

6 August 2020

Dear Member of the Scottish Parliament

### **Preventing Evictions During a Pandemic**

We are writing to ask for your urgent support in extending an important aspect of Scotland's coronavirus response. Please help prevent an increase in homelessness this autumn by supporting an extension to temporary safeguards relating to evictions.

The [Everyone Home Collective](#) came together early in the pandemic because we knew the conditions were being created for a surge in homelessness; we want to do all we can to prevent that. The Collective of organisations from across the third, academic, legal and advice sectors meet frequently on priorities to mitigate the worst impacts of the pandemic on people affected by or at risk of homelessness in Scotland.

A second wave of new eviction cases that may result from the social and economic impact of COVID-19 can be mitigated by Parliament extending the provisions from 30 September to April 2021 in the first instance. This was also a key recommendation of the expert [Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Action Group](#).

We are concerned that if these temporary measures are lifted prematurely you may see an increase in homelessness in your constituency. With the pandemic far from being over and the lasting impact on unemployment unknown, this would be devastating for individuals and families and counter to good public health outcomes in the community.

**Members across the Scottish Parliament can make sure that people with the most insecure housing and economic conditions do not shoulder the impact of this pandemic.**

Evicting people into rooflessness is to be avoided at any time, especially during a public health emergency. It is crucial that we all play our part to prevent homelessness from happening in the first place and that we ensure tenants and landlords have the support they need to resolve any issues. The majority of evictions are due to rent arrears, and we counter the position that people who can pay and don't are a significant number. The Collective are much more likely to advise and support people with rent arrears who have significant money challenges, people with many other life stresses, and people who avoid official correspondence because of mounting pressures affecting their health and wellbeing. Each case has a unique, very real and very human story. These households need our help, especially now and in the aftermath of this pandemic.

These are not ordinary circumstances. The emergency measures put in place quickly and with Parliament's support have helped many people stay safe and well over the past few months. This is why we are urging you to support the extension of emergency legislation on evictions up to April 2021 in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

*the undersigned*

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