DONATIONS BY INCOME STREAM





CASE STUDY | HANNAH*

Trying to stay afloat for my little boy

I'm a single mother going through an extremely difficult time and without the financial support of the Footwear Industry Trust, I just don't know where I would be.

I live with severe, debilitating depression. Last year, I was signed off work repeatedly and because of my health, I was forced to leave my job. I have a two-year-old son, Jason, and it was all very frightening!

I rely on Universal Credit, including the Child Element, Child Benefit, and Child Maintenance. While my rent is covered through housing support, I struggle with essential living costs such as utility bills, council tax, and clothing for my son. I rely on a local food bank to ensure Jason has enough to eat.

Although my hob still works, my oven is broken, which makes preparing meals very difficult. Each day is a constant balancing act between meeting basic needs, caring for my son, and managing my mental health.

Having previously worked in shoe manufacturing, I reached out to the Footwear Industry Trust when I found myself in need of support. From the outset, they were compassionate and understanding. In 2025, I was awarded a twice-yearly grant, which has made a meaningful difference to our lives. It enabled me to have my oven repaired, contributed towards essential utility costs, and gave me vital breathing space to focus on recovery, look for work, and provide greater stability for Jason.

Without the support of the Footwear Industry Trust, I genuinely do not know where we would be today.

The Footwear Industry Trust has been my lifeline.

Thank you for making a difference

We extend our thanks to the organisations whose generosity makes the work of the Footwear Industry Trust possible. For nearly 190 years, the footwear community has come together to look after its own, supporting colleagues past and present who need help when it is needed most.

This year, thanks to the support of these organisations, we have been able to support members of our community facing financial hardship, helping them to regain confidence, stability, and control over their lives.

C & J Clark 1922 Employee Trust
Community (Trade Union)
Dr Martens Foundation
Drapers
Footsure Southeastern Ltd.
Gardiner Bros
Harvey Jacobson
Jacobson Group
Jeffery-West Ltd.
London Shoe & Leather Trades Golfing Society
Micro-Pak Ltd
Norwich Shoe Trades Golf Society
Pentland Brands Plc
Pavers Ltd.
Rubin Foundation Charitable Trust
SATRA Technology
Skechers USA
T & A Footwear Ltd.
The Earl Fitzwilliam Charitable Trust
The Footwear & Allied Trades Golf Team Championship
The Worshipful Company of Cordwainers
The Worshipful Company of Pattenmakers
Timpson Ltd.
William Lamb Group

And, thank you also to those donors who wish to remain anonymous.



CASE STUDY | BETHANY*

A helping hand when we needed it most

We are a family of seven, including a toddler, and the past few months have been incredibly challenging. Just as we were trying to adjust to our monthly rent increasing from £750 to £900, everything seemed to go wrong at once. Our washing machine broke beyond repair, our fridge freezer stopped working, and our cooker began tripping the electrics, leaving us with only the hob to prepare meals.

With no savings to fall back on, replacing these essential household items simply wasn't possible. What started as a rent increase quickly became a crisis. The pressure was overwhelming.

We turned to the Footwear Industry Trust for help, and it awarded us a £450 grant towards replacing these essential white goods. That support came at exactly the right time.

The grant eased the immediate financial burden and helped restore a sense of normality to our home. We could wash clothes, store food safely and cook proper meals again, things many people take for granted, but which make an enormous difference to our family life.

More than anything, the Trust gave us breathing space. At a time when it felt as though every setback was happening at once, knowing someone understood our situation and was willing to help reminded us that we weren't facing these challenges alone.

Trustees

Our Trustees generously give their time, expertise and insight to help shape the future of the charity. They provide strong leadership, ensuring we remain true to our mission and fulfil our financial and governance responsibilities with care and integrity.

DAVID LOCKYER
President & Chairman
David represents four generations of family involvement in the footwear industry and brings more than 40 years of experience. His distinguished retail career includes serving as Retail Director of C&J Clark International before leading the growth of Stead & Simpson to a nationwide retail estate of more than 450 stores. Since becoming Chair and President in 2013, David has overseen the distribution of more than 5,000 grants, totalling £1.5 million, to support people across the footwear industry.

MALCOLM COLLINS
Trustee & Honorary Treasurer
Malcolm brings over 40 years of footwear experience, including senior roles at Clarks Shoes and New Look. As Honorary Treasurer, he provides strong financial oversight, helping ensure the Trust's resources are managed responsibly and directed where they are needed most. He joined the Board as Honorary Treasurer to give back to the industry that shaped his career.

JUSTIN MORGAN
Trustee
Justin has spent his entire career in the footwear industry, working with leading brands before founding JGM in 2008. Inspired by the Trust's compassionate approach, he joined the Board and plays an active role in assessing grant applications. Seeing the impact of the charity's support motivates his continued commitment to helping others.

MARK JEFFERY
Trustee
Mark's family has been part of Northamptonshire's shoe trade since the 17th century. In 1986, Mark co-founded Jeffery-West and remains passionate about supporting the local footwear community. As a Trustee, he helps lead local fundraising initiatives and is proud to support the Trust's work providing practical help to people facing hardship.

HARVEY JACOBSON
Trustee
Harvey has worked in the footwear industry since 1972, founding the Jacobson Group and overseeing brands including Gola, Lotus and Ravel. He joined the Trust to support people facing difficult circumstances and uses his extensive commercial experience to help ensure every donation delivers meaningful benefit across the footwear community.

SUSAN O'HARE
Trustee
Susan brings a wealth of experience in the footwear and apparel industry, including 30 years holding senior buying and product leadership roles with Marks & Spencer, Courtaulds and Start-Rite Shoes. She is also a member of the British Footwear Association and a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Pattenmakers. As a Trustee, she supports the charity's long-term strategy and future development.

PETER LAMBLE
Trustee
Peter has more than 35 years' experience in the footwear industry and is Chairman of Start-Rite Shoes. Representing the Cordwainers' Company on the Board, he has seen first-hand the difference the Trust's grants make. He champions strong financial stewardship to ensure every donation directly supports those in need.

SHARON REASON
Trustee
Sharon brings more than 40 years of international footwear experience, having worked with BUSM, Dr Martens and brands across the Far East. Now a packaging specialist at Monro, she joined the Trust to give back to the industry. She provides practical support to the Board, helping people access assistance when they need it most.

IAN CARTWRIGHT
Trustee
Ian is Chief Executive of the British Footwear Association and brings over 30 years of experience across manufacturing, sourcing and retail. As one of the Trust's newest Trustees, he is committed to giving back to the industry by supporting colleagues facing financial hardship through practical, timely assistance.





CASE STUDY | SAM & FIONA*

Keeping our family warm and together

We are raising four children, and the past few years have pushed our family to breaking point. When the pandemic hit, our lives changed overnight. I lost my job, our income disappeared, and the savings we had worked so hard to build were quickly used just to keep a roof over our heads.

Although I was fortunate to find another role in footwear manufacturing in Northampton, the financial pressure has never really gone away. Every month is a struggle to cover the basics: rent, food, energy bills, and everything our children need. Rising living costs mean we're constantly trying to stay one step ahead, but it often feels impossible.

My wife, Fiona, is a full-time carer for our eldest daughter, so she is unable to work. While we receive some state financial support, it doesn't reflect the reality of caring for a child with complex needs.

Winter is always our biggest worry. With no savings to fall back on, higher energy bills bring an added layer of anxiety, and there have been times when we've genuinely wondered how we would manage.

The Footwear Industry Trust has been a lifeline for our family. Its grant at Christmas eases some of that pressure and gives us invaluable peace of mind. It means that, during the coldest months of the year, Fiona and I don't have to make the heartbreaking choice between heating our home and feeding our children. That support gives us more than financial help. it reassures us that we're not facing these challenges alone.



CASE STUDY | SALLY*

Holding on to my independence

I live with relentless, life-changing pain in my knee and lower back. Despite surgery earlier this year, my condition continues to deteriorate, and my mobility is now severely limited. I was devastated to learn recently that the knee replacement I had been waiting for is no longer an option because of serious vascular complications; the surgery would carry such a high risk that it could result in amputation. Instead, I have been advised to stop walking altogether and restrict my movement to essential transfers only.

Coming to terms with losing my independence has been incredibly difficult. I now rely on a wheelchair full-time to protect my spine and prevent further complications, but I still need to be able to transfer safely from my chair to my bed to continue living at home.

A specialist adjustable bed is no longer a luxury; it is an essential. It will properly support my weight, reduce the strain on my joints, help me manage my pain, and allow me to reposition myself safely and independently throughout the day and night. Maintaining my independence depends on having the right equipment.

The cost of such a bed is far beyond my means, so I turned to the Footwear Industry Trust for help. The Trust awarded me a £500 grant towards the cost, easing the financial burden and allowing me to purchase the equipment I need.

This support means the world to me, it's more than funding a bed, it is helping me retain my independence and continue living safely in my own home.

We're building a stronger future for our footwear community

Our strategy for the years ahead is built on one simple ambition: to ensure members of the footwear community can access the support they need, when they need it most. We will focus on:

1. Maximise our impact by refining our grant-making approach, ensuring support is targeted where need is greatest, and strengthening collaboration with partner organisations to enhance the level of assistance we can provide
2. Strengthen our income by deepening relationships across the footwear sector, expanding fundraising initiatives, and increasing engagement with partners, donors, and supporters
3. Ensure long-term sustainability by maintaining strong financial oversight, building reserves, and continuing to improve our governance and operational effectiveness to serve future generations

FIT
EST. 1836

Correspondence address:

Footwear Industry Trust
c/o Footwear Friends
P.O. Box 77403
London SW9 1FG

The Footwear Industry Trust is a registered charity in England and Wales (22217)

Footwear Benevolent Society
(Footwear Industry Trust)
c/o Griffin Chartered Accountants,
Courtenay House, Pynes Hill, Exeter EX2 5AZ

footwearindustrytrust.org
info@footwearindustrytrust.org

© Footwear Industry Trust All Rights Reserved, 2026.

*To protect privacy, the names of individuals and the photographs used in our case studies have been changed to preserve anonymity.