

# Homeless Network Scotland

we are all in



## Our Impact

July to December 2020

## Connect, Learn & Act on homelessness to end it for good



### Measuring Our Impact: July to December 2020

Connecting with a wider network is the lifeblood of our work and, as we worked out the logistics, it felt great to connect directly with more people in more ways than we did in the first half of 2020.

What's been important to us is being part of the continued progress on homelessness, despite the challenging circumstances. During this period, that included Scotland's Housing First Pathfinder continuing to pick up pace. A re-shaping of night-shelter accommodation that not just responds to the public health emergency but provides a platform to design-out dormitory style accommodation from our homelessness system. And the kick-starting of a concerted, systems-wide response for people with no recourse to public funds.

While sadly much of the coming six-month period will still be under restrictions, we look forward to connecting and learning with you.



**Maggie Brünjes**  
Chief Executive

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# Connect

## What we did

We connected with people across Scotland, facilitating conversations on plans to end rough sleeping across Scotland, prioritising permanent over temporary solutions for people experiencing homelessness, and agreeing priorities for our post-Covid recovery.

As with all of our work we attempted to place people and partnerships at the heart of our achievements.

## Across Scotland

We continued to connect with partners across Scotland, including

### Safe as Houses Annual Conference



More than 500 attendees joined us over three days in October for the Safe as Houses conference, connecting with more than 60 speakers sharing ideas and insights in our first online conference. Safe as Houses provided a menu of live lounge discussions, keynotes, video features, speed training and briefing with insights from sector leaders, politicians, and people with an experience of homelessness.



Read the Report  
& the 10 Takeaway  
Messages

<https://bit.ly/2YYv08o>



## In partnership with Frontline Network

We welcomed 58 people to our Acronyms Aweigh event, held in partnership with Frontline Network, to brief staff across the homelessness sector on the headlines from the reconvened Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) and updated Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan (EHT).



**"I found the event to be very interesting and informative. Great to hear other views and perspectives from others in other areas"**

**"Well organised, warm and inclusive atmosphere. Ideal chance to link to colleagues in other services"**

## Housing First Scotland Re-Connect Event

50 Housing First Pathfinders and Leaders attended the first online Connect event, sharing lessons from continuing to scale-up Housing First while managing restrictions in place as a result of the pandemic.

 **Read Reconnect**  
<https://bit.ly/3cFLvON>



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## Across the UK

Between July and December 2020, we connected with colleagues and partners across the UK, including:



- Presenting at the Housing First in Wales webinar, hosted by Cymorth Cymru, to share learning from the delivery of Housing First in Scotland
- Participating in the Westminster All Party Parliamentary Group on Ending Homelessness with Dr Sam Tsemberis (founder of Housing First) and Andy Burnham (Mayor of Greater Manchester) to launch the Housing First enquiry
- Joining a host of UK charities at the Homelessness Roundtable hosted by the Royal Foundation to shape the priorities for the work of the Foundation going forward
- Presenting at the Northern Ireland Annual Housing Conference to discuss Rapid Rehousing and Housing First



 **All-Party Parliamentary Group for Ending Homelessness**  
<https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/appg-for-ending-homelessness>

## Across Europe

We also connected with partners across Europe:

Participating in the Urban Thinkers Campus with World Habitat, sharing the challenges and successes in responding to homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic including the intensive work to provide rough sleepers with accommodation, and prioritising a public health approach by ensuring emergency responses included people with no recourse to public funds.



 **Covid-19 Urban Thinkers Campus | Report Series 2**  
<https://www.worldurbancampaign.org/covid-19-urban-thinkers-campus>

# Learn

## What we did

We prioritised our role as a knowledge-based organisation, promoting and sharing learning across our networks and partnerships.

This included streamlining the recommendations of the reconvened Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) into short guides for local authority and housing association colleagues.

Responding to  
**COVID-19**

## Destitution in the UK publication HNS locality co-ordinator role

The third in the series of the Destitution in the UK research series, funded by JRF and delivered by I-SPHERE at Heriot-Watt University, was published in December 2020, and we were pleased to reprise our locality co-ordinator role to support the fieldwork in Glasgow.

The research makes clear the growing scale of destitution across the UK, and highlights the importance of a decent, affordable home in coping with the impact of Covid-19.

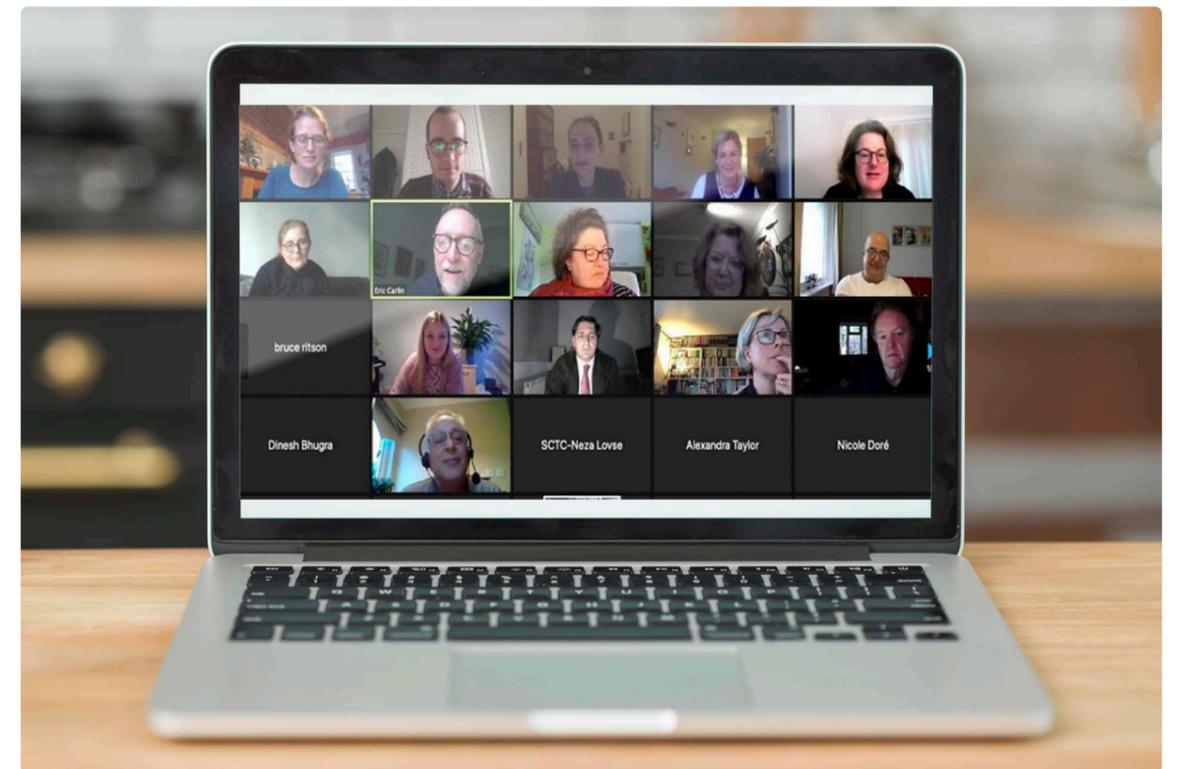
## Destitution in the UK 2020 | JRF

Exploring the factors that influence harmful alcohol use through the refugee journey

We supported the delivery and launch of research exploring the factors that influence harmful alcohol use through the refugee journey, funded by Scottish Health Action on Alcohol Problems (SHAAP) and undertaken by Dr Fiona Cuthill and Dr Steph Grohmann of the University of Edinburgh.

The research, published in November 2020, highlighted the range of ways the asylum and refugee system can trigger harmful alcohol use, particularly in relation to claims being denied, having no recourse to public funds, and not being able to work.

In the coming period we will actively connect this learning with the work of the Everyone Home Collective and the implementation of the route-map to end destitution in Scotland.



**Destitution in the UK 2020**

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-uk-2020>

## Scottish Government Consultation responses

After connecting with the sector, we submitted two consultation responses to the Scottish Government: one to support the intended legislative change to modify local connection rules, giving people more choice over where in the country they make their homelessness application, and the second to offer feedback on the draft guidance to support the implementation of the revised Unsuitable Accommodation Order to ensure definitions of what is unsuitable are as clear as possible for frontline staff, and for people who require temporary accommodation.

Linking  
with  
Scottish  
Government



**The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2020 – Draft Guidance (October 2020)**

<https://bit.ly/2MNkb6P>

**Consultation On A Ministerial Statement For Modifying Local Connection Referrals In Scotland (October 2020)**

<https://bit.ly/3aJ5OIB>

## HARSAG guides for Local Authorities and Social Housing Providers

We published two guides on the recommendations made by the reconvened Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group: one to support local authority leaders to transfer policy and practice recommendations into Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans, and the second to assist housing colleagues responsible for local policy and delivery.



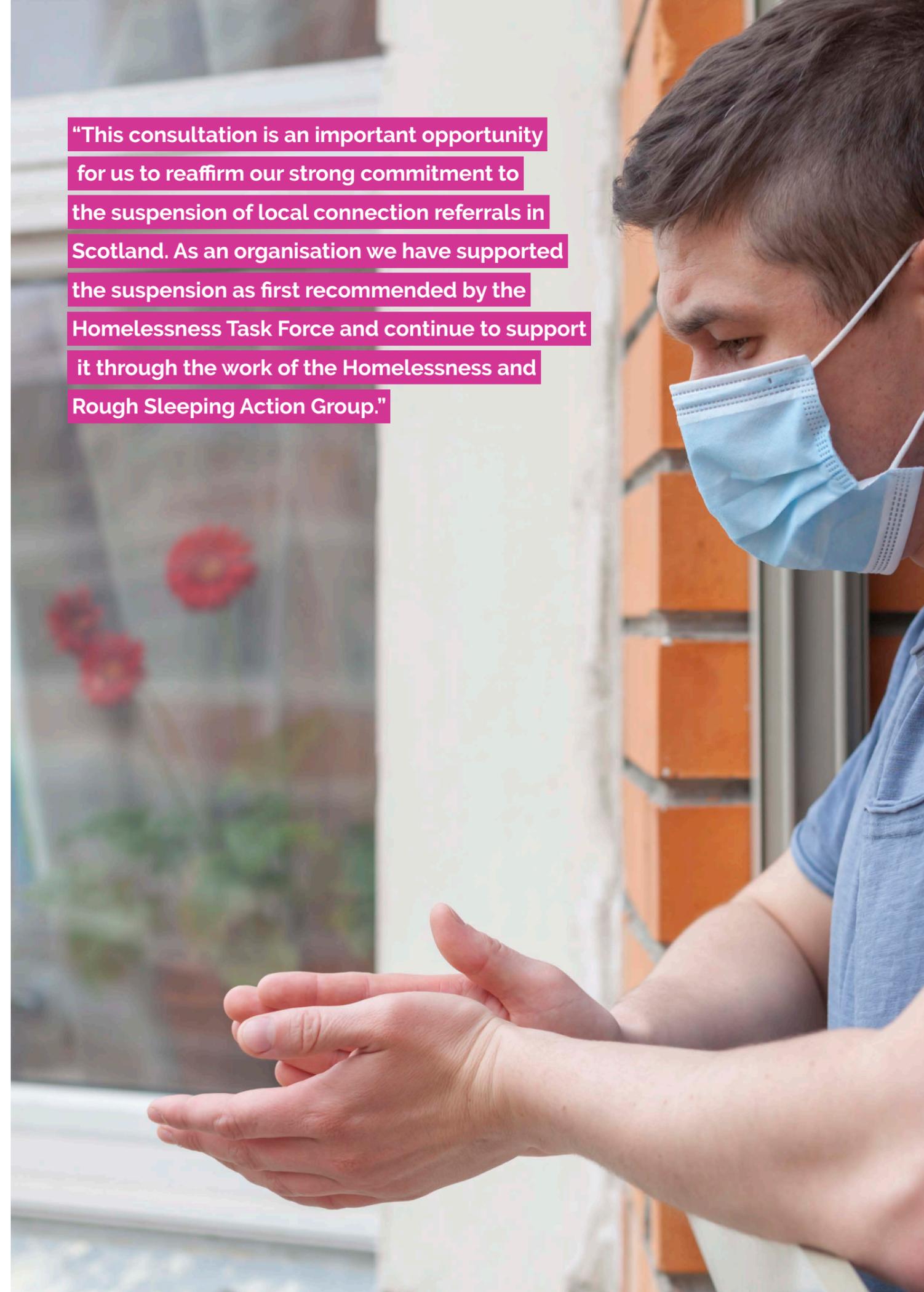
Providing  
Guidance



**RRTPs and HARSAG 2020:**  
What now? A short guide for social housing providers  
[http://bit.ly/RRTP2020\\_1](http://bit.ly/RRTP2020_1)

**Social Housing and HARSAG 2020:**  
What now? A short guide for local authorities  
[http://bit.ly/RRTP2020\\_2](http://bit.ly/RRTP2020_2)

**“This consultation is an important opportunity for us to reaffirm our strong commitment to the suspension of local connection referrals in Scotland. As an organisation we have supported the suspension as first recommended by the Homelessness Task Force and continue to support it through the work of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group.”**



# Act

## What we did

We continued to turn our connections and learning into action, ensuring we do more of what works and what matters, shifting away from what doesn't.

## What impact we made

### Prioritise Prevention



Since the launch of the Prevention Commission in January 2020, the group went from strength to strength in the second half of the year. Using their personal and frontline experience of homelessness, the Commission continued to discuss proposed new prevention duties in Scotland and share their perspective with the Prevention Review Group.

As the work comes to an end, members of the Commission are delighted to have influenced the thinking of the Review Group, particularly in terms of:

- Embedding choice and control into future duties to ensure they are not restrictive and leave people with no part to play in their own positive solutions
- Developing a Duty to Ask, meaning that we simply start by asking people “what needs to happen to prevent you from becoming homeless?”
- Ensuring that new legal duties allow enough time to intervene to find sustainable solutions, and that offers of accommodation are stable and secure



**JOYCE**

Being part of the commission has allowed me to review my own knowledge and passion, I'm now encouraged to learn more. Also meeting new people and gaining friendships has been great.

Working with the commission has given me the chance to challenge my own thinking, blending the old way of working with the new.



**DAVY**



Meeting Reports

[homelessnetwork.scot/prevention-commission](https://homelessnetwork.scot/prevention-commission)

## Protecting Homes in Communities Across Scotland

Everyone Home

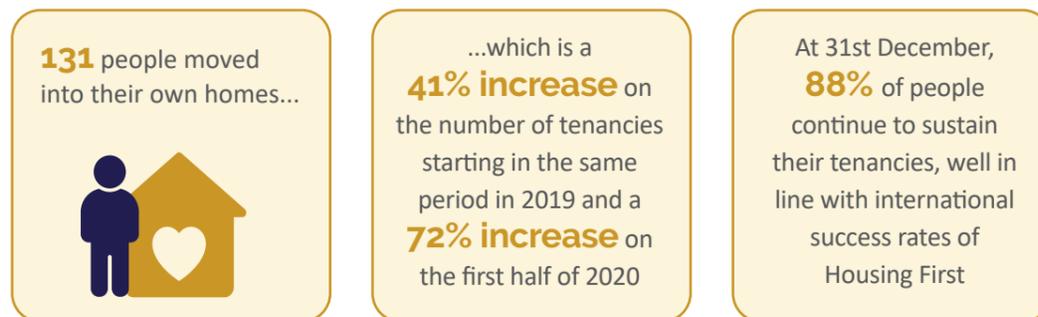


The Everyone Home Collective developed and published a route-map focused on preventing homelessness by protecting homes in communities across the country. The route-map sets out the gains of taking a place-based approach to homelessness prevention, setting out actions that can be taken in local communities now to protect people's homes, as well as the partnership working needed to ensure that we collectively prioritise prevention.

 [A Route-Map to Protect Homes in Communities Across Scotland](https://www.everyonehome.scot/pdf/route-map-4.pdf)  
<https://www.everyonehome.scot/pdf/route-map-4.pdf>

## Transition To Rapid Rehousing

### Scotland's Housing First Pathfinder



July 2020 → December 2020

## A National Framework for Housing First

We launched a 7-week consultation period on the draft National Framework to Start-up and Scale-up Housing First in Scotland over a ten-year period, including key sections on:

- The evidence behind Housing First
- The policy framework in Scotland for Housing First
- Key learning from the implementation of Housing First to date
- Equalities considerations
- Fidelity, Evaluation & Quality
- A Live Status Report – what and who it will take to meet Housing First demand

74 people participated in the consultation, with 27 people completing an online survey and 47 people attending one of a series of consultation webinars held in partnership with the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, Public Health Scotland, Community Justice Scotland and the Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland.

 [A National Framework for Housing First Consultation](https://bit.ly/3ffwMcF)  
<https://bit.ly/3ffwMcF>



## Shared Spaces

Scotland's transition to Rapid Rehousing, which makes Housing First the default response for those that need it, creates a new set of questions for supported housing options across the country. To better understand the implications of the policy change we launched the Shared Spaces research project, funded in partnership with Action for Children, Crisis and Turning Point Scotland.

Undertaken by Indigo House, with the Research Advisory Group chaired by Dr Beth Watts from I-SPHERE at Heriot-Watt University, the research will seek to answer:

- In what circumstances, if any, is shared or supported accommodation the appropriate housing option for households experiencing homelessness?
- What should the shared and supported accommodation options required in these circumstances look like?
- What is the likely scale of such shared and supported accommodation options likely to be in the future?
- How well placed are local authorities, HSCP's and service providers to adopt these housing options at the scale required?

The research fieldwork will continue into early 2021, with the findings due to be reported by Summer.



## End Rough Sleeping And Destitution

### Scotland's Ambition to End Destitution and Protect Human Rights

Following the publication of the Everyone Home Collective route-map in October 2020, the Scottish Government adopted a number of the recommendations into the updated Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan, including funding for the Everyone Home Collective to develop the NRPF Gateway, co-producing a Scotland-wide approach and network to ensure that people with no statutory entitlements have a safe place to stay with access to support, advice, information, advocacy and representation.



#### Route-Map 2 : Scotland's Ambition to End Destitution and Protect Human Rights

<https://everyonehome.scot/pdf/route-map-2.pdf>



### Ending the Need for Night Shelter and Hotel Provision

Following the publication of the Everyone Home Collective route-map to end the need for night shelter and hotel provision, the Scottish Government adopted the commitment into the updated Ending Homelessness Together Action Plan, committing to:

**“Support our partners to modify existing night shelter provision in Edinburgh and Glasgow in winter 2020/21 and actively end the use of night shelter and dormitory-style provision in future”**

*(Scottish Government, Ending Homelessness Together, Oct 20)*

From 1st December 2020, the night shelters in Glasgow and Edinburgh, run by Glasgow City Mission and Bethany Christian Trust, changed to Welcome Centres which offer single-occupancy hotel rooms as emergency accommodation rather than dormitory style accommodation.

## More Lived Experience

### Glasgow Alliance to End Homelessness

Following the recruitment and establishment of the Glasgow Alliance to End Homelessness we supported 8 people with personal experience of homelessness to play a full and equal role in the ten different Alliance working groups including Service Design, Income & Resources, Performance & Strategy and the Alliance Leadership Team.

#### Feedback on Emergency Accommodation in Glasgow

Members of the **Glasgow Homelessness and Feedback Team** spoke to 43 people experiencing homelessness in Glasgow, including in hotels being used as emergency accommodation as a response to coronavirus pandemic.

Following the focus groups and interviews and focus groups in the Alexander Thomson Hotel, a short-term working group was established by the Glasgow Alliance to End Homelessness to identify and implement priority improvements across all hotels being used as emergency pandemic accommodation. During follow up consultation, residents noted a series of improvements >>

The food is much better now, and there's always plenty to eat

I always know what's going on with my support and my move on plans and if I'm not sure then I can just ask the staff and they'll find out for me

# Systems And Culture Change

## All in for Change

18 Change Leads with personal and frontline experience of homelessness continued to lead the All in for Change Programme, including:

- Attending and contributing to 3 meetings of the Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group
- Participating in the local authority Unsuitable Accommodation Order working group
- Assessing applications to the Homelessness Prevention Fund in partnership with the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations
- Contributing to the development of Everyone Home Collective route-maps



Read the All in for Change Briefings  
[homelessnetwork.scot/change-team](https://homelessnetwork.scot/change-team)

Frontline Experience

## New System Alliance

In partnership with Mayday Trust, Platform, Changing Lives and the National Lottery Communities Fund we launched the New System Alliance, working for a total change in the systems people come up against when they experience tough times. Since the launch, 177 people and organisations have become allies to create a paradigm shift, where people can take control and together we can respond in a new way to finally make systems work for people.



The New System Alliance  
<https://newsystemalliance.org>

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