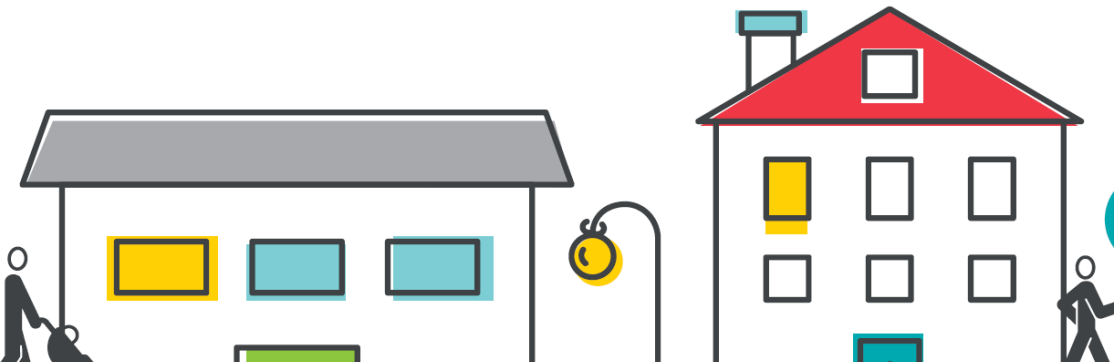


Ending Homelessness Together:

High Level Action Plan



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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UNIVERSITY of
STIRLING 

European Homelessness Research
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Delivering the Right to Housing?

Why Scotland still needs an Ending Homelessness Action Plan

Isobel Anderson

BE THE DIFFERENCE

Presentation outline: Delivering the Right to Housing? Why Scotland still needs an 'Ending Homelessness Action Plan'

- Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003 - broadly a legal right to housing by 2012
- Policy Implementation – successes and challenges
 - Equality
 - Temporary accommodation
 - Acute homelessness and complex health and social care needs
- Context for further review
- 2017 - 'Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group' (HARSAG)
- 2018 - 'Ending Homelessness Together' action plan.
- 2019 - Early progress
- 2018-2023 - Potential for ending homelessness
- Conclusions

Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003

- Local authority housing since early 20th Century – 20% of current housing stock is ‘affordable social housing’
- Local authority duties to respond to homelessness since 1977 (UK wide framework)
- 1999 – Creation of Scottish Parliament with full powers over housing and homelessness
- Homelessness Task Force (2000, 2002) – reviewed ‘4 tests’ of 1977 law
 - Homeless – broad definition retained
 - **Abolished test of priority / non-priority need – all homeless households a priority**
 - Proposed abolition of test of ‘intentionality’ – not fully implemented
 - Proposed abolition of test of ‘local connection’ – not fully implemented
 - Retained legal duty to secure permanent/settled accommodation
- Broadly a legal right to housing by 2012



2003 Act Implementation – early successes and challenges (Anderson and Serpa, 2013, *EJH*)

- Success in abolishing priority need test
- Increased equality - removed discrimination between different groups experiencing homelessness
- Beacon policy – survived political change
- Indicator of nation building – rights based approach

- Challenges in provision of ‘settled’ accommodation
 - Secure social housing
 - Minimum 12 month private tenancy
- Long stays in temporary accommodation
- Policy blurring – homelessness assessment and housing options advice
- Taxation, social security benefit and migration powers all reserved to UK government
- Need for independent monitoring and evaluation



2003 Act Implementation – medium term successes and challenges (Anderson, Dyb and Finnerty, 2016)

Impact of 2008 financial crisis

- **Significant cuts to welfare and public expenditure, especially post-2010 UK austerity measures**
- **2015 – house prices and market rents increasing**
- **2015 - housebuilding well below 2007 peak**
- **Social housing completions fell 44% 2010-14**
- **Increasing housing pressure, not meeting building targets**

2003 Act Implementation – medium term successes and challenges 2 (Anderson, Dyb and Finnerty, 2016)

- **Households in temporary accommodation**
 - Increased from 3995 in 2000 to 11,250 in 2011 (implementation of 2003 Act)
 - 10,551 in 2016, higher than Ireland (similar population)
- **Street Homelessness**
 - Applicants asked if they have ‘slept rough’ – but no distinct counts of rough sleeping in Scotland
 - Scottish household survey – 5000 per year experience rough sleeping, up to 600 on any one night
- **Importance of poverty in generation of homelessness**
- **Long term consistency in reasons for homelessness and characteristics of homeless households**
- **Increasing proportion with support needs**

Context for further review - to 2017

- High level joined up strategy group
- Promotion of homelessness prevention / Housing Options
- Homelessness declined 2010- 2015, mainly young single males
- End 'right to buy' for social housing tenants (2016)
- Modernised (more secure) private sector tenancy (2017)
- Continuing austerity measures to reduce public sector deficit
- Slow economic recovery
- 'Can't build our way out of homelessness'

- **Failure to eradicate the most acute homelessness experienced by people with complex health and social care needs**

Context for further review 2 - to 2017

- **Decrease in homelessness explained by prevention activities, despite austerity**
- **Impact of prevention already slowing by 2016-17**
- **Resilience of homelessness legislation, supported by prevention**
- **Homelessness statistics not reflecting wider housing crisis**
- **We do need to ‘build our way out of homelessness’**
- **Also missed emerging street homelessness crisis – especially in major cities**
 - – focus for new action (citizens, non-government agencies)
 - – inadequate data
- **Scottish Parliament Review – Local Government and Communities Committee reported in 2018.**

2017 - 'Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group'

Membership: Crisis, Church of Scotland, Glasgow Homeless Network, Govan Law Centre, Heriot-Watt University, Social Bite, Streetwork and Simon Community, Glasgow Health and Social Care Partnership, Queens Cross Housing Association, Shelter Scotland.

1. What can be done to reduce rough sleeping this winter (2017-18)?
 2. How can we end rough sleeping?
 3. How can we transform the use of temporary accommodation?
 4. What needs to be done to end homelessness?
- Evidence review, series of working papers, 'Aye we can' (work with homeless people), Temporary Accommodation research, interim and final reports in 2018.

2018 - 'Ending Homelessness Together' action plan.

Responds to 70 HARSAG recommendations

Vision - 'Everyone has a home that meets their needs and homelessness is ended'

1. Person centred approach across public services
 2. Preventing homelessness from happening
 3. Prioritising settled housing for all
 4. Responding quickly and effectively whenever homelessness happens
 5. Joining up planning and resources
 6. Other supporting actions
- £50 million to support homelessness prevention over 5 years from 2018-19

Ending Homelessness – early progress

- **Link to Scottish National Performance Framework – ‘treat all our people with kindness, dignity and compassion’**
- **Planned public perceptions campaign**
- **‘Need to get better at knowing how many people are actually homeless’ (p10)**
- **Local Authority Rapid Rehousing Plans by end 2018 – funding announced in August 2019**
- **Housing First pilots in five cities, £6.5m, partnership with Social Bite, from 2018-19.**
- **September 2019 announcement on maximum 7 days in Bed and Breakfast accommodation (but not other types of temporary accommodation)**
 - **Progress report due by end 2019**

Ending homelessness – potential 2018-2023?

- Abolish tests of intentionality and local connection (from 1977)
- Improved training and support for frontline workforce
- Legal duty to prevent homelessness
- Update code of guidance for practice (from 2005)
- Joining up Scottish powers – schools/child welfare, drug and alcohol services, public health, criminal justice
- Influencing UK Social Security? Further devolution
- Influencing UK Migration (no recourse to public funds)? Recommendations, but no further devolution
- New framework for temporary accommodation (funding, range, standards)
- New national rough sleeping data collection
- Equality proofing (protected characteristics)

Conclusions

- **Hugely ambitious – appropriately so?**
- **Comprehensive, person centred, approach – across service provision**
- **Delivery Plan – 5 years (2003 Act was 10 years)**
- **Moving towards ‘SMART’ – monitoring framework? Annual reporting to Scottish Parliament.**

- **Strong impetus/pressure from outside government – NGOs and Parliament**
- **How are resources being joined up? Some progress?**
- **Delivering Prevention? Need direct routes to housing, other than through homelessness system?**
- **Strong supply of affordable housing - need to address whole housing system.**

Housing First Know How

Thank You

Questions, discussion and
feedback welcome

isobel.anderson@stir.ac.uk

