



2025-26

ANNUAL REPORT

A report to our community



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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Critical to the growth and success of the organization are the volunteer members of our Board of Directors who give their time, their expertise, and their passion in seeing St. Leonard's Community Services flourish:

Chair

Gordon Thane

Secretary

Beth Allison

Vice-Chair

Joanna Moss

Treasurer

Sarah Davis

Board Members

Erin Donahue

Steph Ouellet

Anthea Fordyce

Scott Switzer

Nicole Nemo

Executive Director

Michael Oates

Remarks from the Board of Directors and Executive Director



A Community Built on Care, Inclusion, and Commitment

We are excited to share our Annual Report to highlight much of what we have accomplished over the past year in support of the participants we serve, our teams and collaborators, and our community.

This past year concluded the final year of our 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, and it saw us make meaningful progress toward the goals we set for ourselves.

Through our Community Matters newsletter, we have focused on building awareness of the different services that we offer to our community, aiming to shine a light on how important our programs are. That included focusing on our youth justice programs, housing first, and our program supporting individuals involved in the developmental services sector.

Paramount is our collaboration with community partners. We celebrated existing partnerships and the formation of new ones: this past year marked 10 years of partnership with the Southwest Centre for Forensic Mental Health (of St. Joseph's Health Care London) in operating C.K. Clarke Centre and our Forensic Supportive Housing program; it also marked the beginning of a new partnership with -



Gordon Thane
Board Chair



Joanna Moss
Vice Chair



Michael Oates
Executive Director

numerous community agencies, led by CMHA Thames Valley Addiction and Mental Health Services, in the London HART (Homelessness and Addiction Recovery and Treatment) Hub.

Many organizations are experiencing fiscal pressures, needing to meet a greater demand without increases in resources, and SLCS is not immune to that. Thus, the creation of a fund development framework was another of our strategic priorities and it saw meaningful progress over the year. Led by a small group of leaders and staff, and with the assistance of an external advisor, there was significant work done to build an understanding of what fund development would mean to SLCS and what we would need to be successful.

Many members of our community are supportive of our mission, and this will provide an opportunity for them to play an active role in contributing to our vision. This initiative will continue with goals of providing greater organizational resilience in the months and years ahead.

Of course, none of this would be possible without ongoing investment in our people and culture. Employee-led committees, such as wellness, social and belonging, and JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) have all helped shape how we work: wellness initiatives to foster well-being and resilience like pet therapy, paint nights, and clothing drives; social opportunities like a hockey game, employee BBQ, and trivia nights; and events to recognize and celebrate the incredible diversity of our workforce like the Pride parade, Truth and Reconciliation Day, Black History Month events, and Restorative Justice Week.

As this year comes to a close, we are finalizing our next strategic plan, one that will guide the organization for the 5 years ahead. We have no doubt we will continue to build on the commitment and passion that defines the hundreds of employees, volunteers, and supporters of SLCS and we will continue toward a community where all feel safe, valued, and supported.

Gordon Thane

Board Chair

Joanna Moss

Vice Chair

Michael Oates

Executive Director



Section 1

Agency Updates



Community Impact and Outcomes

Housing Stability and Identification - Project Home

Project Home is a Housing First program delivered by St. Leonard's Community Services (SLCS) in partnership with the City of London as part of their municipal Homelessness Prevention System. The program supports individuals experiencing chronic or episodic homelessness to access and maintain safe, stable housing in the community through coordinated housing identification, placement, and individualized case management supports.

The *Housing Identification Program* (HIP) works in deep collaboration with other Housing First programs in our city to support the diverse populations by integrating housing navigation, stability and tenancy sustainment, the Housing Identification Program contributes to a more coordinated and efficient homelessness response, reduces service duplication, and strengthens collaboration across municipal, health, justice, and community partners.

During the 2025 year, the Housing Identification Program supported **483** individuals, with **409** unique tenancies. The population served reflects the complexity and diversity of housing needs in London, including **78** families, **42** youth, **66** individuals who identify as Indigenous, and **33** confirmed veterans. Many participants face intersecting

challenges related to mental health, addiction, physical health, justice involvement, and long-term homelessness. To address these needs, over **60** participants are supported by Registered Practical Nurses (RPNs) as part of coordinated care planning. The RPNs, funded independent of the City, provided over **1,300** visits throughout the year.

Over the past year, **351** participants are currently housed, and **131** new tenancy placements were completed during this period. The Housing Identification Program places a strong emphasis on tenancy retention and early intervention.

Project Home continues to support some of London's most vulnerable community members to exit homelessness and remain housed over time. Stable housing is associated with improved health and social outcomes and reduced reliance on emergency, shelter, health, and justice systems. Through its integrated model, strong landlord partnerships, and focus on housing stability, this program contributes to safer, healthier, and more inclusive communities across the City of London.



Strengthening Organizational Effectiveness

Fund Development Update

As we close out this year, and our Strategic Plan for 2023-2026, we would like to provide an update on the fund development journey that SLCS has been on for the past couple years. One of our Strategic Priorities, to Strengthen Organizational Effectiveness, included a key action to develop a fund development strategy. During the fall, SLCS engaged staff and stakeholders in interviews and focus groups to explore opportunities for fundraising and fund development. Insights gathered through this process informed a Discovery Report developed by our Fund Development Consultant, Corey Allison, offering a comprehensive look at the organization's current positioning and future potential.

Participants consistently described SLCS as a highly trusted, values-driven organization with deep impact. However, they also noted that the organization remains relatively invisible to the broader public. This limited visibility is not a reflection of effectiveness, but rather a result of longstanding care and caution in navigating the stigma associated with justice-involved populations. The report highlights how this stigma continues to influence public perception, donor engagement, and even staff confidence, while also emphasizing the organization's significant strengths. This includes a compassionate and skilled

workforce, an integrated service model, and recognized leadership in restorative and community-based approaches.

The findings also underscore both the opportunities and complexities involved in advancing fund development at SLCS. While there is strong alignment around the importance of building fundraising capacity, there is a need for greater clarity regarding roles, messaging, and infrastructure to ensure sustainability and integrity. Staff capacity emerged as both a key strength and a vulnerability, with teams demonstrating deep commitment while managing increasing complexity and emotional demands. Moving forward, the organization is prioritizing the development of a clear, courageous brand identity, strengthening internal readiness, and transitioning our fund development committee from a committee-based approach to a strategic, program-led model for fund development.

At the end of the fiscal year, SLCS began recruitment for a Fund Development Manager to lead this work, helping to establish a strong foundation for future growth while supporting staff and safeguarding the values that define the organization.

Justine Prawdzik

Director of Corporate Services

Section 2

Program Success Stories

A photograph showing a woman from behind, wearing a blue shirt, with her right arm being supported by a man in a white shirt. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green foliage.

Building a Foundation of Safety and Accessibility

Supported Independent Living Success Story

After years of navigating life living rough, surviving without stable shelter, and facing the compounded challenges of disability, mental health struggles, and limited support, one individual's story has taken a remarkable turn.

As a double amputee, everyday tasks were often overwhelming, made even harder by the instability of homelessness and a system that, at times, had little left to offer. Past experiences with trauma, behavioural challenges, and mental health needs created additional barriers to accessing and maintaining support. Over time, resources were exhausted, and options grew scarce.

But this story didn't end there.

Through persistent outreach and a shared commitment to do better, SLCS' SIL Program, the City of London, housing providers, and community partners came together with a unified goal: to create a sustainable solution. Instead of placing him into housing that wouldn't meet his needs, they worked collaboratively to identify a space that could be transformed into a safe, accessible home.

That space has now been fully reconstructed to support his mobility and independence—removing barriers, adding adaptive features, and ensuring he can navigate his home with dignity. For the first time in a long time, he has a place that is not only his own, but one that is built around his needs.

This moment represents more than housing. It's stability. It's a renewed sense of possibility. And it's a powerful example of what can happen when systems align, when communities refuse to give up, and when someone is given the chance to live the life they deserve.

Now, with the foundation of a safe and accessible home, he has the opportunity to focus on his health, build routine, and move toward greater independence—on his own terms.

Lacey Kupko

Assistant Manager SIL



Nurturing Confidence and Resilience

Youth Program: SM's Success Story

When I think about my time at St. Leonard's, I remember the scared girl who had no idea what the future held for her. I was 17, trying to get seven charges dropped before graduation. In my Grade 12 year, I had only 17 credits I needed 32 to graduate and walk across the stage with my friends. It felt impossible. So many people who were supposed to support me put me down countless times. The number of times I heard, "You'll never graduate," was unbelievable.

Then I met Suzanna, a wonderful woman who helped me get through St. Leonard's night school, where I met Racheal and all the caseworkers and staff.

Being part of such a huge community was something I wasn't used to, but what I wasn't used to even more was the unwavering support and commitment I received from the team. I never once heard the words, "You couldn't do it." Thanks to them, I walked across that stage that June.

Now, as a first-year Child and Youth Care student, I'm beginning my journey to help kids who feel lost, to help them find a sense of belonging and purpose just like what was done for me.



Breaking Barriers and Setting Goals

ACP and IRS: KM's Success Story

St. Leonard's Community Services ACP and IRS program has honestly changed my life in a way I didn't think was possible. Being 18 with a record, it felt like every door was already shut on me, and people just saw me as a mistake instead of someone who could do better. But when I got connected with them, they didn't treat me like that—they actually listened and gave me real support. They helped me start taking accountability for my actions while also showing me I'm not stuck being the same person forever.

Through their programs and support, I learned how to make better choices, set goals, and actually believe I can build something positive for myself. It's not like everything's magically perfect now, but I've got direction, structure, and people in my corner, which is something I never really had before.

The St. Leonard's Experience

Attendance Centre Program: CW's Success Story

When I first started going to St. Leonards, it was a bit after I got off house arrest, so I was a bit shy and awkward and really lacked social skills because of being out of society for a bit of time. Going to this program helped me develop those keen skills that I would need for my future. On the curricular side of things, there were things I learned that I wasn't even aware of; even though you may know an aspect of things, there are still small branches to discover. Whether it is about the reasoning for actions, cooking, cleaning, or even ways to be able to cope, there is always something that you can expand upon, whether you show it or not.

I started to attend St. Leonard's while I was going through a period in my life where I started to take action and truly change my life for the greater good. Even though, going into it, I felt forced because of it being a court-related punishment, the longer I went, that perspective really changed. The idea of a bunch of youths who are troubled and even seen as outcasts by people outside, it really seemed strange at first. But once you see the true beauty of these programs, it really shows and outlines something even greater. The programs themselves have good thought going into them, but it's hard to have programs related to change and optimistic views when most of the youths don't want that for themselves or their peers. The curricular part of things wasn't really my favourite, but I still learned a thing or two, so I still benefited positively from it.

But I wouldn't say the growth comes from the curricular side of things. Even though I may have picked up something knowledgeable along the way, it's not the main effect that these programs had on me personally. But having that group of understanding people, whether it's staff or even other youths that have been in your exact shoes, it helps because you don't have to explain why you think or feel certain ways. As a youth that didn't see these tunnel-vision lifestyles as a way of life any more, I didn't agree, but I understood because I had once been there. Whether it's street-related problems, not having control over substances, or feeling that violence is the only way of life, in a world that feels like no one can relate, it gets exhausting. It feels like you have to keep these ways up to keep going, but it's not. Here you will meet people that are spitting images of yourself, whether you like it or not, but it doesn't make you feel like an outcast any more, allowing you to be heard or even seen.



The slide shows aren't going to be the main thing I will remember once I leave, but I will remember the conversations, the laughs, and the jokes when everyone is just being together and doing whatever. Throughout my childhood, I didn't really have many core memories like that with my family, so having them at St. Leonards really filled those gaps. At first, it felt weird going shopping with a bunch of strangers, but once you get to know the staff and the other youths, you really can gain those types of emotional moments that I once thought weren't possible. It's the idea of having a family that can really make St. Leonards feel like another home, a safe space, and even a gathering.

That makes it strive for what it is now. There may be ups and downs, but we are all human, still learning, while trying to find our purpose so young. I would say I'm on a different path in life from most of the youths within the program, but I don't think of myself as better. The truth is I see my younger self speaking through some of the other youths, and it really allows me to resonate with them respectfully. This program is a second chance for most and even time for rehabilitation and the chance to learn from each other as we all grow as people. My experience here has only been positive. I have strived with most of the youths and even made a lifelong friend throughout the process.

The experience at St. Leonards isn't something you will find anywhere else; you won't go to the local book club and experience the same thing. Going into it being able to relate to everyone in the room is like no other. I have shared my story with many of my childhood friends.

They looked at me like I was joking, laughed it off, and thought I was kidding because they didn't see the way I was living a lifestyle, but they saw me as a non-equal because of my experiences and what I had done. That was the moment that I realized how others truly saw us: troubled, try hards, or not socially normal.

The truth is everyone on those cracked roads of life is struggling, lost, and even lacking guidance. I may have departed from those hobbies, habits, and even visions of life, but I won't see others as non-humans because of something they did. That is the door St. Leonards opened for me. I am blessed to have the opportunity to experience something so memorable as St. Leonard's.



A Decade Long Partnership

Celebration of the Southwest Centre for Forensic Mental Healthcare and SLCS's Partnership

On November 13, the Southwest Centre for Forensic Mental Health marked the 10-year anniversary of its partnership with the C.K. Clarke Centre. This milestone reflects a decade of shared commitment to supporting individuals involved in the forensic mental health system as they transition from hospital care to community living.

Throughout the years, this collaboration has played a vital role in strengthening rehabilitation pathways and promoting meaningful community connections. To recognize the impact of this partnership, teams from both organizations gathered at the Centre to celebrate the work accomplished together and the lives positively influenced along the way.

The significance of this partnership was reflected in remarks shared during the celebration:

"This partnership is essential for our patients to demonstrate who they are as people and how they choose to connect with the community,"

said Kent Lewis, Director of Southwest Centre. "Without partners like St. Leonard's, we would only be able to provide part of our rehabilitation journey for patients."



"Patients who may come to us often face stigma, so together we are there to support them," said Michael Oates, Executive Director of St. Leonard's. "Partnerships take many forms, but this partnership is a unique one because we actively work together and co-create services to figure out how to do things better."



Section 3

St. Leonard's Initiatives



Investing in Our People

Three-Year Quality Improvement Initiative Completed

In 2025/26, SLCS completed a 3-year Quality Improvement initiative focused on strengthening employee well-being and resilience. Guided by our Strategic Plan priority to Build a Culture of Community that Fosters Well-Being and Resilience, this initiative recognized that a healthy, supported workforce is essential to delivering high-quality services and positive outcomes for the individuals and communities we serve.

Over the course of the initiative, SLCS enhanced employee supports through improvements to benefits and wellness resources, expanded opportunities for employee engagement and connection, and implemented targeted resilience-building projects for direct service employees working in complex service environments. These efforts included increased mental health supports, expanded wellness and belonging initiatives, leadership-informed team debriefing opportunities, and ongoing opportunities for staff to provide feedback and help shape workplace improvements.

The initiative reinforced several important learnings: employee well-being is strengthened when practical supports are paired with meaningful opportunities for connection, inclusion, and psychological safety; team-based supports are highly valued by employees; and investing in workplace culture contributes to a more engaged, resilient, and adaptable workforce.

While Employee well-being remains an ongoing organizational priority, the successful completion of this Quality Improvement initiative has provided a strong foundation for future improvements and reflects SLCS' continued commitment to investing in its people; our greatest strength!

Kerri Cushing-Mitchener

Senior Director of Operations



Restorative Justice Week 2025

In recognition of Restorative Justice Week 2025, St. Leonard's brought together staff, volunteers, community partners, and guests to celebrate the power of restoration, healing, and second chances.

The event opened with a meaningful smudge offered by Sam Powless from the Restorative School-Based Team, helping to ground us in reflection, connection, and respect.

A special highlight of the gathering was the recognition of our Community Justice Circle volunteers, whose dedication and compassion continue to make a difference in the lives of youth and families we serve. We were honoured to hear from long time volunteer Dan Murphy, who shared his personal story and a powerful message about restorative justice and healing. Another long-time volunteer Carol Wright, offered her personal reflections and experiences and the transformative impact restorative justice can have on young people.

The event concluded with an inspiring keynote from Emily O'Brien, founder of "Come Back Snacks". Emily shared her powerful journey of accountability, resilience, and redemption. Drawing from her own lived experience and time in prison, she reminded us that mistakes do not define a person's future and that meaningful opportunities for growth and reintegration can change lives. Her message of second chances resonated deeply with the values at the heart of restorative justice. Guests were also treated to samples of Comeback Snacks popcorn, a delicious reminder that comebacks are possible. Emily's story and mission continue to inspire communities to look beyond stigma and create pathways for hope, healing, and belonging.

Keri Posno

Lead Restorative Facilitator



Indigenous Cultural Safety Training

Understanding Our Neighbours - Chippewa of the Thames, Oneida Nation, and Munsee Delaware

Last year, our team had the privilege of participating in Local Indigenous Cultural Safety Training—an experience that deepened our understanding and strengthened our commitment to reconciliation and culturally safe practices.

Led by Lena Kecheho and Shania Simon from the *London Health Sciences Centre*, the training focused on the histories and lived experiences of the **Chippewa of the Thames First Nation**, the **Oneida Nation of the Thames**, and the **Munsee-Delaware Nation**.

Through stories, shared knowledge, and guided reflection, we explored the enduring impacts of colonialism and residential schools on Indigenous survivors and their families.

The training was not only informative—it was deeply moving. Lena and Shania created a space that felt both grounding and transformative, leaving us with a renewed sense of purpose. Their teachings reminded us of the strength, resilience, and beauty within Indigenous communities and of our responsibility to walk alongside them in solidarity and action.

A quote shared by Shania captured the spirit of the session and the enduring legacy of Indigenous strength:

“
| ***They tried to bury us. They didn't know we were seeds.***
|

This training was one meaningful step but reconciliation is a journey that requires continuous learning, listening, and action. We invite you to reflect, educate yourself, and engage in ways that honour truth and foster healing in our shared communities.



Laena Leandro Starr

Communications Lead

Section 4

Our Statistics

Our Impact

7,455 TOTAL PEOPLE SERVED

1,485

Total Adults Served

Adult Community Programs

1,314

Adult Residential Programs

171

5,970

Total Youth Served

Youth Community Programs

351

Youth School-Based Programs

5,619

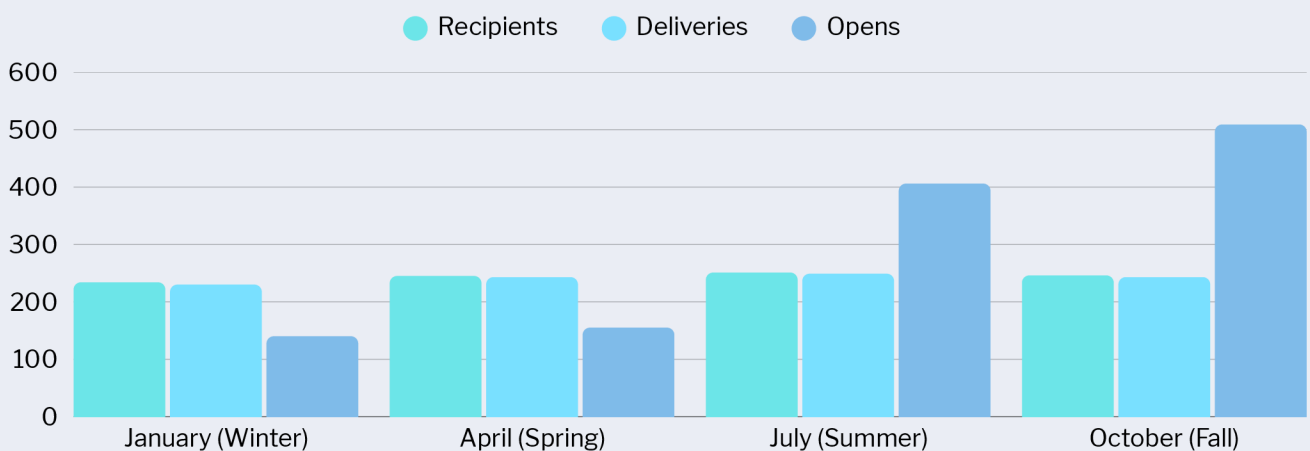


SLCS by the Numbers

117	Restorative conferences during the year held by the Youth Justice Committees
259	Individuals served in our adult diversion programs
447	Participants supported by Project Home
5,366+	Youth supported through Restorative Approaches and Peer Power programs
1,429	Number of visits by the Housing First Registered Practical Nurses
1,235	Hours of service from our Youth Counselling programs
7,700	Hours of support from our Youth Probation programs
452	Visits provided by the London Reporting Centre
9,212	Support days in the Supported Independent Living Program
16,921	Bed days in our residential programs

First Year Analysis of Community Matters Newsletter

2025 STATS



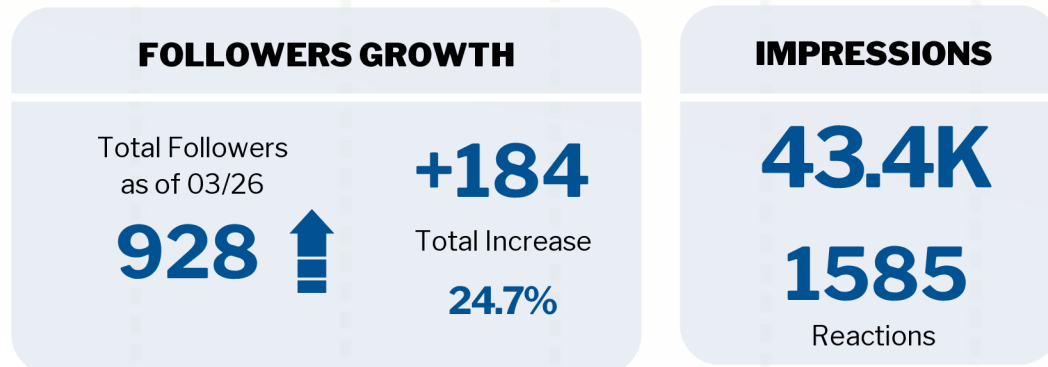
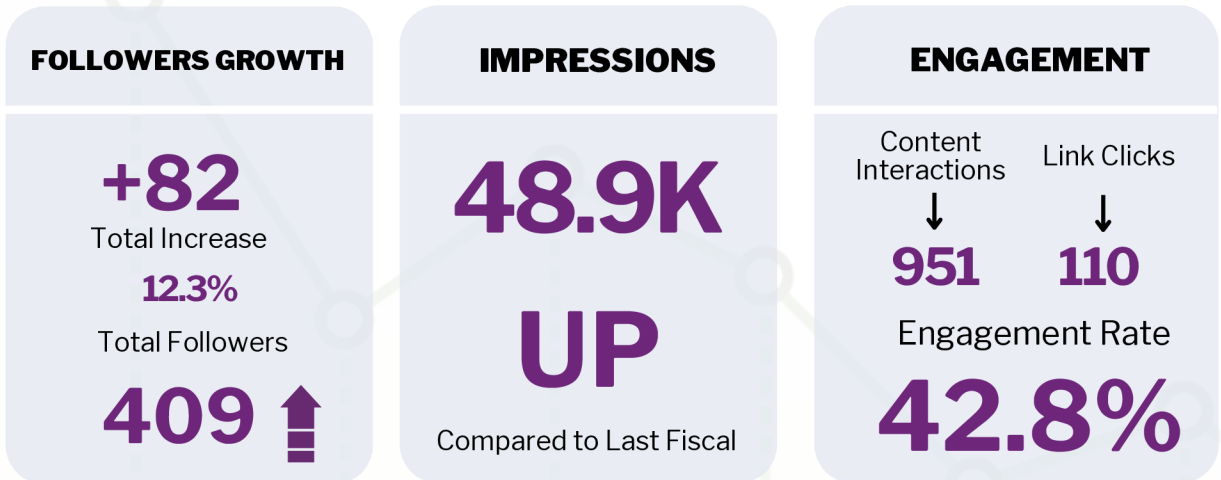
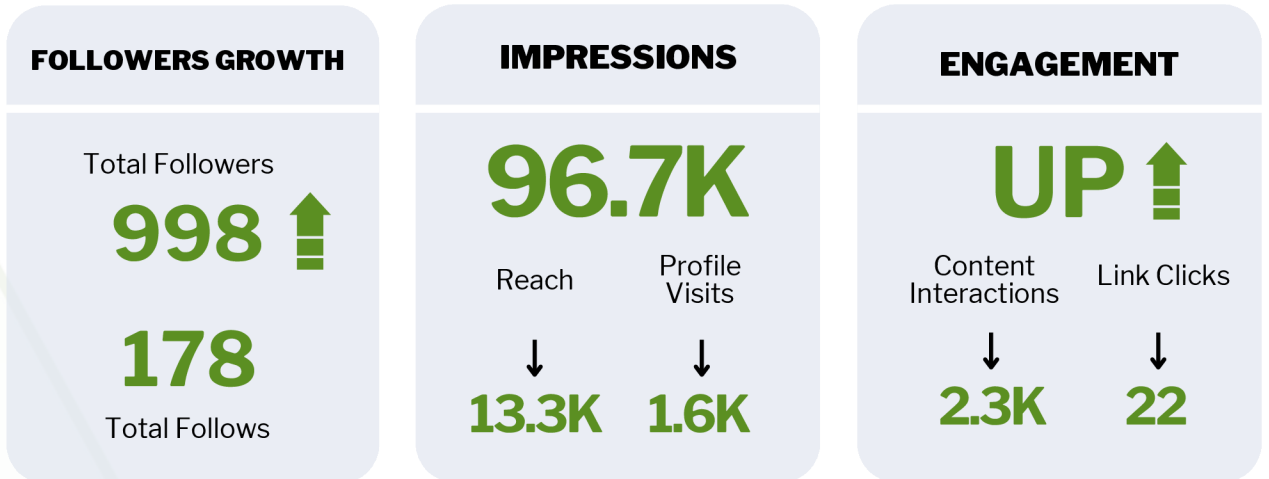
Since launching Community Matters in January 2025, our newsletter has shown strong and consistent growth in both reach and engagement. Our mailing list has grown steadily with email deliveries consistently above 98% for every issue. Open rates have climbed from 30% in January to 40% in October, showing a significant increase in reader engagement over the year. Click rates have ranged from 2% to 20%, with the highest engagement seen in our January issue. Bounce rates have remained low, never exceeding 2%.

We have experimented with new content, including videos and links to external resources, which has helped drive traffic to our other platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook. As we continue to refine our content and processes, we are excited about the future of Community Matters for SLCS and our broader community.

Joseph Codina
Communications Lead

Social Media Statistics

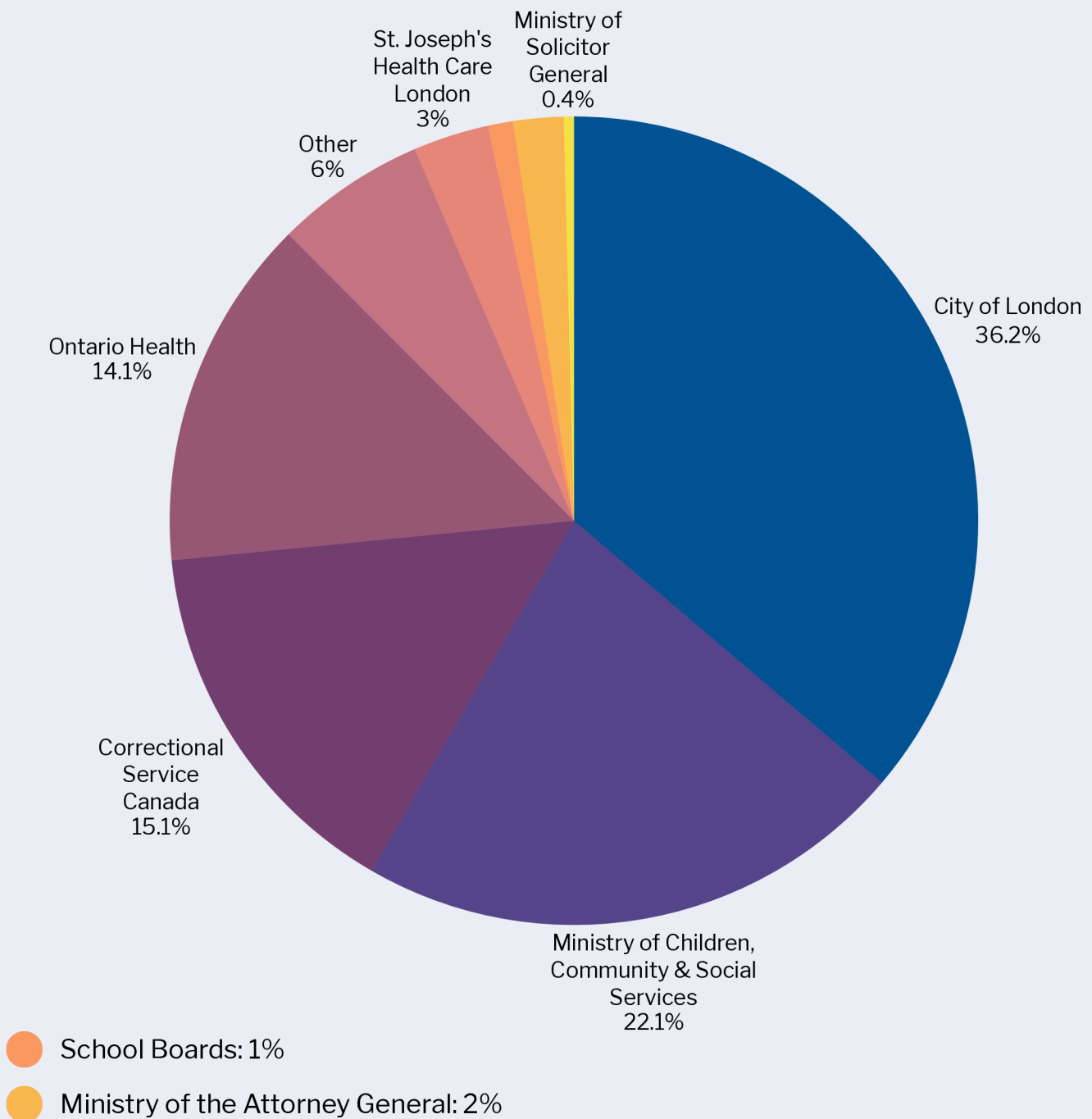
April 2025 - March 2026



Sources of Funding

2025-2026

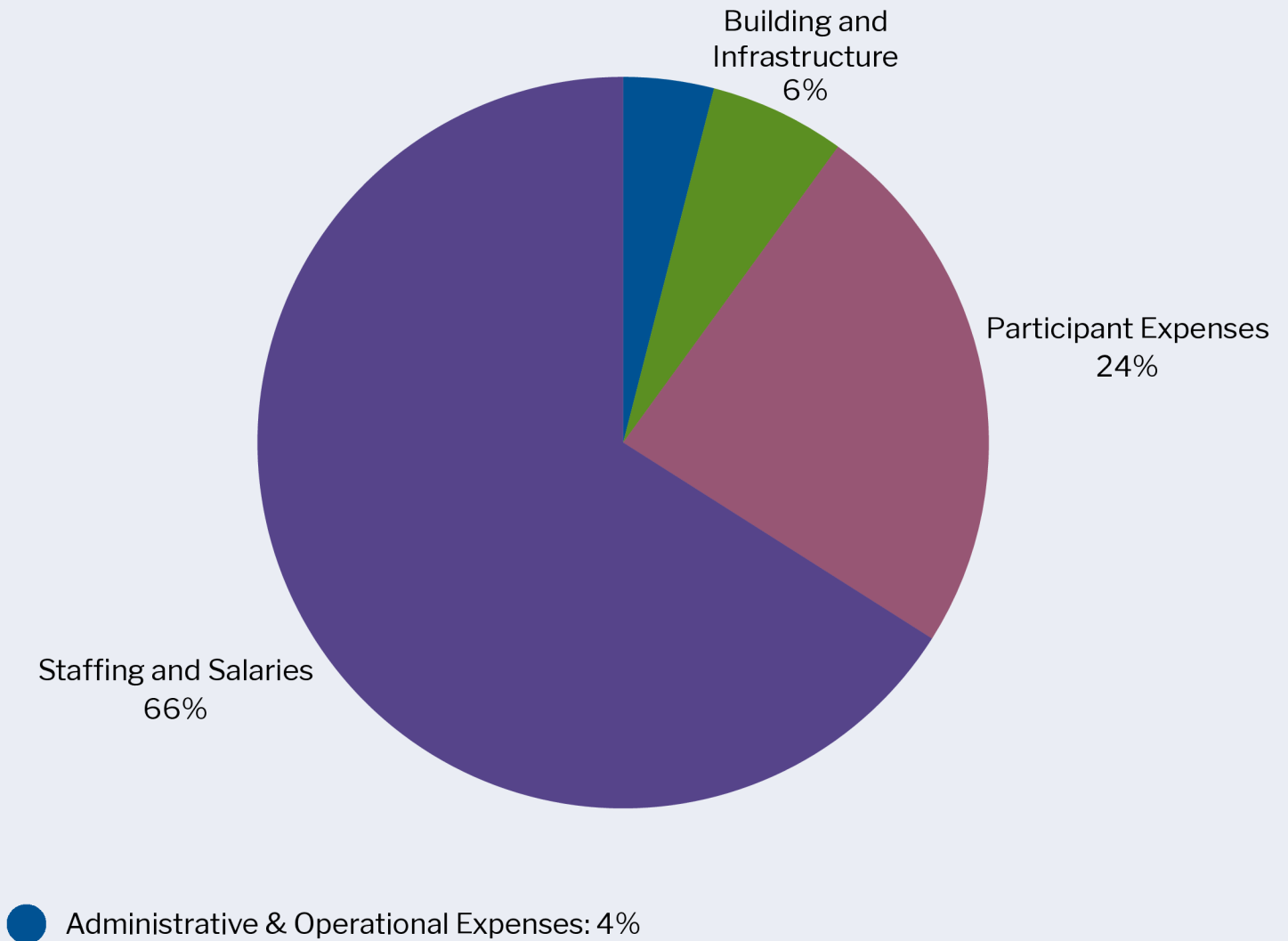
Revenue by Source



Sources of Expenses

2025-2026

Expenses by Category



About Us

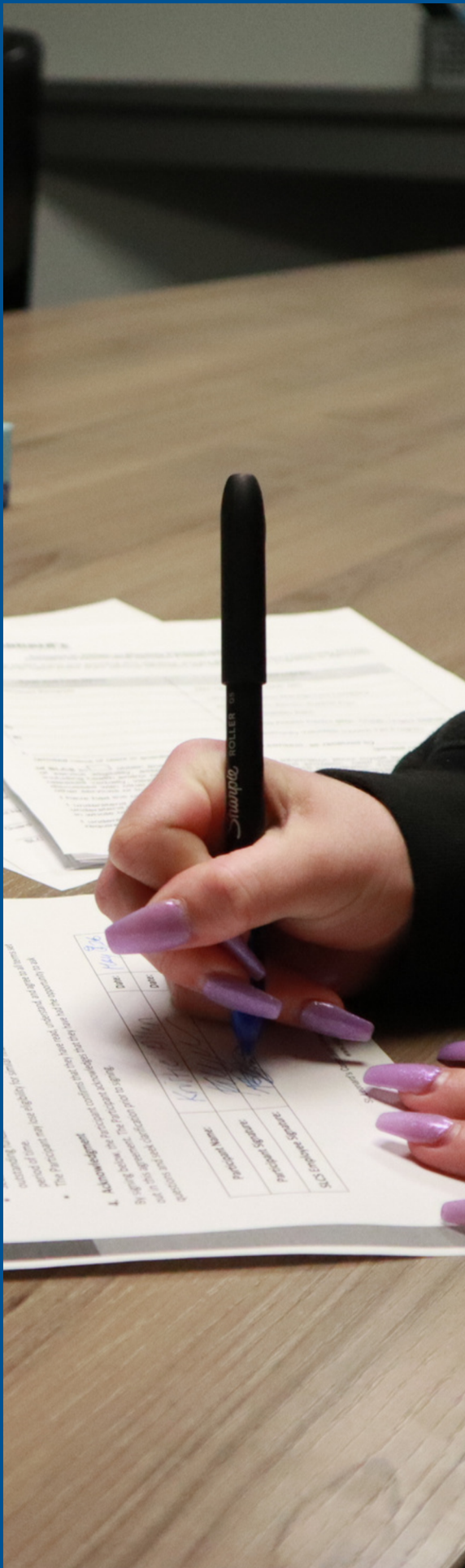
St. Leonard's Community Services London & Region

While St. Leonard's Society of London is our legal name, today, St. Leonard's is known as St. Leonard's Community Services, London & Region (SLCS). SLCS offers community-based support programs and residential centres that:

- Assist persons in conflict, or at risk of conflict, with the justice system, all within a restorative practices framework
- Develop, implement and advocate for improved policies, procedures and service delivery within the justice system to assist in the prevention of crime
- Promote acceptance of responsibility and accountability by persons in conflict with the law to assist with changing behaviour that contributes to crime
- Promote understanding and education to our communities about their responsibility in both the incidence of crime and in the manner in which society responds to it

While SLCS continues to evaluate and respond to the needs of the communities it serves, the spirit of SLCS remains consistent with the original core values its founding members shared.





Mission

To support and advocate with individuals who are, or who are at risk of being, justice-involved.

Vision

A community where everyone feels safe, valued, and supported.

Values

Inclusion

Collaboration

Compassion

Accountability



St. Leonard's
community services
LONDON & REGION

*A community where
everyone feels safe,
valued, and supported.*

Our administrative offices and many of our community-based programs are located at:

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London, ON

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Telephone: 519-850-3777

Fax: 519-850-1396

Website: www.slcs.ca

