



# **Response to the Scottish Government's consultation on A New Deal for Tenants Draft Strategy**

## Our interest

Everyone Home is a collective of 36 third sector and academic organisations who came together in 2020 to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on the scale and experience of homelessness in Scotland. We span frontline services, accommodation, legal services and include intermediary, knowledge-based and campaigning organisations.

Rented housing, whether in the social or private sectors, is the most common housing option for people as they move on from a period of homelessness, and data also shows that we continue to see people become homeless because of a rented tenancy ending.

We welcome ongoing consideration by the Scottish Government and partners of how we can continually improve the rights of tenants, the duties of landlords, and the resources and support needed to ensure that tenants and future tenants are protected from homelessness and have a safe, secure home. Key to the success of these proposals will be their close alignment with the development of new homelessness prevention legislation and the planning and implementation of the National Care Service.



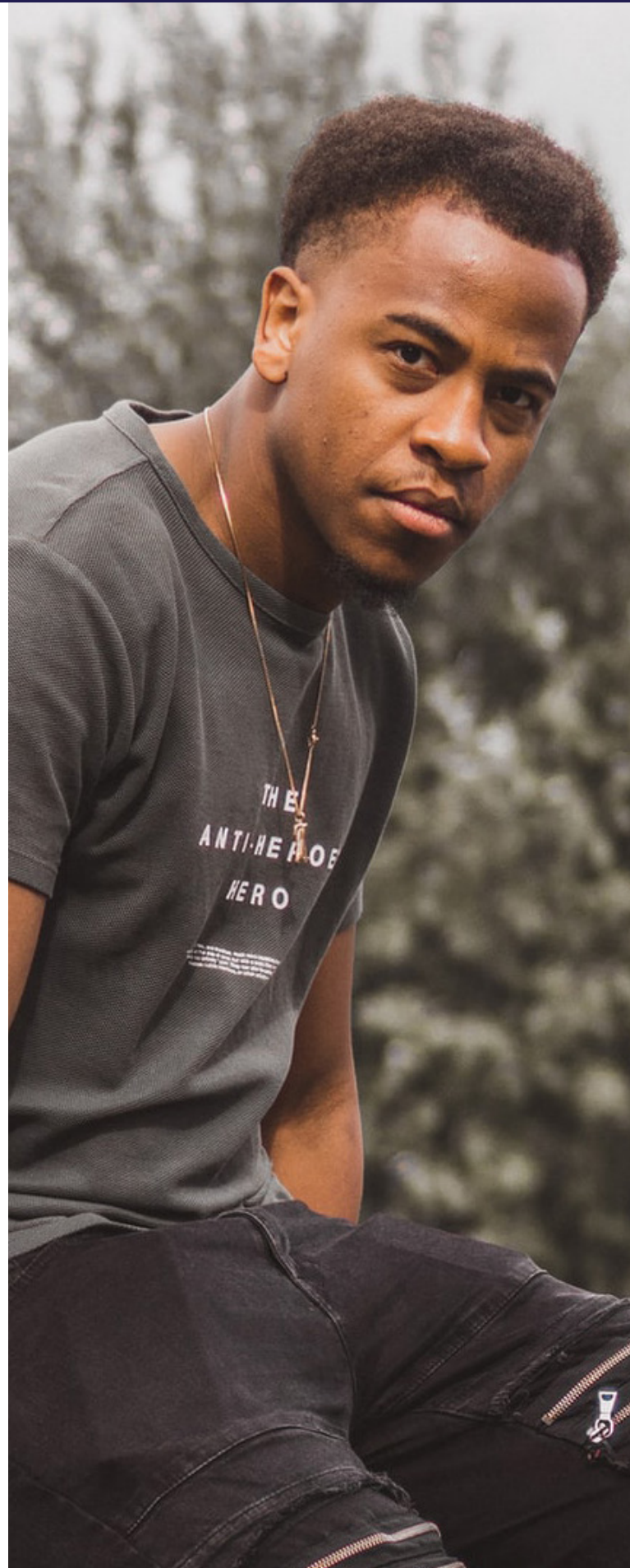
# Building on the Proposals

## No evictions into homelessness

There is clear alignment between the priorities of the Everyone Home Collective and the proposals put forward in the draft strategy in relation to reforming the eviction process. A core priority of the Collective is that nobody is evicted into homelessness, including people currently in asylum and support accommodation, and we believe that the New Deal for Tenants strategy is the ideal platform for taking forward legislation to this effect. The current draft strategy looks closely at winter evictions, but we believe we can go further and outlaw any instances of an eviction being undertaken when the tenant has nowhere to go. This draws a clear line between the objectives of the New Deal for Tenants strategy and the ongoing work to introduce new legal duties to prevent homelessness in Scotland, promoting consistent and complementary goals across the range of housing policies, strategies and legislation being taken forward currently.

In addition to a commitment for no evictions into homelessness, Everyone Home Collective would like to see:

- housing associations never evicting someone who has agreed to, and is meeting, the conditions of rent payment plans.
- more support for housing associations, councils and tenants to provide earlier support, protect homes and prevent evictions.
- reducing evictions on the grounds of rent arrears from the private rented sector.
- all tenants that need it being able to access the Scottish Government's Tenant Support Fund.
- local councils targeted use of Discretionary Housing Payments to help tenants and avoid eviction.
- an end to evictions into homelessness from asylum support accommodation with local authority protocols in place with Fair Way Scotland.



# Transforming the system

We agree that a transformative affordable housing programme and a collective responsibility to prevent homelessness in a way that recognises risk and impact is different for different people. And which takes a place-based approach, creating the right types of homes at the heart of communities working toward the principles of 20-minute neighbourhoods. We would like to see:

- a rights-based housing and homelessness system with the knowledge and resources to ensure our rights are upheld every time. This includes the right to legal advice and representation for everyone, regardless of immigration status.
- a fairer housing and homelessness system that redresses the inequality experienced by some of us.
- every young person has access to expert youth specific services to assist them to avoid, survive and move on from homelessness.
- an outcomes framework that demonstrates whether the national plan to end homelessness is working, with the third and academic sectors contributing data and insights.
- delivery of the social homes we need to reduce housing need.



# Clarity of Intended Impact

As partners in the homelessness sector, the Everyone Home Collective has seen the unintended outcomes of new legislation that either lacked a clear intended impact or did not properly resource the changes. While the principles of proposed legislation can be laudable, we are aware of the implementation gap that exists in Scotland between our progressive intentions and the delivery on the ground. One example of this is the groundbreaking change to homelessness legislation which effectively created a universal right to housing by removing any legal distinction between people with or without an identified priority need. An unintended consequence of this legal change was the increase in demand for temporary accommodation in Scotland, rising to record numbers in recent years, as well as prolonged stays in temporary accommodation and some local authorities being unable to fulfil their temporary accommodation duties.

With this experience in mind, we urge the Scottish Government to give careful consideration to all of the legislative proposals included in the draft strategy, ensuring there is a clear intended impact and that any changes are properly resourced to avoid implementation gaps like that outlined above to ensure that the vision that everyone has access to a warm, safe, affordable and energy efficient home that meets their needs is delivered.





## About The Collective

Everyone Home is a collective of 36 third and academic sector organisations that have come together during the COVID-19 pandemic to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on homelessness in Scotland. Read our framework at [www.everyonehome.scot](http://www.everyonehome.scot) and join us on social media at #EveryoneHome

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