

Dear Ministers

Following this week's statement by the First Minister, those of us concerned about homelessness were reassured by the Scottish Government's continued commitment to resolve the issue, including £3.5 billion to deliver 100,000 affordable homes.

For the cabinet, ministers and MSPs this period is the beginning of a new Parliamentary term buoyed by our shared hopes for a brighter future. Recognising that Scotland's journey to eradicate homelessness is continuing, not starting, is central to defining that future, as well as protecting the remarkable progress made to date. We see a welcome focus on action in the first 100 days, and beyond. Because ending homelessness in Scotland IS possible – IF we continue to act on what works, and what matters.

Scotland has Europe's strongest homelessness legislation and policy – but change on the ground can feel slow. Please consider what we believe are the five most important 'known knowns' shaping what we are doing, framing what has been achieved and guiding future direction:

1. **Housing ends homelessness.** Scotland will have ended homelessness when every person has a safe place to build and live their life, not just a safe place to sleep. Housing should be in communities that people want to live in. Housing First redresses disadvantage among people whose homelessness is made harder by experiences with trauma, addictions and mental health.
2. **We are not all at equal risk.** Estimates show eight per cent of the Scottish population will experience homelessness and we can predict those at greatest risk. Poverty is the most powerful driver, with child poverty a key predictor of homelessness later. We are over eight times more likely to become homeless if household income is under £10k than if over £20k.
3. **Homelessness arrives late in most cases.** Councils and charities are carrying the can for missed opportunities to prevent homelessness early. All homelessness starts in a community, and a place-based approach to prevention – tightened by a new legal duty on the wider public sector - can stop it happening.

**Homeless Network Scotland**

Charity Registered in Scotland (SC0 03453) and Company Limited by Guarantee (SC112361)  
Registered Office at Unit 16a, Adelphi Centre  
12 Commercial Road, Glasgow G5 0PQ  
Chief Executive: Margaret-Ann Brünjes

**Contact Us**

T: 0141 420 7272  
[hello@homelessnetwork.scot](mailto:hello@homelessnetwork.scot)  
w: [homelessnetwork.scot](http://homelessnetwork.scot)

4. **Hostels were closed for good reason.** Temporary accommodation is essential to avoid rough sleeping or other unsafe options on a daily basis. The scale offered by hostel and shared provision can seem appealing. However, that response cannot resolve homelessness, but maintains and sustains it. Evidence proves that a better response is to rapidly accommodate people in a home of their own.
5. **Homeless is a housing status, not a 'type' of person.** People and families affected have different experiences and priorities. Support needs to be person-led and integrated. Government funding for Housing First in Scotland is drawn from both homelessness and the health portfolios, evidence of a commitment to joint working. Ending homelessness depends on planning and commissioning across multiple sectors and taking an equalities approach.

**The Everyone Home Collective** is a group of 35 academic and third sector organisations, including this one, committed to ensuring that housing is the first line of defence in our recovery. The collective is working in partnership with **All in For Change**, bringing lived experience and frontline leadership. We extend a warm invitation to meet the collective to discuss our shared priorities and how we can help achieve our shared goal of eradicating homelessness in Scotland.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Brünjes', with a horizontal line underneath.

Maggie Brünjes  
**Chief Executive**