



Roots
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ROOTS ANNUAL REPORT

- 2024 -

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WHO WE ARE

Roots is a French registered association based on the outskirts of Grande Synthe near Dunkirk. The services we provide include access to fresh water, access to showers, information and phone charging, hygiene supplies and providing camp maintenance.

While the way we support people in Dunkirk has changed over the years the work we do remains as vital as ever. We constantly evaluate our services, working alongside other organisations to maximise support without duplication.

Roots adapts constantly to the ever changing dynamics in camp. This is dictated mainly by regular evictions which can see people relocating their living places farther away from water points, and the distribution area being changed, making accessibility challenging for us and other organisations.



Our primary objective is to offer all of our services with as much dignity and care as is possible. These services are primarily, but not limited to:

The Community Hub
WASH - plus provision and laundry of towels for La Croix Rouge and the Refugee Women's Centre (RWC).
Waste Management

We also assist with hot food distributions.



COMMUNITY HUB

Charging and wifi provision are crucial. We run charge and wifi through our Community Hub, enabling people to stay connected. Phone and power bank charging and access to data is incredibly important. Many people are separated from family and friends and need phones to remain connected. It is also a lifeline. People can access information about services on the ground, safety information and emergency contacts. This autonomy is a fundamental necessity.

The Hub also serves as a place for respite. We provide gazebos with sides and doors to offer shelter and heat when the weather is wet and cold. We have two portable gas heaters to help keep people warm. Our team is on site five times a week, six hours a day, when other organisations are not, to provide the optimum service for as many people as possible.

We also provide games: Connect 4, cards, dominoes, and colouring books and pens. When the weather allows these are offered outside under a gazebo for shade.

New for 2024 was the introduction of a TV to screen downloaded football matches. This became so popular that we introduced a smart TV and we played films for children and adults on Christmas Day. By providing more gazebos we do not take away from the tables used for charging. We also bring chairs to offer more comfortable seating to people.



SHOWERS

We relaunched our hot shower project on September 7th 2024

We ran these showers 4 days a week from 11 am until 3 pm

Up to 64 people per day can shower with 4 shower cubicles

We provided *529* hot showers in 2024. With four shower units in place we could offer up to 64 hot showers per session. We dedicated the final hour at the end of the main session to women and children only. We brought two portable boilers on site for hot water and supplied all the towels, hygiene supplies and, where possible, aftershave, perfume, and make up allowing people to do their hair, make up, nails, etc



**This project can only run in non-freezing temperatures and calm weather. Unfortunately the new designated site for the showers is very exposed. Consequently we can incur significant damage during the winter. We aim to run the hot shower project for up to 9 months of the year - depending on funding, weather, vehicles and volunteer numbers.

WATER



The water project has evolved considerably since we first began distributing as an emergency response to the big eviction of 2021. We used to provide fresh clean water via IBC's as shown in the photo on the left. On average we had six IBC's, each holding 1,000 litres, positioned within a 5 km radius of the distribution sites.

Following the eviction of 2021 which saw Roots distributing up to 18,000 litres of water a day in the summer months, we, along with other organisations, liaised with the local authority, the CUD, and a water point was installed in December 2023. Following a further eviction of the sites used to distribute and provide services, the CUD consulted us about alternative locations for water access. A second water point was installed at the then distribution site,. Following yet another eviction in September 2024 when all organisations were relocated to our present site, the water points were also moved. Currently there are three water points: one near a site we call Families, the other two opposite the distribution site.

Once the CUD provided the water points it enabled troughs and taps to be installed and gave easier access to water to people in the living areas. Water is available 24/7 . We have placed plastic bottles with shampoo, handwash, shower gel and laundry detergent and we provide laminated visual aids explaining each bottle.

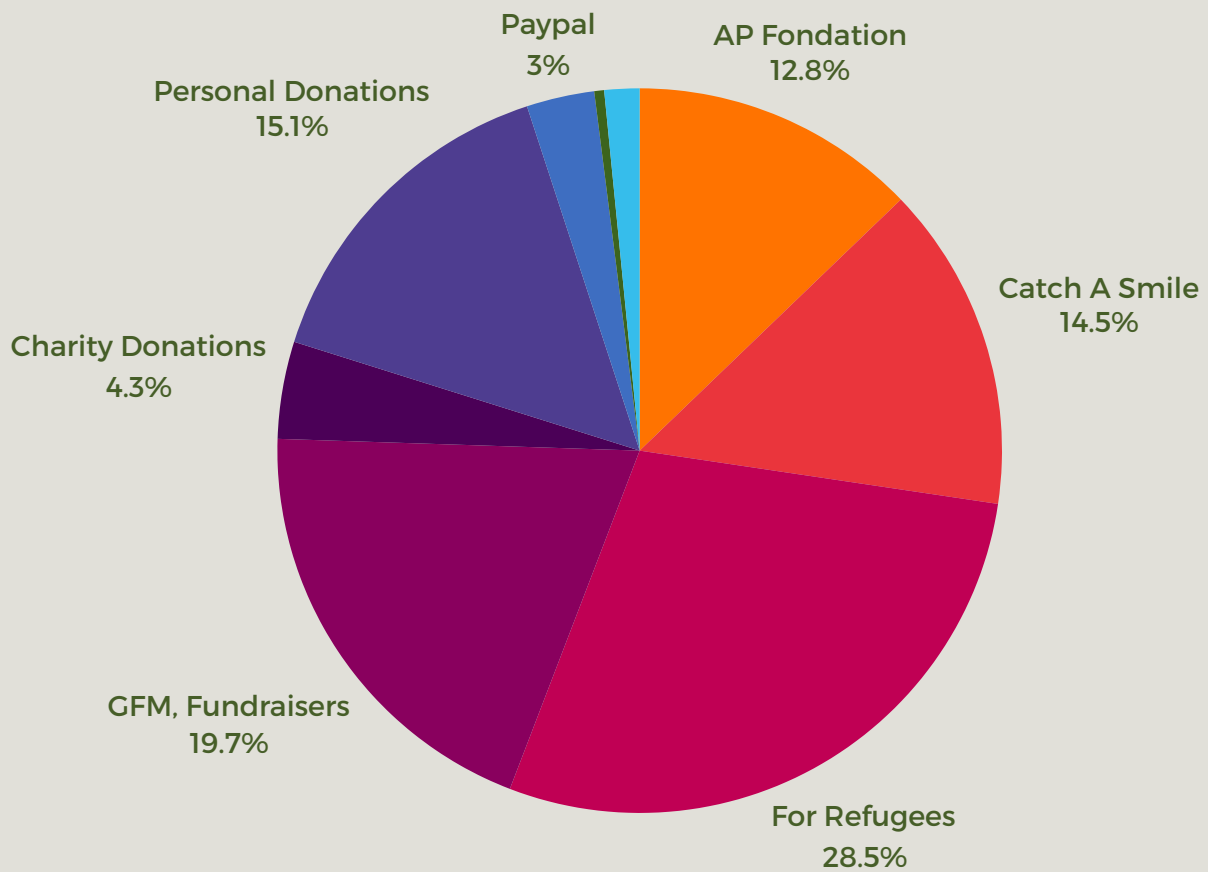


HYGIENE

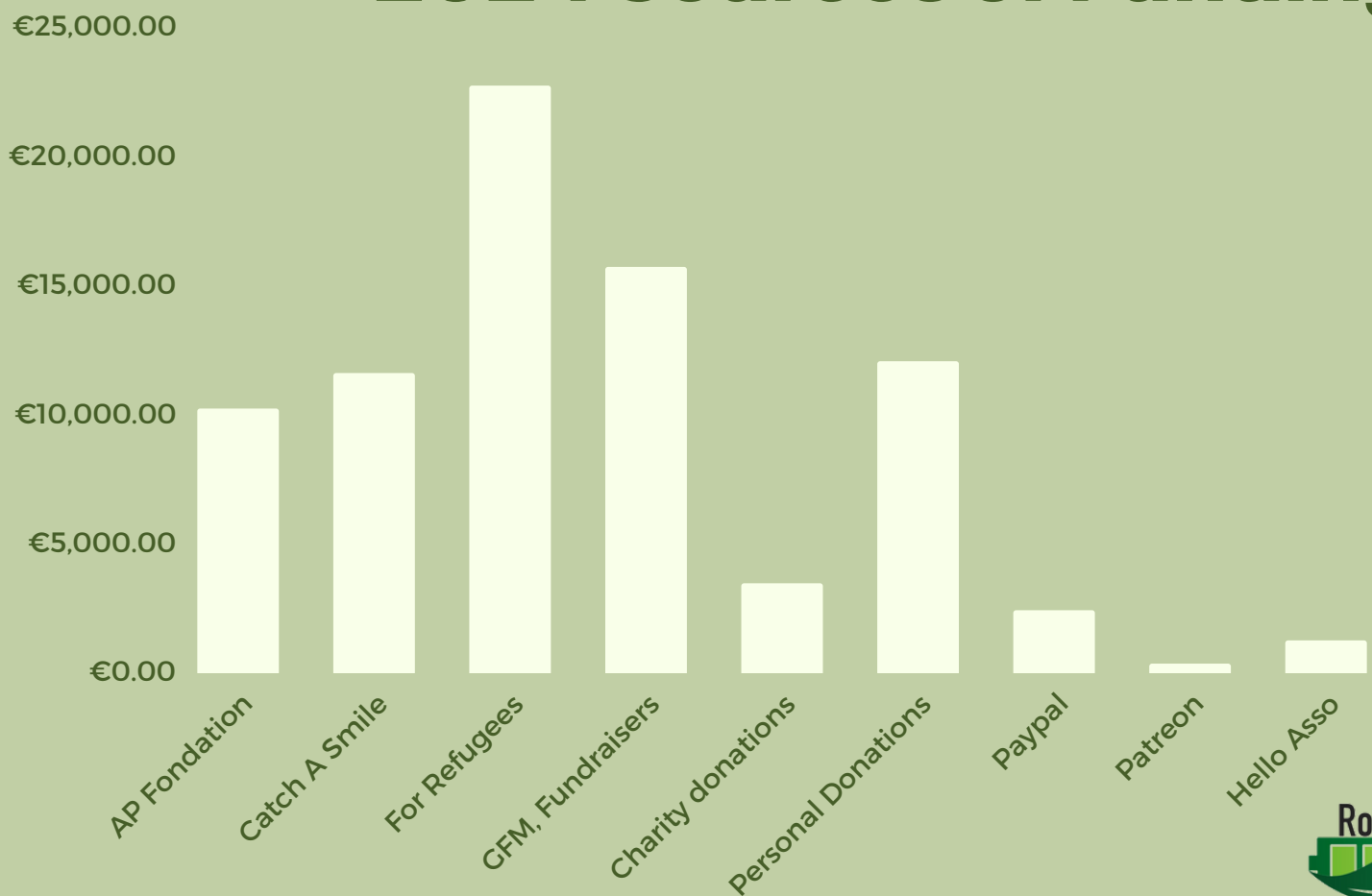
Our hygiene project is the umbrella project for all our activities related to keeping the living areas clean and tidy for people to live in. It is integrated with the water and shower project: Each water point is equipped with holders for liquid soap, shower gel, shampoo and washing up liquid, as well as bars of soap and tubes of toothpaste. We clean the water points at least once a day. We keep a stock of hygiene items - toothbrushes, deodorant, razors and shaving foam sachets, combs and nail clippers - which are available daily upon request. Starting in 2024 we offer pre-prepared packs of Nappies (in all sizes) with wet wipes in a zip lock bag, as well as women's hygiene items again in a zip lock bag.



Maintaining a hygienic environment is incredibly important. We ensure that each time we clean the taps at the water points and replenish the hygiene supplies, we are also doing a 15 minute litter pick. At each water point we provide bins that we empty on a daily basis. When we have visiting groups or a large number of volunteers we organise a large litter pick. These vital services complement our other daily operations.



2024 Sources of Funding



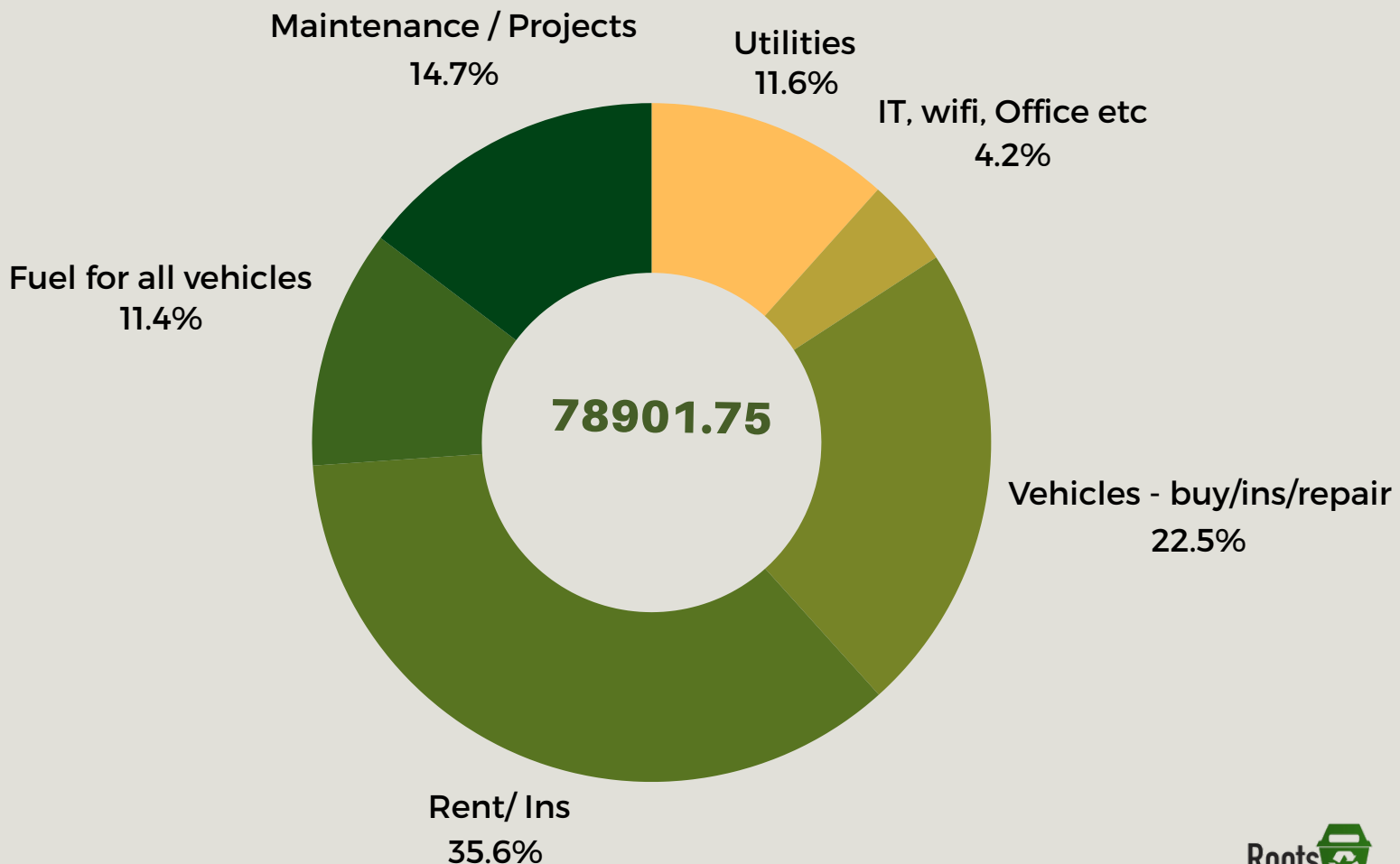
Expenditure

The warehouse and the running costs represent our biggest expenses. However the warehouse enables us to not only maintain and enhance our projects but also offer the services of our WASH project to other organisations. We provide both the Croix Rouge and the RWC with towels for their shower days. We also launder constantly hundreds and hundreds of towels every week!

In 2024 we acquired a van, 'DeeDee', which serves as the workhorse for both the shower project and the Community Hub.

Vehicles endure heavy use and frequently need repairs. We have reduced fuel costs in 2024 because we no longer need to distribute up to 18,000 litres of water every day.

Warehouse Rent, Ins	25158.98
Utilities	8210.38
IT, wifi, Office Supplies	2976.02
Vehicles - buy, fix, Insure	15913.69
Fuel for all vehicles	8045.96
Maintenance / Projects/LPG Gas etc	18596.72



Collaboration

We work closely with other organisations to ensure delivery of consistent and valuable services. Effective action relies on collaboration and so we prioritize regular communication with others.

Whether providing showers directly or indirectly we have made sure that other associations can rely on us to support them throughout the year. La Croix Rouge offer showers at a gymnasium twice a week and we supply and launder all the towels and flannels they use. We also provide toiletries when needed. RWC (Refugee Womens Centre) provide showers specifically for women and children; we assist them through the provision of towels and flannels, also washing and drying them.

When groups visit us for the day, or the weekend, we utilise them to make a positive impact on the litter situation. Our litter picking days have been attended by fabulous volunteers from Care4Calais, Calais Action, Camcrag, Calais Light, RefYouMe and the NEU.



In 2024 we continued to support RCK (Refugee Community Kitchen). Due to low volunteer numbers they could not prepare food but not distribute it so, since 2023, we have been distributing food on their behalf and will continue to do so into 2025.

A total of 25,977 portions of food were distributed by Roots in 2024 !!



VOLUNTEERS & KEY POINTS IN 2024

In 2024 we welcomed 187 volunteers with 11 returning more than once and 4 coming back more than four times.

We rely entirely on volunteers to keep Roots running and we are deeply grateful for the energy that every volunteer brings with them and to the community which develops with each and every person. Thanks to their commitment, we are able to grow and improve our services for the people we support.

Positive Changes

Some of the changes we have implemented in 2024 are:

- Introducing Roots' logo gilets - for easy identification on site now we regularly have groups as well as longer term volunteers.
- Launched a new Fundraiser Reward System whereby an individual can earn Roots merchandise by either hosting a fundraising event or setting up a GoFundMe.
- Purchased new Gazebos and repaired existing ones.
- Welcomed our first NEU delegation and will continue these into 2025.
- Bwgan a collaboration with the UK based charity RAN.
- Hosted delegations from Calais Light which will continue into 2025.
- Relaunched the Hot Shower Project.
- Relaunched the Community Hub which is now operating 5 days a week.
- Continue to work with CamCrag and RefYouMe.
- Purchased 'DeeDee' our 'new to us' van.

At Roots we are funded solely by goodwill!!! We rely 100% on donations, fundraisers grants. In 2024 we received incredible support from the public and thanks to these donations we have been able to offer our regular services and introduce / relaunch others.

We have a great relationship with many organisations both old and new (to us) including:

Catch A Smile
Calais Light
NEU (National Education Union)
CamCrag
Calais Action
Abbe Pierre Fondation (grant)

We have also introduced Patreon allowing you to make a regular monthly payment of your choice

.
Thank you all for your support in 2024 and we hope this continues in 2025 - it's thanks to you all that we can do what we do.

