

Are you with us?

We're fighting for a Scotland where everyone has a place to feel safe. Where no one chooses between food and rent, and no one sleeps on the streets. We all have the right to a good home and we want to make it the law. Are you with us?

The campaign for housing rights

Scotland has some of the most progressive housing legislation in the world, and over time people should be finding it easier to secure the safe home that is so vital to a fulfilling life. **But whilst housing is a human right,¹ there is a gap between this technical right and what is protected under domestic law.** And too often the existing laws and housing rights remain beyond the reach of too many. **People don't know what their rights are** and public bodies, struggling under the weight of cuts in services and increases in demand, are **unable to enforce them.** For thousands, a safe, secure and affordable home is still out of reach. We believe that citizens need better protection to secure their right to a home.

- Last year, 29,894 households were made homeless – the equivalent of one every 18 minutes, and 10,989 households are currently in temporary accommodation.²
- Rough sleeping in Scotland is rising. Last year, 2,875 people had slept rough in the 3 months prior to making a homeless application.
- Councils broke the law and denied people their right to temporary accommodation over 3,000 times. Many people were forced to sofa surf or sleep on the streets as a result.
- Families with children spend 219 days, or more than 6 months, in temporary homeless accommodation on average.
- Hundreds of thousands of families struggle with impossible decisions about how to pay their rent. 1 million households, or one in five in Scotland are in poverty after they've paid their rent or mortgage³ and 613,000 households are living in fuel poverty.⁴

¹ Shelter Scotland (January 2019), [Housing is a human right](#)

² All homelessness statistics available at Scottish Government (2019), [Homelessness in Scotland: Annual Publication 2018-19](#)

³ Scottish Government (2019), [Poverty and income inequality in Scotland: 2015-2018](#)

⁴ Scottish Government (2018), [Scottish house condition survey 2017 key findings](#)

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What can be done to protect and enhance housing rights?

The First Minister's Advisory Group on Human Rights Leadership recently recommended a new Act of the Scottish Parliament on human rights. This creates a major opportunity to underpin Scotland's tangled web of housing rights by including the right to a home in Human Rights legislation for the first time. This bill must incorporate into Scots law the right to adequate housing for all. Enforceable in court this will greatly enhance the power of an individual citizen to secure their legal right to a home and ensure no public body can break the law with impunity.

That is why Shelter Scotland is campaigning for a Scotland where:

- New laws enhance and protect the right to a safe, secure and affordable homes for all.
- Everyone knows and can defend their housing rights.
- Rights are upheld and laws cannot be routinely broken.

What can you do?

- 1. Sign the petition today** to make housing rights, human rights at shelterscotland.org/areyouwithus
- 2. Adopt the Charter for Change:** Get your employer or organisation to adopt the Charter for Change and commit to make the changes Scotland needs to ensure there's a safe, secure and affordable home for everyone.
- 3. Become a housing rights defender:** Use your voice to raise awareness about the housing emergency - and the solutions. Share information on social media with the hashtag #areyouwithus, and stay in touch with our campaign for more information and some specific acts you can take.

Contact: Lisa Borthwick, Senior Campaigns & Policy Officer,
lisa_borthwick@shelter.org.uk, 0344 515 2469