

Jan - June  
**2025**



# Impact Report

**LIONHEARTS.CA**



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# From Our Founder

Each and every day, the work we are doing is restoring hope and dignity across the communities we serve.

And that's why it's difficult for us to wait a full year to issue our impact report - there's too much to tell!

So, please enjoy this interim six-month report looking at the first half of 2025. It will come as no surprise that, thanks to generous donors and partners, we were able to do even more than ever before - a great accomplishment that is also a sobering reminder of the challenging times we find ourselves in.

Thank you for your interest in, and support for, our work.

As 2025 has shown us so far, even if our goals remain far off, we have a major role to play in addressing challenges like food insecurity, nutrition, and housing.

Our food and household goods rescue operations have grown quickly in London, and we're regularly asked to visit or consult with other communities about how to rescue food and goods where they live. Our Kingston shelter and transitional housing programs continue to restore hope and dignity to hundreds, and our expertise and focus on dignity in these vital programs have saved lives and served our community well. The stories continue to inspire and challenge us in our work each and every day.

Everything we do is done in partnership with local communities, frontline agencies, and a whole lot of volunteers. The stories and successes in this interim report aren't mine, and they aren't just Lionhearts' either - they are yours, too. Thank you for all you do, on behalf of those we serve.

*Travis Blackmore*

TRAVIS BLACKMORE  
FOUNDER AND CEO



Visit

[Lionhearts.ca/volunteer](https://lionhearts.ca/volunteer)

to get involved

# Overview

This interim report is structured a bit differently from our past impact reports. If you're looking for more specific details about our programs, visit our website and we'll fill you in.

The purpose of *this* report is to show what our supplier partners, donors, volunteers, and staff have made possible in the first half of this year.

You'll find inspiring stories, amazing facts, and proof that our lionhearted teams are making a huge difference - in Kingston, in Ottawa, in London, and in the lives of those we serve.



**Thank you for partnering with us, on behalf of those we serve.**



# Food and Household Goods Recovery (January - June 2025)

*Ottawa* **\$7,722,982.47**

"We get a lot of unusual stuff from Amazon sometimes, and we don't always know where the best place to send it will be.

So, we started producing a catalogue and asking agencies what they'd like to receive, and it turned into this **amazing opportunity** to provide birthday party supplies to a local community housing agency so they could hold a birthday party for some of their tenants.

We also had the opportunity to provide a hydraulic dog washing station to a pet rescue charity which has saved them a lot of work."



*Kingston* **\$2,107,156.92**

"Julie from The Willow Network stops by several times a week to collect food donations, and recently she shared a heartfelt request: suitcases for the people she serves. That day, we didn't have any to give. But later, during our Costco pickup, **two full sets of luggage** came off the truck — almost as if the universe had heard her ask.

The next morning, we called Julie to share the news. She rushed over, thrilled, thinking she'd be picking up just a couple of bags. Instead, she discovered several beautiful pieces waiting for her program. The **joy** on her face was **unforgettable**, and in that moment, we felt tears well up — a reminder of how generosity flows in ways we can't always predict.

What began as a simple request turned into a story of **abundance, gratitude, and the quiet miracles** that happen when community comes together."

*London* **\$ 550,738.50**

"In the spring, we began regularly gathering at Gateway Church to hold **sorting parties**, where tens of thousands in goods would be repacked and redistributed **in a matter of hours**. We also started picking up and redistributing food from Canada Life Place after major events."



# Transitional Housing

"Before coming to Lionhearts, I was going through a difficult transition period in my life. I had recently relocated to Kingston and was working on establishing stability for myself and my children. At that time, I did not have a secure long-term place to stay, and being accepted into transitional housing gave me the **opportunity to rebuild my routine and feel safe** while planning the next steps for our future.

From my very first interaction, I felt **supported and treated with respect**. The team was kind, patient and open to communication, which helped me feel safe and welcomed during an important transition in my life. The process was clear, well-structured and explained step-by-step, which made paperwork and the move-in **smooth and stress-free**. I always felt I could ask questions and receive help when needed, which I deeply appreciated.

Overall, my stay was positive. I had stability, privacy, and a safe environment. I am sincerely grateful for the **opportunity** to recover, rebuild and feel settled."

*This participant graduated into their own lease!*

**5,945**  
nights

**Nine**  
properties



# Shelter and Day Program

“One individual, in particular, has truly **shined** through the challenges of this past year.

She initially stayed in the shelter with her husband until they moved away and the relationship ended. Upon her return, she found herself largely alone, returning to the shelter as the only place where she felt **safe and supported**.

Since then, she has **moved into one of our transitional housing units** and is thriving. She participates in our Day Program almost every day, which has allowed her to complete her resume, begin volunteering at a local church, get connected with dental care, and enroll in college courses starting in January.

Without access to the Day Program, it is possible she would have remained trapped in the cycle of shelter life; sleeping, finding meals during the day, and returning in time for a bed at night, without the opportunities to engage, grow, and plan for a more independent future. Her progress demonstrates the **real-life impact of our programming** and the importance of providing consistent support and meaningful activities for our guests.”

Line-ups  
begin up to  
**one hour in  
advance**



We sheltered  
**11,140** people  
between January  
1 and June 30



**392**

individuals  
turned away due  
to no capacity



# Student Food Box

"One afternoon, we received a simple text message:

**"Do you know where I can get some food today?"**

A few messages later, it became clear that this mother of five had nothing to feed her children for dinner. By chance, it was a Student Food Box delivery day, and our team was already in her neighbourhood.

Although we didn't have any extra boxes prepared, we quickly gathered supplies and delivered them to her home.

When we met the client, she was articulate, optimistic, and deeply grateful. We explained the Student Food Box Program and encouraged her to apply. Even learning that the program often has a waitlist didn't discourage her. We stayed in touch, and shortly after, we were able to enroll her family.

Since then, she has shared repeatedly how much the boxes have meant, not only because they provide consistent access to good food, but because they make her family feel seen. They feel respected, supported, and worthy of care. What began with a single urgent message has grown into lasting stability and connection for a family who needed it most."

**250** local  
families  
supported



**Community Foundation**  
for Kingston & Area



**Kin Canada**  
Kinsmen Club  
of Kingston



**United Way**  
Kingston, Frontenac,  
Lennox and Addington



**\$220,000**

worth of food  
distributed



**\$80**

average  
value of boxes



**2,750**

boxes  
delivered

# Fresh Food Markets

“One older adult who regularly attends two of our markets shared how **essential** these spaces have become **to his daily life and sense of connection**. Although he comes for groceries, he stays for the community.

Living alone, he buys fruit to enjoy on the spot, using the seating areas to chat with others and build friendships. Over time, he has formed meaningful relationships, often teaching fellow older adults about computers, positive mental health strategies, and books.

Our target profit margin is **40% below** grocery stores

He also uses the fresh produce he buys to cook meals for a close friend who lives with severe mental health challenges and rarely leaves his home. A few times each week, he invites this friend over for a home-cooked meal, made possible by the affordability and convenience of our markets.

He told us that having the markets located within **trusted, accessible community hubs** is a lifeline. While he still drives, he emphasized that these markets will become even more critical once he can no longer do so. Because he lives in a nearby seniors' subsidized housing complex, he can **walk to our markets**, something he says many of his neighbours **rely on**. For some residents in his building, attending our market is the **only time they leave their unit**.”

Through conversations in his building, he has encouraged others to attend, and some now walk over together. He also shares meals with neighbours who are unable or uninterested in cooking and introduces them to our ready-made meal options.

**98,942**  
items sold

**10,575**  
transactions



**165**  
markets  
operated  
between  
January  
and July

The markets sell fresh produce (not rescued)



**11** market  
locations  
**1** pop-up  
market

# The Embassy

2025 will be our second full year at The Spire, and in the first half of the year, we saw a **significant increase** in free tickets being given out to individuals seeking a warm place to relax, enjoy a snack, and take in a performance by our talented Embassy artists. We continue to **welcome a dozen regulars** who never miss a show.

## F.A.S.T. 101

"We continued our presentations, making 13 in the first half of the year, and we distributed 15 first response bags. These bags and our work have been especially important this year in light of a significant human trafficking trial ongoing in Kingston, which has highlighted some of the challenges experienced by victims of human trafficking.

FAST also supports victims, who were, or are currently, going through the court process. This year we have assisted with rent payments, phone bills, house appliances and therapy to name a few. One support worker, who was sitting in court with a victim, mentioned the huge relief her client felt once she was told that next month's rent was just paid for and that she didn't have to worry about it anymore. Having rent hanging over her head, while trying to get through the court proceedings, was too much. Knowing that her home was taken care of was extremely significant for her well-being. This also allowed her to focus on what she needed to do."

## Kingston Street Mission

"During the evening meal program I noticed a gentleman wandering around outside. He would look in the door, then leave again. I went out and introduced myself and invited him in. He said he couldn't. I reminded him it was a safe place and we would love to have him join us, but understood if he didn't feel comfortable yet. This happened several nights in a row.

One night, he came inside but wouldn't come close to anyone. Each night, he came a little closer. We were so happy when he came right up to the counter. We spoke with him and offered food as we do with all of our guests. His answer was, "why are you being so nice to me? I've never had anyone be this nice. I don't deserve it, I am not worthy of this". This broke our hearts. We gave him encouragement, reminded him he was valued and loved and spent time chatting each night until one night he ate some food and was so grateful. We started sending food with him when he left as most nights he was on the street."



17  
shows

900 guests  
77% complimentary  
tickets



**WE'RE STILL  
WRITING THE  
FULL 2025  
REPORT**

**You can be a  
part of it**



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