

## **Dear Dundee City Councillors,**

We, as frontline housing, homelessness, civic and community organisations in Dundee, are writing to urge you to declare a housing emergency in the city.

Our Coalition's community-led Housing Emergency Action Plan sets out clearly what the emergency means in reality: families uprooted repeatedly, survivors of domestic abuse left facing impossible choices, people sofa surfing without clarity about their rights, and residents living with damp, mould and disrepair.

The latest homelessness figures show this in black and white: breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order – which gives people the legal right to temporary accommodation that meets their needs – have surged by 38% in the last year, from 240 to 330, at a time when the national figure fell by 8% and other major cities recorded reductions.

Dundee is now an outlier.

Homelessness applications are up 6%, despite a 3% national decrease. Households assessed as homeless continue to increase in Dundee while decreasing across Scotland, meaning every year thousands of people are facing the agony of losing their home.

There are 13% more households in temporary accommodation in Dundee compared to last year, up from 412 to 464 – outpacing the 9% national rise. Significantly more households are entering temporary accommodation (479) compared to those leaving it (367), meaning strain on the system continues to grow.

Dundee's housing system is no longer coping – **you must act now.**

Existing strategies are ambitious and recognise the pressures, but are not delivering the changes needed, and will not deliver the urgency we need in this emergency situation. Incremental progress over five-year cycles will not reverse the trends that are worsening year on year. An emergency requires an emergency response, with immediate, short-term actions aimed at ensuring compliance with legal duties, urgent delivery of new social homes by building and buying the supply, and person-centred support in place for those who need it.

Responsibility for ending the emergency must lie with the whole council, with a coordinated action plan that acknowledges the centrality of housing to so much of the council's work. Failure in housing is costing the city socially and financially, and we need action now.

We know that declaring a housing emergency will not solve the crisis overnight – but what it will do is acknowledge Dundee's reality, align the city behind a coordinated response and empower

council teams to deliver the immediate changes we need, strengthen the case for additional Scottish and UK government support, and demonstrate the civic leadership the city demands.

The cost of failure is being paid for by all Dundonians. We stand ready to work alongside you to deliver the urgent and sustained action that is required to end this emergency.

Dundee cannot wait any longer.

Kind regards,

Alison Watson - Director, Shelter Scotland

Margaret-Ann Brunjes - Chief Executive, Homeless Network Scotland

Tánaiste Custance - President, Dundee University Students Association

Donald Gordon - Chairman, Dundee Civic Trust

Peter Kelly - Chief Executive, Poverty Alliance

Chris Milburn - Director of Customer Services, Cairn Housing Association

Helen Murdoch - Assistant Director of Strategic Operations and Development (Scotland), The Salvation Army

Justina Murray - Chief Executive, Aberlour Children's Charity

Kirsty Nelson - Queen's Nurse, Parish Nursing Dundee

Shirish Patel - Chief Executive, Dundee Survival Group

Kristina Piggott - Manager for Strategy and Operations, Dundee International Women's Centre

Bryan Smith - Chief Executive, Transform Community Development

Fiona Steel - National Director for Scotland, Action for Children

Sarah Stewart - Head of Service, One Parent Families Scotland

Audrey Thomson - Interim Director, Faith in Community

Claire Wilson - Acting Assistant Director, Barnardos Scotland