

A smiling woman with curly hair is holding a baby against a brick wall. The woman is wearing a light purple t-shirt and blue jeans. The baby is wearing a light blue striped onesie. The background is a brick wall. In the top right corner, there is a red square with the word "Crisis" in white. In the bottom right corner, there is a purple line drawing of a house.

Crisis

We can end homelessness in Wales

2026 Election Manifesto

About us

Crisis is the national charity dedicated to ending homelessness.

We directly support people out of homelessness, including through our Skylight service based in Swansea.

In addition, we work with partners across Great Britain to identify and share good practice.

We research and campaign for the social changes needed to solve homelessness altogether.

Homelessness in Wales

Last year, more than 13,000 households in Wales experienced homelessness.¹

Without bold action, homelessness in Wales will increase – by a further 24% by 2041.²

But it doesn't have to be this way...

With bold action, we can end homelessness

Our research shows us that with bold policy change we can end homelessness in Wales.

This Senedd term, we've seen politicians from across parties come together to support key actions within the national plan to end homelessness. Some good foundations have been laid, but we must build upon this work and drive forward bold action to end homelessness.

As the cost-of-living crisis continues and homeless presentations remain high, we cannot sit still. That's why we're asking the next Welsh Government to create a renewed **strategy to end homelessness**, by committing to:

1. Work together to **prevent homelessness** from happening in the first place
2. Ensure that people experiencing homelessness have the **support** they need
3. Invest in and deliver more **genuinely affordable homes**, particularly social homes.

1 [Homelessness: April 2024 to March 2025 \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

2 [The Homelessness Monitor: Wales 2025 | Crisis | Together we will end homelessness](#)

Foreword

Matt Downie MBE
Chief Executive, Crisis

It is tragic that right now in Wales, thousands of people are experiencing homelessness. Without a stable place to call home, it can be difficult to stay healthy, work, study, and even maintain relationships. Homelessness takes a toll on every aspect of our lives.

And yet, with the continuing cost of living crisis and rents rising across Wales, many people are being pushed to the brink.

More than 12,000 people across Wales are facing the worst forms homelessness³ – sleeping on sofas and moving between friends' houses, living in temporary accommodation for months on end or sleeping in cars, tents or the streets.

Our research tells us that, without bold action, homelessness in Wales will rise 24% by 2041.⁴

But it doesn't have to be this way. By working together, we can steer Wales on the road to end homelessness.

We can look to a Wales where people experiencing homelessness are moved into a secure home as swiftly as possible and given the support they need, so that people can rebuild their lives and move beyond homelessness.

Throughout this Senedd term, it's been heartening to see politicians from all parties working together to establish the foundations of a new law on homelessness. It is a law that, if passed, will be transformative and set the direction of how we prevent homelessness and improve homelessness support.

3 [The Homelessness Monitor: Wales 2025 | Crisis | Together we will end homelessness](#)

4 [The Homelessness Monitor: Wales 2025 | Crisis | Together we will end homelessness](#)

We've also seen councils across Wales working hard on plans to look at how we can start to move away from long stays in costly temporary accommodation – with examples of innovative practice emerging.

And we've seen the sector come together to look at how barriers can be overcome to build more affordable homes.

But the road does not end there. There is much work left to do. The next Welsh Government must bring forward and support the implementation of changes to the law. It must grow and evolve good practice and shift to new ways of working. And it must invest in creating the social homes we so desperately need.

As both the human and public costs of homelessness escalate across Wales, it is vital that the Welsh Government – and all politicians – focus on building on these foundations in the next Senedd term and accelerate our collective journey towards ending homelessness.



Matt Downie MBE
Chief Executive, Crisis



Foreword

Archie, our Expert by Experience

Homelessness isn't about losing a roof. It's the stripping of humanity, dignity, and hope. Without a home, life becomes survival, days are short and restless, and the nights become long and distressing. A cold floor becomes a home. Temporary accommodation becomes a mirage in the desert that we call life, a comfort at first glance, but in truth, a trap that deepens the trauma.

Homelessness can feel like the absence of self, the absence of dignity, and the absence of belonging. To be exposed to the rawness of this world, to be stripped of humanity, and to be seen solely as a number.

I know this because I have lived it. Homelessness and addiction don't discriminate. In my experience, living through homelessness is to be passed from one system to another, to be given phone numbers instead of care, and for food banks to become second kitchens, to be seen as a number and managed as a problem and face prejudice.

But when I was given a home, a rose truly flourished from concrete, and I was able to rebuild, to recover, and to renew a future; to find sobriety through the calm that comes from the stability of having a home. A home is not simply a shelter but a foundation. At the time of this writing, I am two years and seven months sober.

Homelessness can be ended. We end it by recognising housing as a human right, not a privilege and by breaking down barriers in the system, so people are not left to fall through the cracks. To ensure that everyone has not just a roof, but a place to belong, to have a system that works, and not assign people as numbers and statistics.

Homelessness is heavy, but it is not inevitable. We must never resign ourselves to believing otherwise. We must ensure that the next Government in Wales commits to prevent homelessness and follow the ideals in this manifesto.

Homelessness is heavy, but it is not inevitable. We must never resign ourselves to believing otherwise.



Summary

Our research shows that, with the right policy change and drive, we can turn the tide on homelessness in Wales.

To do this, we will need the newly elected Members of the Senedd from all parties to make ending homelessness a priority.

We need the next Welsh Government to make a commitment to end homelessness, creating a strategy that focuses on the following milestones:

1. Working together to prevent homelessness from happening in the first place

By working together, we can put the brakes on the rising numbers of us who are living without stable place to call home. We can stop people from having to live through the trauma of homelessness.

2. Ensuring people experiencing homelessness can get the support they need

By ensuring our systems are structured and funded so that each person experiencing homelessness receives the support they need, we can end their homelessness as quickly as possible and stop them from being pushed into homelessness again in the future.

3. Investing in and delivering more genuinely affordable homes, particularly social homes.

There remains a chronic undersupply of genuinely affordable homes across Wales, especially for social rent. Delivering more homes to match the needs of people experiencing homelessness is critical.

1. Working together to prevent homelessness from happening in the first place

Homelessness can tear people's lives apart. It can be dangerous and emotionally challenging.

We know that people who experience homelessness face increased risks to their physical and mental health. Indeed, reports demonstrate that the average age of death for people experiencing homelessness is 45 years old for men and 43 years old for women.⁵

In our own services here at Crisis, we've also seen an increase in people experiencing homelessness who, given the pressures they are facing, are experiencing suicidal thoughts. Every day, we see homelessness take its toll on people's relationships, confidence, education and employment. The human cost of homelessness is immeasurable.

The rising level of homelessness also impacts our public services. Research published by Crisis and Heriot-Watt University earlier this year shows housing services across the country describe themselves as being in "firefighting mode."⁶

We cannot afford to go on this way. We must move beyond the firefight and push prevention upstream. We must ensure that we do everything we can to prevent people from living through the trauma of homelessness.

Once passed, the anticipated Homelessness and Social Housing Allocations Bill will help to ensure people who are at risk of homelessness can get help much earlier and that wider public services play their part in homelessness prevention.

But more hard work is needed in the next Senedd to implement these key changes and make this a reality. Homelessness and its root causes often extend beyond the door of housing services. By working together, across our health, social services, education, job centres and other key services - collaborative working can make a huge impact. We must ensure that we invest in the resources, training and systems to support this way of working, because the benefits are huge for everyone.

"The success rates recorded by local authorities across Wales for preventing people's homelessness have fallen by 16% since 2017/18. We must do more to prevent people from experiencing the trauma of homelessness."

⁵ [Deaths of homeless people in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁶ [The Homelessness Monitor: Wales 2025 | Crisis | Together we will end homelessness](#)



2. Ensuring people who are experiencing homelessness have the support they need

Too often, people who are experiencing homelessness can be locked out of support, or struggle to navigate the very systems that are meant to help them.⁷

The current homelessness law can limit the support people can access simply because of who they are. For example, under current systems, single people can struggle to access homes. It often fails to meet people's individual needs and can leave people pushed out with nowhere to turn when they struggle to navigate services and support.

Often, people who are experiencing homelessness are facing multiple challenges and barriers.

If we are to truly end homelessness, we need radical change. Alongside prevention, 'rapid rehousing' must be a cornerstone of any strategy to end homelessness. Rapid rehousing means

acting early to rehouse people quickly, as soon as they become homeless. It also means giving households the support tools they need to sustain their accommodation, so they don't become homeless again.

We need systems – and a housing supply – that recognises the importance of moving into a stable and secure home as swiftly as possible and building support around people. This can be financial support, or more person-centred support related to health and wellbeing.

This Senedd term, politicians from all parties are looking at key changes to homelessness legislation to improve support. But work must continue in the new term to make such changes a reality.

We must push ahead with putting changes to homelessness systems into practice and ensuring that services are adequately funded and supported to deliver meaningful change, so that no-one is turned away from help and people are moved quickly into a home of their own. Because, ultimately, lives depend on it.

⁷ [ending-homelessness-in-wales-a-legislative-review.pdf](#)

3. Investing in and delivering more affordable settled homes.

We have a chronic undersupply of genuinely affordable homes across Wales.⁸ This is a widely acknowledged issue with 86%⁹ of the Welsh public surveyed highlighting the need for more affordable homes as an issue of concern.

Here at Crisis, we often see people who are trapped living in temporary accommodation for months on end, living in limbo without access to basic facilities like cooking and laundry. In many cases, people are living by curfews, being asked to vacate accommodation during the day, and even living with the uncertainty of where they will sleep from night to night.

Our members tell us that living this way is like being in survival mode – it can make daily life difficult and creates significant barriers to holding down a job or nurturing relationships.

Ensuring people who are facing homelessness can be moved into a home as swiftly as possible is crucial. A stable home gives a foundation from which we can build our lives. Unfortunately, statistics show that the number of people moving into temporary accommodation each month consistently outstrips those moving into settled homes.¹⁰

Councils surveyed as part of our Homelessness Monitor published earlier this year reported that a key barrier to ending homelessness is a lack of affordable homes to meet need, in particular a lack of one-bedroom properties.¹¹

⁸ [Affordable housing | Audit Wales](#)

⁹ Taken from a poll conducted by NFP on behalf of Crisis in 2024, based on a sample of 1,020 Wales residents aged over 16.

¹⁰ [Homelessness: April 2024 to March 2025 \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

¹¹ [the-homelessness-monitor-wales-2025.pdf](#)

We know there is good practice across Wales to boost housing supply, but there is still much work to do to promote and extend such practice and to support councils in aligning supply planning with housing need with a goal of ending homelessness.

It is critical that the next Welsh Government presses ahead with investing in homes to match the needs of people experiencing homelessness. This means investment in social rent homes and making sure the private rented sector is fit for purpose.

“It is very difficult to control your future and rebuild when you don't have the control in the now.

I was stuck in survival mode. My headspace was taken up with worrying about how I was going to make money, where my next meal was coming from. When will I get my kids back properly instead of fleeting moments. It was too much to have the headspace to begin to think about more.

But once I had a stable place to call home, everything changed. My mind became calmer and I was able to move beyond survival mode and start sorting out getting back on top of things even if it was little actions.”

Declan – Expert by Experience

Conclusion

The last few years have been tough. Homelessness has been rising and social housing waiting lists across the country are unmanageable.

But it doesn't have to be this way. We know the steps that will drive us forwards towards a Wales without homelessness.

We need the next Welsh Government and elected Members of the Senedd from all parties to commit to working together on these steps, because, quite simply, we cannot afford not to.

We can and must end homelessness in Wales.

We must put the brakes on homelessness to prevent more people from living through it.

We must end the trauma that thousands of people across Wales are facing day in day out.

We must see our homelessness services move beyond firefighting mode.

We must ensure everyone has a safe place to call home.



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