

# Media Release

Strictly embargoed until 00:01 Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2021

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Images: Alison Watson, Director of Shelter Scotland & Perry – a campaigner with Shelter Scotland in Aberdeen who has been waiting for three years for a transfer to a suitable home.

Invite: An additional photograph and interview opportunity is available at Shelter Scotland's shop at Raeburn Place in Edinburgh at 11 am on Wednesday 26 May 2021. The shop has been refurbished and will carry our new Fight for Home campaign branding and new brand identity for Shelter Scotland.

NB: see notes to editors for methodology for estimating population figures

## **1.5 million people suffering due to Scotland's 'broken and biased' housing system**

- Charity Shelter Scotland calling for public to 'Fight for Home'

More than one in three adults living in Scotland are now impacted by the housing emergency, Shelter Scotland reveals today.

Research for the leading housing and homelessness charity shows 1.5 million adults in Scotland (36 per cent) are currently struggling with the condition, security, suitability, or affordability of their home, or been discriminated against while trying to find it.

Three per cent – representing more than 130,000 adults – agreed they had experienced discrimination in the search for their current home and felt it was because of their ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, religion or disability.

The findings are based on an online poll by YouGov.

The number of people in unsafe or insecure housing rises to a shocking 1.9 million when children are included in the total.

Shelter Scotland Director Alison Watson said: "Scotland's housing system is broken and biased. It is failing people. Hundreds of thousands of people are being held back by the lack of a proper home that would support them to flourish.

"You don't have to be living on the streets to be severely impacted by the housing emergency. Hundreds of thousands are putting up with the unacceptable, counting their blessings that it's not worse. We have to stand up and demand better for everyone."

The charity said people who agreed they had experienced discrimination when trying to find their current home were almost three times as likely to be struggling with issues such as overcrowding, poor conditions, insecurity or affordability.

Alison Watson added: “Our housing system is horribly unequal. The fight for home starts here. We’re asking people to join us whether they are personally affected by this or not. Together we will campaign to end this injustice.”

## Case Study

### Perry’s story

Perry (57) from Aberdeen has been waiting on a transfer to a flat with no stairs for three years. He has mobility issues and other health problems after suffering from a brain injury many years ago. He needs a home on the ground floor in a quiet neighbourhood as he is sensitive to noise. He currently has to negotiate stone steps leading up to his front door and then a long flight of steps to his flat.

“Because of my problems with the stairs I only go out three or four times a month.

“I’ve weakness in my legs and sometimes when I go to the stairs I think I just can’t do this and I can’t go out. I’m worried I will fall or I won’t be able to get back in. When I do use the stairs I’m holding on tight.

“When I get my shopping delivered, they won’t take it upstairs. It just sits inside the door. I start with things for the fridge. I take them upstairs and the rest just waits until I can manage it. It’ll take about two days to get it all in.

“Finding a home that’s on the ground floor that I can manage will mean a lot. It’ll mean a better quality of life. I will be less isolated. If I don’t have to negotiate stairs I can use that energy to go for a walk round the block, enjoy the sun. It might seem like a little thing but just getting fresh air will make a big difference.”

## ENDS

### Notes to Editors

1. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2060 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 6th-12th April 2021. The survey was carried out online. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all Scotland adults (aged 18+). Of which 676 agreed they had experienced at least one of eight issues with the condition, security, suitability or affordability of their current home, or been discriminated against while trying to find it, and 90 said agree/ strongly agree they had been discriminated (currently or ever).
2. The figure of 36% is the percentage of all respondents who said they “strongly agree or Tend to agree for at least one of the eight statements in the table below”.
3. Table 1. The calculations above are based on responses to these eight statements:

	Equates to estimated number of adults (rounded down to nearest 000)
% result (all agree)	

I/we do not have enough bedrooms in the home, meaning there is a need for unsuitable room sharing	7%	310,000
My home has a significant mould, condensation or damp problems	11%	487,000
I cannot keep my home warm in winter	17%	753,000
My home has safety hazards such as faulty wiring, fire risks, or hazards that could cause a fall	5%	221,000
The home I live in is not structurally sound (it has significant defects/issues to the walls and/or roof)	8%	354,000
I/we regularly have to cut spending on household essentials to pay the rent/ mortgage payments on my home (of those that currently rent/ pay some rent/ own a mortgage)	8%	354,000
I worry that I might lose/ be asked to leave the home I am currently living in	8%	354,000
(current home) I/we found it hard to find a safe, secure and affordable home because I experienced discrimination	3%	133,000

4. Population estimates are calculated using the ONS midyear estimates of the Scottish population rounded to the nearest decimal point for figures over one million and to the nearest thousand for figures under one million. 1.5million is 36% of the population aged 18 and over.
5. Shelter Scotland spokespeople are available for broadcast interview. Call 0344 515 2442 to arrange with our media team.

**We exist to defend the right to a safe home and fight the devastating impact the housing emergency has on people and society. We believe that home is everything.**