



Shelter

Foreword

As a longstanding supporter of Shelter, I have seen the devastation that homelessness can bring to families. The loss of security that comes from being without a place to call home is a terrible situation for anyone to face, whether an adult or a child.

A home is not a room in a B&B. It's not a place where the rent keeps rising until it is too high to pay; or where mould is covering ever bigger spaces on the walls; or where scurrying rodents keep you awake at night.

A home is not just walls and a roof. It is a place to feel safe and secure, a private world just for those who live there. But for far too many people, a home is something that they don't have.

Housing in the UK is in crisis. There are simply not enough homes for the people who need them. In England 60,000 families with children are currently homeless, many of them living in temporary accommodation. Shelter thinks this is unacceptable. And they need our help to change the situation.

This is why we launched Home Team, a group of committed supporters pledging to help UK families who need our support. Home Team has raised almost £500,000, but we still have a long way to go to reach our goal of £1 million by 2019 to provide vital support for families across England.

Will you join Home Team today?



Stuart Roden
Chairman, Lansdowne Partners
Home Team Founding Member





Left: Brenda and her granddaughter
Above: Keeping up with schoolwork
can be challenging in temporary
accommodation

Why families?

Families living in poor quality accommodation, or who are being moved around between hostels and B&Bs, can face long term and potentially devastating effects on their health and their children's education. This not only creates immediate problems for those children and the communities they live in, but can also have a significant impact on their future and for society as a whole:

- homeless children are more likely to be in poor health than children with a stable home
- children who have been homeless for more than a year are more likely to have mental health problems such as anxiety and depression than other children
- children living in unfit and overcrowded accommodation are almost a third more likely to suffer respiratory problems than those who are not facing these challenges
- children who have to move frequently are more likely to fall behind at school, and to have poor attendance, than their peers

Our Family Support Service

Urgent action is required to protect children from the devastating effects of bad housing and homelessness. Shelter's Family Support Service takes a 'whole family' approach to housing problems and homelessness, delivering a range of interventions designed to help families access, keep and improve homes.

The service works intensively with the whole family across a range of issues to overcome both the immediate and underlying causes of homelessness. The Family Support Service operates from Shelter Hubs across the UK, including London, Bristol, Merseyside, Sheffield and Birmingham, and provides tailored and committed assistance to families who need their help.

Tracey Nathan is the Manager of the Family Support Service in Sheffield.

“ When working with families, it's of the utmost importance not to see their housing problems in isolation from all the issues that can be impacting on their situation. For example, poverty, debt, violence and health issues can all have a huge impact on a family's ability to keep or maintain a home.”



Tracey Nathan,
Family Support Service
Manager, Sheffield

“ We support the whole household to look at all of the challenges that they are facing, addressing the urgent housing needs, while building up skills, knowledge, confidence and resilience to give families control of their situation. They need joined-up help, and that’s what we provide for them.”

Tracey Nathan
Family Support Services Manager, Sheffield

Dedicated support workers individually determine and deliver a tailored package of support that gives the right type of help, at the right time, to the right level of intensity, for the family they are working with. Shelter also establishes a ‘supply chain’ of specialist services focused on resolving issues that can be a barrier to accessing, keeping and improving a home. These specialist interventions may include approaches designed to resolve or manage:

- mental health issues
- alcohol and substance dependency
- domestic violence
- anti-social behaviour
- family breakdown
- problems with physical health and disability



A father and son no longer worried about losing their home – at the end of 2015, over 100,000 children were homeless in the UK



Improving the lives of vulnerable families

Shelter's Family Support Service has a proven record of helping families to address the most pressing housing issues that they are facing, as well as the contributing factors.

Often the underlying root causes and consequences of clients' housing situation are related to physical and mental health problems and well-being.

A recent external evaluation of our Family Support Service in Hackney, London, found that working with the Family Support Service resulted in positive outcomes. In the short term, parents reported:

- improved emotional stability
- feeling listened to and valued
- being increasingly able to look after and manage their own physical and mental health
- being more able to look after the wellbeing of their children

Mother, child and kitten living in North London, by Nick Hedges (1968–1971).

Since Shelter's launch in 1966, helping families facing bad housing and homelessness has been at the heart of our work





Connie Cullen, the Manager of the Hackney Family Service, has seen first-hand the extraordinary impact that the Family Support Service can have on people's lives.

“ Recently, a service user told me that the difference Shelter and his support worker had made ‘saved his life’ .

“He felt that the support we offered was different to other places, as we came to him when he was in crisis and listened to the different issues his family was experiencing. We helped him decide what he wanted to do and how the family would improve their circumstances; step by step we supported the family as they secured a safe and affordable home and could focus on the children's schoolwork, the parents' own mental health and the family's future. The flexibility of the service is crucial to ensuring that we are able to offer each individual and each family the support they need to get where they want to be.

“One client, Gemma, identified that the main cause of stress was her daily inability to meet the basic needs of her children, with the threat of eviction looming in the future.

“Our approach therefore included both practical and therapeutic measures to empower Gemma to take control of her life and manage her household.

“Six weeks after her first session with her support worker, Gemma described herself as feeling that ‘a weight has been lifted’ from her. Confident in the knowledge that her housing problems are being addressed, she is sleeping better, and feeling more able to manage the challenging behaviour of her elder children. As a direct result she is able to get the younger children to school on time every day.

“ For me it's a privilege every day to hear about the impact of the Hackney Family Service on our service users' lives and to see the change that they and their support workers are able to achieve together.”

“We supported the family as they secured a safe and affordable home”



As time goes on, the Family Support Service begins to shift the emphasis from direct support to helping a family to help themselves. Families are encouraged to advocate for their own needs with statutory or other support services. This increases feelings of competence and self-esteem.

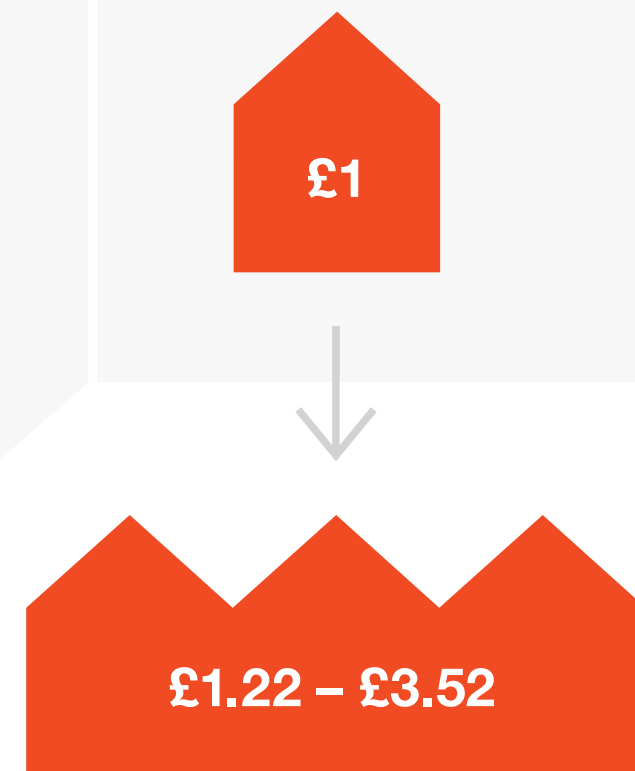
Where direct housing outcomes have been recorded for advice cases, almost two thirds of clients either secured permanent accommodation, stayed in their home or achieved a positive, desired result with the Council. The remainder secured other emergency or temporary accommodation and were on a path towards longer-term accommodation.

“ The Family Support Service is a vital service, but we are reliant on donations to continue operating. Home Team aims to bring stability to the service by providing consistent funding that will help ensure we are there for the families who need us most, now and in the future.”

Connie Cullen
Family Service Manager, Hackney

The Return on Investment

A recent analysis of representative case studies at Shelter’s Hackney Family Service demonstrated in its first year that the service can generate cashable savings to local authorities and the government of between £1.22 and £3.52 for every £1 invested.



Home Team – helping families in the UK

Shelter's Family Support Service relies on the generosity of donors to fund its vital work. Home Team is a group of Shelter's most dedicated supporters, committed to raising over £1million in pledged income by 2019.

With that funding in place, our Family Support Service can fulfil Shelter's commitment, as outlined in our latest three year strategy, to address the causes as well as the consequences of housing problems for more people than ever before.

With Home Team behind them, our Family Support Service will aim to help 600 families across the country. This is an ambitious target, but one, with Home Team's backing, we are confident in achieving.

Join Home Team

We invite you to be part of this transformational initiative that will make a real impact on families' lives.

To join, we ask you to commit your support by pledging a financial gift to our Family Support Service for a minimum of three years.

“ I know first-hand from families and from our services team how vital the Family Support Service is. Your support will enable us to plan for the long term and make a lasting difference for families in the UK who desperately need our help and who we cannot reach without you.”

Polly Neate
Chief Executive, Shelter

Members of Home Team will have a unique opportunity to engage with the Family Support Service through:

- the chance to visit one of the services around the country
- biannual updates on the Services' work, telling the stories of the staff and service users that you are supporting
- invitations to Shelter's annual Summer and Christmas receptions
- an invitation to an exclusive event for Home Team members, where you will hear from Shelter staff, service users and ambassadors
- the option of recognition in Shelter's Annual Report

You can help us to provide a bright future for children and families across the UK.



Our Members

We are deeply grateful for the support and commitment of Shelter’s Home Team members, including:

Robert Blizzard	Edward Hill	The Philipps Charitable Trust
Edward and Victoria Bonham Carter	Tim Hincks and Pippa Healy	The Roden Family
Michael Bresges	JLM Charitable Trust	The Dr. Mortimer and Theresa Sackler Foundation
Jacob and Miranda Cnattingius	The Bernard Lewis Family Charitable Trust	Trillium Trust
Rachel and Geoff Evatt	Greg Nasmyth and Sam Rowe-Beddoe	John Young
Jason Fox	Catherine Nasmyth	

About Shelter

Shelter helps millions of 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.

Every day we see the very real and heart-breaking impact of homelessness and bad housing on families and individuals across the country. The stress, the depression, the thwarted ambition, the lack of opportunity, the toll on people’s health and wellbeing and the break-up of communities.

Shelter will not rest while this continues. We will:

- help as many people as we can to get, keep, or improve their home
- create momentum in order to push housing and homelessness to the top of the political agenda
- make sure the solutions to this crisis are fair and comprehensive
- not stop until everyone has a home

For more information, contact Home Team at hometeam@shelter.org.uk or call [020 7505 2197](tel:02075052197).

