

# Homeless Network Scotland

we are all in

**Annual Report  
and Accounts  
2025-26**





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# Homeless Network Scotland

## What we do

**We are Scotland's national membership network.** Our vision is a Scotland where homelessness is prevented and everyone has a safe, settled home. We connect people and organisations to share insight, influence decisions, challenge inequality and drive evidence-based change.

During this year, we have focused on making change in this direction:

- 1. From crisis response to prevention** where homelessness is prevented through early, targeted and proactive interventions – so that crisis responses become rare, not routine.
- 2. From temporary to settled housing** where everyone can quickly access settled, affordable homes in the communities they choose – and time spent in temporary accommodation is short, suitable and supported.
- 3. From unfair systems to joined-up services** where everyone has fair access to housing, shapes the decisions that affect them and receives seamless, coordinated support.

We do this in the following ways:

- 1. Evidence and influence**  
Using data, research and collective insights to inform and strengthen decision-making.
- 2. Lived experience leadership**  
Providing platforms for people with experience of homelessness to shape solutions.
- 3. National programme delivery**  
Coordinating and supporting flagship cross-sector programmes that turn policy into practice.
- 4. Convening and learning**  
Facilitating networks, events and learning spaces that connect people, share knowledge and inspire action.

# Message from the Chief Executive

**This has been a year of laying foundations for better prevention. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2025 receiving Royal Assent in November marked a defining moment. For the first time, Scotland has a clear legal framework requiring a wide range of bodies to Ask and Act – to identify housing risk early and take meaningful steps before homelessness takes hold.**

Ask and Act will help prevent homelessness in the many forms it takes. Around half of those who seek help only need support with housing. But for the others, some of the sharpest system failures happen much earlier – where multiple forms of disadvantage are more likely to come before the loss of a home, rather than after it.

Understanding this upstream failure has been the focus of the No Wrong Door Scotland test of change, whose two-year learning phase in four cities concluded this year. Local insights from very different service contexts were shared with a National Learning Set of people from policy, lived experience, practice, funding and academia. Strikingly similar enablers and barriers to joined-up, effective support appeared in every local setting.

This showed that a systems-level solution at the hard edges is possible – and that lasting improvement depends less on inventing new standalone services than on changing how existing systems work together. That learning has shaped The Level, a delivery protocol for system change at the hard edges.

It supports the principle of No Wrong Door, while recognising that in many cases the floor beneath also needs raising, so that people receive a consistent minimum standard of support wherever they turn.

The Level confronts another persistent problem: proven interventions that still lack implementation at scale. Housing First is the clearest example in our sector – strong outcomes on housing retention, but still under-scaled, constrained by disconnected systems and the housing shortage. Other sectors face barriers with approaches they know work too – and across all of them, the obstacle to scale is often the absence of joined-up systems and funding around them. The Level doesn't create more Housing First or more of any single intervention. Instead, it supplies the shared method and spells out the common conditions – in policy, practice, systems and resources – that allow those interventions to reach more people and work at full strength.

Although instigated by the homelessness sector, this work deliberately reaches further across sectors and the overlapping issues that lock people into repeated crisis. At the hard edges, homelessness usually arrives late. By the time someone reaches a homelessness service, other problems have typically been present and interacting for

**More  
than 100**  
member  
organisations

some time. Official homelessness is often a late marker of deeper exclusion, leaving homelessness services to carry the consequences of earlier missed opportunities. Where Ask and Act places duties on individual bodies, The Level tackles the practical challenge of making those duties work together on the ground and across all sectors – so that people most in need of seamless, whole-person support receive it.

The Level has a clear job: to drive system change at the hard edges. It aims to stop the system itself from adding harm, raise a consistent floor of support and prevent people from being passed around or excluded because their needs cross organisational boundaries.

Further upstream, the structural drivers remain. Tackling poverty, inequality and the shortage of affordable housing is where the biggest gains still lie.

All this sits within a wider year of progress on prevention. Peer-led research by the Change Team offered an unfiltered picture of system navigation and its effects on people experiencing homelessness and those supporting them. The Upstream Homelessness Prevention Fund, delivered jointly with the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations, prevented homelessness for 662 households and delivered an estimated £10million in savings. Through Fair Way Scotland, work continued to press for equality in housing, setting out both the human and financial costs of No Recourse to Public Funds policies and a practical roadmap beyond them.

This has been a year in which many partners across Scotland laid the foundations for better prevention. What remains is the collective will and resources to build on them, so that no one's experience depends on which door they happen to knock on.



**Maggie Brünjes**





**250+**

delegates at our  
annual conference

# Connect

Making connections and creating collaborative spaces for learning and action are vital to advancing our mission.

We connect across our network in two ways. Broad initiatives such as our annual conference, networking events and the Everyone Home collective bring diverse groups together to maximise our shared influence. Meanwhile, targeted programmes such as Fair Way Scotland, Housing First Scotland and No Wrong Door Scotland drive deeper, focused collaboration to solve specific challenges.

Key opportunities for connection throughout the year included:

- Our annual conference<sup>1</sup> which creates vital opportunities to share learning, explore solutions and address the core issues shaping homelessness in Scotland. More than 250 sector delegates gathered in Perth around four themes – **Safe, Well, Respected** and **In Control** – and explored how services can work more effectively to mitigate the worst harms of the housing emergency. Key focus areas included joining up services around people's needs, promoting equality, upholding rights and choice, and ensuring people have a meaningful voice in decisions affecting their lives.



## Floella Benjamin

Bringing inspiration  
to our conference



## 4 themes

Safe, Well,  
Respected and  
In Control



## Inspiring performance

Uniting voices  
in song

“For me, the whole event was an emotional rollercoaster. The content was brilliant; the selection of the speakers was inspired and the conference chair was sensational. The messaging was on the money and what a start to the run-up to the Scottish Parliament election.”

- Our webinar-based thematic **network events** continue to attract audiences of around 100 participants from the third sector, local authorities, housing associations, health services and academia. **Housing First in a Housing Emergency** explored how homelessness is compounded by trauma, addiction, poor mental health and rough sleeping, placing people at risk of the deepest and longest-lasting harms of the housing crisis. The event highlighted how each additional month without a settled home adds measurable damage to health and life chances, while generating some of the highest per-person costs across temporary accommodation, health services, social care and the justice system.
- In our convening role for **Fair Way Scotland**, we created opportunities for funders, policymakers and allies to engage with emerging evidence, strengthen partnerships and to advance collective action on some of Scotland's most pressing social justice issues. This activity included bringing together stakeholders to hear the findings of a research programme led by Fair Way Scotland and Heriot-Watt University on the impact of No Recourse to Public Funds policies. The discussion highlighted both the human and financial costs of destitution and demonstrated the value of preventative support in reducing rough sleeping and demand on public services.



## Taking action

on no recourse  
to public funds



## Joined up support

Across services  
and communities

## Reaching Out

We continued to open conversations beyond the homelessness sector – essential if earlier prevention and joined-up support are to become normal practice. By bringing other sectors into key discussions, we strengthened partnerships and shared learning on the drivers of homelessness and the practical solutions that work.

This year we:

- Convened No Wrong Door Scotland, a three-year test of change with partners in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Fife that concluded its two-year learning phase. Led locally by four progressive third sector organisations – Aberdeen Foyer, Penumbra, Cyrenians and Turning Point Scotland – each tested joined-up, whole-person support in very different contexts. This has shaped a national delivery protocol to raise the floor of support and turn ‘no wrong door’ into practical reality for people at the hard edges of services.
- Challenged inequality by highlighting the disproportionate impact of homelessness on different groups, including those with experience of the immigration and asylum system, and by promoting more inclusive policy responses.
- Delivered a session with Clan Childlaw on the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC), homelessness and care leavers’ rights. The discussion explored the rights of care-experienced children at risk of homelessness and identified good practice in planning for leaving care so that young people are not left in unsuitable accommodation.

# Learn & Act

We use evidence and shared learning across our network to drive the strategic shifts needed to transform how Scotland resolves homelessness.

## (i) Inspiring Practice

*“Found it really helpful and the trainers were great at keeping me engaged.”*

*“...I take away a deeper understanding of the policy intention behind much of the legislation I refer to in my work.”*

These are two of the many quotes shared across the learning sessions we delivered this year.

**We Are All In** is our training and consultancy service, rooted in lived experience, evidence and what works. We help teams build the knowledge, skills and confidence to challenge disadvantage, reduce inequality and drive lasting social change.

Key consultancy projects have taken the policy changes of today and worked with partners to make sense of how they will work on the ground. We create spaces to discuss and explore what is ahead and develop practical tools so change can be carried out with knowledge, confidence, skills and clear processes.

During the year we delivered learning and good practice sessions to 91 learners across 28 organisations. Feedback showed 96% of learners left the training more confident in their role. We also provided bespoke learning support to 10 individual organisations to enhance their knowledge and practice, many of which will cascade that learning further.

This year, we also delivered the second phase of All in for Glasgow, connecting commissioners, providers and Homeless Network Scotland Associates to co-design a new model of supported housing as a settled destination for those who cannot maintain a mainstream home.



**96%**

of learners left  
training more  
confident in  
their role



## Shaping change together

Turning shared insights into better practice

### (ii) Shaping Policy

We continue to make policy recommendations to those in positions of influence, backed by robust evidence and lived experience.

Working with partners across the Everyone Home Collective, or speaking as the membership organisation, we ensure policymakers hear first-hand about what we know works. This year we:

- Continued to hold politicians to account on responses to the **housing emergency**, including a call from Everyone Home and All in for Change on the first anniversary of the housing emergency being declared, calling on all political parties to commit to taking urgent, concrete and bold action to turn the tide.
- Shared solutions and ideas from the sector with the then Cabinet Secretary for Housing Màiri McAllan, who made her conference debut with us and continued to support the prevention pilots and the early design stages of **More Homes Scotland**.
- Created opportunities for our members (more than 100 organisations) and the Collective (over 40 organisations) to influence the **Housing Bill**, with a specific focus on the prevention duties. We also provided advice on an amendment requiring the Scottish Government to report annually on progress in scaling Housing First, increasing tenancies and implementing its principles. The Bill received Royal Assent this year.

- Contributed to how the **Ask and Act duties** in the Bill are taking shape in the developing national guidance. This new legal duty will require a wide range of relevant bodies to ask about housing situations and take action to prevent homelessness. Our focus is on implementation – finding the best routes to make the duties everyday reality in practice.
- Worked with the Everyone Home Collective and All in for Change to produce the **Housing Justice manifesto**<sup>2</sup>, setting out what is needed for a Scotland where everyone has equal access to a home, homelessness is prevented far more effectively and services work for people and the public purse.
- Brought key people together to launch **Ending Destitution in Scotland – A Roadmap for Policymakers**<sup>3</sup>, a legal briefing from Jen Ang, Director of Lawmanity, detailing practical steps local authorities and the Scottish Government can take across seven policy areas to reduce harm for people with No Recourse to Public Funds.
- Published the annual **Housing First Scotland Check-up**<sup>4</sup>, which welcomed progress but called for renewed political commitment, joint planning and joint investment so that Housing First can operate at the capacity needed. And we updated **Branching Out**<sup>5</sup>, the national framework for planning and delivering Housing First, setting out an ambitious vision for the next phase of scaling up.

### (iii) Targeting Resources

We pool the knowledge and influence of our network to help direct funding where it matters most – towards evidence-based, cost-effective solutions rather than sticking-plaster fixes.

- The **Upstream Homelessness Prevention Pilot**<sup>6</sup> – a £1million Scottish Government initiative jointly run with the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations – tested early help by housing associations working with local charities, including a cash-first approach offering payments of up to £1,300. Almost 1,000 people were supported and homelessness was prevented for 662 households, with estimated savings approaching £10million. The learning will inform national guidance on the Ask and Act duties.
- The work of **Fair Way Scotland** has continued at pace. The next phase of the project is under way: a pathfinder with South Lanarkshire Council to explore the current work and next steps Scotland should take to prevent and mitigate homelessness and destitution among those with No Recourse to Public Funds.
- The Everyone Home Collective **published a joint position paper**<sup>7</sup> with the Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland calling for **More Homes Scotland** to integrate housing equality and strategic support from the outset.

A photograph of two men standing outdoors. The man on the left is bald with a full beard, wearing a black zip-up jacket over a light blue shirt. He is looking towards the other man. The man on the right is seen from the side, also bald with a beard, wearing a dark green t-shirt. He is gesturing with his right hand towards the first man. The background is a blurred residential street with green trees and houses.

## **Earlier help, safer homes**

Preventing homelessness  
before crisis takes hold

**662**  
**households**

were prevented  
from experiencing  
homelessness



## (iv) Shifting Mindsets

We use evidence of what works to challenge assumptions and inspire new ways of thinking.

This year we:

- **Centred people at the hard edges.** Over two years, four service delivery partners tested joined-up support for people facing severe and multiple disadvantage as part of the No Wrong Door Scotland partnership. A National Learning Set of professional and lived experience experts captured the learning. From this we began developing The Level – a national delivery protocol designed to raise the floor for people at the hard edges and turn the No Wrong Door approach into consistent, whole-person action on the ground.
- **Streamlined systems to reduce trauma.** Glasgow Homelessness Involvement and Feedback Team (GHIFT), a team of HNS Associates with lived experience, co-designed the WAYfinder service blueprint with providers and commissioners from Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership. The framework removes barriers that force people to retell their stories and provides practical tools for better collaboration.
- **Insights from lived experience.** The Change Team launched its first ever peer-led research project to map people's experiences of homelessness in Scotland. **Mapping Journeys Through Homelessness<sup>8</sup>** highlights the difficulties of navigating complex systems, the reliance on individual frontline workers who go above and beyond, and the types of support people actually want.
- **Growing our shared vision:** Ask and Act has brought a diverse range of insights, concerns and shared perspectives this year. We have seen momentum building as conversations and definitions tighten and more people embrace the aspirations and potential of a national framework for prevention.
- **Advanced our own practice.** Through At Home With Equality, a long-term programme guided by Dr Lateesha Osbourne, Homeless Network Scotland's Board, staff and associates are deepening our understanding of equality and intersectionality so we can better advocate for more equal housing and homelessness systems.

# Our People

We strive to be a knowledge-based and participatory organisation that listens, learns and continually progresses. This work is driven by our board of directors, staff, associates and member organisations.

## Our Board

Homeless Network Scotland's Board are non-executive directors of our company and trustees of our charity. The Board comprises individual members and representatives of member organisations, who are either elected at the AGM or co-opted during the year.

During 2025-26, the Homeless Network Scotland Board was:

**Moira Bayne**  
Housing Options Scotland

**Graeme Brown**  
Hillcrest Futures

**Mike Burns**  
Penumbra Mental Health

**Jackie Erdman (Outgoing Convenor)**  
Individual Member

**Prof Suzanne Fitzpatrick**  
Individual Member

**Amy Hutton**  
Cyrenians

**Peter Kelly (Interim Convenor)**  
Poverty Alliance

**Alex MacEachin (Treasurer)**  
Individual Member

**Maeve McGoldrick**  
Crisis Scotland

**Elodie Mignard**  
Scottish Refugee Council

**Vicki Pirie**  
Individual Member

**Ashleigh Simpson**  
Individual Member

**Jim Strang**  
Individual Member

**Laura van der Hoeven**  
Edinburgh Food Project

# Our Staff 2025-26

The Board delegates the day-to-day management of the organisation to the Chief Executive, who is supported by a leadership and core team, advisors and leads.

## Leadership and Core Team

**Margaret-Ann Brünjes**

Chief Executive

**Russell Ferguson**

Finance Manager

**Janice Higgins**

Head of Corporate Services

**Aileen O'Halloran**

Core Support

**Lisa Sen**

Design Lead

**Mhairi Snowden**

Head of Policy & Programmes

## Specialist Leads and Advisors

**Ginny Cooper**

Impact Lead

**Laura ffrench-Constant**

Learning Lead

**Michelle Major**

Equalities and Involvement Advisor

**Jamie Milne**

Policy and Communications Advisor

**David Ramsay**

Impact Lead

**James Stampfer**

Impact Lead

## Associates

Homeless Network Scotland's Associates bring their personal expertise and insight into homelessness, helping to broaden our perspective, deepen our knowledge and strengthen the impact of our work.

Our special thanks this year to: **Claire, Craig, David, Duncan, Dylan, Jeremy, Jim, John, Lisa, Martin, Shea, Suzanne, Zander.**

**Members:**

Homeless Network Scotland is proud to umbrella a diverse and growing membership of organisations in Scotland that share our vision for a future without homelessness. We offer our continued thanks for their support, advice and guidance.

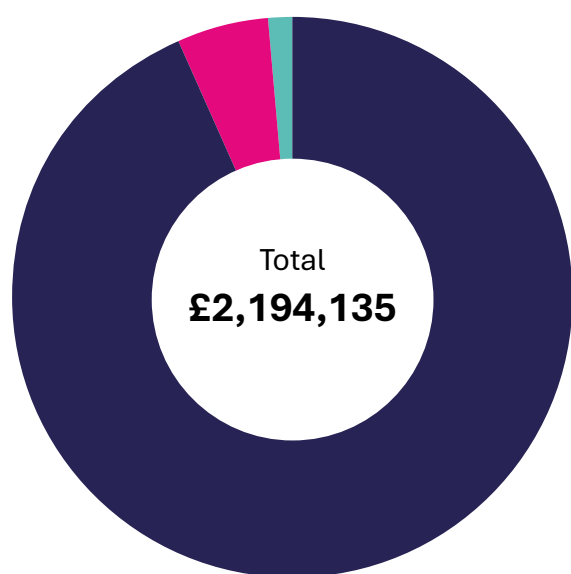
Find out more about membership here:  
**[homelessnetwork.scot/member-sign-up](https://homelessnetwork.scot/member-sign-up)**



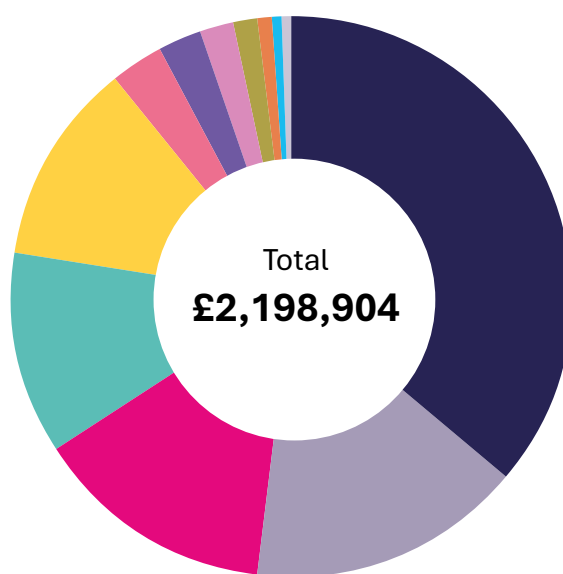
# Accounts

| <b>Expenditure 2025-26</b>         |     | <b>£2,194,135</b> |
|------------------------------------|-----|-------------------|
| ● Direct Charitable Expenditure    | 94% | £2,051,772        |
| ● Training and Consulting          | 5%  | £115,875          |
| ● Other Administration Expenditure | 1%  | £26,488           |

| <b>Income 2025-26</b>                      |     | <b>£2,198,904</b> |
|--------------------------------------------|-----|-------------------|
| ● Scottish Government                      | 36% | £796,348          |
| ● National Lottery                         | 16% | £346,000          |
| ● Training and Consulting                  | 14% | £308,050          |
| ● Oak Foundation                           | 12% | £259,000          |
| ● Robertson Trust                          | 12% | £257,000          |
| ● Platform                                 | 3%  | £63,000           |
| ● Social Investment in Housing             | 3%  | £56,520           |
| ● William Grant Foundation                 | 2%  | £40,000           |
| ● Glasgow Health & Social Care Partnership | 1%  | £32,000           |
| ● Interest Income                          | 1%  | £17,687           |
| ● Other grants > £10K                      | 1%  | £15,300           |
| ● Donations                                | 0%  | £7,999            |



**Expenditure**



**Income**

# Endnotes



## 1. HNS Conference 2025 Report

<https://homelessnetwork.scot/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/HNS-Conference-Report-2025.pdf>

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## 2. Housing Justice Manifesto

<https://homelessnetwork.scot/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Manifesto-280126.pdf>

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## 3. Ending Destitution in Scotland – A Road Map for Policymakers

<https://homelessnetwork.scot/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Fair-Way-Legal-Briefing-12.2.25.pdf>

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## 4. Housing First Check-up

<https://homelessnetwork.scot/housing-first/checkup/>

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## 5. Branching Out – The National Framework for Housing First in Scotland

<https://homelessnetwork.scot/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/National-Framework-December-2025.pdf>

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## 6. Upstream Homelessness Prevention Pilot

<https://homelessnetwork.scot/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/ask-and-act-housing-associations-going-upstream-2-1.pdf>

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## 7. Toward A Fairer National Housing Agency

<https://homelessnetwork.scot/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/Toward-a-Fairer-National-Housing-Agency-Recommended-Course-of-Action-March-2026.pdf>

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## 8. Mapping Journeys Through Homelessness

<https://homelessnetwork.scot/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Maps-1.pdf>

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