



Bridges to Belonging:

Priorities for Supporting the Transition
from Homelessness to Inclusive
Communities in Scotland

Policy Brief

September 2024

Executive Summary

In 2024, after a series of stakeholder workshops, Steering Group discussions and an evidence review, a shortlist of ten priorities for supporting the transition from homelessness to inclusive communities in Scotland was agreed upon. Service-users, frontline workers and other persons with lived experience and professionals were instrumental in shaping these priorities. The project was co-led by the University of Strathclyde, Simon Community Scotland and a group of Peer Leaders.

Far from exhaustive, the priorities seek to raise awareness of key 'pain points' in homelessness services, policies and community integration. The priorities intend to focus efforts and mobilise system- and community-wide action to foster a more sustainable and rights-based inclusion of homeless-experienced persons into communities. This briefing is designed for policymakers and service-providers in the housing, health and social care sectors, particularly those working within local authorities, and for people with lived experience and advocates who have an interest in effecting positive change for those experiencing homelessness.

- **Social exclusion for homeless-experienced people does not end with permanent housing. Community stigma and a lack of opportunities persist post-resettlement.**
- **Stigmatising and inflexible healthcare services are among the main barriers to inclusion.**
- **In addition to housing, homeless-experienced people face significant support, knowledge, skills and opportunity gaps.**
- **There is an urgent need to train people for life. Training should focus on household, self-management and other life skills (e.g. budgeting).**
- **Resettlement success is dependent on more than just stable housing. It involves having the tools, knowledge and confidence to manage a tenancy. It also entails feeling part of the community, feeling valued and being able to exercise one's rights.**
- **Long-term community-based support led by both professionals and peers is needed post-resettlement. In addition to instrumental advice and guidance, community supports should focus on reducing social isolation and promoting good mental health.**
- **Some individuals prioritise establishing stable and trusting relationships with support staff before moving into permanent housing. Trust and partnership-building must be at the core of homeless services.**
- **In Scotland, there is a scarcity of well-coordinated community reintegration initiatives for homeless-experienced persons.**

- **Peers should be viewed as an essential part of the homeless services workforce. And yet, the potential of peers to offer compassionate, rights-based services and transformational policy input remains largely untapped.**
- **There is also a dearth of data on rehoused individuals' long-term health and social inclusion outcomes. Statutory monitoring and academic research in this area should be expanded. Comprehensive outcome measures should be developed to help monitor individuals' resettlement, community integration and citizenship-related progress and respond to any setbacks.**

Background

Homelessness is the embodiment of structural inequality and social exclusion; a deep state of 'non-citizenship' – a disconnection from the rights, responsibilities, roles, and resources essential to a socially and economically fulfilling and contributing life¹. The COVID-19 pandemic, together with the cost-of-living and housing crises, has perpetuated the socio-economic exclusion of this population, and placed further strains on the housing sector and homeless services²³⁴. Many individuals continue to endure persistent barriers to community integration and citizenship even after resettling into permanent housing, including stigma, social isolation and loss of contact with services⁵. Monitoring and supporting individuals following settlement into permanent housing have remained overlooked in the UK's homelessness prevention efforts – resulting in uncertainty regarding resettlement outcomes such as housing stability, community integration and sense of belonging⁶. In September 2023, the Glasgow Alliance to End Homelessness was disbanded – indicating an urgent need to re-mobilise stakeholders and build alliances and consensus on priorities for alleviating homelessness.

In October 2020, the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)⁷ updated their strategic plan for ending homelessness. The plan centres upon escalating access to permanent housing for all; embedding personalisation and equality across policies and procedures; addressing the fundamental causes of homelessness; and optimising information-sharing and partnership-working, among several other key actions.

¹ Rowe et al. (2001). <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-9515.00217>

² Doran & Tinson (2021). https://www.feantsaresearch.org/public/user/Observatory/2021/EJH_15-3/EJH_15-3_A3_v02.pdf

³ <https://www.cih.org/news/progress-on-homelessness-at-risk-of-being-lost-without-continued-focus-on-rapid-rehousing>

⁴ <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/homelessness-monitor/scotland/the-homelessness-monitor-scotland-2024/>

⁵ Sylvestre, J., Nelson, G., & Aubry, T. (Eds.). (2017). *Housing, citizenship, and communities for people with serious mental illness: Theory, research, practice, and policy perspectives*. Oxford University Press.

⁶ <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/resources-for-practitioners/housing-centre-guides/rapid-rehousing-transition-plans-a-scottish-overview/>

⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/ending-homelessness-together-updated-action-plan-october-2020/documents/>

There is also a commitment to strengthening the influence of voices of lived experiences on decision-making, and on promoting public awareness and challenging stigma in the community. According to a Homeless Network Scotland 2023 report stemming from a national conversation with stakeholders⁸, creating welcoming environments, offering community-based support and supporting tenancy sustainment are among the priorities for tackling homelessness in the country. The 'At Home' strategic pillar of the Network focuses on 'people (re)building their lives and social connections through safe, secure housing'⁹. While these priorities have been clearly identified by stakeholders, less is known about what actions must be taken to achieve these goals.

Homelessness prevention efforts have been met with many systemic challenges, among which are housing supply and other sector capacity challenges^{10,11}. In a February 2023 report¹², The Scottish Housing Regulator highlighted the persistent challenges facing homelessness services in the country in the context of post-pandemic recovery, the cost-of-living crisis and the war in Ukraine. The most urgent of these are the significant numbers of individuals placed in temporary accommodation for extended periods of time, in addition to the mandate to provide permanent homes that meet individuals' needs.

While homelessness prevention remains of critical importance, we must acknowledge that **permanent housing is necessary but insufficient** for formerly homeless individuals and families to establish meaningful and contributing lives in the community. Community integration encompasses a wide range of outcomes such as social participation, independent living arrangements, meaningful and appropriate occupations, emotional connections to one's community, and others¹³. These positive outcomes are dependent not only on just and equitable housing and welfare policies, but also on community amenities, recreational opportunities, positive social networks, community cohesion, access to education, and many others¹⁴.

The experience and determinants of community inclusion in the pre- and post-resettlement process have received considerably **less policy attention**, including in Scotland, compared to housing- and welfare-related policy and systemic issues. Reports from in-depth, longitudinal studies of community integration experiences and outcomes post-resettlement in Scotland are lacking. This provided impetus for the public engagement and research work reported in this brief.

⁸ https://homelessnetwork.scot/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/AIFC-Taking-the-Temperature-2022_web.pdf

⁹ <https://homelessnetwork.scot/about-all-in-for-change/>

¹⁰ <https://solace.org.uk/housing-in-scotland/>

¹¹ <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/homelessness-knowledge-hub/homelessness-monitor/scotland/the-homelessness-monitor-scotland-2024/>

¹² <https://www.housingregulator.gov.scot/landlord-performance/national-reports/thematic-work/homelessness-services-in-scotland-a-thematic-review-february-2023/>

¹³ Yasui & Berven (2009); <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638280802306638>

¹⁴ Glasgow Centre for Population Health (2016); <https://www.gcph.co.uk/latest/publications/304-social-contexts-and-health>

Citizenship and Transitions from Homelessness: Research Highlights

Transitions from homelessness are often rife with setbacks, uncertainty and structural and societal discrimination, especially for people with a history of chronic social exclusion and challenging life experiences such as mental illness, substance use issues and justice system involvement. Many individuals face significant obstacles as they [...] work toward becoming, or returning to a status as, full, valued, participating members of their communities.¹⁵ To better support individuals with reintegrating into the community and achieve meaningful personal and social roles, we must first understand their hopes, expectations, strengths, motivations, needs and concerns as they navigate this challenging transition. Karadzov's research¹⁶ with chronically homeless adults in Scotland highlighted their anxieties regarding achieving autonomy and re-establishing valued social roles post-resettlement. It also identified promising factors facilitating these transitions such as peer support, access to vocational opportunities, staff empowerment, and client-centred services. Importantly, it revealed service-users had contrasting views and expectations about the resettlement process and life in the community – from the welcome prospect of resuming a sense of normality and control to fears and uncertainty about what life in the community would look like.

Relatedly, MacIntyre and colleagues¹⁷ research developed a Scottish model of citizenship that identified aspects of citizenship that were important to those who had some form of life disruption (for example, mental illness, homelessness and justice involvement) to achieve inclusion and belonging. Building reciprocal relationships with others, not being stigmatised, viewing oneself positively, feeling valued, being a good neighbour and having access to supports and services (including safe housing, transport and education) were some of the priorities voiced by people who had experienced various life disruptions. **Citizenship**, hereby defined as an individual's connection to the **5 Rs of rights, resources, relationships, roles, responsibilities, and a sense of belonging**, served as an organising framework for the community engagement project reported in this brief.

¹⁵ Ponce et al. (2012); <https://doi.org/10.1080/15228932.2012.695660>

¹⁶ Karadzov (2023a); <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15332985.2022.2155096>; Karadzov (2023b); <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/10497323221147127>

¹⁷ MacIntyre et al. (2021). <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/hsc.13440>

Methodology

A Project Steering Group comprising University of Strathclyde researchers, Simon Community Scotland staff, and peer leaders was formed in early 2024. The project aimed to:

1. Foster academic-community partnerships through multistakeholder engagement and build capacity for future knowledge exchange, research and advocacy activities;
2. Identify stakeholder concerns, needs and priorities for supporting individuals' transitions, outcomes and community integration post-homelessness;
3. Identify future research priorities by co-creating researchable and policy- and practice-relevant questions that align with stakeholder views, and housing sector 'pain-points';
4. Contribute to the continuous professional development and leadership among people with lived experience, service providers and academic staff.

The project was rooted in **community-based participatory research (CBPR)** and a **citizenship framework**¹⁸. The methodology was also inspired by the **James Lind Alliance Priority-Setting Partnership Model**¹⁹, which brought structure, focus and urgency to the activities.

In May and June 2024, two **conversation cafés** were held in Glasgow, Scotland, with 51 stakeholders to help identify priorities for supporting individuals' transition from homelessness into inclusive communities. Attendees included service-providers (statutory and third sector), service managers, charity representatives, peer leaders, formerly homeless individuals and other people with lived experience, and academics.

Roundtable discussions were kept broad and participatory. Peer Leaders, service-users with lived experience of homelessness and other life adversity, shaped the conversation café format to ensure it was inclusive and acceptable. At each roundtable, attendees were asked to discuss, in turn, challenges, priorities and good practices regarding the pre-transition, transition and post-transition phases of homelessness.



Images 1 - 3; Attendee responses and prompts

¹⁸MacIntyre, G. et al. (2022). <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/hsc.13440>

¹⁹<https://www.jla.nihr.ac.uk/>



Image 4: Conversation Café, May 2024, Glasgow, Scotland

Attendees were also encouraged to consider six domains: **Housing, Support, Rights, Well-being, Opportunity** and **Community**. These were drawn from academic research and Peer Leaders’ input.

They were presented with the following prompts:

- *What is most important in supporting individuals during these stages, within and outside of services?*
- *What are the challenges and barriers?*
- *What are examples of success or good practice?*
- *How should we measure success in our efforts to transition individuals from homelessness to permanent housing and citizenship?*

At each table, facilitators (Simon Community staff and Peer Leaders) took notes and encouraged input from all attendees, clarifying key themes and prompting the conversations when needed. At the start of each roundtable discussion, ground rules were established to maintain respect and confidentiality. To make the discussions more interactive and hands-on, attendees also shared their views using the Ketso Kits provided (see photographs).

Shortlisting the Top 10 Priorities

Following the conversation cafés, the Steering Group gathered and summarised all stakeholder input, and convened to agree on key messages and Top 10 Priorities that reflected stakeholder views and priorities, and co-produced this brief and other dissemination materials.

Due to the nature of the priority-setting exercise, the shortlisted Top 10 does not capture all issues, concerns and experiences shared by the attendees. Some of these broader issues are exemplified in the quotes below.

The quotes were generated by the conversation café participants using the Ketso Kits provided. They illustrate each of the aforementioned six priority areas.

Greater Representation Is Needed

We recognise the Steering Group and conversation cafés are not fully representative of stakeholders in Scotland, particularly service-users. We therefore urge the involvement of diverse and underrepresented groups such as women, young people, refugees and other migrants, and persons with disabilities in future community engagement initiatives.

KEY MESSAGES

The Problem	Action Points, Good Practice and Innovations	Outcome ²⁰	Priority Area ²¹
Priority One: Increase individuals' knowledge of their rights and empower them to use their rights			RIGHTS
<p>Accurate and accessible information about available services, rights, and community resources is often lacking. This gap can lead to sanctions and missed opportunities for assistance.</p> <p>People are often unaware of what their rights are and of how to use them.</p>	<p>Ensure that homeless individuals receive accurate and timely information about their rights and available services.</p> <p>Independent advice on individuals' rights should be available at all stages of the rehousing process.</p> <p>Pilot and scale up the provision of rights-relevant information using different mediums (e.g. text messaging; Facebook groups; Whatsapp).</p>	<p>Individuals have access to independent and timely advice on their rights.</p> <p>Individuals have knowledge of their rights and can self-advocate.</p>	
Priority Two: Offer better help with navigating the system			SUPPORT
<p>People find it difficult to access support that meets all their needs. Services are often not joined up and do not collaborate optimally.</p> <p>Trustworthy and consistent support is crucial. Individuals feel let down when support workers frequently change, preventing the formation of meaningful relationships.</p> <p>Continuity in support is essential to avoid feelings of abandonment and to ensure sustained assistance.</p> <p>Consistency and honesty are critical to service-users' engaging with staff and accepting help.</p> <p>The system is overwhelmed, with caseworkers handling too many clients, leading to inadequate support. An investment in increasing staff capacity, support and training is urgently needed.</p>	<p>Community hubs play a critical role in providing comprehensive support and fostering a sense of community. More 'umbrella' services or hubs, similar to the Simon Community's Glasgow Access Hub, should be established to offer localised support and resources.</p> <p>Increase the number of Complex Needs Case Workers.</p> <p>Scale up investment in peer support programmes. Increase the number of peer support workers to provide relatable and effective guidance and support, and bridge gaps in service provision. Peer support workers are a largely untapped future workforce and are important for staff retention and service-user engagement.</p> <p>Value for money should be demonstrated for such services. There is a need for economic evaluation data for innovative service delivery models (such as hubs and peer support workers) to strengthen the case for scaling them up.</p>	<p>Individuals feel listened to, and that the system is working with and for, not against, them.</p> <p>Individuals receive support that is accessible and coordinated.</p>	

²⁰ These suggested target outcomes can be used as indicators of rehousing success, community inclusion and citizenship and adopted as part of formal monitoring tools.

²¹ The priority areas were jointly determined by the Project Steering Group, including Peers Leaders. They were used to structure the workshops and ensure a comprehensive scope.

<p>Priority Three: Put in place targeted pre- and post-transition support and plans</p>			<p>SUPPORT</p>
<p>Individuals often report feeling ill-equipped for independent living – for example, lacking in household management and other life skills.</p> <p>Permanent housing may not be perceived by homeless individuals as a desirable option. Individuals will often cite the cost-of-living crisis, the lack of skills and/or the preference for fewer restrictions and higher mobility as the reasons for not actively pursuing permanent housing.</p> <p>Support is harder to maintain post-rehousing, leaving some individuals feeling unsupported and vulnerable. This increases the risk of losing one’s tenancy.</p> <p>Some individuals report needing longer-term support following rehousing. Many individuals relapse into homelessness or addiction due to a lack of ongoing support.</p>	<p>In the pre-transition period, case workers should lead on establishing a post-transition support plan. This should include more than crisis support.</p> <p>Understand and mitigate the effects of addiction and mental health difficulties on service engagement and housing maintenance. This recognition is vital and should be built into assessments and support planning.</p> <p>Increase funding for resettlement programmes. These programmes should focus on building skills and independent living - managing benefits, healthcare access, tenancy responsibilities, being a good neighbour (transition skills). They should not focus on housing acquisition alone. Such programmes can and should take place in hostels and other temporary accommodation, and should be made accessible to those with lived experience.</p> <p>Service-providers should offer education on managing benefits, healthcare, and tenancy responsibilities. They should offer programmes that teach coping strategies and prepare individuals for the transition out of homelessness. Include incentives for programme participation. For example, training modules could be co-designed between universities or colleges, charities, peers and support workers.</p> <p>During the transition phase, it is vital to help individuals develop self-management and coping strategies and acquire practical skills (e.g. cooking, budgeting, finance management, IT skills).</p> <p>Formalise and support mentoring already delivered by staff to resettled individuals.</p>	<p>Individuals possess the essential skills and confidence to self-manage and maintain a household.</p> <p>Individuals report having access to independent living support and other types of support post-rehousing and in the long term.</p>	

Priority Four: Ensure assessment of housing needs is personalised, holistic and flexible			HOUSING
<p>Assessment focuses exclusively on housing need and does not consider an individual's broader social needs. This means they are less likely to be able to maintain their tenancy as broader needs have been overlooked. Assessment needs to be more personalised with greater opportunities for follow-up and check-in.</p>	<p>Offer personalised support tailored to individual needs, including gender-specific and situation-specific assistance.</p> <p>Increase the number of caseworkers and reduce caseloads to ensure more personalised support.</p> <p>Implement trauma-informed care practices across all services and ensure environments are welcoming and safe.</p> <p>Prioritise individual choice and preferences (right type of tenancy etc.).</p> <p>Pilot collaborative, multidisciplinary assessment practices (for example, involving housing and social care staff, and peer workers).</p> <p>Instil social care values and principles in housing assessment such as compassion, care, dignity, choice, advocacy and good listening. Encourage more effective collaboration and joint working. Consider joint assessments and enhanced information-sharing.</p> <p>Increase the availability of supported accommodation.</p> <p>Carry out risk assessment periodically to capture changes in individuals' circumstances, needs and preferences.</p>	<p>Person-centred, holistic assessments are carried out that take into account an individual's health and social care needs, as well as a consideration of housing.</p> <p>Individuals feel that all their needs and preferences have been considered and adequate support has been put in place to meet them.</p>	

Priority Five: Improve the conditions of permanent accommodation			HOUSING
<p>Permanent accommodation often does not meet tenants' expectations. Tenants frequently report issues regarding the area or neighbourhood and building co-habitants, as well as the quality of the housing itself (such as the lack of essential furnishing and appliances).</p> <p>Recent budget cuts to the Scottish Welfare Fund have meant that tenants' basic needs are often not provided for.</p>	<p>Implement minimum standards for cleanliness before move-in.</p> <p>Ensure tenants are assisted with accessing the Scottish Welfare Fund.</p> <p>Create a register of charities that provide free or low-cost furniture and household items.</p> <p>Encourage social enterprises to upcycle furniture and other household goods.</p> <p>Housing Officers should ensure tenants are provided with information and ongoing support to comply with the requirements for managing a tenancy. There should be a recognition and understanding of new tenants' difficulties with adapting to household rules and policies.</p>	<p>The tenancy feels like a home. The tenancy and neighbourhood feel safe. Tenants take pride in, and responsibility for, their tenancy.</p> <p>The housing conditions (area, co-habitants, restrictions) are facilitative of recovery and independence, and do not re-traumatise tenants.</p>	

<p>Priority Six: Lower barriers to healthcare access, ensuring homeless individuals can receive medical and dental care without stigma</p>			<p>WELL-BEING</p>
<p>Access to GPs and dentists is challenging, often due to financial barriers and stigma associated with addiction.</p> <p>Homeless individuals frequently feel judged or stigmatised as a result of their addiction, impacting their willingness and ability to seek medical help.</p>	<p>People should be able to access health care when they do not own a phone, do not have a fixed address, or when they miss an appointment.</p> <p>Work with primary care providers, pharmacists, dentists and reception staff to educate them about barriers homeless individuals experience, and encourage flexibility.</p> <p>Train primary care and reception staff (for example, in trauma-informed care and in social prescribing).</p> <p>Good practice in pharmacy services for people who are homeless in Scotland has been documented²².</p>	<p>Individuals can access healthcare services without fear of stigma or judgement.</p>	
<p>Priority Seven: Provide better integrated dual diagnosis (substance use and mental health) services and support</p>			<p>WELL-BEING</p>
<p>There is a severe lack of dedicated services for people who have a dual diagnosis in Scotland.</p> <p>The organisation of support and services often does not reflect the interrelatedness between mental health and substance use difficulties.</p> <p>Disjointed mental health and substance use services make it harder for individuals to self-manage and engage in their care.</p>	<p>Overcome the silos between mental health and substance use services. This will require leadership, culture change and cross-sectoral training and partnership-building events and other initiatives to improve joint working.</p> <p>Establish and disseminate good practice for dual diagnosis support services.</p> <p>Evaluate and enhance standards for such services.</p>	<p>Mental health and substance use services are well-coordinated, and wherever possible, co-located.</p> <p>An inclusive, holistic approach to care is the norm – making individuals more likely to engage in care.</p>	

²² Lowrie et al. (2017); <https://www.feantsa.org/download/march-2017-health-and-homelessness-newsletter2959399951318964653.pdf>

Priority Eight: Increase access to employment, volunteering and other skill-building opportunities			OPPORTUNITY
<p>Individuals often report they lack important life skills and confidence, which is a barrier to sustaining independent tenancies.</p>	<p>Service managers should encourage and empower staff’s initiative and creativity in trying out projects to develop service-users’ skills and confidence.</p> <p>Offer peer development programmes in every service.</p> <p>Allocate funding to support skills-building initiatives, including social enterprises. These could be delivered in partnership with further or higher education institutions.</p>	<p>Individuals have opportunities to build skills for life and confidence – capitalising on their strengths and interests and making a meaningful contribution to the lives of others.</p> <p>Homeless-experienced individuals can explore and develop a career in peer support that is recognised and validated.</p> <p>Homeless-experienced individuals are involved in activities that enable personal growth and their sense of purpose, and that bring value to others.</p>	

Priority Nine: Prevent social isolation		
Priority Ten: Promote community inclusion		
<p>People often do not feel part of their new community and do not know how to access services and supports. They may lack local community knowledge. People may then revert to previous micro-communities, which could expose them to substance use, exploitation and/or violence.</p> <p>Long-term homelessness can make it harder for people to maintain social and independent living skills. When resettled, individuals often need to re-learn these essential skills.</p> <p>There is a societal stigma that contributes to feelings of being marginalised and alone.</p> <p>Stigma persists even after moving into permanent housing. Due to safety concerns, drug use communities and past trauma, many individuals do not want to engage in a new community after moving into permanent housing.</p> <p>Formerly homeless individuals often report a lack of community knowledge – this makes feeling part of the community difficult.</p> <p>Self-stigma is often reported as a result of anticipated and felt community exclusion.</p>	<p>Raise awareness in the community about the challenges faced by formerly homeless persons, and ways to be good neighbours towards them via local neighbourhood initiatives.</p> <p>Foster community integration through local hubs and initiatives to reduce stigma and isolation. Support individuals with acquiring community knowledge and relationships. Positive examples are Street Soccer Scotland²³; Evening Hubs (Simon Community Scotland); and The Connect Hub²⁴ (Simon Community Scotland) - a new community and support centre for women.</p> <p>Spotlight positive examples of resettlement in the media to counter unhelpful stereotypes.</p> <p>Organise awareness-raising events on and around World Homeless Day²⁵. Raise awareness of homeless-experienced persons' challenges and strengths at national festivals such as the Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival²⁶ and Refugee Festival Scotland²⁷.</p>	<p>Resettled individuals feel they have the knowledge and skills to be good neighbours.</p> <p>Homeless-experienced individuals can take part in community activities.</p> <p>Resettled individuals do not feel judged by others; on the contrary, they feel 'seen', validated and included.</p>
COMMUNITY		

²³ <https://streetsoccerscotland.org/what-we-do/>


²⁴ <https://www.simonscotland.org/2024/05/13/our-new-connect-hub-is-open/>

²⁵ <https://www.crisis.org.uk/get-involved//fundraise/world-homeless-day-event/>

²⁶ <https://www.mhfestival.com/events/>

²⁷ <https://www.refugeefestivalscotland.co.uk/about/>

Top 10 Priorities for Supporting the Transition from Homelessness to Inclusive Communities in Scotland



KNOWLEDGE OF RIGHTS




ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY



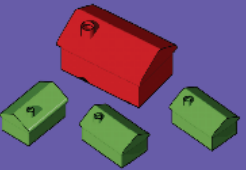
NAVIGATING THE SYSTEM



PRE- AND POST-TRANSITION PLAN AND SUPPORT




PERSONALISED AND COLLABORATIVE ASSESSMENT



IMPROVED HOUSING CONDITIONS



LOWER BARRIERS TO HEALTH CARE



INTEGRATED DUAL DIAGNOSIS SERVICES



COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND INCLUSION



PREVENT SOCIAL ISOLATION



KNOWLEDGE OF RIGHTS

“Sticking people who don’t know their rights in hostels when all I need is caseworker”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Never knew my housing rights”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Rights without support; left my tenancy”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Learn about your rights and feel empowered”

- Person with Lived Experience



“Building life skills education into the curriculum”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Left in hostels for long term and forgotten about”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Should be more peer support”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Services need to have the bigger picture”

- Person with Lived Experience

“From years on the street to a TFF [temporary furnished flat] with no support & addiction is setting up to fail”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Trust factor”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Re-learning skills...”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Lack of resettlement staff”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Continuity, stickability and responsibility”

- Person with Lived Experience

“The main aim is not a house as the right support”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Lack of moving-on services”

- Person with Lived Experience



“Pressure to move people along...when not always appropriate”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Getting your own housing is when the problems start.”

- Person with Lived Experience

“See the person not as a problem”

- Person with Lived Experience

“No rules; my own boss; my own door”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Poor relationships leading to tenancy breakdown”

- Person with Lived Experience

“More choice of permanent housing”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Feeling prepared”

- Person with Lived Experience

“The real work starts when you get the tenancy”

- Person with Lived Experience

“No one moves into a house with nothing - why are the homeless expected to?!”

- Person with Lived Experience



“Positive outlook and self-determination to make the most of it”
- Person with Lived Experience

“Good mental space from having my own house”
- Person with Lived Experience

“Having a reason to get up and go out”
- Person with Lived Experience

“Lonely”
- Person with Lived Experience

“Can’t get mental health support if still using/drinking”
- Person with Lived Experience

“Mental health resources”
- Person with Lived Experience

“Depression, mental health and isolation”
- Person with Lived Experience

“Need help with my mental health”
- Person with Lived Experience

“Engaging with services - GP/counselling/dentist”
- Person with Lived Experience

“Cant get GPs and dentists”
- Person with Lived Experience



ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

“Reinventing yourself...What opportunities are there for me in the community...?”

- Person with Lived Experience

“People need purpose and opportunity and kindness”

- Service Provider

“More volunteering schemes”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Lack of opportunities”

- Person with Lived Experience

“To have more opportunities while going through trauma”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Being able to grow”

- Person with Lived Experience



“I would stigmatise myself”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Disconnected from society... Still don't feel part of society when I got my housing”

- Person with Lived Experience

“My neighbours help me”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Feel more community and opportunity in prison than outside”

- Person with Lived Experience

“Going from institutionalisation to living alone in the community”

- Person with Lived Experience

Spotlighting Community Inclusion Initiatives

Anna Pragnell is an Essential Skills Lecturer at the Widening Access and Community Department, City of Glasgow College. Anna's classes target a wide range of transferable skills – from communication and working with others to financial literacy, and from volunteering to well-being and creative writing.



Please tell us about yourself and your work with homeless-experienced people.

I am a lecturer in the Community and Widening Access Department of the City of Glasgow College and have been working there for 25 years teaching many different levels of Communication to a wide range of students. We started working with the Simon Community three years ago and our class is very successful there. One of the most important aspects of the class is the flexibility of approach to the class dynamics and assessment. Our students there are gaining SQA qualifications and benefiting from regular attendance.

Why is skills development important for transitioning from homelessness and/or community inclusion, in your view?

Skills development is vital for those transitioning to community inclusion. Our classes, by the nature of the courses we do, focus on soft skills that underpin the ability to function well in the community. We work on more than qualifications, we work to improve the lives of those attending with a side focus on pastoral care. Often we assist with emotional and administrative support as well. Some of our students have spent little time living independently, many have spent extended time in care and/or prison. Our classes give them confidence to try new things as well as give them a sense of stability. On another note, in terms of recovery, we also see benefits from attendance for many of the reasons I have mentioned. Family connections can be restored when a student is seen to be making the effort to improve themselves. This also helps with the stigma attached to being homeless. [...] I have seen individuals move onto volunteering from my class and then onto employment.

In your view, are there opportunities to scale up this type of work across Scotland? If yes, what would be necessary for this to happen?

I am not aware of any opportunities but that does not mean they exist, I am sure they do. It is likely that they all happen in organisations like the Simon Community and Glasgow City Mission. I think that there is definitely a need for these kind of classes that address the psychological and social needs of those transitioning to more permanent integration into the community. Of course it is going to start with funding, as well as creating more safe spaces for those to attend classes. If my classes were on Campus, I doubt they would be as successful. Widening Access programmes are vital to bring non traditional learners onto a path that supports their journey.



Street Soccer Scotland

Street Soccer Scotland train and mentor players for the homeless World Cup which is in South Korea this year. The players involved feel a sense of connection and self worth with each other and also a sense of being in a family probably for the first time in their lives. The feeling of being included and accepted for who they are is invaluable to them.

Michael Woods, Mental Health Worker at Street Soccer Scotland²⁸

²⁸ www.streetsoccerscotland.org

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