SHELTER SCOTLAND

IMPACT REPORT

2025/26



Scotland is in the grip of a housing emergency. Every 15 minutes, a household in Scotland becomes homeless.

In 2025/26 alone, over **14,000 children** experienced homelessness. That's an average of **39 children in Scotland becoming homeless every day.** This crisis does not affect everyone equally.

Racism and bias in our housing system mean that some communities are hit hardest and face greater barriers to finding a safe, secure home.

But it can be fixed.

Over the past year, we have **worked tirelessly to fight for home,** standing together to expose a broken system, and defend those bearing the brunt of **Scotland's housing emergency.**

SHELTER SCOTLAND

OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE

Across our Services in Scotland in 2025/26:

13,000+ clients supported directly by TOAS, the Communities Teams and the Shelter Scotland Housing Law Service.

7,782 online chats responded to by TOAS.

1,271 clients provided support, advice and advocacy by Community teams.

3,864 clients supported via the Helpline.

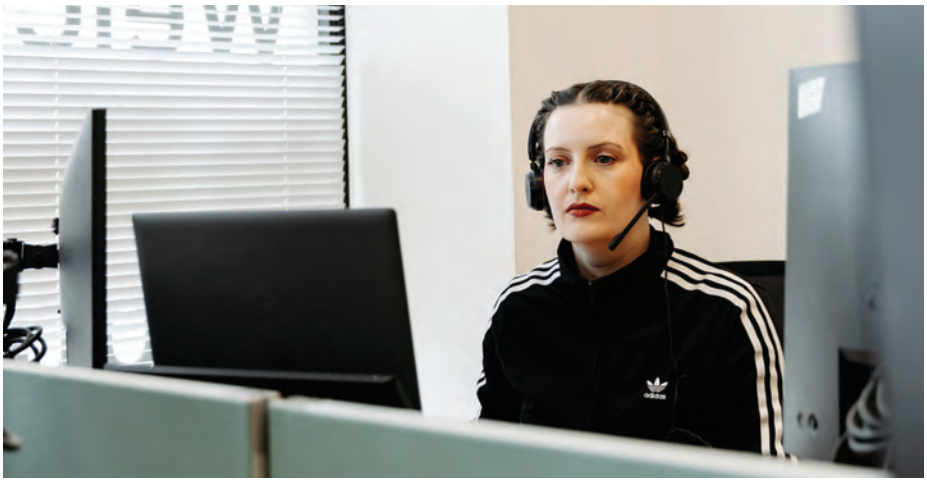
308 clients helped through our Law Service.

Through our rights education and capacity-building work, our teams equip people with the knowledge, confidence and tools to understand their rights, take action to defend them and empower others to do the same.

In 2025/26, we delivered 110 sessions to 1,190 people from communities and the voluntary sector, as well as capacity-building sessions for other frontline organisations.

Empowering communities through housing rights

There are many challenges which people face when trying to find a safe, suitable and secure home. Unfortunately, many of these challenges disproportionately affect **minoritised groups** in our society more acutely than others. This includes refugees, disabled people, families with children, care leavers and Black People and People of Colour (BPoC). This reflects a housing system that continues to deepen racial inequality rather than work to alleviate it.



Over the past year, our community team has been **delivering workshops** to help partner organisations build capacity. These workshops tailor support for working with BPoC communities, with a **strong emphasis on homelessness rights** and addressing the disproportionate impact of Scotland's housing emergency on refugee communities in Glasgow.

Using a **peer-to-peer capacity building model,** we aim to embed Shelter Scotland's anti-racism commitments and peoples lived experience into all aspects of our work. Rather than positioning refugee communities as passive recipients of **expert knowledge,** this model helps us to recognise Peer Advocates as leaders in shaping how housing rights information is communicated and acted upon within the community.

We have seen very positive feedback and strong demand amongst our partners to build upon and expand this work.

Going forward we are committed and will continue work which aims to tackle racism, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination within the housing sector.

CAMPAIGNING FOR CHANGE

In March 2026, Dundee declared a housing emergency. After years of austerity, decades of underinvestment, and political choices that have left **too many people without a safe, secure and affordable home,** the declaration was a pivotal moment. The Dundee Housing Emergency declaration came after 13 other Scottish councils had already done so. **A national housing emergency was declared by the Scottish Government in May 2024.**

Every day, people across Scotland are denied their legal right to suitable temporary accommodation, tenants are unprotected against rising rents and worsening conditions, and families are unable to secure a social home which truly meets their needs.

The Dundee Housing Emergency Coalition (DHEC) was formed by Shelter Scotland to mobilise local organisations, communities, and supporters to push Dundee City Council to declare a housing emergency. Over the past year, we worked closely with city partners to help build momentum and ensure the housing emergency could not be ignored any longer.



This work began with mapping and proactive engagement across the city, identifying organisations, community voices and individuals who wanted to be part of the movement. Stakeholder workshops were held, bringing together **over 32 organisations and people with lived experience** to inform a community led Housing Emergency Action Plan (HEAP) tailored to Dundee's specific housing challenges. The HEAP reflects local priorities and outlines the actions Dundee City Council needs to take to address the housing emergency.

This work has used a series of key actions which aim to drive change:

- **Workshops:** Partner organisations and people with lived experience worked together to contribute to the content of the community-led HEAP.
- **Civic event:** Politicians and senior council officers were invited to hear directly from coalition partners and lived experience participants. Amy and Ryan's powerful stories left a lasting impression, highlighting the urgent need for action and the real-life impact of those living the housing emergency.
- **High-profile support:** Award-winning actor Brian Cox, a proud Dundonian, lent his voice to our work, shining a spotlight on the issue and boosting social media engagement to reach a wider audience.
- **Community engagement:** The people of Dundee sent 438 emails directly to their councillors demanding a housing emergency be declared.
- **Open letter:** We coordinated an open letter signed by 19 local organisations, demonstrating broad support and further pressure on the council to declare a housing emergency.

You can read the full Dundee Housing Emergency Action Plan, put together by the Dundee Housing Emergency Coalition, here: **shelterscotland.org/DundeeHEAP**

LIVED EXPERIENCE OF DUNDEE'S HOUSING EMERGENCY

"I believe Dundee City Council is in a housing emergency. I'm a mum of two from Dundee, and I've been on the council housing waiting list for 14 years, moving from one private let to another. It's financially crippling."

"Last year, after experiencing domestic abuse, I faced homelessness."

Despite facing a period of homelessness and domestic abuse, Amy had to wait for almost a year before her homelessness application was taken up by the council.

Even after being recognised as homeless, Amy remained in limbo, waiting for a suitable home for herself and two children. During this time, she received incorrect and conflicting information from the council on her housing options, making her situation even more confusing, stressful and hopeless.

"I contacted Shelter Scotland. The woman who helped me was lovely and took the time to explain to me my rights."

Shelter Scotland gave Amy clear, accurate advice on her housing rights, correcting misinformation and helping her build the confidence to advocate for herself.



Her long wait for housing, even as a parent and a survivor of domestic abuse, highlights pressures on an overstretched housing system in need of dramatic change and a new generation of social homes.

Amy was able to move into a safe and suitable social home and has since gone on to support others, undertaking a student placement and strengthening her advocacy skills through Shelter Scotland's capacity-building sessions.

THANK YOU

Thank you to every supporter who has stood with Shelter Scotland this year. Your voices have driven our campaigning, with thousands of emails sent to MSPs during the Scottish Election, making housing impossible to ignore.

Together, you have kept the focus on the urgent need for more social homes at a time when rents are unaffordable and too many families remain trapped in temporary accommodation.

As new MSPs take office, your continued support is ensuring pressure remains high and the message is clear: **Scotland must build more social homes and end the housing emergency. We cannot do this without you.**

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