Impact Report 2025/26

GROCERY AID®

The help you've earned

Welcome to GroceryAid's Annual Impact Report

In the following pages, we are proud to share the progress we have made over the past year and, most importantly, the difference GroceryAid's support has made to thousands of people working across the grocery industry.

It has been a significant year for the Charity. In 2024, GroceryAid established a renewed long-term vision, purpose and set of values, providing a clear direction for our work towards 2030. At the heart of that vision is a simple but powerful ambition: to help more grocery colleagues by providing relief in tough times through our wide range of welfare services.

To achieve this, we recognised that we needed to do more to ensure that people across the industry know GroceryAid is here for them when they need us. At the end of 2025, we relaunched the Charity with a fresh brand identity and a new communications programme designed to reach grocery colleagues more directly.

This culminated in our first multichannel awareness campaign during the winter months. We also refreshed the way we communicate with our industry supporters, helping to strengthen our events programme - the primary source of the vital income that enables us to deliver our welfare services.

The early results have been remarkable. Increased awareness of GroceryAid contributed to a 15% year-on-year rise in applications for financial grants during the campaign period, alongside an increase in the number of grants awarded. During our first campaign, we also saw a 12% increase in the number of people accessing support through the welfare section of our website.

These figures demonstrate encouraging progress towards our ultimate goal: helping more grocery colleagues and their families when they are facing difficult times.

However, as our awareness grows, we are also learning more about the scale and complexity of the challenges facing people across the industry. Demand for our services is increasing significantly, placing greater pressure on the resources required to provide that support.

Meeting this growing need will require even greater backing from across the grocery industry. Continued attendance at and support for our events will remain essential, but we must also develop new and more diverse sources of income to complement our successful events programme and secure the Charity's long-term sustainability.

I have been delighted to continue as President of GroceryAid this year and have seen first-hand the progress the Charity is making. The GroceryAid team continues to serve grocery colleagues with tremendous energy, commitment and passion.

Together, we have the opportunity to reach and support many more people - but we cannot do it alone. We are enormously grateful for the continued generosity of our supporters, and we will need that support more than ever as we move through the next stage of GroceryAid's journey.

Thank you

Rami Baitiéh,
GroceryAid President

Grocery Workers Context & Needs

Grocery workers are incredibly proud and hard-working people, but asking for help should never be a source of shame.

Like much of the population, many grocery workers are facing challenges. **38% say they are finding it difficult to cope with daily life** and **over half (53%) say they have experienced tough times in the last 18 months** - that's over 1.4 million grocery workers that we could help.

The biggest needs are:

32%
Mental Health

29%
Financial difficulties

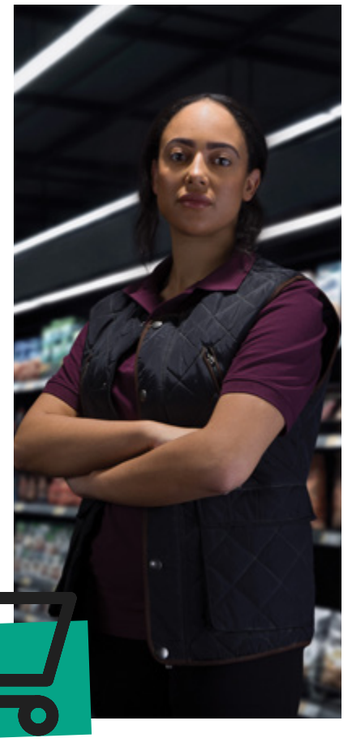
17%
Physical Health concerns

16%
Relationship breakdown/ bereavement

10%
Challenging Caring Responsibilities

There are many barriers to seeking and receiving the help grocery workers need, the biggest of which is feeling judged (31% of those seeking support). Other key barriers are: knowing where to get support (26%); having to wait a long time for a decision or even a reply (24%); and not knowing what support is available (23% of those seeking support).

To help overcome the stigma around asking for help, we've positioned our support as 'the help you've earned', and it seems to be working - more and more grocery workers are reaching out to us for support.



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GroceryAid Impact

We have changed the way we are measuring impact from 'incidences of support', to the 'number of people we have helped' which allows us to measure the overall GroceryAid vision: To help more grocery workers in tough times through the provision of our welfare services.

Over the past year, our brand relaunch and targeted campaigns have begun to make a real difference. By increasing awareness of GroceryAid and the support we provide, we have been able to help an incredible 19,200 grocery workers.

19,200
Grocery Workers Helped

8,162
Grocery workers received grants from GroceryAid

4,210
Grocery workers were supported via our Helpline

1,421
Grocery workers took up specialised sessions with our support Partners, paid for by GroceryAid

4,576
people actively used our website to access support other than grants, Helpline or Partners

We are confident that this momentum will continue as the full impact of our awareness campaigns takes effect. Early results from 2026/27 are already highly encouraging, with more grocery colleagues accessing our support, and we look forward to reporting on this continued progress in next year's Impact Report.

Financial Grants

8,395
Financial Grants Paid

Last year we paid 8,395 financial grants to 8,162 grocery workers, an increase of 3%.

This reflects the marketing focus in quarter 4 which focussed on driving awareness of financial grants, where we have seen a 15% increase in applications during the campaign period vs the same period last year. We expect this growth to continue as we drive further awareness.

Financial grants paid out included:

1,518
Financial Relief Grants

2,444
Cost of Living Grants

3,546
School Essential Grants

453
Carers Gateway Grants

Every financial grant application is reviewed by our grants officers to ensure the right help is provided to colleagues and their household. When additional needs are identified, our welfare officers will call to understand more about a person's situation, which often results in us providing more than one service.

The housing crisis is affecting household incomes with colleagues spending a higher proportion of their income on rents and mortgages. Our grants have enabled many colleagues who were facing eviction to remain in their homes. For more complex issues, we partnered with Shelter Plus who provided 165 hours of advice to support those colleagues with legal issues around housing.

Our School Essentials Grant meant that once again, 6,667 children benefitted from a £150 grant, helping families ensure they started school in September with new uniform and equipment.

"I cannot thank the team at GroceryAid enough for the support I have received!! The application process has been seamless, and the communication has been excellent throughout. I am truly grateful to everyone involved for helping me and my family during this difficult period, you truly are wonderful!"

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Emotional Support

GroceryAid's emotional support is free and confidential, so colleagues can be confident that sensitive information is not shared with employers. We believe this removes a significant barrier and encourages individuals to reach out for help.

In 2025 we switched service provider to ensure higher quality and more relevant services were available to grocery workers more easily.

In 2025/26, **more than 4,200 people turned to our Helpline for support.** Over 1,200 sought help for anxiety, while more than 700 needed support for complex mental health issues. Others contacted us for help with stress, bereavement, relationship challenges and many other personal difficulties.

In total, **over 11,000 support sessions** were delivered through the Helpline last year.

11,000+

Support Sessions

Counselling

Our in-the-moment counselling sessions, with a qualified counsellor, are accessible 24/7, 365 days a year, and each case is discussed on an individual basis. Callers may also be signposted to other services to support with specific issues.

This year we also launched our High Intensity Counselling service. This is a specific form of high level CBT delivered over a 12-20 week period, recommended for treating moderate mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety and OCD. This has proven to be a much needed additional service, driving an overall growth in Structured Counselling sessions of 84%.

We continue to support grocery workers and their families to navigate their relationship challenges via our trusted partner, Relate. Last year, 243 grocery workers and their households received a total of 1,449 relationship counselling sessions, thanks to GroceryAid.

4,210

People were helped via the GroceryAid Helpline, with over 11,000 support sessions delivered

1,964

Structured counselling sessions delivered

1,449

Relationship counselling sessions delivered

Autism & ADHD.org Partnership

228

Sessions delivered

"I finally had a safe space to say everything I'd been holding in. Being able to talk openly, without judgement, was a huge relief. It helped me regain a sense of control."

In March 2025 we launched a partnership with Autism & ADHD.org – and last year they delivered 228 sessions for affected grocery workers and their families.

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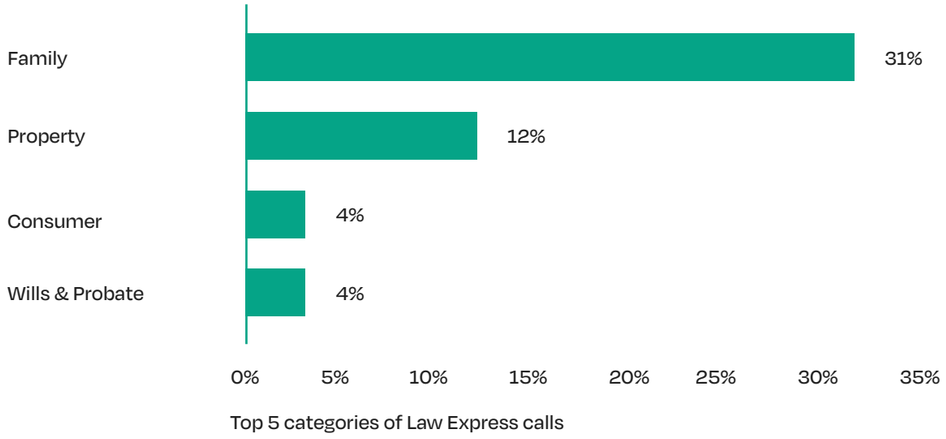
Other services

While Financial Grants and our Helpline are the core of GroceryAid's welfare support, we also help people in many other ways.

Through our online support and partnerships with specialist organisations and charities, we provide access to a broad range of advice, information and services, ensuring grocery colleagues can find the support that's right for them.

These include Law Express, GamCare, MoneyHelper, Turn2Us, StepChange and Shelter. We also provide useful tools such as a Benefits Calculator, as well as information on other emotional and practical services.

In 2025/26 we saw greater uptake of Law Express services; +115% more sessions taken vs last year, with the top 4 categories being:



Top 5 categories of Law Express calls

115%

increase in legal advice sessions

31%

of legal advice delivered was around family law

D&I IN GROCERY

Accelerating a truly diverse and inclusive grocery industry

GroceryAid's D&I in Grocery Programme is supported by the Strategy Steering Group and three Workstream Steering Groups to ensure the Programme is meeting the current and future needs of its Partners. Underpinned by insights from the D&I in Grocery Maturity Model, the Programme supports Partners in areas that require focus and development to continue to drive change both at a company, and industry level with the purpose to create the most inclusive and diverse industry possible.

"2025 was a year of positive progress for the D&I in Grocery Programme. Through continued commitment, increased collaboration and a strong focus on raising standards across the industry, our Partners demonstrated that diversity and inclusion remains central to building stronger businesses. We know that inclusive organisations make better decisions, understand their customers more deeply, drive greater innovation, and attract the best talent. Together, we're helping to build an industry that's better equipped to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future with inclusion at its centre."

- Richard Stratton, Tesco and 2025 Chair of the D&I in Grocery Strategy Steering Group

In 2025, the programme delivered:

102
Partners

10%
increase in Partner connections

10%
increase in mentors and mentees

2%
increase in industry-wide maturity model score
(Jan 2025 to Jan 2026)

3%
increase in GroceryAid fundraising contribution

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How we raise our funds

The contribution from our events is vital to us being able to provide the welfare services we offer, to help more grocery workers in need.

Last year, we saw an **increase of 6.4% of colleagues** attending our **16 central events,** providing unique networking opportunities in many different environments, whether it's accomplishing a challenge at the cycles, or bonding with customers on the water at the beautiful Co-op Windermere Row.

We also offer brands opportunities to activate new and existing products to their important customers at all of our events. For the second year running, **five of our fundraising events raised over £1million,** including Barcode Festival, Sporting Lunch, Asda Tickled Pink Gala Ball, Tesco Glitz Ball and Sainsbury's Big Bash, and we continue to grow at a much-needed pace to help those in our industry needing support.

Building relationships is key to the Charity's success and last year GroceryAid's relationship management team continued to develop a large network and strength of support with **over 600 organisations.** Our various committees are made up of **over 340 senior industry leaders** all making a difference to help steer the direction of the Charity. Our GroceryAid Engage webinars, attended by HR and Communication professionals, continued to grow and were **attended by 231 companies,** who learnt more about our welfare services and how to promote them.

600+
Organisations

The year ahead

The results in this report demonstrate that our strategy is beginning to deliver tangible outcomes as we turn our vision into action.

During the final quarter of the year, our increased investment in raising awareness of GroceryAid and the support we provide has started to translate into more grocery colleagues accessing our services. We have seen encouraging growth in both financial grant applications and Helpline usage, helping more people when they need us most - our ultimate measure of success.

While this is exactly the outcome we set out to achieve, it also brings new challenges. As we continue to raise awareness and reach more colleagues over the coming year, demand for our services will continue to grow. This makes it essential that we accelerate our fundraising ambitions to ensure we can meet that increasing need.

We are incredibly grateful that support for GroceryAid continues to grow alongside demand for our services. It is particularly encouraging that attendance at our fundraising events increased by 6.4%, demonstrating the industry's continued commitment to supporting grocery colleagues.

As more people access our services, it is vital that we continue to strengthen our fundraising programme by engaging new supporters, diversifying our income streams, and encouraging our existing partners to maintain their outstanding support through event participation, donations and strategic partnerships. Together, we can also continue to raise awareness of GroceryAid so that even more colleagues know where to turn when they need help.

I am delighted with the progress we are making and would like to thank our colleagues, trustees, partners, volunteers and supporters for their dedication and commitment. Together, we are helping more grocery workers and their families through life's toughest moments.

Thank you for your continued support of GroceryAid.

Kieran Hemsworth
CEO, GroceryAid

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groceryaid.org.uk