



Together
we will end
homelessness

A vertical photograph of a woman with long, wavy, light-colored hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a dark top with a patterned scarf. The photo is positioned on the left side of the red background.

A MANIFESTO FOR ENDING HOMELESSNESS IN SCOTLAND

**SCOTTISH GENERAL
ELECTION 2021**



We all want to live in a society where every person has their basic need for a home and support met. But for too many people across Scotland, that's far from a reality.

Homelessness isn't inevitable - it can be ended.

The coronavirus pandemic has reminded all of us how essential a home is to our security, as a base on which to build our lives. Extraordinary action from the Scottish Government, local authorities and partners brought hundreds of people into safe accommodation, removing legal tests and allowing everyone to access support. It showed that with the right measures in place we can put an end to rough sleeping.

The pandemic has also presented us with:

- An unparalleled opportunity to support everyone who has been given somewhere to stay during the lockdown to engage with services and rebuild their lives so that they can move on to a permanent, settled home, and don't have to return to the streets.
- A huge challenge to do all we can to prevent a rise in all forms of homelessness, as the economic impacts of the downturn start to bite.

Scotland must maintain momentum if we are going to uphold our track-record as a world-leader in tackling homelessness. Every political party must make preventing and ending homelessness, including rough sleeping, a national priority.

A commitment to ending homelessness means ensuring that everyone has a safe and stable home and access to the support to maintain that home. It means:

- 1 No one sleeping rough**
- 2 No one living in transient, dangerous or insecure accommodation. This includes people squatting, living in cars, tents and non-residential buildings, and 'sofa surfing'.**
- 3 No one living in temporary forms of accommodation without a plan for rapid rehousing into affordable, secure and safe accommodation.**
- 4 No one homeless as a result of leaving a state institution, such as prison or the care system.**
- 5 Everyone at immediate risk of homelessness gets the help that prevents it happening.**

Ending homelessness does not mean that nobody will ever lose their home again. It means that, through prevention, homelessness only happens very **rarely**, that when it does happen it is **brief**, and that once it has happened to an individual or family it is **prevented** from happening again.

Ahead of the election, we are asking political parties to:



Make preventing and ending homelessness, including rough sleeping, a national priority. Ending homelessness needs to be a strategic priority of government, underpinned by a national, cross-departmental strategy to tackle the causes and consequences of homelessness.



Commit to bringing forward legislation which strengthens the legislative framework around homelessness prevention. Crisis would like to see every political party commit to prioritising legislation early in the new Parliament to open up support for people at risk of homelessness and to ensure all public services play their part in helping people to stay in their homes or find accommodation, without ever having to suffer the indignity of homelessness.



Commit to a long-term strategy for the supply of homes for social rent. Homelessness is intrinsically linked to housing supply. Evidenced by recent research, we support Chartered Institute of Housing, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and Shelter's call to set a target of delivering 53,000 affordable homes over the next Parliament, including 37,000 for social rent. Future investment must be targeted, not only in localities with greatest need, but also to provide homes which match the size requirements of households who are homeless. This means expanding provision of one-bedroomed homes in many parts of Scotland.



Maximise the options available to homeless households by improving access to affordable and suitable homes in the private rented sector (PRS). The PRS can and does provide a suitable home for many households in Scotland including some who have experienced homelessness. We would like to see greater funding and support for PRS access schemes, including consideration of the role of a national rent deposit scheme, which would reduce barriers and increase tenancy sustainability.

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