



# Shelter Scotland Impact report

2017/18



Shelter  
Scotland



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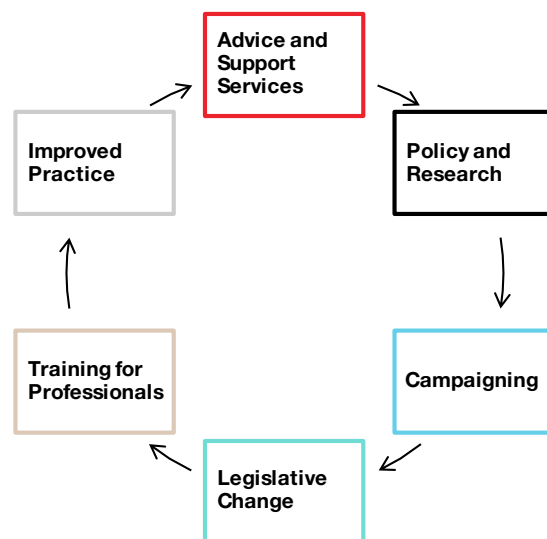
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# What we do

Shelter Scotland is Scotland's national housing and homelessness charity. We are here so that no-one has to face bad housing or homelessness alone.

For 50 years we have sought to drive change towards our vision of a home for everyone in Scotland. We advise and support anyone in housing need today and we use the insight we gain to inform our campaigns and make positive change for tomorrow. We also raise professional standards for those working in Scotland's housing and homelessness sector by offering a broad range of training courses.

Working under this model, we primarily help those that come to us for support to “find”, “keep” or “improve” their home. We use the framework outlined below to measure our impact in these areas:



Find a home 	Keep a home 	Improve a home 
<b>The outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More people find somewhere to live</li> <li>More people see their longer term housing needs met</li> <li>More people have greater opportunities to find a safe, secure and affordable home</li> </ul>	<b>The outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More people stay in their homes</li> <li>More people can pay their rent and mortgage</li> <li>More people have the skills to cope and flourish</li> </ul>	<b>The outcomes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More people enjoy better housing conditions</li> <li>More people live in safer, more suitable homes</li> <li>More people have their rights and responsibilities defended</li> </ul>

# Introduction

Shelter Scotland has always sought to ensure that our work makes a real and positive impact for those we seek to help. This document summarises the impact of our work across Scotland in 2017/18.

Across the country, we still see significant problems at a local level turning our good housing policy or legislation into good local practice. Too many people in Scotland continue to fall through the cracks of our public services and come to us for advice or support.

Private renters and younger people continue to dominate those seeking our help in Scotland and affordability and poor conditions still come out on top in terms of the big housing challenges people are facing. We are proud that as a charity we offer universally available online and telephone advice services to ensure anyone in Scotland can seek our support, but we still see an overrepresentation of people coming to us from urban areas, suggesting that this is where many of our housing issues remain most acute.

We have continued to innovate in our service delivery, both online and in face-to-face support, launching a new model for housing help embedded in the A&E service at Victoria Hospital in Fife and the continued expansion of our Time for Change programme, working with and utilising the experience of peer mentors, which is now running out of our Community Hubs in both Glasgow and Dundee.

On the campaigning front, phase two of our Homelessness: Far from Fixed campaign, informed by the voices of those with lived experience of homelessness from across Scotland, was instrumental in securing the establishment of both the Scottish Government's Homelessness and

Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) and Holyrood's Local Government and Communities Committee inquiry into homelessness. We now await the recommendations from these two major bits of work being turned into a comprehensive action plan on homelessness.

As well as being a challenging voice, we also know how to work in partnership to drive change. Our New House Rules campaign, in partnership with the Scottish Government, helped to raise awareness about the landmark changes to the private rented sector that our Make Renting Right campaign secured last year. Running from December 2017 until March 2018, this initiative led to a 30% increase in awareness among Scottish private renters about the changes to their tenancy, their new rights and new responsibilities.

Our training functions have continued to grow over the last 12 months, with a significant 350% increase in the number of people trained last year on key issues such as private rented tenancy changes, housing and human rights, and homelessness.

It has been a busy and significant year across several fronts at Shelter Scotland. Our work continues to ensure that people across Scotland can assert their right to a safe and secure home. As we mark our 50th anniversary in 2018/19 we will keep fighting to ensure there is a home for everyone.

**Graeme Brown,**  
**Director, Shelter**  
**Scotland**



# Year in numbers

**21,290  
people**

helped by our housing advice and support services in 2017/18

Across all those we helped the top three issues were:



**Struggling to pay or afford housing costs**



**Housing conditions**




**Issues with their landlords**

**42%**  
were male


**58%**  
were female

Of those that came to us for help:

**32%**

needed help finding a home 

**46%**

needed help keeping a home 

**22%**

needed help improving their home 

 **894,025  
visitors**

to our website were recorded in 2017/18

**46%**

of all our clients where aged 16-34

**36%**

of all our clients came from the private rented sector

**71%**

of the public in Scotland know about Shelter Scotland and 61% have a favourable impression of us.



On our website, we carried out online chat sessions with

**5,918 people**



**21 policy papers**

published and we responded to 8 Scottish Government consultations on key housing and homeless issues.



**12 street campaign days**

were held in cities and towns across Scotland



**273 press releases**

were issued in total, securing 485 million opportunities to hear or see about our work in print, broadcast and online media. 5 per week



**1,831 people**

accessed our physical and online training courses



**62% of people**

polled describe Shelter Scotland as “trustworthy”



**123 people**

completed our Housing Law Advice course in 2017/18



**171 volunteers**

gave over 10,494 volunteer hours to support our work 2017/18

# Key insights

**The following are some of the key insights that have emerged from our work in 2017/18:**

- Of all the people accessing our advice and support services in 2017/18, the highest number of cases were related to helping people to keep their home, as in the previous year.
  - The dominant presenting problem remains as “struggling to afford or pay housing costs”, with affordability staying a priority issue across private renters, social sector renters and home owners.
  - We continue to support an over representative number of people living in the private rented sector (PRS) in Scotland. 36% of all our client cases last year came from the private rented sector, but only 15% of Scottish households live in the PRS.
  - 46% of all our client cases came from people aged 16-34, yet this demographic only accounts for around 25% of people in Scotland. This significant number of young people coming to us for help confirms our view that Scotland’s housing crisis disproportionately impacts on the young and is storing up major problems for future generations.
  - Our efforts, and the continued backing of our campaign supporters, successfully led the way for important new legislation being introduced on December 1st, 2017, called the private residential tenancy.
- It replaced assured and short assured tenancy agreements for all new tenancies and changed the rights of tenants and their ability to ensure they can take action to raise standards.
- The Programme for Government announced in early September 2017 included the establishment of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG), the creation of a £50M ‘Ending Homelessness Together’ fund, supported by a further £20M investment in drug and alcohol services.
- This marked a major milestone for our Far from Fixed campaign, with homelessness included as one of the First Minister’s top seven priorities.

- This year we published joint research with the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and the Equality and Human Rights Commission to better understand how the Scottish Government affordable homes target will be delivered in practice.

This report provided great insight into local delivery and reported that the target was likely to be met, but underlined that fact that the single biggest priority for housing in Scotland remains increasing the supply of affordable housing.

- Our 'No DSS' report in October 2017, reviewed evidence on landlord and letting agent attitudes to tenants receiving Housing Benefit and showed that there is still a challenge of private landlords being unwilling to let to this group. This is something we will be looking at further to ensure tenants renting privately in Scotland are not discriminated against.

- Following extensive lobbying, highlighting how it could potentially put many young people at risk of homelessness, the UK Government scrapped its decision to end automatic entitlement for help with housing costs through Universal Credit for 18- to 21- year olds.

- Influenced by key factors such as changing internet use and smartphone mass adoption, the way people seek and use our advice content continues to change and requires us to continually monitor and respond to these changes.

Peter praises the support he got from his Shelter Scotland support worker.

"Julie's been a breath of fresh air because we were worried about everything but she kept us right."

## Service Spotlight

# New model of housing help for Fife hospital

**Homeless people are 3.8 times more likely to attend A&E and 2.2 times more likely to be admitted to hospital than people who are settled in a home of their own.**

Homeless people attending A&E at a Fife hospital are being given specialist housing advice as part of a ground-breaking service delivered in partnership with Fife Council and Fife Health and Social Care Partnership [HSCP]. It's hoped the service can improve the lives of patients with multiple and complex needs and save vital NHS resources by getting the right advice to people in hospital who might otherwise not seek out help with housing problems. Two specialist advisers are based at the Victoria Hospital in Kirkcaldy during the two-year trial.

The project is backed by £173,000 of funding with the majority being supplied by Shelter Scotland with contributions from Fife HSCP and Fife Council.

During the project health staff will refer patients who are homeless or at immediate risk of losing their home to our advisers in the hospital who will work with them to resolve housing issues.

Among the expected benefits are a reduction in delayed discharge cases.

The project aims to demonstrate how improved links between healthcare and housing can deliver better health for patients and be more cost effective for the NHS by cutting the number of repeat visits. Those who receive help from the Intervention Service will be asked for their feedback to help health and housing services work more effectively together in the future.

Six months in, the service has now seen over 50 people benefit, with most patients only having to wait 24 hours before they leave hospital rather than the average six weeks and there have been major savings for the NHS.



We are delighted to be working with Shelter Scotland to bring this vital initiative to Fife. The early signs are positive.

People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness often have varied and complex needs. By partnering with Shelter Scotland, we are working together to support people into safe and appropriate accommodation earlier.

By working as one team our aim is to help prevent re-admissions, and attendances at the Emergency Department by supporting the wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable in our community. I look forward to watching the programme progress over the next 12 months.'

**Michael Kellet**

Director of Fife Health and Social Care Partnership

# Impact of our services

**This section summarises and analyses the people Shelter Scotland helped in 2017/18 through our range of advice and support services across Scotland.**

Shelter Scotland provides both universal and bespoke housing support and advice in several different ways. Most frequently our advice is accessed through Get Advice (our online content) and our National Helpdesk, which consists of a free national helpline and digital chat web service. In addition, we run a suite of core advice services from our four Community Hubs based in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee.

We also seek to develop innovative housing services to pilot and test new approaches

and to further demonstrate best practice in this complex field. We do this through a variety of statutory and grant funded projects across Scotland with notable services currently being run in Dumfries and Galloway, Fife, South Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire.

For the purposes of this section of analysis, the support we provide is measured in case work and referred to as “cases” or “cases opened” and the individuals we help are referred to as “clients” in line with how we record the support we provide on our central systems. Given the nature and sensitivity of this area of our work, we record a variety of types, and a varying amount, of information in relation to the specific impact of our work.

## Who came to us for help?

**In 2017/18 Shelter Scotland helped 15,372 people across our housing advice and support services in Scotland.**

11,199 (73%) of these people came via our universal helpline. Including our online chat, the number of cases increases to **21,290**.



### Gender

**58%** of those that sought help were recorded as female.

**42%** were recorded as male.

In less than 1% of our case load did the client identify themselves as transgender or non binary.

### Age

**46%** of those we helped were young people aged 16-34

**52%** of those we helped were aged 35-64

**3%** of those we helped were aged 65+

### Location

**57%** of all our client case load in 2017/18 came from just five of Scotland's local authority areas.

Glasgow City Council	<b>20%</b>
City of Edinburgh Council	<b>14%</b>
Aberdeen City Council	<b>9%</b>
Dundee City Council	<b>9%</b>
South Lanarkshire Council	<b>5%</b>

## Tenure type

We can clearly see that by a significant margin, issues from tenants in the private rented sector account for the single largest group of cases we handled **(36%)**.

Tenure Type	% of total cases
Private Rented Sector Tenant	<b>36%</b>
Non-Tenant Occupier	<b>19%</b>
Council/Registered Social Landlord Tenant	<b>17%</b>
Owner Occupier	<b>13%</b>
Roofless/Rough Sleeping	<b>5%</b>

**19%** of all our client cases last year came from what are termed as 'non-tenant occupiers'.

This includes tenants in temporary accommodation, tenants of resident landlords, tied accommodation, or people living with their parents or spouse.

This group have limited housing rights in Scotland.

## What did we help them with?

The reasons people come to us for advice and support can be broadly grouped into three categories:

Issues related to people **finding a home** – including advice and assistance with homelessness

**32%**



Issues around **keeping a home** – including people struggling to afford their housing costs, or facing eviction

**46%**



Issues related to people seeking to **improve their home** – including landlord issues or housing conditions

**22%**



It is important to note that often people who come to us for help and support will have numerous difficulties spanning these three broad areas of categorisation.

## Top presenting problems

In 2017/18 the top three individual types of problems people came to us for help with were:



**13%** Struggling to pay or afford housing costs



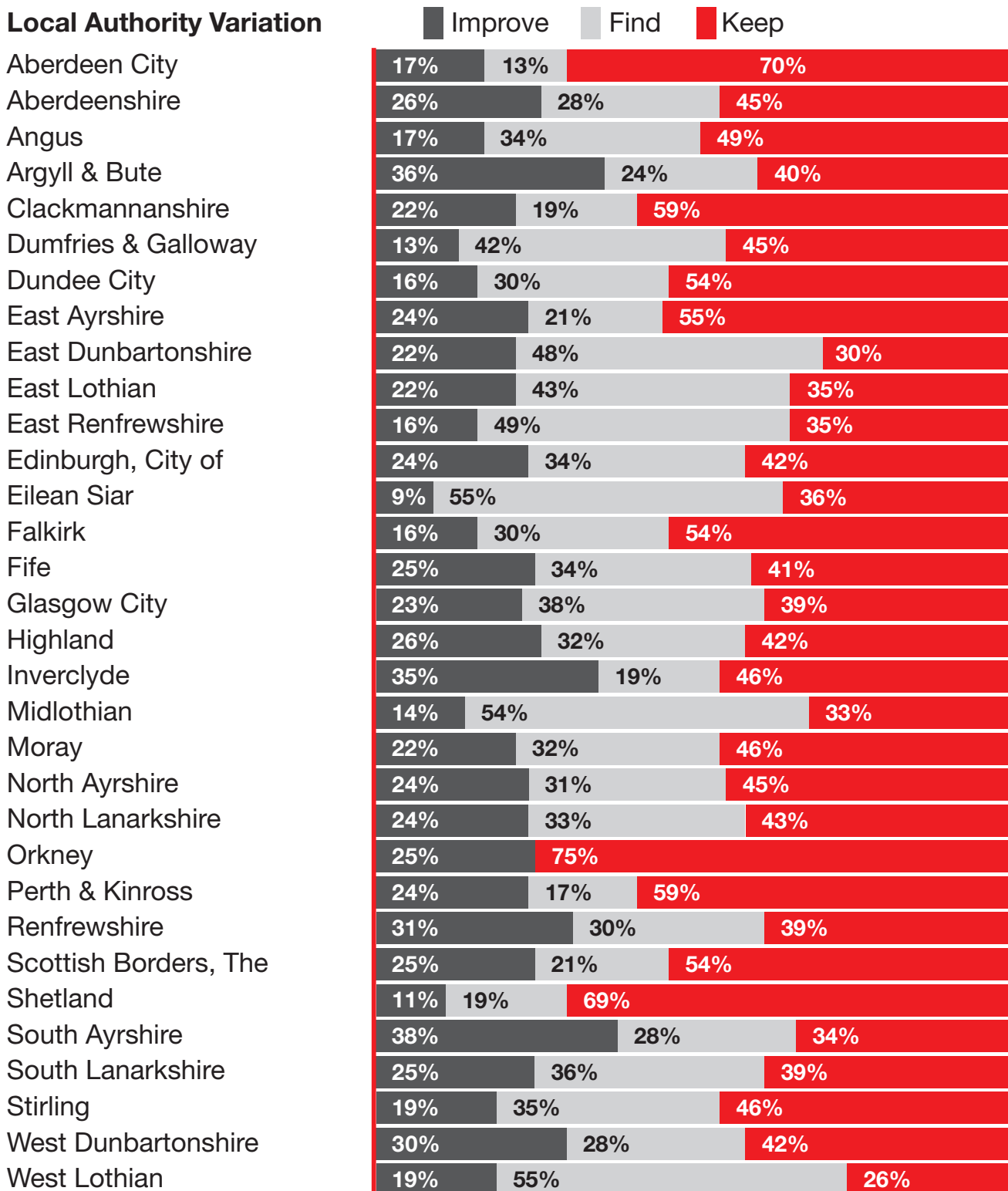
**11%** Housing conditions



**9%** Advice /assistance with local authority allocations

# Local authority variation

## Local Authority Variation



\*Due to the rounding of figures, the percentages of some Local Authorities do not total 100%

## Get advice online



**894,025**  
visitors

In 2017/18 more than 894,025 visitors came to our Get Advice pages, which cover a range of housing and homelessness information specifically for people living in Scotland. This average of over 74,500 visitors each month demonstrates the significant demand for this type of information provision.

In 2017/18 our five most visited web pages were:

- New House Rules (advice on the new private residential tenancy) **42,164**
- Housing rights while pregnant **34,847**
- Homelessness advice **33,108**
- Short Assured Tenancies **30,045**
- Your rights if your partner wants you to move out **28,764**



49% of all visits to our Get Advice section were from mobile devices, similar to last year, while 40% came from desktop devices and 11% from tablet devices.

We received a total of 4,689 feedback comments on the content of our Get Advice pages and our average monthly Net Promoter Score over the course of the year was 35% (compared to a public-sector benchmark of 20%) – a company's Net Promoter Score is an index that measures the willingness of customers to recommend a company's services to others.

### Digital chat

In 2017/18 we provided 5,918 online chat sessions, where a volunteer adviser supports an online advice seeker to find and understand the information they need. This number has increased 9% since the same period last year. In line with recent GDPR legislation, data recorded through this method must now be anonymous, so this is not included in the earlier analysis.

### Volunteering

In 2017/18 a total of 171 people from a variety of backgrounds and interests gave their time to volunteer with Shelter Scotland (not

including volunteers in our retail shops across the country). These people gave a total of 10,494 volunteer hours of their time over the year (over 200 hours per week) to support our work across all our offices and service locations in Scotland. This represents a 16% increase in volunteering hours on the previous year.

Shelter Scotland gives a special note of thanks to all those who selflessly volunteer their time to help us in our mission of ensuring there is a home for everyone in Scotland.



Every time the phone went you'd think 'oh have they got a house for me...is this going to be it'

# Elaine's story

**Elaine Armitage and her two children become homeless when her marriage broke up and she was unable to find affordable accommodation near her parents who provide support. They were in temporary accommodation for two years, during which she had the support of the Shelter Scotland South Lanarkshire project to make sure she knew how to get temporary and permanent housing that would meet their needs and help them to thrive as a family.**

“My marriage broke up and my husband said he wanted to stay in the marital home and obviously it was no longer feasible for me to stay there with him, so I had to go down to the council to ask them for help.

“I had to get letters from my doctor, from schools, you name it to say that I had to stay in East Kilbride for family support because my son has Asperger's and it would have been too disruptive to have to try and move him to another area, another school. Plus, I've got fibromyalgia and my mum and dad really are my main support for the kids.

“It was a two-bedroom house that I was offered but they couldn't tell me how long I would be in a two-bedroom house. I explained I had a son and a daughter and they said ‘well you and your daughter could share a room’ and again I had to go

back and get a letter from the school and various other people to say that no that wouldn't be beneficial for her wellbeing and it would need to be a three-bedroom property. So I had to wait another few weeks and eventually I got temporary accommodation. It was a roof over my head, but it wasn't in an area I knew. You didn't know how long you were going to be there. They couldn't say a year, six months whatever. You didn't want to start mucking about with changing schools and things.

Every time the phone went you'd think ‘oh have they got a house for me...is this going to be it’. I was there for two years and in the end, I was living out of boxes for those two years because I couldn't settle. It was very, very stressful and very unsettling and the whole experience...I just never felt at home.”

Eventually Elaine was offered a three-bedroom permanent home.

“It's great because the kids know where they are. We've been able to decorate their rooms, basically make it a family home for me and the kids but it's been really good to finally put down roots and just to establish myself. This is our home, and nobody can come and take it away from me. It's as permanent as permanent can be. It's just given us an opportunity to be a family and start a proper family life.”

# Service Spotlight

## Time for Change

**Time for Change is currently operating in Glasgow and Dundee and funding has now been secured to develop this work in Edinburgh.**

Time for Change focuses on the identification of local issues facing homeless people and, through involvement and wider consultation, co-produces the design and delivery of a local response to tackle those problems. The focus of Time for Change is on the practical impact and empowerment of people with experience of repeat or long term homelessness; untapping expert lived experience to deliver more informed and enriched services.

The project starts with meaningful and robust consultation with people with multiple and complex needs in the area about 'what better would look like' in the services they access, the support they receive and the experience they have of the housing and homelessness sector.

A programme of active and assertive outreach ensures that we reach people in the community at the services they are using. The approach taken by Time for Change recognises that the individuals we seek to engage with face more barriers to accessing our core offer of advice and support, so we go to them and whilst seeking to learn from their

experiences and involve them in our work, we provide them with access to our core offer at the point of contact. This approach aims to improve individual outcomes whilst learning about the wider societal and systemic changes that are required.

Individuals who participate in these consultations are invited to become involved in the design, delivery and governance of Time for Change in that area. A core group provides a governance structure and this group then leads on developing a local delivery plan to affect change on the issues they have identified. Individuals involved in the TfC delivery become the agents for change: volunteering, campaigning, advocating and working alongside others in the community who are facing the same issues.

The project originated in Glasgow and the main issue identified by the group was gatekeeping, where people are stopped from accessing the homeless services they are entitled to by law.

As such, traineeships were offered to participants to become involved with Shelter Scotland, to complete Housing Law and Advice training and then work towards the accredited qualification. Trainees and staff attend outreach sites



throughout the city, provide support and advice to individuals and offer 'assisted presentations', supporting people affected by gatekeeping to present as homeless with support, where needed . They have had an incredible success rate.

Furthermore, the trainees have been supported with personal development plans to receive work experience and qualifications. Two of the trainees who have gone through this experience are now actively seeking paid work and have qualifications to support this.

The delivery of Time for Change in Dundee is newer and still in its developmental stage but peer support was identified as one of the approaches that could make a difference to people's journey - having someone who had

'been there, done that' and could support others through the journey - again backed up by access to advice and casework through paid staff at outreach sites.

The Dundee project now has nine peer mentors who are just completing their mentoring training and are now attending outreach sites with staff and building up relationships with individuals in the community who are currently facing homelessness or housing issues.

Looking to the future, the approach taken by Time for Change will be further embedded in our work as a whole, informing and supporting our campaigns and policy work and as a framework for how we engage individuals and the community and design our responses around need with maximum impact.

# Impact of our campaigns

We are here so that no-one has to face bad housing or homelessness alone. We use our voice to make sure that housing and homelessness is a top political priority both nationally and locally, and campaigning for change is a central pillar of all that we do.

From national campaigning on the supply of affordable housing or advocating for a better strategic approach to preventing homelessness, to local influencing on social sector evictions or homeless rights, our client experience is at the heart of our policy and campaigning work. This section gives an overview of our activity and the impact we have had in 2017/18.

## What we did

### Campaigning and influencing:

- We delivered phase two of our landmark **Far from Fixed** campaign, arguing that homelessness is still a major issue and should be a political priority. This workstream included 12 campaign days across Scotland, engaging with service users, volunteers, members of the public and politicians from across the political spectrum.
- In September 2017 homelessness was included as a priority issue in the First Minister's annual Programme for Government announcement, having been absent the previous year.
- A national Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) was established to tackle rough sleeping and related issues with Shelter Scotland playing an active and central role in that group. The group put forward a series of ambitious recommendations which have all been accepted by the Scottish Government. The City of Edinburgh Council and Glasgow City Council have also established Homelessness Task Forces locally.
- A Scottish Parliament Committee established a formal inquiry into homelessness. Shelter Scotland submitted written evidence, gave oral evidence twice and secured a special slot for people with lived experience of homelessness who have used Shelter Scotland services to give evidence in Parliament, engaging directly with members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs). The Committee's final report highlighted a number of Shelter Scotland's key campaign issues and references our involvement throughout.



## Policy:

- We published research into the planned delivery of affordable housing to meet the Scottish Government's affordable homes target. Commissioned jointly with Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), the research was well received and contributed to moving the debate on the delivery of new homes from a simple 'how many', to what is being built where to meet housing need.
- Jointly with SFHA, we produced a good practice guide for housing associations around applying flexibility in charging tenants the first month's rent in advance. This was an issue that had been raised as problematic by Shelter Scotland services. We are currently assessing the impact of the guide.
- We supported the roll-out and delivery of reforms to Scotland's private rented sector including a new tenancy and tribunal which we had previously campaigned for.
- Following extensive lobbying, we saw the UK Government U-turn on their policy to remove automatic entitlement for help with housing costs through Universal Credit from 18- to 21-year olds.
- We published a report into evictions for rent arrears in the social rented sector and followed up with a roundtable to understand what lay behind the figures.
- We published research on 'no DSS' practices in the private rented sector.
- Our Private Landlord Support Project was endorsed by the Scottish Government by being included as an example of good practice in the Statutory Guidance on Landlord Registration.
- We developed a Letting Agent Plus service standard and signed up 13 letting agents dedicated to improving practice for tenants who need extra help with renting privately.

## Engagement and influencing:

- We engaged 199 members of our online private tenant forum as part of a key workstream to develop the influence private tenants have on policy and practice.
- We worked with over 500 landlords directly through our private renting projects in Dundee and the Highlands and reached a further 20,000 through awareness raising activities.
- Political debates were held in our four hub cities: Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dundee, ahead of the local government elections in May 2017. These were all extremely well attended and gave members of the public, supporters, volunteers and service users an opportunity to raise issues directly with local politicians.
- We held an exhibition stall in the Scottish Parliament for three days in November 2017 where we issued all MSPs with localised statistical briefings. We had great engagement from all political parties including meeting with all five party leaders and had discussions with 84 MSPs.
- We have had exhibition stalls and held 'Big Housing Debates' at the major political party conferences, engaging with national and local politicians – highlighting the work that we do and the issues that we see.



# Campaign Spotlight

## Homelessness: Far from Fixed

**On paper, Scotland has some of the most progressive homelessness rights and legislation in the world. However, in recent years progress on this vital issue has stalled with local and national governments having taken their eye off the ball.**

In Scotland today, a household becomes homeless every 18 minutes. Last year 14,000 children were made homeless and 3,250 homeless families were staying in temporary accommodation – often for lengths of time that stretch the definition of “temporary”. In addition, Scotland has seen a 10% increase in rough sleeping over the last 12 months.

The view from Shelter Scotland’s service users and frontline advisers is that, sadly, homelessness is getting worse across the country. This is undoubtedly linked to economic pressures and the heartless welfare reform agenda from Westminster but it was also being compounded in Scotland by a lack of political leadership and a disjointed approach to homelessness prevention across our public services.

For too many people, the right to a home was not equating to the reality of a good home.

Despite all this, the Scottish Government’s 2016/17 Programme for Government did not contain a single mention or reference to homelessness issues.

At Shelter Scotland we said enough was enough. In a wealthy country, no one should have to face the human tragedy of homelessness due to a broken housing system.

We launched our Homelessness: Far from Fixed campaign to deliver a new strategic approach to homelessness that would:

- Put homelessness firmly back on the radar for local and national government
- Educate and raise public awareness about homelessness in Scotland
- Drive practice change to improve outcomes for homeless people across Scotland homelessness happens and helped tackle the stigma around this.

Our campaign took us to cities, towns and villages across Scotland engaging with communities, stakeholders, media and decision makers to make our case for renewed leadership and strategy on homelessness.

We created a bespoke “Chance not Choice” board game to engage people and demonstrate how a number of things can lead to a household becoming homeless - debt, a landlord selling up, a personal loss. This game opened up dialogue around how and why homelessness happens and helped tackle the stigma around this.



We created tailored local briefing packs on each local authority area in Scotland for media and stakeholders to understand their local homelessness issues. Highlighting the lived experiences of our service users, we secured the support of over 1,700 members of the public,

91 elected officials, 32 stakeholder organisations and 13 celebrities to endorse our call for leadership and action on homelessness.

Our campaign led directly to action on homelessness being a central part of the 2017/18 Programme for Government via the creation of the Scottish Government's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group, as well as the new £50million “Ending Homelessness Together” fund. We also secured a major 12 month inquiry from Holyrood's Local Government and Communities Committee into homelessness.

Our campaign put homelessness back on the political agenda in Scotland. But we know that keeping it there, and ensuring good rhetoric is backed by real action and change on the ground, requires constant vigilance.



# Impact of our marketing and communications

Our Marketing and Communications function is responsible for retaining our public profile and driving awareness of both our campaigns and our advice services.

- In 2017/18 we retained an average rating of 73% awareness and 64% favourability of our brand in Scotland (tracked by independent polling among Scottish adults) with an average of 62% describing Shelter Scotland as a “trustworthy” organisation.
- We issued 273 press releases across a range of housing and homelessness issues, securing 485 million opportunities to hear or see about our work in print, broadcast and online media.
- We were funded by the Scottish Government in late 2017, to raise awareness around changes to the laws around private renting in Scotland and the introduction of the new ‘Private Residential Tenancy’ (PRT) legislation. We developed multi-channel online and offline marketing activity and an advice “chatbot” called Ailsa.
- We managed to achieve an increase in awareness about the changes from 25% to 54% in a four month period and were shortlisted for an integrated campaign award by the Chartered Institute of Public Relations.
- We delivered three high-profile policy conferences, engaging with over 200 paying delegates. In addition, we hosted another 165 delegates at two information





events: 'Renting, Venting and Change' which was our first community event for private tenants run with Living Rent and our own Private Tenant Panel, and a well-attended event for landlords in Inverness.

- We held another successful Borders Cycle Challenge event in September 2017 with corporate support from Rettie and Co.
- Our second hackathon was held at CodeBase Edinburgh in March with partners Product Forge and Safe Deposit Scotland Trust. We hoped to emulate the success of our first hackathon, which saw the winning idea the 'I Need Help' button, go on to win funding from Comic Relief.

The winning team, Info Inclusion, built an accessible version of advice for people who are digitally excluded and who find it hard to access the correct housing advice when needed. We will be exploring opportunities to further develop this idea in the months ahead.



‘

It breaks my heart to not see Margaret because we live for each other. It felt like we were cut in half.

# Peter & Margaret's story

**Peter and Margaret Rome are as devoted a couple as you are likely to meet, but he once joked to her that she would go before his herd of beloved fell ponies. That turned out to be an empty threat. In June 2014 Margaret suffered a stroke at their home, a tied house on the farm near Kirkudbright where Peter worked as a dairy man. Peter remembers the shock of finding her slumped on the floor and not being able to move her. Margaret was left unable to walk. From that point they were unable to live together for more than two years as they lost their home, his job and those fell ponies.**

Peter recalls:

“The tied house wasn’t suitable for Margaret, so she couldn’t come home. We had to make a homelessness application to the council. When Margaret was well enough to leave hospital, there wasn’t a house that could be adapted for a wheelchair, so she was moved to a nursing home and the council gave me temporary housing for homeless people. That’s where I was for more than two years. I can’t not see Margaret in the day. It breaks my heart to not see Margaret because we live for each other. It felt like we were cut in half. I had to give away the ponies and our dogs went to stay with a friend who has a farm.”

For Margaret the years in the nursing home – 20 miles from Peter’s temporary housing – were tough.

“It wasn’t living, just existing. I was just waiting for him to come every day.”

With the shock of nearly losing Margaret and her profound disabilities sinking in Peter began to suffer from depression.

“It creeps up on you but it’s a horrible thing. The only thing that helped was seeing Margaret. I’d go and see her every day and take her out on Sundays for her lunch.”

That contact with each other came at a price. The couple’s benefits income wasn’t enough to cover these expenses and the contributions she was expected to pay towards the cost of her care home. They paid £50 a week but still owe more than £10,000 and will have to repay it.

In December 2016 Peter and Margaret were finally given a council home that could be adapted for a wheelchair user. Peter moved in a few weeks before Christmas giving Margaret the opportunity of having Christmas dinner in her own home for the first time in years. She moved in in January 2017 with support from carers.

Peter praises the support he got from his support worker.

“Julie’s been a breath of fresh air because we were worried about everything but she kept us right.”

# Impact of our training

Shelter Scotland offers practical training solutions for housing and homelessness professionals and anyone working in or interested in the sector. Through developing the knowledge and expertise of these professionals, we aim to ensure they can best support their service users in a changing housing landscape.

## What we did

- In 2017/18 a total of 1831 people accessed our face-to-face and online training courses in Scotland. This represents an increase of 352% on the previous year.
- The ongoing use of our online store continued to make it easier for people to find out about and access our courses.
- We innovated new ways of delivering e-learning including using animations, new look learning materials, improving our mobile accessibility, and improving our support for learners.
- In 2017/18 we created and launched several new courses in response to growing trends and needs in the sector, including the following three courses which a total of 1,014 people accessed:
  - Private Residential Tenancy
  - Private Residential Tenancy (PRT) for Housing Support Practitioners
  - Private Rented Sector for Landlords
- We continued to offer our sector leading Housing Law Advice qualification with 123 people completing this course in 2017/18.

## What we achieved

As part of our partnership with the Scottish Government to raise awareness of the new Private Residential Tenancy, we produced free online learning resources to support the understanding of this tenancy and the Private Rented Sector.

The courses were very well received, and this was reiterated in the positive feedback we received:

- 97% of learners who undertook the PRT course said they were more knowledgeable about PRT after completing this course
- 87% of learners who undertook the PRT for housing practitioners course said they were more knowledgeable about PRT after completing this course

“A very useful resource giving valuable insight into this new legislation which will be a major impact on all landlords and letting agents”

“Great source of learning. Learnt so much in a short space of time”

“Really useful. Greatly enhanced my knowledge”

# Service Spotlight

## Praise for Dundee service for young people

**The impact and legacy of a Dundee service to prevent homelessness among young people was hailed at the end of the six-year project in 2017. Safe and Sound was run by Shelter Scotland and Relationships Scotland and supported almost 500 local children and young people.**

A formal evaluation of Safe and Sound found that it brought much-needed support for children and young people who were either already homeless, at risk of homelessness or who had run away from home. The report found that of those who took up the offer of help there was a significant improvement in their safety and prospects of doing well in the future.

The project provided a mix of family mediation, emotional support and practical help for those learning to live independently in difficult circumstances.

Safe and Sound's impact has not just been at local level. The methods used by staff to gain the trust of the children and young people, so their issues could be understood, has been captured in a training programme for professionals. This is being delivered nationally by charity Missing People.

Shelter Scotland also worked in partnership with the Scottish Government and Police Scotland to deliver the country's first National Framework for Missing Persons.

Alison Watson, Deputy Director of Shelter Scotland, said:

“Evidence shows that more than half of young adults who are homeless had previously run away from home. Safe and Sound has found that offering support to people who run away and others at risk of homelessness can prevent a bad situation spiralling out of control.

“The team have produced compelling evidence of what works to help this group of young people who can so easily find themselves at risk of harm. We are delighted that some of the lessons from this service will be shared right across Scotland through the training, the framework and our new evaluation document.”

The project was a partnership between Shelter Scotland and Relationships Scotland working closely with Police Scotland as well as schools and colleges. It was funded as a demonstrator project by the Big Lottery and then by Comic Relief.

# Our presence in Scotland

1. Edinburgh Hub
2. Glasgow Hub
3. Dundee Hub
4. Aberdeen Hub
5. Foundations First (Renfrewshire)
6. Shelter Scotland Support Service, South Lanarkshire
7. Shelter Scotland Support Service, Dumfries & Galloway
8. Glasgow Time for Change Project (based in Glasgow Hub)
9. Dundee Time for Change Project (based in Dundee Hub)





Shelter Scotland helps over half a million people every year struggling with bad housing or homelessness through our advice, support and legal services. And we campaign to make sure that, one day, no-one will have to turn to us for help.

We're here so no-one has to fight bad housing or homelessness on their own.

Shelter Scotland  
Scotiabank House  
6 South Charlotte Street  
Edinburgh EH2 4AW