









HITTING HOME THE MESSAGE

An evaluation of the first three years of All in For Change

OUR POWER POINTS

1. Bringing it!

The Change Team has been evaluated as bringing real added value to policy making in Scotland.



2. Building from it

But there is much more to do to implement change on the ground – at local and national level.



3. Joining it up

More urgent change is needed to connect services and create 'No Wrong Door' for people.



4. Seeing it

People do see some progress, despite growing pressure on people and the system.



5. Levelling it

Poverty and inequality causes homelessness, and we are determined to do more to address this.



6. Supporting it

More support for people who support people is badly needed.



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1. INTRODUCTION

All in for Change was launched in December 2019 to help close the gap between good policy and action on the ground. This was intended to help Scotland's new policy objectives around homelessness as set out in the joint Scottish Government/COSLA Ending Homelessness Together plan.

The programme is led by a Change Team of people from across Scotland committed to ending homelessness. 'Change Leads' include people with lived experience of homelessness, frontline workers and others working to address and end homelessness.

They are supported by partner organisations Homeless Network Scotland and Cyrenians, with the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) providing an advisory and evaluation role.

The main aim of this evaluation has been to assess what impact All in for Change has had.

2. HOW THE EVALUATION WAS CARRIED OUT

The evaluation has involved collecting information throughout the programme through a survey "Measuring What Matters".

In February to March 2023, a series of interviews were carried out to gather evidence of the impact the Change Team was having on the people involved.

Change Leads and a range of people working in homelessness policy* who had engaged with the Change Team took part in the evaluation.

This report brings together the survey data with the analysis of the interviews.



*The term policy officers are used to denote those working in a policy role though is not necessarily their official role or title within their organisation.

3. WHAT PEOPLE SAID

Why the Change Team is important

Engaging with the Change Team was seen by policy officers as a way of bringing the voice of lived experience into homelessness policy and service design. This was viewed as crucial to ensure that policy and services become more effective:

"It's completely inappropriate not to find a genuine way of uncovering the views and experiences of people, who have been homeless and people who have experience of frontline delivery, as they can have a better understanding of what needs to change and why."

Policy Officer

The Change Team's independence was seen as important, and their platform being supported by organisations like Homeless Network Scotland who don't provide direct services:

"I think it's really important to have an impartial and, almost at a distance, involvement of lived and living experience from your organisation. Because what I've seen in my career is when you bring in people to be part of your organisation and to form the lived and living experience, kind of group, if you like, there's a reticence for them to challenge that organisation. And they become employees of the organisation. In some ways, the impartiality is lost a little bit."

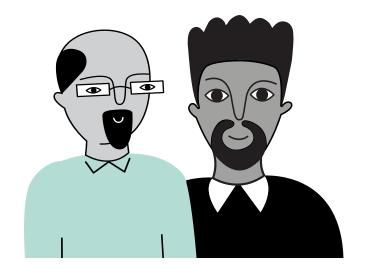
Policy Officer

A related reason for involving the Change Team was that it was a way of challenging complacency, and the assumption that everything is going well in homeless services and policy, something which one policy officer felt the 'Scottish homelessness system' could be guilty of.

Building on this, the Change Team was seen as vital to shift policy thinking towards prevention rather than mitigating its effects:

"Our objective is to prevent homelessness happening in the first place, not be proud of the response when it does. And when you listen to people with lived experience of homelessness, that message is powerful."

Policy Officer



WHAT HAS THE CHANGE TEAM ACHIEVED?



BRIDGING THE GAP

There was a feeling among the Change Leads who were interviewed that they are at the front-line of changing the culture within homelessness provision and policy. Change Leads described how the Change Team enabled them to "talk to all the people at different levels", including policy makers about approaches such as the Four New Directions.

Another benefit that was mentioned by one policy officer was that working with the Change Team had helped to build their own, and colleagues understanding and compassion for others and their experiences – this reinforces the message from Change Leads that All in for Change has helped to break down barriers and reduce the divide between people in the world of policy and people with lived/frontline experience:

"They were hearing it first-hand, but then also hearing the human story about recovery, and how people have moved forward. And that had such a profound impact on the team."

Policy Officer

All the policy workers said that they would want to engage with the Change Team again. Some said that this would be for a different purpose than before and that this would probably mean the nature of the engagement would be different.





REACH OF ALL IN FOR CHANGE:

Influencing homelessness policy and services

The Change Team had been involved in shaping the following:

- Influencing the Prevention Duty Review Group via the Prevention Commission (particularly the 'Ask and Act' element of this).
- Representation on the Scottish Government's Homelessness Prevention and Strategy Group and working groups.
- Influencing the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group recommendations, including policy around rapid rehousing and Housing Youth First.
- Contributing to the Scottish Government/ COSLA Ending Homelessness Together Plan.
- Influencing the priority setting of Everyone Home – a third and academic sector collective.
- Helping the Scottish Government finalise new guidelines about the Unsuitable Accommodation Order.
- Shaping the job description for Team Leader position at Scottish Government.

- Opportunity to contribute various Homeless Network Scotland events and conferences.
- Involvement in the Scottish Government Residential Drug Rehabilitation Working Group.
- Giving evidence to Scottish Parliament committee as part of the development of the National Care Service.
- Influencing the removal of the Local Connections policy in homelessness legislation.
- Contributing to the Temporary Accommodation Strategy.
- Helping shape emergency accommodation.
- Involvement in the Scottish Government's National Mission on Drugs: National Collaborative.



Policy officers framed their engagement with the Change Team very positively. It was generally seen as having achieved its goals so far and as making a significant contribution to policy:

"There's been a shift change, I think amongst my colleagues, and the Change Team is not at all tokenistic. It's not a box ticking exercise. Every time we're working on a new policy, the Change Team are part of that."

"It's becoming embedded in a lot of our work."

Policy Officer

Concrete examples of how the Change Team has shaped policy are provided below. However, some policy officers and Change Leads emphasised the more nuanced nature of co-designing policy, and that change was a gradual process:

"How do I put it into words? You see it working gradually daily. It might be harder to tell some people than other people, but it starts gradually sinking in."

Change Lead

Example:

The Homelessness Prevention Review Group

One of the most influential pieces of involvement that the Change Team has had is their contribution to the Prevention Review Group. The Change Team were brought in to have parallel conversations about the questions and proposals being considered by the group, as one policy officer explained:

"The Change Team looked at the same questions in relation to homelessness legislation, and there was a shared understanding of the role and specific expertise that the change team brought."

Policy Officer

They went on to describe how the Change Team's involvement had a direct influence on Scottish Government commitments to prevent homelessness through legislation, and this was clear as the new housing bill was brought together.



Example:

Ask and Act

One of the specific commitments that All In For Change were proud of, was the 'Ask and Act' recommendation, which would require that relevant public bodies ask people about their housing situation to help identify issues early on and then to act to support people when an issue is identified:

"One of the biggest cornerstones and one of the biggest successes of the Change Team was formulating Ask and Act, which will be legislated in the autumn by the Scottish Government as a key prevention measure to prevent homelessness. And it was a subgroup of the Change Team that really helped to drive and bring that"

Example:

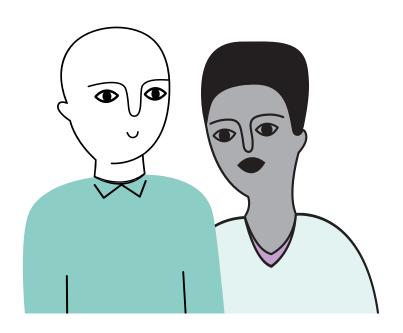
Local Connections

Another example provided was that of removing the Local Connections policy, which had previously meant that people who are homeless could only receive support from local services if they could prove they had a local connection to that area. Change Leads were keen to highlight the unfairness and ineffectiveness of this policy in their interviews, and how they had long-recognised the need for change.

One of the Change Leads explained how the Change Team had a direct route into changing this policy:

"We had a very direct route into this one where our colleague from the Scottish Government was the person in charge of the Local Connections Framework, which gave the us the opportunity to feed directly into the new policy changes."

Change Lead





INFLUENCING PARTICIPATION AND CO-PRODUCTION

Another area of change which came through in the interviews was in terms of improving engagement and participation in designing and planning public services.

By setting an example through its own work, the Change Team is inspiring the organisations who work with them.

Some policy interviewees described how working with the Change Team was leading to improved participation work within their organisations:

"Engaging with the Change
Team has allowed me to help
us understand the difference
between active engagement with
a particular demographic versus
public engagement, which is a far
more generic thing. And we've seen
organisational change as a result."

Policy Officer

The same interviewee went on to describe how bringing in the Change Team for one specific piece of work had led to the national organisation they worked for adopting a new approach to designing services, specifically in relation to co-designing drug and alcohol services for people with protected characteristics.



4. THE VALUE THAT THE CHANGE TEAM BRINGS



INDEPENDENCE

In general, the Change Team was viewed by those in policy as being an authentic, agendafree voice:

"They want to influence policy, but there's always less of an agenda. I think you get a bit more honesty from the change team than you do from other areas".

Policy Officer

A Change Lead reinforced this point:

"You're only affiliated to yourself. Even though your part of the Change Team, you've got your own opinions and your own thoughts."

Change Lead



STRENGTHENING EVIDENCE

The Change Team was held up as an example of valuing lived experience as a form of expertise which, in turn, was seen to strengthen evidence. A policy officer cited the Change Team's lived experience as being crucial in informing policy in the future.

Specific qualities of the Change Team include the clarity of message that comes from lived experience. This was described by one policy officer as follows

"Assumptions where everyone wanted to have security over choice when moving from homeless accommodation to a tenancy, the change team challenged that by stating having choice before security was more important when deciding what type of accommodation, they wanted to live in"

Change Leads agreed that being able to bring the voice of lived experience into the design and planning of homelessness services was why being part of the Change Team is so important:

"I think it's important for the people that we currently have to be involved because they do offer such a unique insight".

Change Lead



DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

In general, Change Leads saw their role as falling into three broad areas:

1) Bringing their own lived experience of homelessness into policymaking

Change Leads recognise the value of their own lived experience, and why it is important that this experience is given a voice through being part of the Change Team.

Importantly, 'lived experience' was not simply described as the same experience, but as something that could vary, with different Change Leads bringing different kinds of experience into the team. For instance, one Change Lead identified their experience of youth homelessness as being an asset.

Representing, or advocating for, others with lived experience of homelessness

Most of the Change Leads who were interviewed saw themselves as representing the voices of others with experience of homelessness currently or in the past:

"Yeah, I would say we are the voice advocating for people that are homeless. We can bring their voices to decision makers, with the aim of implementing the changes needed."

Change Lead

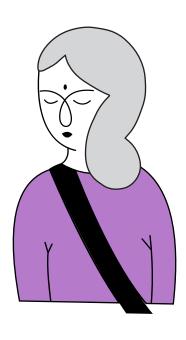
3) Bringing in their experience of working at the front line of homelessness

Change Leads who currently worked in peer support roles for homeless charities showed in the interviews how well-equipped and knowledgeable they were of homeless services and the issues and challenges around this.

The fact that these different roles are brought together within the Change Team was identified as a key asset:

"I think frontline workers are important because we are the ones actually seeing how service users are getting treated, where they're going, the conditions they're put in, and the way society stigmatises them."

Change Lead





CREDIBILITY

Lived experience was even seen to add credibility when trying to advocate for change:

"There's personal reassurance to me that, you know, when I'm standing up against the system and saying it's not how people assume it is, I have that evidence of lived experience to tell me that, so I'll lean into that a lot."

Policy Officer

Change Leads were aware of the authority which being part of the Change Team gave them when contributing their views to policy:

"We've got a team behind us and a brand, almost, it's a lot more powerful than I first thought, and it's something we are all invested in."

Change Lead



CHANGING ATTITUDES

A spin-off benefit of good coproduction is that it can help to convince people of the value of lived experience.

When making this point, one policy officer broadened the impact to include public perceptions of homelessness and how the Change Team's input into policy could challenge misconceptions and stereotypes:

"One of the things that underpins the continued existence of homelessness is the way in which social attitudes other people, and they say people bring it on themselves, or it's individual failure or choice. And to see a healthy exercise like this is also to see people's underlying cultural norms changed around equality and respect towards people with lived experience."

Policy Officer



5. THE IMPACT ON CHANGE LEADS

A benefit of involving people with lived experience in policy design and implementation is that it can have a positive impact on those who participate.

Change Leads universally agreed that they had beneffited from their involvement.

Confidence and self-esteem

Change Leads reported how their involvement in the Change Team had positively impacted on their own lives. For instance, most who were interviewed said being part of the Change Team had given them more confidence and self-esteem:

"People trust you and have faith in what you have to say is so important to me due to my past experiences, as at times in my life I never had trust or faith in myself, it's a great feeling."

Change Lead

Change Leads have voiced their opinions in 'high-level' arenas such as Scottish Parliament Committees, which has been well received.

Being involved in the Change Team has given Change Leads a sense of achievement and pride, and in some instances had positively impacted on their home lives.

"At times in my life I never felt that connected with my family and now having been involved in this work it has opened up new connections with them."

Impact on wider work

Change Leads saw their increasing confidence as having positively impacted on their wider work in homelessness services and felt they would not have had the same opportunities and further work-experiences without having been part of the Change Team:

"I felt the change team were a great sounding board for me and gave me the confidence to bring up new ideas at work."

"Being involved in the change team really empowered me and I was able to take this into my role as a front-line worker."



Measuring what matters to Change Leads

This section brings together the results of 5 separate rounds of the Measuring What Matters survey, between 2020-23.

The Measuring What Matters Survey was used at each Change Retreat (the in-person and online gatherings) to gather feedback from Change Leads on their experience of participating in the process.

The information gathered was aimed at assessing whether the Change Team is making a difference.

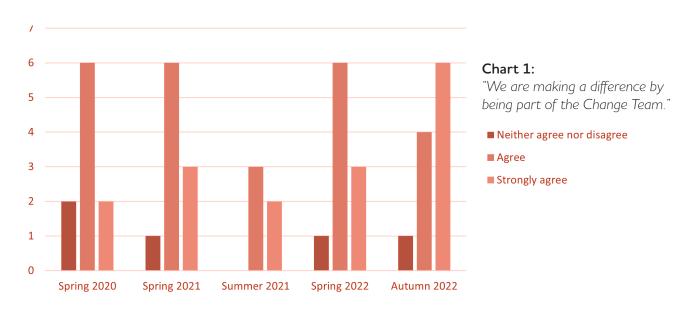
It asked Change Leads to report on the following:

- i) that they are making a difference through their participation.
- ii) that their experience is respected.
- iii) they are being listened to and have influence.
- iv) that they work well together as part of a positive and solution focused Change Team; and
- v) that they are a bridge between decision makers and people affected by change.

Results were generally very positive as can be seen in the analysis below.

This explains why most of the charts do not have columns for negative expressions 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' as there were no values returned for these options.

Making a difference



Change Leads who felt they were making a difference by being part of the Change Team has grown over time.

Comments on influencing specific policies included:

"We have made good progress in influencing different policy briefs, none more so than the prevention commission, everyone home collective and the residential drug rehabilitation working group."

Change Lead, Summer 2021

Other examples were more about change on the ground:

"Being part of the change team has given the knowledge and confidence to promote change within the Glasgow Alliance to end Homelessness and it is having a positive effect with the members of GAEH."

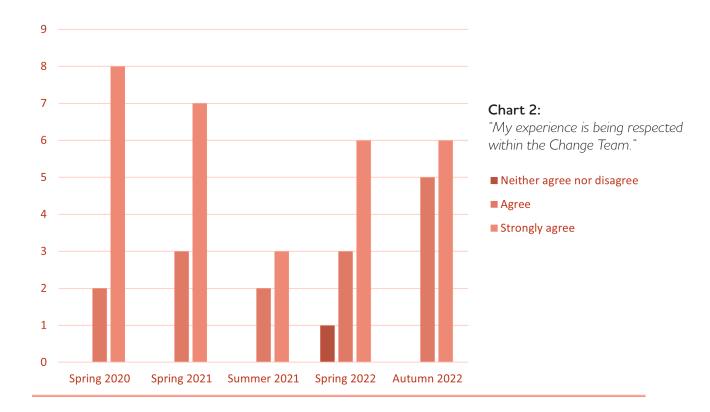
Change Lead, Spring 2022

One Change Lead thought they could be provided with more support to make a difference:

"There are areas where the change team could do more or provide more training. Doing so would make it easier to help those who we encounter on the streets potentially find the best and most effective support and assistance. The training provided is improving though."



Respecting experience

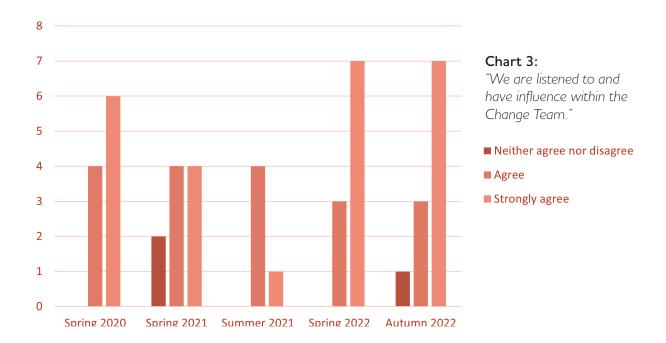


Change Leads felt their experience was respected throughout the programme.

Comments reinforced how valued and respected Change Leads felt within the Change Team.

"Everyone is an equal in that place. I do not feel that anyone is being ignored or isn't given full respect."

Being listened to



Change Leads agreed with this statement throughout the programme.

The proportion of people strongly agreeing appears to dip slightly in 2021, although it is worth stating again that any variation is small and therefore less likely to be significant.

Comments backed up this finding, showing that Change Leads felt listened to within the Change Team, and by policy makers in government and elsewhere.

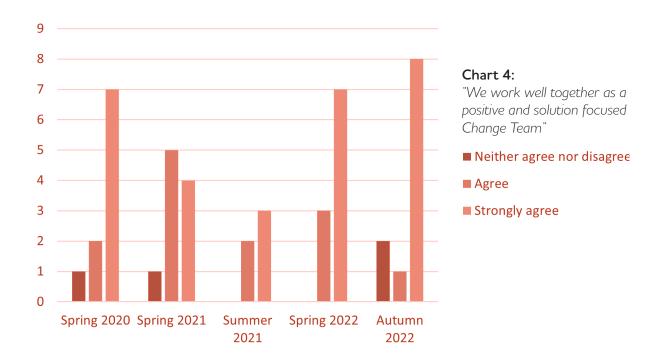
"I believe our involvement in various tasks has clearly been taken on board and effected change within strategy and policy."

Change Lead, Spring 2021

Some comments indicated the kinds of barriers and issues that can prevent people from participating as well as they otherwise might have – factors which were outside of the control of the programme.

"As well as being uncomfortable with online meetings, I don't currently have much direct involvement with homelessness at work – just the referrals and caseload I have just now. So, I feel a bit out of touch with direct experience to contribute just now."

Working Together



Almost all Change Leads agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

A couple of comments for this question in the earlier Change Retreats suggest that, at that point, the Change Team was finding its feet in terms of working together in a solution-focused way, and also in terms of explaining how the group's influence was working.

"The mechanism by which what we do/discuss things changes things on the ground or at policy level isn't clear to me. We're told what we did influence the Everyone Home campaign, but we weren't involved 'along the way'.

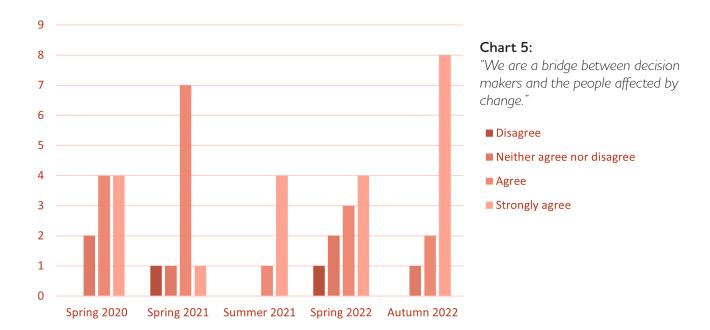
"I think we are a positive Team, but we should be more solution-focused (more practical things to do, more external meetings and conferences to attend)."

Change Lead, Spring 2021

As the programme progressed, people began to feel more confident about the way the team worked together.

"Yes, we work together as part of a great team, and it helps us promote and make changes as a group rather than individuals as we all have different backgrounds."

Bridging decision makers and people affected by change



The results show and highlight that, throughout the programme, Change Leads have mostly felt that the Change Team acts as a bridge between decision makers and people affected by homelessness.

As with the results of some of the other survey questions, there appears to have been a slight increase in the strength of agreement over the course of the programme.

As with the working together statement, comments regarding the Change Team acting like a bridge started out rather cautiously and became more confident as the programme went on:

"I feel that we are directly influencing decision makers which will naturally filter down to the people affected by change. It will be interesting to see how that change has affected people as we progress."

Change Lead

"We must continue to use the voice and power we have within AIFC and close the gap between decision makers and people experiencing homelessness."

Change Lead

What would help the change team better meet its purpose?

The survey also asked Change Leads if they had any suggestions as to how the Change Team could better meet its purpose.

The most frequently made suggestion was that the Change Team should recruit more people with recent experience of homelessness, including "some feedback from people going through the homelessness system at the moment" (Change Lead, Spring 2020). There was also a recognition that Covid-19 made recruitment and attendance (at online meetings) harder for many people and that this could hamper any effort to hear voices with current or recent lived experience.

"Possibly some feedback from people going through the homelessness system now. This could be prerecorded video messages, giving folk a chance to have their voices heard without the discomfort of meeting everyone online."

Change Lead, Spring 2020

Another common 'ask' was for increased attendance participation of members at Change Retreats. A small number of comments concerned the process of how the Change Team worked, which touched on the need for a more co-productive approach and on the issue of some people dominating the discussion.

"I love being part of Change Team but sometimes feel the retreats can be taken over by one or two strong opinions and as a result no clear actions or direction agreed. This is only sometimes." A small number of comments concerned the process of how the Change Team worked, which touched on the need for a more coproductive approach and on the issue of some people dominating the discussion.

"We should work less on consultation and more on co-production, becoming involved in projects from the beginning (e.g. right to appropriate housing, National Model for frontline outreach) and understand what happens after we share our opinions on the matters discussed."

Change Lead, Spring 2021

Overview of survey analysis

Taken together, the survey results show that Change Leads feel the Change Team is working as a mechanism for them to work together, to have their views and experiences respected, and to collaboratively shape policy in relation to homelessness.

In general, the positivity about the Change Team and its influence has increased as the work has progressed.

It is encouraging to see that, as the programme has progressed, Change Leads feel more influential, something they reinforced with the examples they have provided, both in the survey and in the interviews.

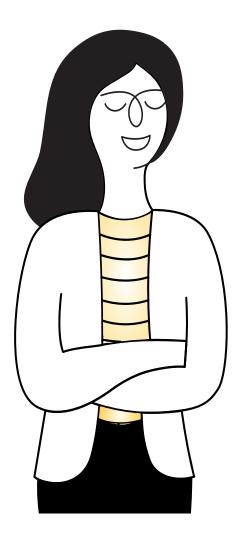
6. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the survey and the one-to-one interviews clearly shows that the Change Team has successfully enabled the contribution of people with lived experience and front-line workers to improving homelessness policies and services.

The Team

The Change Team acts to support these voices to work together with policy makers and others in strategic roles to make services more preventative and effective.

The voice of lived experience is particularly valued by the Change Leads and policy officers who participated in this evaluation. Change Leads who have experienced homelessness bring the following qualities to strengthening evidence and, in turn, designing and improving services:



Lived Experience brings

- First-hand experience of the issues and barriers people face when engaging with services.
- A range of different experiences, and a corresponding range of views and perspectives on homeless services and policy
- A level of trust and credibility with others who have lived experience of homelessness, so that Change Leads are able to see, hear and understand the issues that people continue to face and their priorities.
- A level of independence or impartiality, with less reticence to challenge ideas or to stick to an organisational or political line.
- A clarity of message that can cut right through in terms of challenging assumptions and complacency which can result from abstract policy making.
- Credibility, in the sense that policy officers can feel confident that their own ideas and perspectives are shared (and, of course, tested) by those with lived experience.

Their Key Achievements

The Change Team has contributed to an impressive number of different policy developments. Change Leads and policy officers can point to concrete examples of when, and how, the Change Team has influenced how a policy has developed.

Prominent examples are the Change Team's involvement in the Prevention Commission which strongly influenced the Prevention Review Group and its report and recommendations, and the abolishing of the Local Connections policy, which the Change Team influenced.

The Change Team's impact goes beyond policy influence. Change Leads and policy officers who engage with the Change Team have been taking the approaches and ideas from the Change Team, such as the 4 New Directions, back into their roles and organisations.

They promote the 4 New Directions and other approaches to colleagues in their own and other organisations.

Change Leads working in front-line services report that their role in the Change Team increases their skills and confidence and helps them to better support people currently experiencing homelessness.

Policy officers report that engaging with the Change Team has helped foster culture change in their organisations, furthering a shift towards prevention and participation.

Supporting the Team

Certain elements of the Change Team, and how the process works to support them, came out in the interviews, and these are worth highlighting.

A key ingredient so far has been the way that the partners behind the Change Team, namely Homeless Network Scotland and Cyrenians, were able to clearly articulate the message about what the Change Team was and why it was necessary.

Some Change Leads highlighted how helpful it was to have the participation of a Scottish Government civil servant within the Change Team.

"Having someone from the homelessness team at the retreat has been really valuable, as it shows the Scottish Government are taking the views of the Change team seriously."

"It also gives everyone involved in AIFC the belief that change is possible and there is a reason why we are all involved in this work."

Change Lead

A policy officer working closely with the Change Team emphasised that the model works best when careful thought is given to the most appropriate role that the Change Team should have regarding a specific piece of legislation.

This helps both to ensure that the Change Team isn't overwhelmed and so that engaging with them doesn't become a box ticking exercise.

7. KEY LEARNING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Key learning points from the evaluation of the Change Team are:

- The Change Team is valued by policy makers and Change Leads as a way of bringing an independent and authentic voice of lived experience, as well as front-line workers, into homelessness policy and service design.
- Policy makers and Change Leads recognise the vital contribution to strengthening evidence-based policy and improving homelessness services which has been made by the Change Team.
- The Change Team's approach to working with those with lived and front-line experience is a way of shifting policy thinking towards prevention.
- The Change Team has worked to help 'bridge the gap' between policy and lived experience of homelessness.

- The contribution of lived experience, and front-line workers, enables policy and services to be 'sense-checked' so that assumptions and complacency can be challenged.
- The Change Team could be strengthened by being more representative in terms of geography, groups with protected characteristics and people with recent, or current, lived experience of homelessness.
- There is still work to be done to ensure that the experience of people who have been homeless is valued and supported and, crucially, that policy and services are genuinely co-produced.



Based on this key learning, the following recommendations are made:

At national level:

A fundamental part of the 'Scottish Approach to Government' is characterised by moves towards embedding more participatory, coproductive and assets-based approaches at the core of how government operates. This recognises the important role that people have in bringing different types of knowledge and experiences to address the challenges faced by government. As such:

- The homelessness unit at Scottish Government should be commended for enabling and funding this platform, for deploying a skilled colleague to participate so fully and effectively alongside the Change Team and for creating a separate seconded policy post with lived experience to work within the unit. All In for Change should continue to strive for genuine co-production in service and policy design within the Scottish Government's homelessness team. There is much to build from and much more that can be done.
- Other parts of Scottish Government should be encouraged to review the All in For Change model and its accomplishments in the first 3 years and consider what parts can be applied in their own context working toward more participatory approaches at the core of how government operates.
- More needs to be done to influence a shift towards genuinely preventative policy and spend. Broadening the scope of the Ending Homelessness Together Plan to include the overarching drivers of homelessness

 poverty and inequality – would play an important role. The composition of the Change Team should reflect this broader scope too.

At local level:

- As is the case in Glasgow, local lived experience groups that focus on housing and homelessness at strategic level can find a productive synergy with the national Change Team. Local platforms should be explored by local authorities and health and social care partnerships.
- The Housing Options Hubs offer a cross-authority platform for mutual briefing and influencing with the Change Team, and this should be explored further. Wider public sector organisations working in and around homelessness should engage with the Change Team if they have not already done so.

At programme level:

- All In for Change should continue to strive for genuine co-production in service and policy design and also in relation to how the Change Team operates internally.
- All In for Change should carry out a recruitment drive to strengthen the representativeness of the Change Team in terms of geography, groups with protected characteristics and people with recent, or current, lived experience.



THE CHANGE TEAM | KEEP IN TOUCH

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