



# **Bold solutions: Our 10-year strategy for ending homelessness**

# "A future free from homelessness is possible"

Introduction from Crisis' Experts by Experience (people who have experienced homelessness)

**"Life without homelessness is possible. We know because we have been through it."**

This introduction has been written by a group of us who have experienced homelessness – Ana, Elena, Nicholas, Sarka and Tom. While our individual experiences were different, we share an understanding of what it will take to end homelessness – for individuals and for society.

We know change is possible. That's why we contributed our time alongside a wider group of Experts by Experience, who have helped shape Crisis' 10-year strategy.

Our involvement ensures the strategy is grounded in the reality of people's experiences. Because of this, we are confident that what is set out is realistic and achievable.

**Nothing about us, without us**

We firmly believe in the principle, "Nothing about us, without us." Without members – and other people with lived experience – there is no Crisis. So, a commitment to improving lived-experience involvement is important.

Meaningful co-production and involvement is not easy. Too often it can feel like our words and experiences are falling on rocky ground – rather than fertile soil. Listening on its own isn't good enough. Our input must result in action.

The strategy development process showed us the commitment is being taken seriously. Our contributions have been treated on an equal footing with staff, volunteers and external partners. Now Crisis needs to build on what they're doing well, so they can become a beacon – leading by example on co-production.

**"Big changes are needed to deliver a future without homelessness. Some need to happen within Crisis – and some within our political systems and wider society."**

The idea of ending homelessness can feel unreal to people. But in the countries where some of us grew up, homelessness didn't exist in the way it does here. Things don't have to be this way. There is work to be done to secure the policies needed to solve homelessness – but we also need wide scale change towards a better society **for everyone.**

The five of us have been failed by systems and policies that aren't working. Too often, services don't see you as a whole person. But homelessness touches all areas of your life. Without a safe, decent home, it's so much harder to have good mental health – to participate in everyday life or take action on issues that matter to you.

Homelessness is an issue for society. So, ending it requires us to argue for social justice. We hope Crisis' commitment to tackling discrimination and marginalisation is just one part of this.

**We're here to help you**

Our experiences give us power to help staff, volunteers, supporters and the public understand why ending homelessness matters for society.

This isn't about hope or idealism. By collaborating with us, understanding our realities, and turning this into action, Crisis can develop the solutions that will make ending homelessness a reality.

**"When everyone reading this strategy truly shares our conviction, a future free from homelessness is possible."**

Ana, Elena, Nicholas, Sarka and Tom

# “Join us on our bold new journey”

Introduction from Matt Downie, Chief Executive at Crisis



**Homelessness is still with us. It's a scandal for our society that destroys lives, but it can be solved. Crisis wants to provide long-term solutions to homelessness as quickly as possible. We want to build a future where homelessness has ended, and everyone has a safe, settled home.**

Both at home and abroad there are now real examples of breakthrough progress. In Finland, Housing First is the cornerstone of their strategy to end homelessness – the most successful in the world. In recent years we've also seen huge progress in Austria, Denmark and Spain, alongside bold reforms in Wales and Scotland.

## Thinking bigger

It's no longer a question of whether homelessness can be ended, but how we can introduce proven solutions.

This strategy is about thinking bigger to overcome the barriers to progress. It's about doing things differently to inspire through success, and backing others who are also determined to end homelessness.

Homelessness is devastating, but our mission to end it is about positivity and solutions. Our supporters are partners in our work, and we cannot achieve our mission without them. Please join us as we start a bold new journey together.

## Our vision

**We want a future free from homelessness. This is how we'll achieve it.**

**In ten years, the number of people experiencing homelessness will be going down. We'll see the beginning of the end of homelessness.**

Right now, people across Britain are trapped in poor quality temporary accommodation, hostels, night shelters or forced to sleep in cars, sheds and public transport. Others have no option but sleeping rough because there's no place to call home.

It doesn't need to be this way.

In the future, some people may still lose their homes. But after 10 years of positive change, we'll have strengthened support services to prevent homelessness from happening. Where it does still happen, we'll be able to quickly help people into safe, settled accommodation. Because every person should have a home where they can build a decent life and meet their true potential.

By the end of 2034, for thousands of people experiencing homelessness, the nightmare will be over. People will leave homelessness behind to live the life they choose.

This isn't a fantasy future – it's possible if we all take action over the coming decade. Our strategy sets out how we'll play our part, by achieving three aims:



**1**  
**Securing policies that solve homelessness**



**2**  
**Delivering services that end homelessness for people and places**



**3**  
**Building a community of people across Britain helping to end homelessness**



## **Aim 1 – Securing policies that solve homelessness**

**Imagine a country where there are enough homes for everyone. Where the welfare system is designed to prevent homelessness. Where housing and good quality support has replaced the need for hostels and shelters. Where public services like the NHS and the criminal justice system actively prevent homelessness. Where homelessness is no longer caused by people being ignored or treated unfairly by the system.**

With the right policies and social changes in place, this is all achievable.

### **Making change happen**

We know the policy changes we need to make this a reality. So far, we've seen lower rates of homelessness in Scotland and Wales than in England. But homelessness levels across the whole of Great Britain are rising again and we need to respond. We can learn from the quick decisions political leaders in all three countries made during the pandemic. Political action is the key to success.

We know campaigning changes government policies. In the past our campaigns have successfully changed the law to prevent homelessness, regulate bad landlords, help survivors of domestic abuse and increase housing benefit.

Yet these changes haven't been enough to turn the tide. Homelessness is on the rise again.

In England, Wales and Scotland, we'll run a powerful and long-term campaign for strategies across government to end every kind of homelessness and implement the changes needed.

Strategies that must include:

- increasing housing supply and access to homes for people facing homelessness
- all public services playing their part in preventing and ending homelessness
- a move to 'rapid rehousing' – moving people quickly away from emergency accommodation to a home of their own
- changing homelessness law so that everyone is entitled to help
- changing welfare and immigration rules so that across the UK, they solve rather than cause homelessness.

We'll need the kind of progress not seen before. Campaigning for change won't be easy – and every policy solution will need to be carefully designed. We'll make sure decision-makers listen to people who've experienced homelessness and know what needs to change.

We'll also work alongside the thousands of local volunteers and hundreds of charities desperate for action.

Together, we'll grow our work in Scotland and Wales to make sure big ambitions become reality by working with others to make change happen.


### **By the end of our 10-year strategy we will:**

- secure government strategies for ending every kind of homelessness across Britain
- see a reduction in homelessness of 50% in every Crisis Centre location
- double our success so that over 80% of members we work with leave homelessness behind for good
- provide over 1,000 homes to our members
- expand Crisis at Christmas, and make sure 80% of guests don't return to the street
- positively change public attitudes to homelessness
- **see a marked drop in homelessness across Britain.**

### **What do we mean by 'our members'?**

Our members are people who use our services and get help from Crisis. Members are part of Crisis and at the centre of everything we do. We work with our members every single day and they inform, inspire and motivate us in our mission to end homelessness.



 **Aim 2 – Provide services that end homelessness for people and places**

**Fighting discrimination**

Across Britain the way many people think about homelessness is a problem. It can increase the stigma around homelessness, prevent change and make solving it seem impossible.

In response, we'll connect our campaigning work to changing public attitudes and success in securing the right policies.

We'll share our voice with people who face barriers in society so we can understand and tackle the discrimination that causes homelessness. By working with a diverse range of people and organisations, we'll campaign to stop the negative attitudes experienced by many groups that drive homelessness.

**Now is the time for us to apply more pressure and push harder for the changes we want to see. Because our society is stronger when everyone has a place within it.**

**All of us need a decent home to be healthy and thrive. We're proud to provide services for people facing homelessness across Britain. Especially for people most in need who find it difficult to access public services or have been shut out of them altogether. We also have a strong tradition of helping people over Christmas.**

We want to be sector leaders, showing how people in greatest need can leave homelessness behind for good through housing and high-quality support.

In the next decade we'll offer outstanding services, based on evidence, that help transform our members' lives. We'll use the most effective tools from what we already do to build a network of Crisis Centres across Britain – and also begin to provide housing directly to our members.

## Our Crisis Centres

Our network of Skylights provide excellent support up and down the country – from finding a home, to applying for jobs, learning vital skills, and accessing healthcare and support.

And now, with our new Crisis Centres, we'll take that support to the next level.

The Centres will be a key part of what we call a 'place-based' plan for ending homelessness. This means digging deep into the problems, experiences and relationships of local people to find solutions. Alongside local organisations we'll be part of projects to design homelessness out of communities. One way to do this is the Built for Zero programme. Built for Zero is a data-driven solution to ending homelessness in specific areas for different groups of people. We'll introduce it to help local communities end homelessness.

It's essential that people experiencing homelessness shape our services, so we'll design the Centres together.

## Learning and changing

Our services are dedicated to helping members keep or find a home, because safe and settled housing is the foundation of every journey out of homelessness.

We want to provide people the best services possible. Today we end the homelessness of around 40% of the people we support. Over the next decade we will double this to help at least 80% of members leave homelessness behind for good.

Sadly, we can't offer direct services to everyone that needs them. So we'll make sure we collect evidence of what works, share practice and learn from other organisations too.

## Our Crisis Housing

We can't end homelessness without homes. So, we'll set up a new Housing Agency, providing housing for over a thousand Crisis members, offering different kinds of homes to meet different needs.

This will include Good Place Lettings, our new partnership with Homes for Good. It will manage homes for private landlords, carefully matching our members to housing and helping people keep their homes.

Over the next decade we'll grow our agency, so it helps over a thousand members. We'll show that this approach works, while inspiring others to offer similar solutions.



## Crisis at Christmas

For over 50 years, Crisis at Christmas has supported people each winter who face spending the festive season sleeping on the streets and experiencing other forms of homelessness. We're very proud of what we've achieved so far.

In the next decade we'll grow Crisis at Christmas to be a specialist emergency service for people rough sleeping in London and other parts of the country. We'll bring as many people as possible off the street and into private, dignified accommodation where they can start their journey out of homelessness.

We'll continue to help people who are homeless over Christmas across Britain. But we'll also offer emergency help during extreme weather for people rough sleeping, and other times we're needed, in other areas of Britain too.

For some people this will mean becoming a Crisis member. For others, we'll work with local authorities and charities so people can find housing and a future beyond homelessness.

## **Aim 3 – Building a community of people across Britain helping to end homelessness**

Homelessness has a huge impact on our communities. But together we can demand and create change.

We know across Britain people see the suffering caused by homelessness and want to help solve it. Yet, very often they don't know what to do for the best.

Whoever you are, we'll be here to help you make a difference. And together, we can build a national community determined to end homelessness.

For Crisis, this means lending our expertise and supporting other people's efforts.

### **Together with people who play a direct role we will:**

- find new ways to prevent evictions and tackle homelessness by working with landlords
- partner with local authorities to plan and provide an end to homelessness in their area and show what works
- drive change in the public sector, including prisons, job centres and other spaces to prevent and end homelessness
- invest in big ideas to end homelessness from start-ups and entrepreneurs through our innovative Venture Studio.

### **Together with people who see homelessness and want to solve it we will:**

- show how employers can tackle homelessness in the workforce
- harness the power of our young people and teachers to help schools, colleges and universities play their part in preventing homelessness
- help health professionals in primary and secondary care spot and respond to the signs of homelessness in partnership with Pathway, the homeless and inclusion health charity
- help people working in services that regularly see homelessness to prevent and end it. These include people working in prisons, the care system and with refugees.

### **Together with the public we will:**

- match people with local opportunities to help tackle homelessness in their community, making Crisis relevant and helpful in every part of Britain
- provide many more ways people can engage with us – including more volunteering
- share solutions to homelessness on a new online space – giving people the tools, resources and evidence to play their part.



## **Supporting our strategy**

**We can't end homelessness alone. Over the next ten years we need the knowledge and support of more people dedicated to making a difference so we can change lives.**

Crisis is only able to do its work because of our supporters. To create lasting change we will find new opportunities to raise money and build relationships to achieve our ambition.

We'll push the boundaries of our commercial income and explore strategic partnerships to increase our impact. We'll also invite people to join us in sharing their skills and support to provide solutions that will spark the beginning of the end of homelessness over ten years.



# Our people and culture

## Ending homelessness starts with our people and how we work together.

Our staff, members and volunteers are vital to getting the right government policies in place, providing breakthrough services and building a supportive community.

We'll lead by example to nurture a positive and ambitious workplace guided by ending homelessness. In everything we do we'll always be kind, compassionate and dignified.

Crisis will be a place where everyone – our staff, people facing homelessness, volunteers and supporters – are proud of their contribution to ending homelessness.

We'll work closely together, learn from each other and make sure people who've experienced homelessness are at the heart of our work.

Achieving our vision won't be easy. So, we'll support each another to be curious, try new things, take considered risks and work hard to end homelessness.

## How we work – our values

To end homelessness, we'll be:



### **Bold**

We're relentless in our mission to end homelessness. We'll make a real difference – no matter what challenges we face. We're not afraid to try new things, take risks, or sometimes fail.



### **Impactful**

Our work is based on evidence, has a big impact, and meets high standards. Everything we do should help end homelessness – and we'll be accountable to everyone we work with.



### **Collaborative**

We work best together. We'll share ideas, find solutions, and embrace new ways of doing things. Co-production is at the heart of what we do – and people with lived experience of homelessness shape our work.



### **Equitable**

We're about fairness and equity. We'll always champion the voices and experiences of people who are marginalised. With evidence and insight, we'll also challenge barriers put up by the system.