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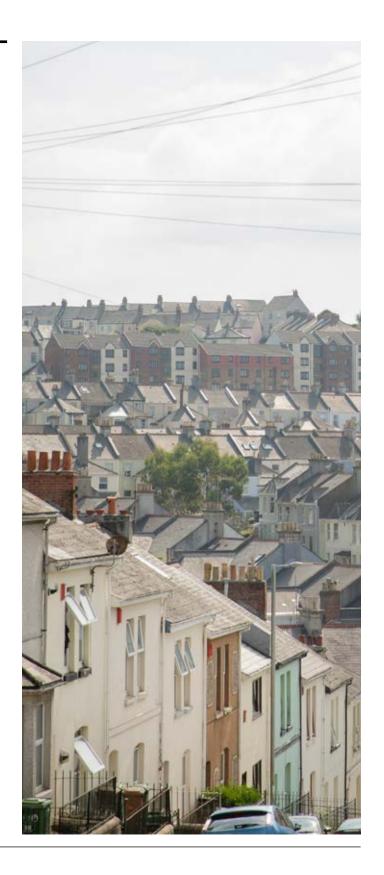
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# 

The changes we have all lived through since 2019 are so momentous that when we started to review the 10-year goals we at Shelter had set ourselves back then, in preparation for this new three-year plan, we were open to significant change.

What we found, as this document explains, was that our original goals are still the right ones. However, in the context of greater inequality, hardship, fear, social division and political distraction from social policy, our goals are even more urgent and harder to achieve and the stakes are higher.

Luckily the past three years have seen notable successes for Shelter. The extraordinary loyalty, commitment and generosity of our supporters have meant that we've emerged fighting fit from the pandemic.



We have learned much along the way about our strengths and weaknesses as a team, as an organisation and as a player in partnerships both nationally and locally.



We still know that there is no way we can achieve that goal alone. And we are even more acutely aware than we were in 2019 that the local communities where we work face immediate and deeply damaging challenges that we must address alongside them.

Locally and nationally, we need individuals and organisations to join us and we hope that this strategic plan is as much a call to action as a manifesto.

In order to put this plan into action, we need a disciplined focus on what matters most. That requires us to be ruthlessly honest with ourselves about when we are true to our values and the priorities we have set and when we are not. We must listen to and trust each other in the way we have been learning to do on our journey towards active anti-racism, becoming a charity that puts equity and inclusion at the centre of all our activities. We must never forget that the

climate emergency threatens to undo all we achieve in the struggle for social justice unless we hold it constantly in mind.

Our ambition for change in the country has sharpened but not altered. We have recognised that, in setting the vision for Shelter itself, we must learn the hard lessons of the last three years. The organisation that can achieve our aims by 2025 looks radically different from Shelter in 2019, and our internal shift is only just beginning.



Our immense privilege is to work with more than 1,200 colleagues and 5,000 volunteers who understand and share the radical intent of this strategic plan and its activist spirit. It is because of them that our partners, supporters, donors, campaigners trust Shelter – not only to point out the problem, but to solve it, because home is everything, and the fight for home is one we cannot afford to lose.

Polly Neate, Chief Executive Helen Baker, Chair



### WE EXIST TO DEFEND THE RIGHT TO A SAFE HOME

We believe that a home is a fundamental right. A safe home is the foundation on which our lives are built. It opens the door to employment, health, education, and is the basis of strong communities.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic forced us all to seek refuge at home. But for millions, that simply wasn't possible. The worst public health crisis in living memory collided with an existing housing emergency and, caught in the fallout, were the people we exist to support.

Thanks to the public response to our emergency campaign, we were able to help more people who, in countless ways, were at risk of homelessness – whether they were threatened with eviction, could no longer pay their rent or surf their friends' sofas, or were living in unsafe conditions.





# THE HOUSING SYSTEM RIGHT NOW IS UNAFFORDABLE, UNFIT, UNSTABLE AND DISCRIMINATORY 8 | STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-25

# AS A RESULT, THE SITUATION IS A NATIONAL EMERGENCY

Our research (Denied the Right to a Safe Home) shows that

# ONE IN THREE

adults in Britain (34%) are now affected by the housing emergency. Lives are being ruined by the failure of successive governments to build the homes we need.

To bring fairer life chances to everyone in our society, irrespective of who they are or where they live, we urgently need social housing. In England, we don't yet have a commitment from the UK government to build enough social homes. In Scotland, progress towards the social homes we need is too slow and often in the wrong place.

Right now, those struggling with the unaffordability and discrimination that is endemic in our housing system are left vulnerable and disenfranchised because of an absence of real protections. Thousands sleep on the streets every night, more than a quarter of a million are stuck in 'temporary' accommodation that puts lives on hold for years, and millions of renters are forced to pay too much for too little, unable to complain in case they're evicted. Systemic racism pervades the housing system and discrimination is frighteningly common. Single parent families, the vast majority of them led by women, bear the brunt of

the inhumanity that comes with living in unfit temporary accommodation.

# THE FIGHT FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE STARTS AT HOME

Every day, we fight for those most at risk from the housing emergency through our campaigns for change and by standing alongside people with support and specialist legal advice. As the nation emerges from the pandemic, we want the public and politicians to join us and ensure that everyone has a place to call home.



## PEOPLE ARE TRAPPED BY THE HOUSING EMERGENCY

14%

of people say they regularly have to cut spending on household essentials like food or heating to pay their rent or mortgage payments



of people say their experiences of finding and keeping a home makes them worry about the likelihood they will find a suitable home in the future

RENTERS SAY THEIR HOME IS DAMAGING THEIR MENTAL OR PHYSICAL HEALTH **OVER** 

109,000

HOUSEHOLDS ARE LIVING IN TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

# OUR STRATEGY 2019-2029

In 2019, after the biggest consultation in Shelter's history, we committed to a 10-year strategy designed to transform ourselves, the housing system and the country. It set ambitious goals and we've made significant progress towards them.

# **SUCCESSES 2019-22**

#### RENTERS' REFORM BILL

The announcement in the 2021 Queen's Speech that the government will legislate to improve renters' rights means we've taken an important step towards ensuring every private renter in England can have a decent place to call home.

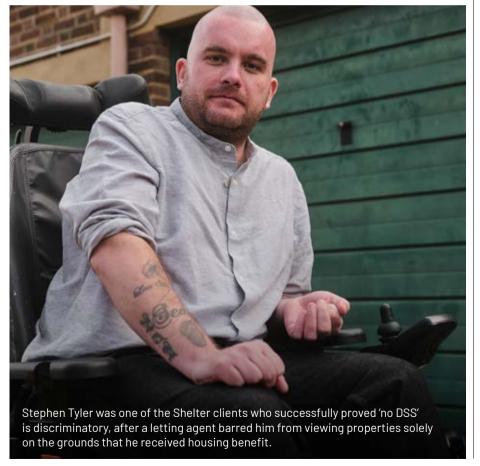
#### 'NO DSS' DISCRIMINATION

For too long, letting agents and landlords have banned renters who receive housing benefit from accessing homes. These 'no DSS' policies lock hundreds of thousands of renters out of properties they could otherwise afford.

We saw that this was affecting women, People of Colour and disabled people disproportionately and set out to prove in law that it must stop. We aimed to establish that 'no DSS' is indirect discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

Since 2019, our specialist legal teams have pursued strategic litigation against landlords and letting agents. In July 2020, we made a historic breakthrough: at a hearing at York County Court, involving Shelter client 'Jane'.

Since that breakthrough there have been countless other important victories, all of which will make a real difference to the lives of hundreds of thousands of renters in the UK.





## BOOSTING GRASSROOTS SUPPORT

We knew in 2019 that we couldn't fight the housing emergency alone. A national emergency can only be stopped by a national movement. Our strategy can only succeed if we work with individuals, organisations and policy makers across the country. So, we set out to recruit supporters, build partnerships and galvanise a movement for change. Since then, we've grown our supporter base to include more than 400,000 people and built key strategic partnerships with organisations at local and national levels.

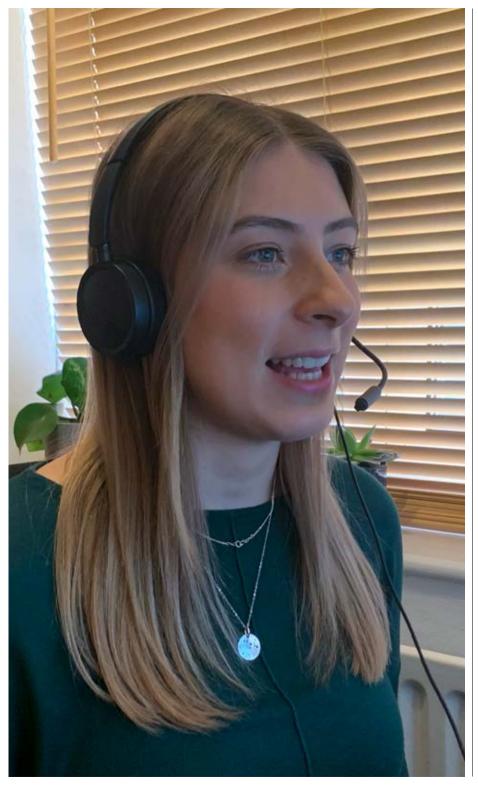
#### **CHANGE IN COMMUNITIES**

In 2019 we set a new vision for our local services. Our goal was to turn them into centres for activism and partnership at the heart of our communities, ensuring the lessons we learn from individual cases are used to improve things for everyone.

Even though our hubs were forced to work remotely because of the pandemic, we've made dramatic changes in our community-based work. We're building capacity to work in partnership with groups, organisations and individuals who want to transform systems at a local level, as well as to help end the housing emergency for the country.

This approach is already bringing about real change in communities. For example:

- 1. Through Time for Change in Dundee, local people with lived experience of the housing emergency met with Dundee City Council and won a long-term commitment to replace hostels in the city with better-staffed supported accommodation. The power of real lived experience was the key to achieving change.
- 2. Our Community Organising team in Birmingham brought local communities and organisations together to develop the Birmingham Fair Housing Manifesto, drawing on our listening campaign which saw over 300 local people sharing their experiences of the housing emergency. Directed at key decision makers, the manifesto shines a spotlight on the housing injustices people face in Birmingham and demands that these are tackled without delay.
- 3. In Plymouth, we partnered with the City Council on a systemic inquiry into the local housing system, which is now considered to be best practice. As a result, we've been approached to sit on the new Homelessness Reduction Board for Plymouth, which connects our work to a key city-wide governance framework.



# REACHING MORE PEOPLE AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

Shelter's telephone and online services, including our advice pages, webchat and our emergency helplines in England and Scotland, are a lifeline for millions of people struggling with housing issues every year.

In response to the pandemic, we significantly increased capacity on our helplines and webchat in England and Scotland to support more people. As a result, in 2020/21 alone we were able to answer more than 50,000 calls and almost 25,000 webchats.

## OUR IDENTITY AND CULTURE

To work in the radically different ways we set out in our strategy, we had to strengthen Shelter itself, uniting everyone behind our purpose. We've invested a lot of time in this work, aiming to create a culture built on compassion, fearlessness, inclusion and trust. We've worked to empower and galvanise our people, taking tangible steps to improve transparency, delegate more decisions and authority and take time to learn and develop as an organisation.

In light of our new strategic goals, we undertook thorough research into Shelter and the results showed us that we needed to evolve. Our brand shapes our culture and expresses who we are and we felt that our core values were not shining through in our branding effectively enough. We needed to be braver and more purposeful, to stand out and make our voice heard.

Shelter was founded with activism at its heart. The new incarnation of Shelter we launched in 2021 is intended to rekindle that bold, determined spirit. It embodies our history as a campaign for social justice and is designed to rally communities throughout the country, inspiring people to support the fight for a fairer housing system and a more just society.



# BUILDING MOMENTUM FOR SOCIAL HOUSING

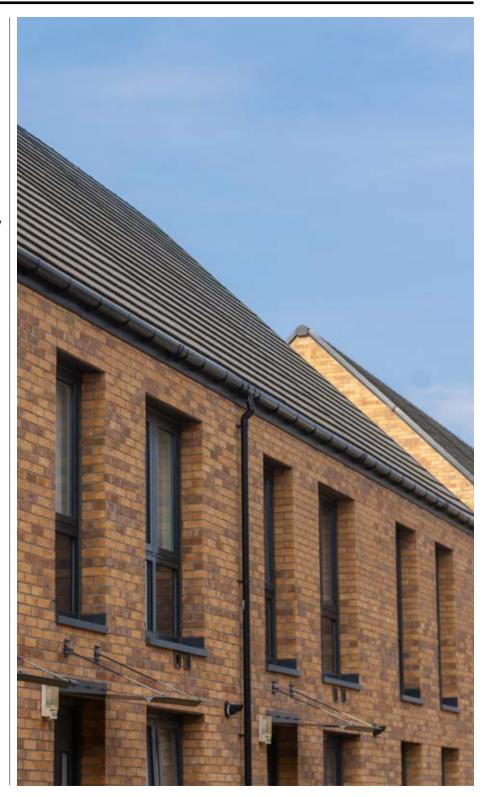
There is only one solution to the housing emergency: to ensure the homes we build are the homes our communities desperately need.

Since 2019 this debate has tangibly shifted. We've seen engagement from parliamentarians across the political spectrum, as well as increased public interest in and understanding of the need for homes those on low incomes can afford.

In Scotland, we've secured a landmark commitment to building enough social housing from the ruling Scottish National Party and its Green Party coalition partners. This is a huge achievement of which we're truly proud.

In England, we believe it's now a matter of when, not if, significant investment in a new generation of social homes will be made. Our job now is to bring that 'when' closer.

The 10-year goal we set in 2019 to ensure that genuinely affordable homes are available for everyone who needs them is achievable only if we shift gears in this new strategic plan.







#### POLITICAL COMMITMENT TO SOCIAL HOUSING IN ENGLAND

In 2019 we set ourselves a three-year aim: to secure a commitment to building sufficient social homes from all political parties by the time of the general election – which was then due in 2022.

While this ambition was achieved in Scotland, there have been seismic shifts in the political landscape in England since we set that original goal. The scheduled general election is no longer happening. But more than that; the overwhelming traction of Brexit and the pandemic have sucked the oxygen from the debate we hoped to ignite. Despite a significant change to the national conversation on housing, so far the UK government does not share our vision. We need to change that.

#### A MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE

As we researched our 2019 strategy, it became clear that our goals were too ambitious to achieve alone. We committed to building a movement, both locally and nationally, to make government recognise the housing emergency and take action to end it.

We now know the movement has to be both bigger and more active than we'd imagined. We need to redouble our efforts to mobilise people to take action at a local level and support our campaigns nationally. We've invested in technology, organisational change and communications and we must build on the methods that have been proven to work in our next strategic period. We must be better at partnership and move beyond 'generous leadership' to recognise that, to achieve change, we may not need to lead at all but simply add value in the way that has the most impact.

#### **EQUITY AND ANTI-RACISM**

In June 2020, Shelter, along with many other organisations, publicly declared solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and made a commitment to becoming an anti-racist organisation. Since then, we've been actively working on and investing in anti-racism.

Shelter was established as a social justice organisation and we realise that there is no social justice without racial justice. Unless we're fighting institutional discrimination within the housing system, we're not truly defending the right to a safe home.

While we are making progress, there's still a long way to go. We know that in the past we've been slow to act on systemic racism in housing and to improve the experiences of People of Colour within Shelter. This needs to be a major focus for us now. Our fight for home must recognise that racism and other forms of discrimination play a big role in housing inequality. The way we work internally must reflect this commitment.

Our 10-year strategy isn't changing. Our research, experience and the evidence we've gathered over the past three years mean we have a greater understanding of the scale, nature and impact of the housing emergency.

We're even more strongly compelled to act than in 2019. Building on three years of successes and lessons, we will continue to work for change: with individuals, in communities and across society.

Our goal is to transform the housing system so that the right to a safe home is protected and new, safe, genuinely affordable homes are delivered for people who need them, making homelessness a thing of the past.

Shelter wasn't founded simply to point out what's wrong or to pick up the pieces – though we must address the human cost of the housing emergency. Our founders came together in 1966, with partners, to change the country. We will not give up until the right to a safe home is real.

A right on its own is not enough. The reality is that people's lives and the centres of our communities are hollowed out by the sheer lack of homes. That's why the only solution to the housing emergency is a new generation of social homes with rents that people on low incomes can afford. You can't solve homelessness without homes.

We have three ambitions for 2025 – two focusing on change for individuals, in communities and across society and one targeting the change we need to see in Shelter itself.

Our first goal is to see tangible progress by 2025 towards a new generation of social homes, because that's the only way to bring the housing emergency and homelessness to an end. Our second goal is to improve the rights of those who are at risk of homelessness and trapped in appalling conditions. To meet these goals, we'll need to inspire and mobilise a movement both nationally and in local communities.

Our third goal is a shift of power, so that we put the views, experiences and needs of people living through the housing emergency at the centre of everything we do.







# BY 2025

- A BROAD PUBLIC MOVEMENT IS DEMANDING A NEW GENERATION OF SOCIAL HOMES
- IN SCOTLAND, EVERYONE WAITING IN TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION CAN ACCESS A SOCIAL HOME

We must lay the foundations for a 21st century generation of social housing in England. In Scotland, we'll fight for better social housing, available to more people and built more quickly.

We're talking about safe, secure, decent homes at rents people on low incomes can afford. Homes that people can stay in for the long-term, giving them secure bases for the lives they want and need and enabling them to lay down roots in their communities. Homes that are big enough, warm enough and safe enough to allow growing families to thrive. For people living at the sharp end of the housing emergency, homes like these have the power to transform lives. For all of us, they transform communities, enabling young people to stay, older people to find security, businesses to survive and diversity to flourish.

But we believe the impact could be even bigger. We'll carry out research into the ways in which a new generation of social homes could benefit the whole of society. Building greener homes with better insulation and modern heating systems can contribute to the UK's net zero target and help fight the climate emergency. The mental and physical health benefits of safe, secure housing would also reduce strain on the NHS. For example, fewer people living in homes with severe damp could help cut down cases of asthma. while improvements in housing security could help lower stress levels. And of course, building back better with a new generation of social homes would provide much-needed new jobs and skills which would benefit our people, our economy and our planet.

A NEW GENERATION OF SOCIAL HOMES

# A BROAD PUBLIC MOVEMENT TO FIGHT FOR HOME

Across England and Scotland, we'll launch an ambitious campaign to achieve our mission of safe homes that people on low incomes can afford, bringing the public on board with our movement.

We'll convene architects and planners to inspire the public with our vision of what these homes could look like. We'll also build a coalition of people and organisations who share our ideals, not just in the housing sector but across sport, music, business, and wider society. The housing emergency touches everyone, so our movement for change needs to be broad and diverse.



Building social housing on the scale needed will mean a seismic change in housing policy in England. To deliver it, we need action from the Westminster government. But the last three years have taught us that pressure from the housing sector alone – however united – is simply not going to achieve this aim. That's why we need others to make the case for change with us, loudly and clearly and in an inspirational way that captures everyone's hearts and minds.

We need local leaders to step up and show Westminster that building the homes we need is possible. Across England, we'll collaborate with metro mayors and other local influencers to understand the difference a new generation of social homes would make in different areas. Then, we'll work with them to make sure these homes are built, helping to identify and overcome obstacles which may stand in their way, whether to do with planning, land reform, or financing.



In Scotland, we've already secured a commitment to building enough social housing. Over the next three years, our focus will shift to holding the Scottish government to account for getting those homes built, so that everyone in Scotland currently stuck in temporary accommodation will have a social home by 2025.

We were clear in our 10-year strategy that the national housing emergency can't be stopped by anything less than a national movement. It's still our goal to bring the country together in a shared ambition for the right to a safe home.

Over the last three years we've inspired a huge new wave of grassroots supporters. The next step is to build on that success, continuing to develop our supporter base while building strategic partnerships with

businesses, opinion-formers, funders, and most importantly with those whose right to a safe home is most under threat.

The development of our grassroots base will be powered by the investments we've made in the first three years of our strategy. Our exciting new brand is attracting new supporters to our fight for home. Once they've joined our movement, supporters' experiences with us are better than they've ever been, thanks to our investment in technology which enables us to engage with them in a more tailored way.

We'll continue to develop strategic partnerships locally and nationally and start collaborating with antiracist groups and organisations to fight racism in the housing sector. We'll leverage our unique role as a national housing charity which provides training and advice to the

housing sector, using our voice to push for change and bring our partners into the movement. We'll act as a convener but not always as a leader.

Within communities, we'll work with local groups and grassroots organisations to deliver change. We'll build housing advice capacity with local authorities and other providers. Our local systems change will inform our national work and vice versa. Every story we hear in our casework and on our emergency helpline will count in our fight for home.

Our donors and funders are some of our most important strategic partners. Over the next three years, we'll build even stronger relationships with the people and organisations who choose to invest in our strategy.

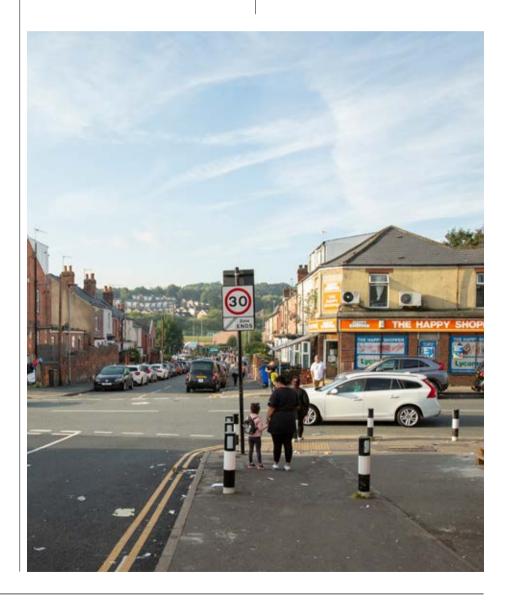


# BY 2025

- INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES ARE EQUIPPED TO FIGHT HOUSING INJUSTICE
- PEOPLE OF COLOUR WILL HAVE INCREASED ACCESS TO A SAFE HOME
- EVERYONE'S
   HOUSING RIGHTS
   ARE STRENGTHENED
   AND ENFORCED

Over the next three years, we'll fight for housing rights where they're under immediate threat.

We'll do this through campaigning, advocacy, and strategic litigation in which one successful case can change thousands of lives by establishing new case law. Above all, we'll stand with people in their own fight for home.

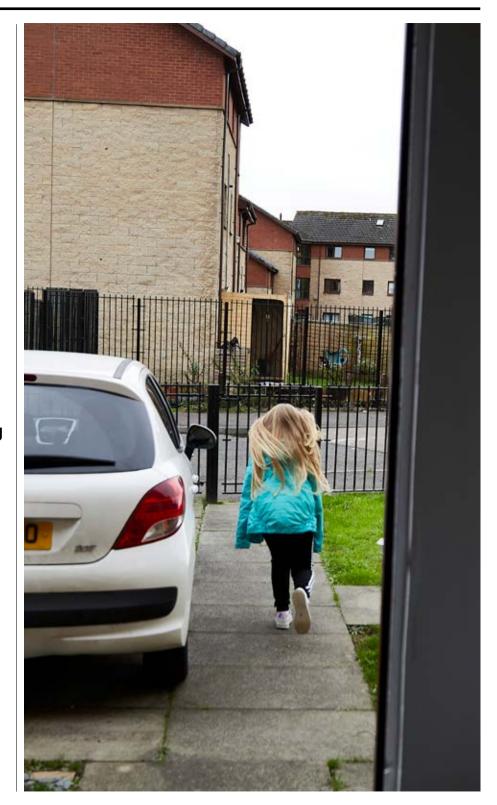


HOUSING RIGHTS - RIGHT NOW

# DEFENDING THE RIGHT TO A SAFE HOME WITH INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES

Demand for Shelter's services has continued to increase over the last three years as the housing emergency has become even more desperate.

We've seen a huge wave of need during the pandemic, which is still gathering momentum. In response, we've grown our helplines in England and Scotland, which provide expert emergency support.



Over the next three years, our national emergency helplines will continue to be a lifeline for people at immediate risk of losing their home, preventing homelessness every single day.

Locally, we have become far more responsive to the circumstances and challenges facing the communities in which we work. We know we cannot meet all the need in those areas, but what we can and must do is stand with people,

supporting individuals to survive the impact of systems failure and working with communities to ensure the systemic failures are addressed and their housing rights are secured. We know that unless we move from responding to systemic failure, to actively engaging in systems change, we are just part of the cycle that ruins lives and undermines communities. That means a more targeted approach to the support and legal advice we provide,

focusing on the cases where we can work with people to make change happen. It means moving from charity to solidarity.

Alongside our own direct work, we'll build capacity to give housing advice and support in communities by sharing our expertise with partners.





HOUSING RIGHTS - RIGHT NOW

# CAMPAIGNING LOCALLY AND NATIONALLY

More than ever before, our campaigning work is embedded within communities.

Each of our community hubs has its own plan for delivering systems change locally, focusing on what matters to the people living there. That might be the poor state of housing in the private rented sector or the failure of local authorities to fulfil their responsibilities. We'll step up our work to empower local communities to achieve change in the broken systems that mean they continue to need us and we'll equip people to know and enforce their rights.

At a national level in Scotland, we'll lead a public campaign to enshrine the United Nations right to adequate housing into Scots Law and empower citizens to make sure their rights are enforced.

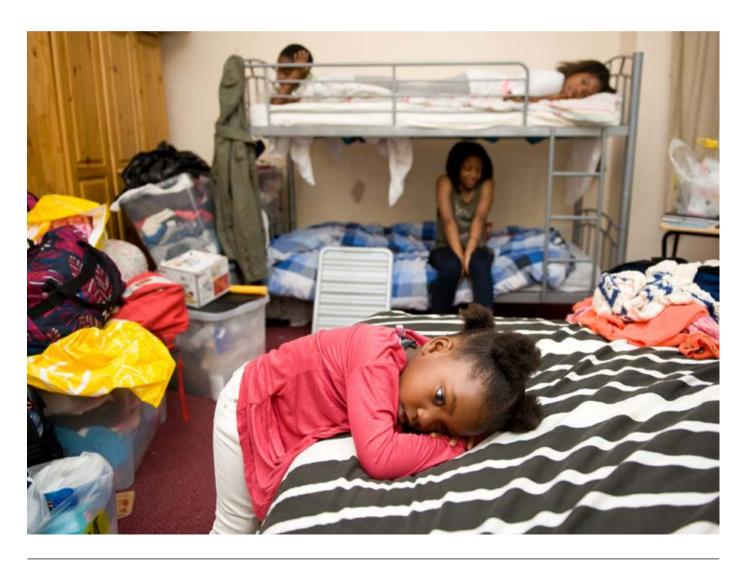
In England, the Renters' Reform Bill provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve rights for renters. For too long, those renting in the private sector have had to contend with high rents, poor conditions, illegal evictions and indifferent landlords, without any of the protections they deserve. We'll campaign for the bill to abolish no-fault evictions. giving private renters greater long-term security in their homes. We'll also push for a National Landlords Register, helping to end bad practices like refusing to make repairs and unlawful acts like invasion of privacy and harassment.

Across both nations, we'll continue to invest in our website and webchat service, giving people access to essential information about their housing rights.



# FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION

We'll continue to fight discrimination in the housing sector, defending those whose housing rights are most under threat.



Whether in social housing and temporary accommodation or in the private rented sector, we'll fight racism in housing. The first step will be to carry out research to understand the systemic discrimination faced by People of Colour in housing. Then, we'll work with communities and anti-racist partner organisations to make lasting change.

In England, we'll build on the success of our campaign against 'no DSS' discrimination. We want to ensure that our successful battle to prove this practice is unlawful bears fruit every day on the ground, challenging more letting agents and property websites to ban the barring of benefit claimants from private rentals.



# A SHIFT OF POWER IN OUR FIGHT FOR HOME



# BY 2025

EXPERTISE BY
 EXPERIENCE,
 ANTI-RACISM AND
 CLIMATE JUSTICE
 ARE AT THE HEART
 OF SHELTER

Shelter was founded as a social justice organisation. To win the fight for home, social justice must be at the forefront, not only in the work we do to change the country but in how we work internally.

That's why the direct experience of homelessness, the threat of homelessness, and the search for a safe home must be at the heart of everything we do. We're transforming Shelter to make sure this is the case. We know that if our movement is not led by the people whose right to a safe home is under threat, it won't succeed.

We also understand that there's no social justice without racial justice. Over the next three years, we'll carry out a specific programme of work to move Shelter towards our goal of becoming an anti-racist organisation. We'll seek to understand how racism impacts our clients, colleagues and volunteers, and use this knowledge to dismantle systemic racism from the inside out. That includes taking a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and hate of all kinds at Shelter.

Our other major priority is our contribution to climate justice. The changes our country must go through in the coming years to tackle and mitigate climate change must also lead to social justice. Many of the forces that have led us to the precipice of climate catastrophe are the same as those which have deepened inequality, and we must learn lessons from this. As we rebuild with equity and empathy, we'll be a society worth the name once everyone has a home from which they can reach their full potential. We at Shelter are determined to play a role in making this happen.





The people who turn to us for support, the communities in which we work, funders, supporters, campaigners and even government – all these are partners in achieving the results we seek and success would not be possible without them. Our trustees track Shelter's ability to play its own role in the ambitious change we need to see and here, we outline measurable goals for 2022–25. If you share them, let's make them happen.



## BY 2025, WE WILL HAVE SUCCEEDED IF:

- The goals we have set ourselves locally have been achieved in all the areas in which we work across England and Scotland
- In England, the Renters' Reform Bill has passed, instituting a National Landlords Register and abolishing no fault evictions without putting equivalent unjust provisions in their place
- We have taken action that has highlighted systemic racism in the housing system and united people against it
- A broad public movement is demanding safe, long-term rented homes for people on low incomes
- We have reduced inequity of experience in Shelter between our White colleagues and our colleagues who are People of Colour
- We have made measurable reductions in our carbon footprint and impact on the environment
- In Scotland, everyone waiting in temporary accommodation can access a social home

# 

Our next strategy period must bring about a sea-change in the country's understanding of the importance of home, the sheer injustice of the housing emergency and the acute danger it poses to people and communities. Above all, we need widespread recognition of the fact that the solution is clear.

Whether you're reading this as a Shelter supporter, a funder or potential funder, a partner, or if you're new to Shelter and our work, you have a role to play. We set ourselves ambitious goals in 2019 and they are now more urgent than ever.

Please help.

# JOIN THE FIGHT FOR HOME.



# DRIVING CHANGE

# **PURPOSE**

We exist to defend the right to a safe home

# **PROBLEM**

The country faces a housing emergency

# **SOLUTION**

A new generation of social homes

# **IMPACT**

An end to the housing emergency and homelessness

# BY 2025

- Everyone's housing rights are strengthened and enforced
- Individuals and communities are equipped to fight housing injustice
- A broad public movement exists which argues for social housing
- People of Colour will have increased access to a safe home
- In Scotland, everyone waiting in temporary accommodation can access a social home

PEOPLE
JOIN THE
MOVEMENT
FOR CHANGE,
DEMANDING:

# BY 2029

- In England a long term commitment to build 90k social homes a year
  - In Scotland social housing is available to those who need it and is seen as a tenure of choice

A NEW
GENERATION
OF SOCIAL
HOMES
IS BRINGING
THE HOUSING
EMERGENCY
TO AN END

Lived experience and anti-racism are at the heart of the fight for home.