Have Your Say policy consultation

Summary report

Together
we will end
homelessness

1 Background

To develop our plan to end homelessness, *Everybody In: How to end homelessness in Great Britain,* we needed vital input from organisations working in and around the homelessness sector, and from people with lived experience of homelessness. So we ran Have Your Say – a major policy consultation exercise across Great Britain's three nations. The results fed into the plan.

The policy consultation used a range of methods and sought to:

- develop our understanding of the most important issues causing homelessness
- generate a wide range of ideas on how to end homelessness, whether prevention of homelessness, rapid responses to homelessness or sustained solutions
- prioritise, test and develop, and build consensus on policy solutions to end homelessness
- promote debate about ways to end homelessness and involve organisations and individuals in the plan.

This report summarises findings from the policy consultation. Given the volume and diversity of responses to the consultation exercise, which included many face-to-face events and meetings, findings here are necessarily abridged. We do not attempt to capture every nuance or individual point of view from what were often wide-ranging discussions.

The policy consultation was an important part of developing *Everybody In: How to end homelessness in Great Britain*, but the plan also draws on other types of evidence. These include: international examples; analysis of data; academic literature; evaluations and our own experience and knowledge of homelessness policy.

As part of stage 1 of the consultation, we commissioned Uscreates and Groundswell to run a series of workshops to hear from people with lived experience of homelessness, totalling 35 events across England, Scotland and Wales, and reaching 289 people. Their direct knowledge of navigating the homelessness system and ideas for change have been invaluable. Results from this work have been summarised in a separate report[1] and were incorporated into discussions at stage 2 and 3 of the consultation.

2. What we did and who we involved

The Have Your Say policy consultation was split into three stages.

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[1] https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/238824/the-lived-experience-of-homelessness-report.pdf

Stage 1: Identify problems and policy solutions (September to October 2017)

During Stage 1, we asked experts from relevant sectors in policy, on the front line, or in government, to tell us their views about homelessness and how it can be ended.

We involved 327 participants during 32 policy workshops. These workshops were themed around issues, such as welfare, housing and justice. All followed the same format, including a mix of problem identification, idea generation and group discussion. In addition to the workshops, 244 people responded to our call for written evidence and detailed online survey.[2] These two activities gave us a wealth of evidence, examples, ideas and viewpoints.

Respondents and workshop participants included: homelessness charities; housing and support providers; local authorities, and practitioners in fields such as benefits, migration and women's services. There was little representation from the private sector and most respondents were sympathetic to Crisis' core aims and beliefs, so bias is a consideration. There was some crossover of respondents between the online consultation and the workshops, and no major divergence of priorities or views between the two formats.

The policy workshops were spread across England, Wales and Scotland[3], and we had a good mix of online responses from each nation and region.[4] For most issues included in this summary report, the overall problem and thrust of solutions are shared across UK nations and regions. There are, however, important differences in the details, particularly where legislative frameworks differ.

We analysed the written evidence and write-ups of workshops in Stage 1, along with the findings from the lived experience workshops, and synthesised the policy solutions suggested in these. This gave us 92 potential policy solutions. They were loosely ranked as 'high', 'medium' or 'low' priority according to how much consensus they had gathered, for example by frequency of mention. Solutions were grouped into four categories:

- solutions to prevent homelessness
- solutions to provide a rapid response to homelessness
- solutions to provide sustained support to people at risk of or experiencing homelessness
- overarching/other solutions.

Finally, Crisis staff undertook an exercise to further group, prioritise and condense the policy solutions. We excluded solutions very similar to one another, those obviously

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[2] Although 244 people answered the call for evidence, many responses were incomplete, with 30–50 meaningful text responses for the bulk of the open questions. Baselines for closed questions are given throughout this report.
[3] Workshop locations included Birmingham, York, Cardiff, Glasgow, Edinburgh, London, Plymouth, Aberdeen and Sheffield.
[4] In answer to 'location of your work', 31% UK, 3% GB, 27% England, 15% Scotland, 11% Wales, 8% particular local authority, 7% particular region. N=119.

outside of Crisis' remit, those with the least amount of consensus and those not sufficiently clear or not feasible.

Through this process, we narrowed the list of 92 down to 36. These 36 solutions would be further tested in Stage 3. We also decided to do a deeper exploration of three key solutions that merited detailed development and discussion with stakeholders, and took these forward to Stage 2.

Stage 2: What needs to change to deliver the solutions (December-January 2017)

In Stage 2, we invited senior civil servants, local authorities, thinks tanks, businesses and academia/research bodies to review in detail three big solutions identified in Stage 1. We asked them to consider what changes need to happen to successfully deliver these solutions.

We held a series of high-level roundtable discussions and one-to-one meetings with senior officials in England, Scotland and Wales.[5]

These focused on three areas that had emerged in Stage 1.

- **How to deliver an integrated service model of homelessness prevention**. What is needed for different departments within local authorities, and across a range of public bodies, to design and deliver a shared agenda on homelessness prevention?
- **Rapid response for homeless people with low level needs**. How can we best create pathways into permanent housing for people who have become homeless and have low support needs?
- **Sustained support for homeless people with more complex needs**. How to commission a package of support services that people using Housing First need to sustain their housing? Which services are needed, and how best to commission them in an effective and integrated way?

Delegates included senior officials in positions of authority on implementation from across a range of sectors. These included: health commissioners, probation commissioners, Jobcentre Plus district managers and housing and homelessness leads from local authorities. We pulled together write-ups of all these events to see where there was agreement across different areas. This helped us to interrogate and flesh out the solutions.

Stage 3: Consensus and prioritisation (February to March 2018)

During Stage 3, we invited people who'd participated in the consultation to help us identify where there is consensus and what solutions are a priority for the final plan to end homelessness. We built an online platform where we listed all the 36 policy solutions

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[5] Three roundtable discussions (one on each question) were held in England, delivered in partnership with local authorities in Croydon, Newcastle and Birmingham. In Wales, two roundtable discussions, also covering the three questions above, were held in Swansea and Cardiff. Fourteen further group and 1:1 meetings were held in Scotland.

identified and refined during Stages 1 and 2, and invited people to review and comment on these solutions.

We also asked them to rank a shorter list of policy solutions from most to least important to help us get a better sense of competing priorities. Eleven solutions were listed for England and Wales and seven slightly different solutions for Scotland.

Finally, organisations working with people with lived experience of homelessness were invited to hold sessions to review and rank the prioritised recommendations. These included Crisis' Experts by Experience groups in the North and South of England and a user group in Scotland facilitated by the Bethany Christian Trust. Skylight member forums including Crisis South Wales were also included.

3. Findings on the problems that cause and exacerbate homelessness

What did people say about the big picture?

Across all stages, respondents and participants at workshops spoke about the wider context in which homelessness persists. Many cited structural issues that perpetuate homelessness. These included entrenched poverty and a low-wage; a low security economy; discrimination; problems in the justice and immigration systems, and the effects of cuts to public services. They recognised that the causes of homelessness are multi-faceted and often stem from very early upstream issues. These could range from childhood trauma and family breakdown to broader influences such as culture, institutionalisation and public attitudes about homelessness.

Although they differed in details, people who participated in our consultation showed a clear preference for what sort of services and systems would better serve the needs of homeless people. They acknowledged that most would require both culture change and a shift to more upfront spending.

Across all areas participants called for improved advice, early and preventative interventions, much better collaboration and communication between different agencies, and support offering holistic, personalised help to people. They encouraged a more asset-based, less bureaucratic and more consistent, long-term approach to tackling homelessness. This can sound vague, but was a big theme across all of our work; one echoed by people with lived experience of homelessness.

People also highlighted interdependencies and overlaps between solutions. They argued that change in any area is difficult unless underlying problems, particularly problems with stigma, affordable housing supply and welfare reforms, are addressed.

What did people think were the biggest barriers to ending homelessness?

Stage 1

In the Stage 1 online consultation, questions were arranged by issue (eg social housing,

migration, social care). Sample sizes for closed questions are very low, but they do give a simple indication of respondents' views.

The graph below (Figure 1) shows what respondents identified as the most important resources local authorities need to better deal with homelessness. We scored their rankings to enable comparison. Here and throughout the open questions in the survey – and consistent with feedback from workshops – availability of social housing was considered the key factor:

Figure 1: The resources and mechanisms needed to meet the needs of homeless people or those at risk
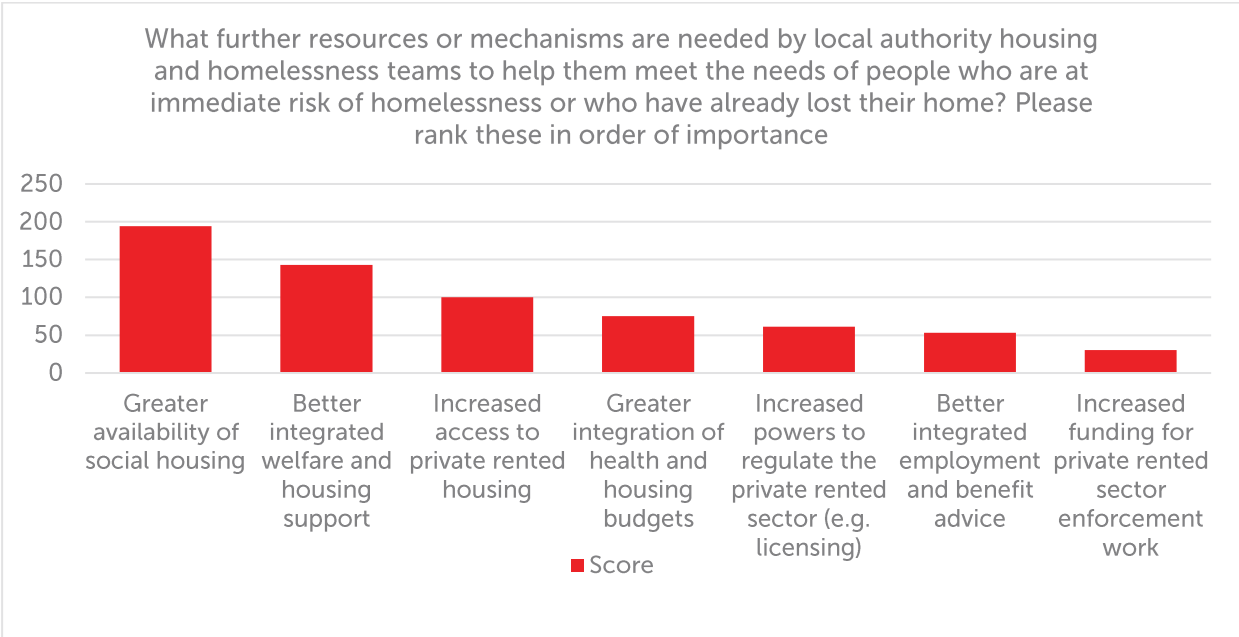
N=48

Respondents did not feel that the private rented sector is meeting the needs of homeless people (87% disagree/ strongly disagree[6]). "The PRS is becoming increasingly out of reach to not only homeless people, but anyone on a low income, or is benefit dependent…" commented one local authority representative.

However, they were more split on whether the social sector meets the needs of homeless people[7]. Respondents felt that it could be a suitable option, but allocations policies and shortage of supply put it out of reach for most homeless people. This was echoed by people who had experienced homelessness. During Stage 3 one 'Experts by
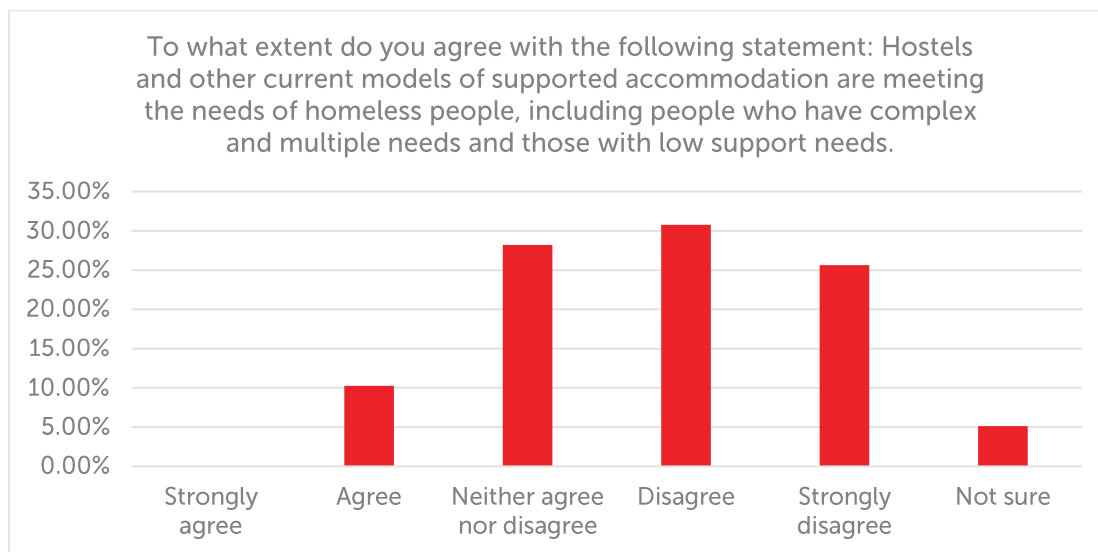
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[6]'To what extent do you agree with the following statement: The private rented sector is meeting the needs of homeless people?' 0% strongly agree, 4% agree, 2% neither agree/ disagree, 36% disagree, 51% strongly disagree, 6% not sure. N= 47.

[7] 'To what extent do you agree with the following statement: the social rented sector (including stock owned by local authorities and housing associations or managed by arms-length management organisations) are meeting the needs of homeless people.' 2.5% strongly agree, 20% agree, 25% neither agree/ disagree, 25% disagree, 22.5% strongly disagree, 5% not sure. N= 40.

Experience' group discussed the intentional homelessness concept which means people homeless, due to circumstances outside of their control, feel they get little help from their council.

As the graph below shows (Figure 2), respondents were not positive about current models of supported accommodation and hostels. While some respondents argued that hostels provided the best opportunity to engage homeless people, others cited examples of dangerous, unsuitable environments. "Hostels offer no more than poor accommodation with very little by way of support for people suffering with mental health issues, addiction issues or both," said one voluntary sector respondent.

Figure 2: The extent to which hostels and other forms of supported accommodation are meeting the needs of homeless people

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Hostels and other current models of supported accommodation are meeting the needs of homeless people, including people who have complex and multiple needs and those with low support needs.
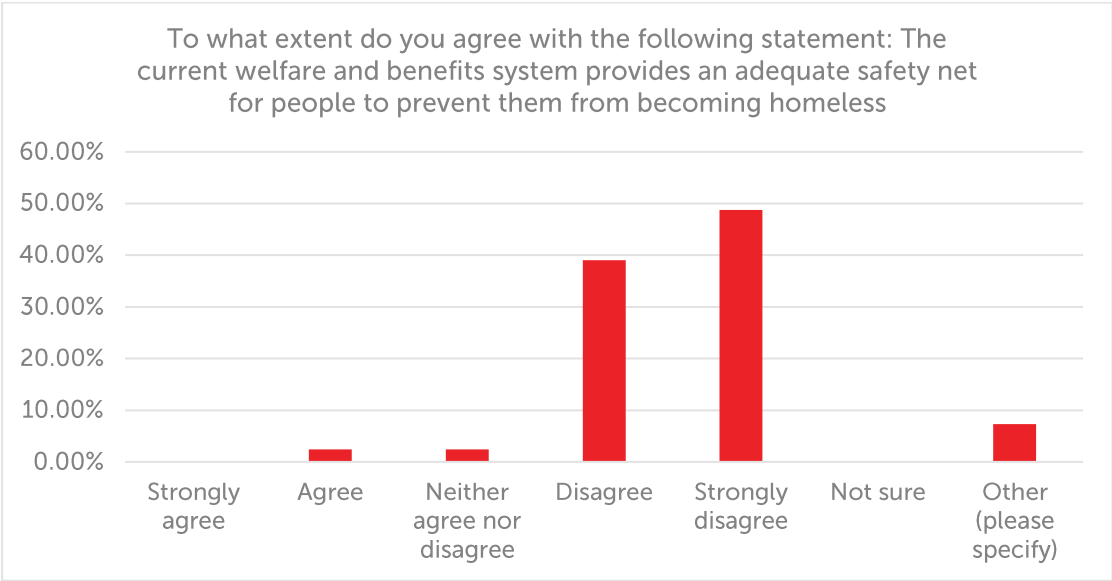
N = 39

Respondents mostly disagreed that local authorities were meeting the needs of people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. However, they recognised that council staff were limited by resource pressures and a lack of options. "They are doing as much as they can with the resources available," said one housing association respondent.

Respondents were clear that the welfare system does not provide a strong safety net (Figure 3).

Figure 3: The extent to which welfare and benefit system is an adequate safety net to prevent homelessness

To what extent do you agree with the following statement: The current welfare and benefits system provides an adequate safety net for people to prevent them from becoming homeless

N = 41

Problems with the welfare safety net came up time and again in later stages of the consultation. Our Experts by Experience groups in Stage 3 argued that Universal Credit "doesn't work regardless of whether you're homeless or not". They cited examples of sanctions that had caused undue hardship and noted that benefit payments were often too slow and did not cover enough rent.

In terms of legislative frameworks, Stage 1 respondents were divided[8] on whether the current statutory homelessness framework is effective at assisting people who are homeless or at risk. This is perhaps because it is different in each region: "While the Homelessness Reduction Act's extension of the legal definition of 'threatened with homelessness' from 28 to 56 days is very welcome... we would like to see local housing authorities taking a more strategic approach to preventing homelessness," said one charity.

At the Stage 1 workshops, participants brainstormed problems connected to homelessness using the 'PESTLE' model,[9]. They then prioritised the top three problems they thought should be addressed (Figure 4).

The biggest barrier to relieving homelessness was felt to be **the lack of affordable housing,** which is making it difficult for local authorities and voluntary services to help homeless people. Lack of investment, poor use of empty properties, NIMBYism and planning laws were felt to contribute to this supply problem.

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[8] 'How effective is the current statutory homelessness framework at assisting people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness?' 0% very effective, 24% effective, 29% neither effective nor not effective, 34% ineffective, 3% very ineffective, 11% not sure/ don't know. N=38
[9] Analysing problems through Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental lenses

The second most frequently mentioned barrier was **welfare reform** and how benefit changes are pushing households into debt. Respondents spoke about immediate problems with Universal Credit rollout but also the bigger problems in the welfare system, which have made landlords nervous of letting to benefit claimants.

The third was **insufficient support and advice** to deal with the various needs of a person experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Fourth was attitudes about and **perceptions of homelessness**, and fifth the **difficulties faced by vulnerable people** with multiple complex needs who do not fit into a 'one size fits all' service culture.

Figure 4: **The most frequently mentioned 'Top 3' problems**

Most frequently mentioned in 'Top 3 problems' at events
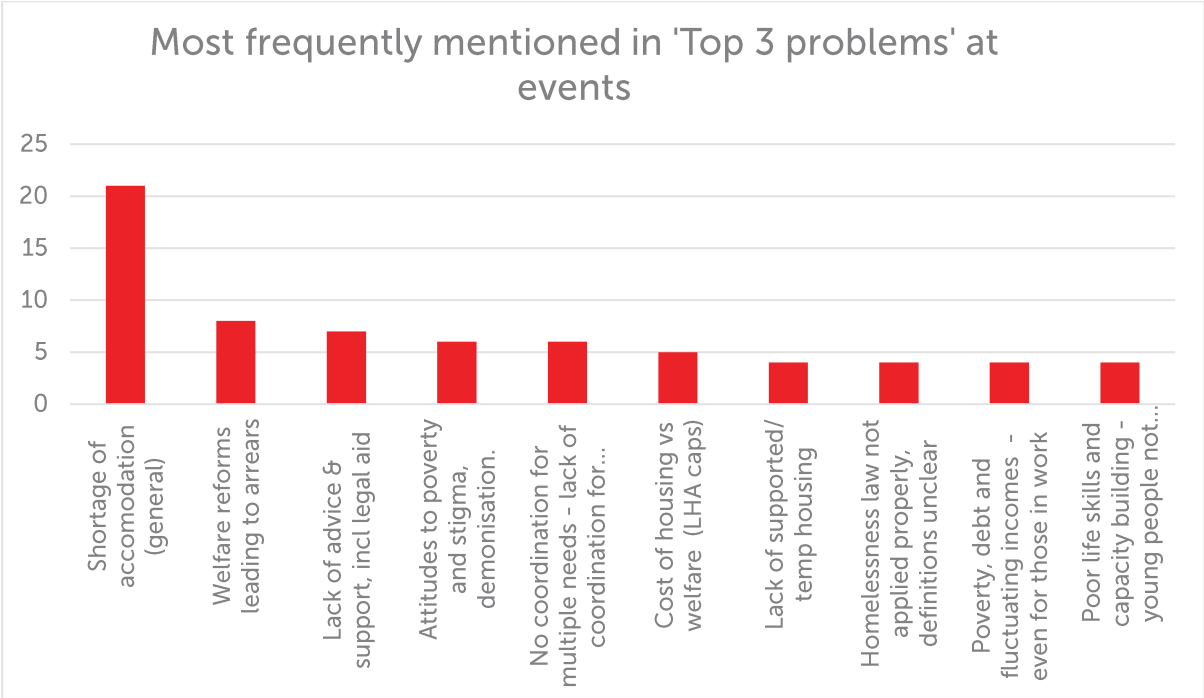
In Stage 2 and Stage 3 our focus was on solutions rather than gathering more evidence on the current problems, but participants did reaffirm the barriers and issues outlined above.

4. Findings on solutions to prevent homelessness

Prevention – Stage 1

In Stage 1 of the consultation, we looked for common ideas raised both online and in workshops and narrowed down to 53 solutions for how to prevent homelessness. These are listed in full at Annex A.

Participants felt that prevention was the most important part of tackling homelessness in the long term, and that councils needed to focus their efforts on proactive prevention measures. As one housing association respondent to the online call for evidence commented: "Preventative interventions is what is crucial, having advice and support in place at the point people begin to move towards crisis point, or even more importantly, pre-crisis, support such as money advice etc."

Accordingly, Stage 1 solutions focused on how to support people to sustain their current housing. Respondents argued strongly for reform of the private rented sector including increased security of tenure to prevent tenants being evicted through no fault of their own. Many also argued for action to tackle high rents. These included rent caps and reforms to welfare to reduce the gap between rents and Local Housing Allowance payments (particularly for young people and sharers).

Tenancy sustainment support – in both the private and social rented sectors – was also advocated. Some participants argued that housing associations should be doing much more to reduce arrears and evictions as part of their social purpose.

Reforms to the way homelessness law and allocations work were also proposed. But solutions here varied by region due to the different legislative frameworks in place in England, Scotland and Wales. In England, successful implementation of the *Homelessness Reduction Act (2017)* will be key.

Participants in all regions called for an end to 'gatekeeping' and blanket exclusions. They sought more consistency in the ways local authorities handle homelessness applications.

Provision of effective, timely advice – particularly on debt, welfare and housing rights – was seen as an important part of both helping people to stay in their homes, and to navigate the homelessness system. Respondents from both outside and within advice sector suggested reinstatement of legal aid. However, this was less pronounced in Scotland where the government has provided additional advice funding.

Others took the idea of education and advice further, arguing for education about homelessness to be part of the national curriculum. There was broad consensus around solutions to prevent prisoners from becoming homeless on release. This included advice and support through sentences and effective 'through the gates' help on release. There was also consensus around employment. Respondents proposed ways of incentivising employers to work with homeless people including training, awareness and accreditation schemes.

People who took part in our consultation were mostly from, or connected to, the homelessness sector. A big feature of their solutions was that staff across different sectors, particularly health, social services, criminal justice and education, need to be involved in ending homelessness. They felt they should do this by joining up, making connections and referrals and being aware of the issues around homelessness.

At the strategic level, participants suggested there should be a cross-departmental government commitment to homelessness prevention. They cited examples like the UK Rough Sleepers Unit as good ways of getting high level coordination of preventative measures in place.

Prevention – Stage 2

During Stage 2 of the consultation, attendees at workshops considered a preventative solution in detail, to test whether it would be effective. They were sent briefings and led through a structured discussion on the question: "How to deliver an integrated service model of homelessness prevention – What is needed for different departments within local authorities, and across a range of public bodies, to design and deliver a shared agenda on homelessness prevention?"

Groups were positive about the solution, noting that while *The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017)* "definitely starts the prevention process"[10] there is more to be done to embed collaborative working, and significant cultural barriers to overcome.

Funding was a clear issue. Although groups had different suggestions for what funding models and administration would best support this solution: locally pooled budgets, a national pot, or personalised budgets. In all of these, it was important that there were clear accountability frameworks in place.

Groups were concerned about the political, and cross sector, commitment needed to make this solution work, with short-term funding cycles and policy changes damaging previous efforts.

To make the solution work, it would need the following.

- To get around issues with data sharing and ethics of data protection: "With GDPR [*General Data Protection Regulation*] coming in... takes a lot of judgement as to when it's safeguarding and when someone's data should be protected."[11]
- Clarity about accountability, roles and responsibilities of different partners involved in the model: "Who is involved? Level of co-operation, who pulls it together? Would it be underpinned by authority and clout?"[12].
- Integration without losing the value of specialist skills and knowledge of staff, there are risks to an approach that is too generalised: ("Housing officers don't have the right skills to deal with alcohol and addictions").[13]
- Coordination between different partners to reduce duplication of work and spend; co-location of services might help.
- Clarity about intentionality and who is included in the commitment to the prevention solution: "Removing priority need and intentionality could be a way of ensuring that resources were more fairly allocated and of avoiding resentment among those who do not receive the same level of support".[14] Relatedly, some suggested a right to housing (backed up by resource) that would underscore this solution.

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[10] Roundtable, Newcastle, 14/12/17
[11] Roundtable, Newcastle, 14/12/17
[12] Roundtable, Swansea, 04/01/18
[13] Scotland stage 2 meetings, various, December 2017
[14] Roundtable, Newcastle, 14/12/17

- Culture change not just in government and the public sector but from well-intentioned charities: "soup runs, do gooders... need to move towards prevention rather than crisis response".[15]
- Long-term funding (one group suggested nine years): "Level of funding needs to be realistic for delivering outcomes."[16]
- Pooled funding pots: "Supporting people, Community Care Grant budget, community resilience grants, separate Department of Work and Pensions and Department of Communities and Local Government (now Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) budgets. Local authorities could put them all into one grant pot with set priorities and a three-year rolling programme based on prevention priorities."[17] Although exact models differed, groups generally felt the funding should be ring fenced (but – conversely – allow for some flexibility).

Other issues and examples:

- Given the existing 56-day homelessness prevention law in Wales, "...There would be a constant need to check the 56-day requirement as part of the integrated approach." Wales lacks a robust duty on other public bodies to refer people at risk of homelessness to local authorities.
- Scotland meetings flagged that involvement from Integrated Joint Boards was crucial, to help join up preventative services. People and talked about the useful learning from the Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) model. This was felt to be effective at "bringing about a cultural change within statutory agencies".[18] There was also felt to be scope for extending statutory duties.
- Some attendees cautioned that this solution must "Recognise the particular issues in rural areas where there are less services/services are more dispersed."[19]

Prevention – Stage 3

For Stage 3, the long list of 53 possible preventative policy solutions was further synthesised to 18 solutions. These are listed below and described in more detail in the table in Annex A.

1. Ensure that the homelessness legislation is effectively implemented across England, Scotland and Wales.
2. Increase the availability of homelessness prevention mediation and advocacy services.
3. Councils should invest in tenancy support, advice, family help and joint work with agencies to prevent homelessness.
4. Amend the homelessness legislation across England, Wales and Scotland to help better prevent homelessness.
5. Develop a homelessness prevention agenda for employers.
6. Greater support to move homeless people into and sustain employment.

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[15] Roundtable, Newcastle, 14/12/17
[16] Roundtable, Newcastle, 14/12/17
[17] Roundtable, Newcastle, 14/12/17
[18] Scotland Stage 2 meetings, various, December 2017
[19] Scotland Stage 2 meetings, various, December 2017

7. Address the gap between rents and benefits.
8. Universal Credit functions as an effective tool to prevent homelessness.
9. Improving awareness of and access to emergency funds.
10. Increase access to legal aid for housing related issues.
11. Ensure that people can access advice services to prevent their homelessness.
12. Prevent prisoners from becoming homeless upon release from prison.
13. Stronger enforcement of regulation regarding the private rented sector to improve conditions and standards.
14. Improve access to social housing for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
15. Improve tenancy sustainment in the social rented sector.
16. Reduce the costs of renting privately.
17. Improve tenancy sustainment in the private rented sector.
18. Undertake strategic planning for local populations to ensure housing/ support that is affordable and suitable for older and disabled people at risk of homelessness.

We put this list on an online platform for further iteration and feedback. None provoked any strongly negative reactions. The solutions around employment attracted the most comments and people supported action here to help get around the "Catch 22 situation"[20] – unemployment and inability to find settled housing and the problems faced by people transitioning off benefits. This might have also been because it appeared first on the platform.

5. What were the top solutions people proposed to provide a *rapid response* to homelessness?

Rapid response – Stage 1

In Stage 1 of the consultation, we looked for commonalities between ideas raised both online and in workshops. There were narrowed down to 23 rapid response solutions for homelessness and are listed in full at Annex A.

People focused on access to the private rented sector as a quick way to rehouse homeless people, advocating for 'help to rent' schemes with attached support and deposit assistance. Noting the unsuitability – and unavailability – of much emergency accommodation, they called for an increase in suitable supply of good quality accommodation for high-risk, high-need individuals. Ideas for accommodation included small units with holistic, person-centred support attached to them. Frontline respondents in particular, including charities that already provide such services, thought there needed to be more provision of emergency accommodation. These included nightstops, day centres and hubs where appropriate – this solution was particularly favoured by participants working with young people.

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[20] Stage 3 online platform; small homelessness charity

Another frequently mentioned rapid response solution was to ensure that councils were consistently providing outreach and helping rough sleepers, learning from approaches like No Second Night Out (NSNO). Nearly all respondents to the consultation and workshop participants spoke about how the welfare system should change to provide a rapid response to homelessness. They proposed: cutting waiting times for Universal Credit: more effective use of discretionary payments, and pausing the rollout of Universal Credit reforms as an immediate response to glitches.

The healthcare system also emerged as an important piece of the rapid response picture. People suggested better evidence for the links between homelessness and health, establishing better joint protocols and ways of working between different agencies.

Rapid response – Stage 2

In Stage 2 of the consultation, attendees at workshops considered a rapid response solution in detail, to test whether it would be effective. They were sent briefings and led through a structured discussion on the question "Rapid response for homeless people with low level needs – How can we best create pathways into permanent housing for people who have become homeless and have low support needs?"

This solution had strong support from all groups and was generally considered effective when compared to existing services: "In a rapid rehousing system people move into long term housing much more quickly and there are also a lot less transition points where things can go wrong".[21]

If implemented effectively, rapid rehousing could lead to a reduction in homelessness approaches and street homelessness. It could benefit cohorts including prison leavers and young people. It could also have wider benefits like helping people settle and move into work more quickly ("avoid chicken and egg issues with jobs and benefit").[22] All groups noted that availability of accommodation and flexibility in assessments (not "one size fits all") would be essential to make it work. Questions were raised about what we mean by rapid and the risk that targets to meet set timelines could mean insufficient assessments or putting people in unsuitable housing. This solution was also felt to be cost effective: "Supported housing is expensive and a rapid rehousing system will ensure that only those who need to be there are in supported housing."[23]

To make the solution work, it would need the following.

- Problems with poor morale and high turnover among homelessness staff to be addressed. It was felt that in the current climate, pay is low and "support workers are undervalued"[24].
- Good quality housing supply, including shared housing and modular housing where appropriate – without this we will default to hostels and B&Bs. Suggested

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[21] Roundtable, Birmingham, 13/12/2017
[22] Roundtable, Birmingham, 13/12/2017
[23] Roundtable, Birmingham, 13/12/2017
[24] Roundtable, Birmingham, 13/12/2017

innovations included voluntary hosting or lodging models, use of empty properties and working with RSLs to fill voids.

- Effective use of the private rented sector.
- Meaningful outcomes: groups debated how to create flexible, personalised outcomes. These should go beyond only the housing measure – rather than targets which are too prescriptive and generate perverse incentives (eg ticking off easier cases and not addressing more complex needs). Related to this was the need for a meaningful definition of rapid.
- Tackling political and public apathy and scepticism about this approach: "people see homeless people as an undeserving population" by demonstrating the costs of the current system.
- Groups stressed the importance of better, more joined-up assessment and allocations processes: "Robust assessments do not exist yet (partners don't trust each other, have different agendas)"[25].

Rapid response – Stage 3

For Stage 3, the long list of 23 possible policy solutions was further synthesised to seven solutions. These are listed below and described in more detail in the table in annex A.

1. Developing and delivering comprehensive support packages for people when they first enter emergency accommodation.
2. Increase and improve the provision and quality of emergency and supported accommodation.
3. Increase help to rent schemes to enable people who are homeless to access private rented accommodation more easily.
4. Build more homes that would increase availability of housing for people who had recently experienced homelessness.
5. Use an assertive outreach model to get people the appropriate support and off the streets as quickly as possible
6. Create an independent body that undertakes homelessness assessments.
7. Improved health outcomes to be part of the homelessness rapid response pathway and ensure that health agencies play an effective role in preventing homelessness.

These solutions were supported by people who reviewed them on the online platform. Experts by Experience who discussed the solutions thought that assertive outreach was important, but only with proper support – it is not just about "getting people off the streets". They talked about the usefulness of hubs and empathetic approaches from outreach workers.[26] Professionals who commented on the online platform also endorsed this. ""Too many support services enable continuation of a destructive lifestyle for long periods. We should, where possible, be helping people off the streets, not enabling them to stay on the streets."[27]

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[25] Roundtable, Birmingham, 13/12/2017
[26] Experts by experience write-up: England, 3/2/2018
[27] Stage 3 online platform; homelessness charity, Wales

6. What were the top solutions people proposed to provide *sustained support* to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness?

Sustained support – Stage 1

In Stage 1 of the consultation, we looked for commonalities between ideas raised both online and in workshops and narrowed down to ten sustained support solutions for homelessness. These are listed in full at Annex A.

Many commenters felt that the private rented sector could be made better use of as a sustained solution to homelessness. Councils already rely on it to house homeless households, but it does not meet their needs due to high costs and poor quality. Accordingly, a big theme in suggested solutions was to improve quality in the sector. This was through incentives and stamping out rogue landlords. Better alignment of Local Housing Allowance to rents and support to help people access the sector – through 'help to rent' or deposit schemes – were highlighted too.

Perhaps the strongest call in Stage 1 was for multi-disciplinary, person-centred coordinated support for homeless people, building on the approach of 'Making Every Adult Matter' and similar models. This was seen as crucial in helping those people with complex needs.

Stage 1 participants called for a move towards strategic commissioning of asset-based and co-produced support to break the cycle of homelessness through person-centred support in trauma-informed, safe environments. A number of respondents and workshop participants proposed an increase in the use of Housing First, provided it was faithful to the Housing First principles and could overcome the delivery problems experienced by some of the pilots. Some respondents felt strongly that the only real way to achieve a sustained solution to homelessness was to eradicate poverty through solutions such as introducing a Universal Basic Income and ending zero-hours contracts.

Sustained support – Stage 2

In Stage 2 of the consultation, attendees at workshops considered a sustained support solution in detail, to test whether it would be effective. They were sent briefings and led through a structured discussion on the question "Sustained support for homeless people with more complex needs – How to commission a package of support services that people using Housing First need to sustain their housing: which services are needed, and how best to commission them in an effective and integrated way?"

Workshop attendees generally supported this solution. But they expressed some reservations about the robustness of evidence to support the benefits of Housing First. They highlighted the limitations of the model in general ("will only address a small

proportion of those who present as homeless"[28]) and the high upfront costs associated with it. They were fearful it could mean cuts elsewhere. It was argued that Housing First must be part of a suite of options. But long-term savings – if they can be evidenced – could be great, and preferable to the current high costs of existing services.

Unintended consequences (eg landlords taking advantage, incentives to become homeless, "queue jumping" accusations) were raised, but groups also thought it was time to "get on with it" and move on from pilots and evaluations.

To make the solution work, it would need the following.

- Effective partnership working where roles are clearly defined and risks are shared. Data sharing is also important.
- Clarity as to who Housing First is for and where it sits within the broader range of housing and homelessness solutions.
- Adequate supply of (appropriate) housing.
- To be designed in a way that is faithful to the Housing First principles and is appropriately tailored to individual circumstances.
- Culture change backed by strong local/ national leadership and political will: Housing First is not without risks.
- Funding that is fixed for a decent length of time (3-5 years) and ideally ring fenced and pooled, to encourage joint working.
- Buy-in and participation from service users, who should be involved in designing and delivering support.

Other issues and examples

There was some suggestion that this solution would be more effective in cities than in rural areas. , Although one group said limited resources would make it harder in London. Workshop groups were divided as to whether a devolved or a centralised model would work best for Housing First. In Scotland, Integrated Joint Boards could play a role in commissioning Housing First; the model is supported by Scottish Government.

Sustained Support – Stage 3

For Stage 3, the long list of ten possible policy solutions in this category were further synthesised to five solutions. These are listed below and described in more detail in the table in annex A.

1. Ensure that all homelessness services are trauma-informed, person centred and co-designed by people who have experience of homelessness.
2. Scale up the provision of a high-fidelity Housing First for people with higher support needs.
3. Ensure that there is more social housing available for people who have experienced homelessness.
4. Ensure that homeless people have greater access to healthcare.

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[28] Scotland stage 2 meetings, various, December 2017

5. Commission person-centred services with multi-disciplinary approach to help homeless people with complex needs.

Our expert user group in Scotland expressed some concerns about how fair the Housing First recommendation would be and emphasised that it must come with proper support. This is something the Experts by Experience in England backed up – though they were encouraged by international examples.

7. What *overarching and other* solutions were proposed?

In Stage 1 of the consultation, a number of solutions cut across our prevention, rapid response and sustained support categories. Six solutions are listed at Annex A. These focused on the public narratives around homelessness and how negative stereotypes and stigma could be ended. The voices of homeless people could be put at the centre of debates for example. The media could be worked with to counter 'demonization' stories and there could be coordinated communications plans between different campaigners. Participants also spoke about the need for a large increase in affordable housing which would help solutions across all three categories.

We also considered e responses that focused on groups with distinct needs. They often score 'low' on our ranking because they were only specifically considered at one event, but are clearly important in any homelessness response.

- Women: events highlighted the lack of emergency accommodation and support that is suitable for women fleeing domestic abuse.
- LGBT people: homeless LGBT people tend to slip under the radar and need specific accommodation in which they can feel safe.
- BME people: discrimination exacerbates the problems facing homeless people for those who are from BME backgrounds.
- Older people: there was felt to be a lack of strategic planning to provide accommodation for older and disabled people.
- Young people, especially care-leavers: support, affordability and access were key issues for young people, and especially difficulties caused by benefits restrictions.
- Migrants: events highlighted difficulties for those without recourse to public funds and argued that government needed to provide more support to this group to reduce homelessness.
- Families: respondents spoke about the long-term effects of child poverty and disruptions to education caused by homelessness.
- People with mental health problems, addictions, histories of offending and childhood trauma were also discussed in the consultation. At events: solutions tended to fall into the joint approaches, Housing First, multiple complex needs, bucket.

We did not do specific Stage 2 roundtables for these issues, but we synthesised them as follows for the Stage 3 online platform.

1. Provide more specialist services for women facing homelessness.
2. Provide specialist LGBT-specific services.
3. Ensure there are migrant specific rough sleeping policies in place.

4. Challenge public attitudes and stigma surrounding homelessness.
5. Capture more/ better data on the scale of homelessness and effectiveness of the interventions needed to end it.
6. Introduce a cross-department government strategy to end homelessness.

These solutions were generally supported by those who commented on the online platform. Professionals were particularly supportive of the proposals on data and strategy ("I think there is a case for a new Rough Sleepers Unit, actually, but all the experience – having spent most of my career in government – is that these units work well for a couple of years while they are fresh and have senior level support. The trick is how to mainstream that."[29]). Our experts by experience groups were more cynical these solutions ("people are individuals not statistics"[30]) and about government in general, urging practical quick-win solutions.

8. The final vote

The final stage in the Have Your Say consultation was asking participants to rank and prioritise a few solutions we felt had come out consistently and strongly throughout the process. For England and Wales these follow below.

1.	[Develop] A joined-up government strategy to end homelessness at national and local levels, based on robust data.
2.	Increase the number of genuinely affordable homes available, including through social housing and the private rented sector.
3.	Ensure the benefits system, Universal Credit, works effectively to prevent homelessness.
4.	Ensure the correct laws are in place to truly prevent and quickly end homelessness.
5.	Get people off the streets quickly with a more effective and supportive outreach system.
6.	Increase standards and end poor and illegal practice in the private rented sector.
7.	Reduce the gap between rents levels and benefits, making best use of discretionary funds.
8.	Prevent and tackle homelessness for migrants, particularly those who have no access to state support.
9.	Scale up the option for Housing First (permanent unconditional accommodation where people can access the different types of support they need).
10.	Transform attitudes to homelessness to public build support for ending it.
11.	Ensure employment ends homelessness through better employment support and work opportunities.

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[29] Stage 3 online platform; London shelter provider
[30] User group, Scotland, 21/2/18

The most popular solution was 'A joined-up government strategy to end homelessness', gaining 14 out of 41 possible votes for the number one priority. Reflecting priorities elsewhere in the consultation, an increase in the number of affordable homes also scored highly. This was followed by ensuring the benefits system works to prevent homelessness. The chart below (Figure 5) shows which solutions participants ranked as their top three priorities.

**Figure 5: 1st, 2nd and 3rd highest ranked policy solutions, England & Wales**
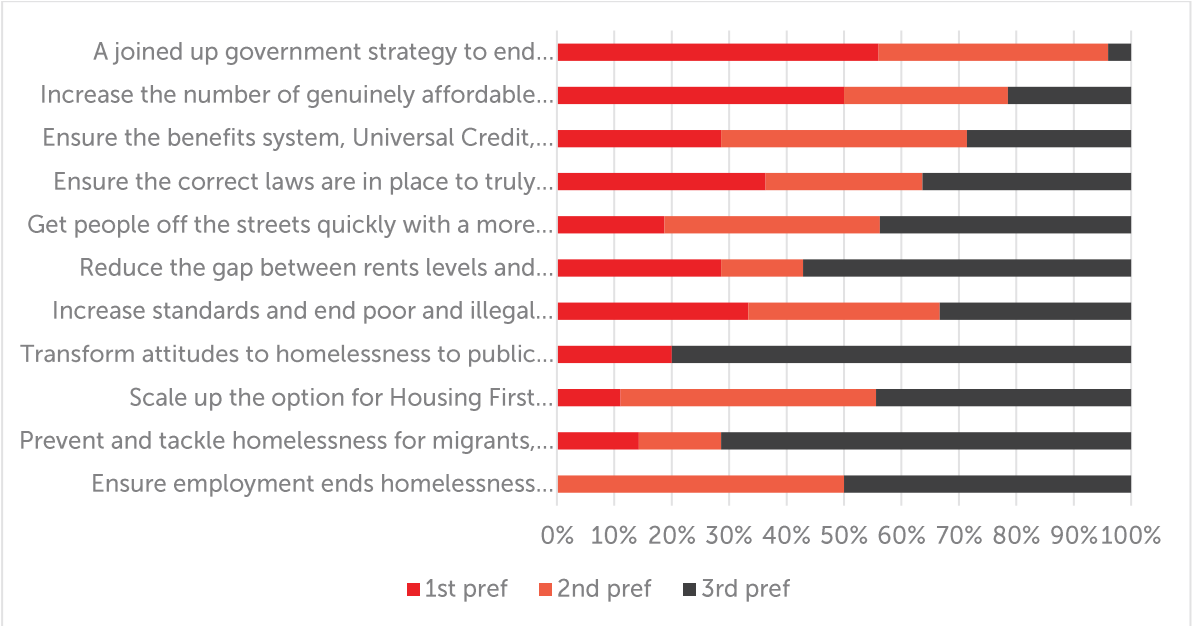
N=41

The following shorter, slightly different list of solutions was used for Scottish participants.

1.	A strategic approach to homelessness based on robust evidence and partnership working at both local and national level.
2.	Local authorities are required to prevent homelessness wherever possible.
3.	Rough sleepers and people with complex needs have access to permanent accommodation and the support needed to sustain it (Housing First).
4.	A benefit system that protects people from homelessness and covers housing costs in a timely manner.
5.	Homeless people have rapid access to affordable and secure housing in the social and private rented sectors.
6.	Public agencies, including health and social care providers, have a responsibility to give assistance to people.
7.	Improve public understanding of the causes of homelessness.

The number of respondents was very low (9) and they were fairly evenly split. The chart below (Figure 6) shows their results.

Figure 6: 1st, 2nd and 3rd highest ranked policy solutions, Scotland
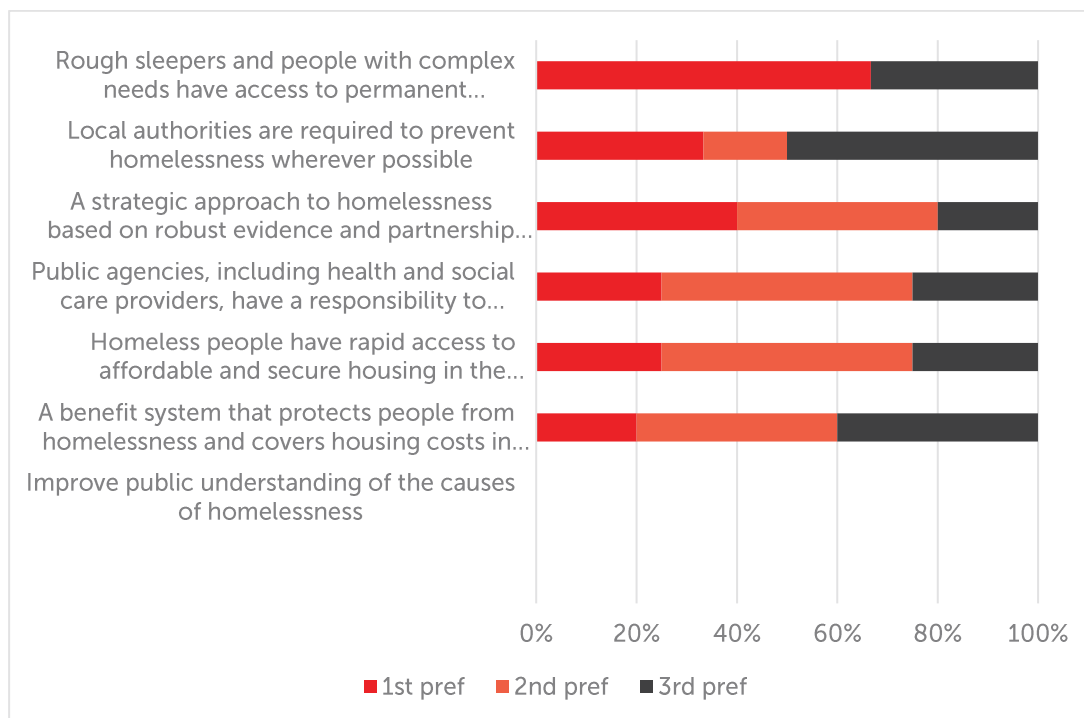
N=9

9. Conclusions

During the Have Your Say exercise, we heard views from hundreds of people and organisations across England, Scotland and Wales with knowledge of homelessness and related issues. We are grateful to all those who gave their time. Many organisations also provided detailed case studies and reports which we have used to feed into *Everybody In: How to end homelessness in Great Britain*.

These contributions have provided us with challenge, insights and diverse perspectives which have been a huge help in developing the plan to end homelessness, along with our other work streams. Throughout all events and responses – whether from private landlords, people at the sharp end of homelessness or local authority commissioners – there was a clear consensus. They agreed that Britain needs a serious strategic focus on homelessness, and soon. This must be a multi-faceted approach that involves responses in housing, welfare, homelessness law and action to tackle rough sleeping.

We would like to thank everyone who participated in our Have Your Say policy consultation between September 2017- March 2018, especially those who partnered with us to deliver specific workshops in both stages 1 and 2, Groundswell and Uscreates, and particularly to everyone who contributed to the lived experience of homelessness workshops.

Annex A: Policy solutions identified and narrowed down during the consultation exercise

Stage 1: Identify problems and policy solutions (June to Oct 2017) (UK-wide)	Stage 2: What needs to change to deliver the solutions (November–December 2017) (UK-wide)	Stage 3: Consensus and prioritisation (February to March 2018) (UK-wide)
PREVENTION **Homelessness law and allocations** 1. **Ensure councils can meet their legal duties to rehouse people:** increase the supply of housing across a range of different tenures that people can afford. [High] 2. **Provide support to people not owed homelessness duty:** councils should go beyond legal duty – or scrap intentionality. [Low] 3. **Ensure homelessness legislation is consistently applied:** increase awareness and understanding of homelessness law and rights and ensure local authorities apply definitions in a fair and consistent way. [High] 4. **Define 'prevention':** agree a consistent definition of homelessness prevention services can work to deliver. [Low] 5. **Reform allocations policies to help homeless people access social housing:** address blanket exclusions and draft policies so that councils can account for individual circumstances. [High] 6. **Focus on preventative, not crisis, interventions:**	PREVENTION Roundtable discussions focused in on one main question. How to deliver an integrated service model of homelessness prevention - What is needed for different departments within local authorities, and across a range of public bodies, to design and deliver a shared agenda on homelessness prevention?	PREVENTION **Homelessness law and allocations** 1. **Ensure that the homelessness legislation is effectively implemented across England, Scotland and Wales.** **Key elements of this solution.** • Increase awareness of homelessness legislation among people experiencing, or at risk of homelessness through publicity campaigns and the use of challenge cards. • Introduce a legal right to have an advocate present when someone makes a homelessness application. • Improve access to legal aid. • Councils should aim to provide open access to a 24-hour one- stop shop to provide people with swift access to a range of prevention services. • Ensure that people with lived experience have a greater say over the design of the process. This solution could be implemented across the UK, but the issue is a devolved matter so would need specific legislation/ funding mechanism in England, Scotland and Wales. 2. **Increase the availability of homelessness prevention mediation and advocacy services.** **Key elements of this solution** • Government should investigate which forms of mediation are most

councils should invest in tenancy support, advice, family help and joint work with agencies to prevent homelessness. [High]

Employment

7. **Reduce employer prejudice about homelessness:** reduce barriers to employment through kitemarks, incentives to take on homeless people, education and training. [High]

8. **Help people transition to and sustain employment:** provide financial support as people transition to employment (eg flexible benefits run-on or rethinking taper) and encourage employers to support employees, through practical help or duty to refer. [Med]

9. **Provide better pre-employment support and careers support for young people:** work experience, pathways, mentoring and apprenticeships. [Med]

10. **Support homeless people with practical job-search issues:** improve coordination between housing and employment services, IT/ digital help, provide training and holistic advice. [Med]

Welfare

11. **Introduce a studio rate for Local Housing Allowance:** stop landlords overcharging for studios. [Low]

12. **Review and reform Local Housing Allowance rates and the Shared Accommodation Rate (SAR):** link benefit rates to actual market

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effective in resolving homelessness for various groups young people and increase the funding available for this provision
• Alongside mediation services, local authorities should invest in-tenancy support for landlords and tenants to help people remain in their homes.
• Co-located independent advocacy services

This solution could be implemented across Great Britain, but the issue is a devolved matter so would need specific legislation/ funding mechanism in England, Scotland and Wales.

3. **Councils should invest in tenancy support, advice, family help and joint work with agencies to prevent homelessness.**

Key elements of this solution
• Local authorities should take a more strategic approach to tackling homelessness through co-commissioning services and providing targeted, early advice through creative use of the Homelessness Prevention Grant.
• This could include mentoring, advice on social media, GP-prescribed advice, effective triage services, mediation and tenancy support.
• More intensive support should be provided to families in B&Bs.
• There should be more joined-up work between council teams (eg environmental health and children's services) in touch with people at risk of homelessness and homelessness teams.

4. **Amend the homelessness legislation across England, Wales and Scotland to help better prevent homelessness.**

Key elements of this solution.
• In England, requiring landlords and employers to be listed in the Duty to Refer regulations, so that they can make a referral to Housing Options

rates and lift caps for young people. [High]
13. **Reform eligible rents:** help people facing rent shortfalls. [Low]
14. **Address problems caused by benefit sanctions:** increase flexibility to offer exemptions, reduce inappropriate sanctioning and continue paying people who appeal sanctions. [Med]
15. **Provide better support for benefit claimants:** build advice and better joint work between job centres and housing providers. [High]
16. **Demonstrate the costs/benefits of welfare reform:** help government understand impacts of welfare reform to other services. [Med]

Housing
17. **Educate people about housing options:** provide training so that people have realistic expectations about their housing. [Low]
18. **Improve tenancy sustainment in the private rented sector:** introduce longer term tenancies and end 'no-fault evictions'. Provide tenancy sustainment support and advice (for both landlords and tenants) for those most at risk of tenancy breakdown, and improve coordination between local authorities and landlords. [High]
19. **Improve tenancy sustainment in the social rented sector:** identify tenants at risk of arrears early on and support them, build closer joint working between housing

if someone is at risk of homelessness.
• Remove intentionality clauses in legislation, to ensure that anyone who is homeless can receive support.
• In England and Wales, place a new duty on local authorities to ensure that anyone sleeping rough, or at risk of sleeping rough is provided with emergency accommodation.
•In England and Wales, abolish priority need and make sure people have a right to housing.

These solutions could be implemented across Great Britain, but the issue is a devolved matter so would need specific legislation/ funding mechanism in England, Scotland and Wales.

Employment
5. **Develop a homelessness prevention agenda for employers.**

Key elements of the solution
• Introduce a national kite-mark on employers' good practice for preventing homelessness of employees to drive a positive culture change.
• Target the government manifesto commitment on incentives for business to employ disadvantaged groups at homeless people.
• Training to improve employers' understanding of homelessness related issues, such as mental health and housing problems.

These solutions could be implemented across Great Britain, but the issue is a devolved matter so would need specific legislation/ funding mechanism in England, Scotland and Wales.

6. **Greater support to move homeless people into and sustain employment.**

Key elements of the solution
• Greater coordination between housing and employment support.
• Placing a duty on employers to help pay an employee's rent for a

associations and councils. [Med]

Justice

20. **Improve data sharing for services working with offenders:** introduce a centralised IT system. [Low]
21. **Reduce use of short-term sentencing:** focus on community support and diversion schemes. [Med]
22. **Provide better support to people in custody:** provide sustained and integrated support throughout sentences to help prisoners maintain tenancies. [High]
23. **Provide pathways and resettlement support for prison leavers:** ensure there is consistent, high quality, whole-system 'through the gates' support to avoid people leaving prison with no home to go to. [High]

Health

24. **Address mental health issues early:** ensure there is provision of services and joint work between housing providers and healthcare professionals. [Med]
25. **Use roll-out of *The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017)*** to co-design better partnerships between health & housing [low]
26. **Prevent addictions:** needle exchanges, community support, education and better pathways for people with addictions. [Low]

Migration

27. **Increase access to quality immigration advice:** reinstate legal aid for these cases, use pro-bono help and upskill the

limited period after they are made redundant.
• Providing a more personalised form of employment support via Jobcentre Plus.
• Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) should ensure that homeless people are not inappropriately sanctioned. Work coaches should be made aware of the 'easement' and apply it consistently. DWP should continue paying Housing Benefit/ housing element of Universal Credit while people are appealing sanctions to help avoid homelessness.

This solution could be implemented across the UK, but the issue is a devolved matter so would need specific legislation/ funding mechanism in England, Scotland and Wales.

Welfare

7. **Address the gap between rents and benefits**

Key elements of the solution
• Introduce a studio rate for Local Housing Allowance.
• Review current levels of Local Housing Allowance and lift the freeze.
• Either scrap the SAR or increase the number of people who are exempt.
• Abolish cuts to Universal Credit for 18-21s.

This solution could be implemented across England, Scotland and Wales.

8. **Universal Credit functions as an effective tool to prevent homelessness.**

Key elements of this solution
• Mass media campaign to ensure landlords, employers and tenants know and are prepared for Universal Credit rollout.
• Pause the roll out of Universal Credit until it works as intended
• Invest in better advice and support for claimants.

homelessness sector in migration advice. [Med] 28. **Provide support to people without recourse to public funds:** government should provide additional support. [Low] 29. **Define 'exceptional circumstances':** provide a consistent definition, with reference to homelessness and destitution. [Low] 30. **Use voluntary schemes (nightstops, emergency hosting) as interim response to people without recourse:** Use voluntary sector support to help migrants while their status/ eligibility is resolved. [Med] **Finance and debt** 31. **Ensure people get help with financial management:** provide advice on prescription and help people deal with money problems through multi-agency approach. [Low] **Women** 32. **Improve training for solicitors to challenge welfare decisions:** as women are hit harder by welfare reforms. [Low] 33. **Improve access to specialist women's services:** co-locate women's services to improve coordination for women with complex needs. [Low] 34. **Integrate gendered housing solutions with local support:** e. have first contact teams and homelessness teams working together. [Low] 35. **Map data to identify the scale of homelessness among women.** [Low] **Discrimination**		• Remove disincentives to save in Universal Credit (eg capital limits, self-employment rules). • Greater tenant choice regarding direct payments. • Greater access to jam jar accounts. • Jobcentre Plus should proactively offer Alternative Payment Arrangements for people who have experienced homelessness. • Abolish the seven waiting days. • Offer interim seven-day grants, rather than loans to people who have experienced homelessness, if the claimant is able to secure a job. • Improve IT systems to reduce errors in processing claims. Areas of these solutions are devolved to Wales and Scotland. 9. **Improving awareness of and access to emergency funds.** **Key elements of this solution** • Emergency funds should be part of a well-integrated and responsive system involving government, local authorities and the third sector. • Greater regulation of rent-to-own modes that offer cheap furniture and white goods. Areas of these solutions are devolved to Wales and Scotland. **Justice** 10. **Increase access to legal aid for housing related issues.** **Key elements of the solution** • Reform long-term funding of the advice sector by enshrining a 'right to justice' principle to underpin the funding of legal advice. • Use the LASPO review to address gaps in benefits advice. • Reinstate legal aid for Housing Benefit and housing disrepair cases. 11. **Ensure that people can access advice services to prevent their homelessness.** **Key elements of this solution**

36. **Build homes that are affordable for older people:** define affordability based on what older people can actually afford. [Low]
37. **Provide LGBT-specific services:** make services safe and accessible to marginalised LGBT people. [Low]
38. **Build awareness of issues facing BME people who are homeless:** recognise discrimination and ensure BME people can access services and support sympathetic to their specific needs. [Low]

Strategy
39. **Introduce a cross-departmental government strategy:** use a dedicated, well-resourced team with strong leadership to set and oversee homelessness prevention programmes. [High]
40. **Join housing and health strategically:** make homelessness a responsibility of Local Heath Boards. [Wales] [Low]
41. **Develop a specific youth homelessness strategy:** covering welfare, housing, homelessness for young people. [Scotland] [Low]
42. **Build consensus around causes and solutions to homelessness:** build agreement on evidence and what works – then deliver. [Med]
43. **Give Welsh councils more say in welfare policy:** address disconnect between UK and WG policy [Wales] [Low]

Social services

• Better joined-up working between job centres and housing providers.
• Co-locating advice services with Housing Options teams.
• Provide 'advice on prescription' from GPs and help people deal with financial problems through a multi-agency approach.
• Improve training for solicitors to challenge welfare decisions.

This solution could be implemented across England, Wales and Scotland, but would need nation specific recommendations because this area of policy is devolved.

12. **Prevent prisoners from becoming homeless upon release. from prison**

Key elements of this solution
• Provide sustained and integrated support throughout sentences to help prisoners maintain tenancies.
• Educational outreach teams should help prepare prisoners for life upon release.
• Probation and rehabilitation providers should have homelessness prevention as an outcome.
• Ensure there is a consistent, high quality, holistic and joined-up approach to 'through the gate' support to avoid people leaving prison with no home to go to.

This solution could be implemented across England, Wales and Scotland.

Housing
13. **Stronger enforcement of regulation regarding the private rented sector to improve conditions and standards.**

Key elements of this solution
• Local authorities should better use existing powers (eg licensing) and incentives to improve suitability of accommodation and stamp out rogue landlords.
• Government should introduce new regulations to improve suitability of accommodation or use

44. **Introduce better referral mechanisms between housing and social services teams:** develop protocols to prevent children slipping through the net. [Low]
45. **Use networks and community support to reduce isolation/ loneliness:** including through sharing information between health, social care, housing. [Low]
46. **Support children who have experienced adverse child events:** ensure good referrals between CAHMS and other agencies [Low]
47. **Increase social services budgets:** make a spend to save argument. [Low]

Education and life skills
48. **Help young homeless people sustain education/ work:** continue support through housing or benefits while young person is in education, provide courses to help them find work. [Low]
49. **Educate people about homelessness from an early age:** build life skills, benefits, housing and related issues into the curriculum. [High]

Legal advice
50. **Encourage effective dialogue between councils and independent advisors:** co-locate advice and housing options teams. [Low]
51. **Use upcoming LAPSO review to address gaps in benefits advice.** [Low]
52. **Reform long-term funding of the advice sector:** enshrine a 'right to justice' principle. [Low]

incentive-based policies to encourage responsible landlords.
• Establish landlord liaison services to help resolve conflicts and sustain tenancies.

14. Improve access to social housing for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Key elements of the solution
• Reform allocations policies to help homeless people access social housing. Address blanket policies which exclude people because they have a history of rent arrears or anti-social behaviour.
• Monitor and review the number of lettings to single homeless people
• Provide people moving on from hostels and supported accommodation with priority to move into social housing.

15. Improve tenancy sustainment in the social rented sector.

Key elements of the solution
• Social housing providers should ensure that they have early identification procedures to help work with tenants at risk. of arrears, and more joined-up working protocols with local authorities to provide robust support
• Social housing providers to deliver support for tenants who might be a risk of bullying.
• Pre-tenancies training and independent advice for tenants.

This solution could be applied in England, Scotland and Wales, but would need specific policy mechanisms for each nation

16. Reduce the costs of renting privately

Key elements of the solution
• Cap rents.
• Ban unfair letting agent fees.

These solutions only apply to England and Wales. Housing is devolved however, so different

53. **Reinstate legal aid:** reinstate legal aid for civil law casework especially on housing and benefits. [High].		policy mechanism would be needed in each nation to affect change. **17. Improve tenancy sustainment in the private rented sector** **Key elements of the solution** • Introduce long-term tenancies, for example minimum two-year contracts. • End 'no-fault evictions' • Provide tenancy sustainment support and advice (for both landlords and tenants) for those most at risk of tenancy breakdown. • Use advanced notice protocols when people are facing eviction (eg letting agents send the council S21 notices at the same time as they send them to tenants). These solutions only apply in England and Wales. Housing is a devolved issue however, so different policy mechanisms would be needed to achieve change. **18. Undertake strategic planning for local populations to ensure housing/ support that is affordable and suitable for older and disabled people at risk of homelessness.** **Key elements to the solution** • Local authorities need to undertake strategic planning for services for local populations. The planning should include: older and disabled people, those with mental health conditions and vulnerable adults. It should be based on assessment of needs, affordability, availability and impacts on health, wellbeing etc. • Provision of housing should be matched with related support services and coordinated joint working (information sharing protocols, named lead officers and clear referral pathways). • Assessments should include provision of adaptations to enable disabled people to remain in their existing homes where possible.

RAPID RESPONSE **Housing** 1. **Introduce private rented sector access or 'help to rent' schemes:** help homeless people access the private rented sector through bond schemes, LA guarantors, social lettings agency approaches and incentives for landlords to take on homeless tenants. [High] **Emergency accommodation and rough sleeping** 2. **Increase the quality and supply of supported accommodation:** reduce use of unsuitable hostels and B&Bs for people with complex needs by providing more units with holistic support attached. [High] 3. **Use innovative methods to rapidly supply new temporary homes for young people:** pre-fabricated and quick construction. [Med] 4. **Increase the range and availability of emergency accommodation:** provide more places people can get immediate help including Nightstops, host-schemes, specialist emergency accommodation for groups eg women, LGBT. [High] 5. **Maintain Supporting People programme:** move to three-year funding cycles to help long-term planning [Wales] [Low] 6. **Rethink access to social housing for rough sleepers/ people in emergency accommodation:** extend	**RAPID RESPONSE** Roundtable discussions focused in on one main question: Rapid response for homeless people with low level needs – how can we best create pathways into permanent housing for people who have become homeless and have low support needs?	**RAPID RESPONSE** **Housing** 8. **Developing and delivering comprehensive support packages for people when they first enter emergency accommodation.** **Key elements of this solution** • Ensure that there is a dedicated support worker, based in temporary accommodation, available to offer full-time help to clients with the most high-risk, long-term needs and most likely to drop out of accommodation. This solution could be applied across England, Scotland and Wales 9. **Increase and improve the provision and quality of emergency and supported accommodation.** **Key elements of this solution** • Provide more places people can get immediate help including Nightstops, host-schemes, specialist emergency accommodation for certain groups eg women, LGBT, families, prisoners. • Convert empty homes into emergency accommodation. • Provide more specialist emergency accommodation for people fleeing domestic violence or abuse. • Reduce use of unsuitable hostels and B&Bs for people with complex needs and provide more units with holistic support attached. • Set up a regulatory body to inspect the use of unsuitable temporary accommodation. • Scale up live-in rehab for young people with comprehensive aftercare and housing. This solution could be applied across England, Scotland and Wales, with specific policy mechanisms for each nation. 10. **Scale up help to rent schemes to enable people who are homeless to access private rented**

statutory rights/ allocations policies to open up social housing for rough sleepers [Med]

7. **Improve data collection:** develop multi-agency software that can be rolled out across Great Britain so we have a more consistent and comprehensive picture of rough sleeping and gaps in services. [Med]

8. **Develop and deliver comprehensive support packages for people when they first enter emergency accommodation:** learn from evidence of what works to get out of the 'revolving door' of emergency accommodation and rough sleeping. [Med]

9. **Ensure people who are sleeping rough get the help available to them:** use sustained outreach, awareness campaigns, hubs or drop-in centres and a co-ordinated approach (learning from NSNO) to help rough sleepers get targeted support they need. [High]

Welfare

10. **Improve the IT and communications systems on Universal Credit:** reduce errors and inconsistency through IT upgrades. [Med]

11. **Allow/ offer alternative payment arrangements:** let claimants choose if they would rather benefits go directly to their landlord. [Med]

12. **Review the way Universal Credit works for people who are homeless/ at risk:** halt roll-out until errors are addressed and build in flexibility for people who are homeless. [High]

accommodation more easily.

Key elements of this solution
• Financial assistance and guarantees (bonds) to help people secure accommodation.
• Tenancy sustainment support for landlords and tenants.
• Improved coordination between private landlords and councils.
• Developing a landlord and tenant education programme.

This solution could be applied in England, Scotland and Wales, but would need specific policy mechanisms for each nation.

11. **Build more homes to increase availability of housing for people who had recently experienced homelessness.**

Key elements to this solution
• Use modern methods of construction to speed up the rate of housebuilding.
• Increase the number of one-bed, studio and shared social housing units that are built.
• Build more co-housing schemes for older people.

These solutions could be applied across England, Wales and Scotland.

12. **Use an assertive outreach model to get people the appropriate support and off the streets as quickly as possible.**

Key elements of this solution
• Ensure rough sleepers are aware of what advice and support is available to them through sustained outreach and greater public awareness.
• Develop 'hubs' or drop-in centres where rough sleepers can get help with health, welfare, drug and alcohol support, housing etc in one place.
• Apply learning from No First Night Out and No Second Night Out and

13. **Invest in advice and support for Universal Credit claimants.** [Med]
14. **Remove disincentives to save in Universal Credit.** [Low]
15. **Roll out a mass media campaign:** ensure landlords and tenants know about Universal Credit rollout and get help. [Low]
16. **Address the 7-day gap at the beginning of a Universal Credit claim:** provide interim payments so that people don't start tenancies in arrears. [High]
17. **Improve awareness and responsiveness of emergency funds:** government, councils and charities should work together to help people with crisis loans and cheap goods. [Med]
18. **Clarify how DHP funding should be used** [Low] [Scotland]

Debt
19. **Reduce debt through forbearance policies, insurance and advice:** use levies to fund support [Low]

Migration
20. **Challenge administrative removal of European Economic Area (EEA) rough sleepers:** build on judicial review and legal challenges. [Low]

Older people
21. **Help older people move out of homelessness quickly:** provide innovative models of housing (factory-built, co-housing) and support. [Low]

Health

apply these models for each council in England.
• Ensure services cater for diverse range of people, with different needs.
• Support workers and peer mentors should help build up relationships with rough sleepers.
• Establish targets to move people off the streets.

Overarching
13. **Create an independent body that undertakes homelessness assessments.**

Key elements of this solution
• The body would be centrally funded and independent of the local authority. The local authority would still provide the services that the person would need to access to resolve or prevent their homelessness. The decision of whether they could access the services would be made by the national homelessness agency.
• Funding would be provided by central government. This means that the money would follow an individual; conditions such as local connection would not exist.
• there would be an agreed framework that the body would abide by.

Health
14. **Improved health outcomes to be part of the homelessness rapid response pathway and ensure that health agencies play an effective role in preventing homelessness.**

Key elements of this solution
• Facilitate more collaborative working and establishing partnerships to implement *The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017)* most effectively
•Better partnership work between health and housing to deliver a joined up health and homeless pathway, including shared protocol on referrals to Housing Options and

22. **Improve joint working between health and housing:** build more effective connections between healthcare and homelessness services, including referrals, hospital discharge services and shared strategies and protocols. [High] 23. **Improve access to healthcare for homeless people:** ensure provision of and fair access to healthcare services, including drop-ins, that communicate well with homelessness services. [Med]		hospital discharge services. • Early identification and join-up with police, mental health and drug/alcohol specialists as part of in-reach and outreach teams. • Joint health and wellbeing strategies should include clearer priorities about homelessness prevention. • A cross-departmental national homelessness strategy from the NHS and other healthcare services including public health teams. The solutions could be applied across England, Wales and Scotland, but health policy is devolved so would need specific policy mechanisms for each nation.
SUSTAINED SUPPORT **Housing** 1. **Improve the quality of the private rented sector:** use powers and incentives to improve suitability of accommodation and stamp out rogue landlords. [High] 2. **Incentivise landlords to let to homeless people / benefit claimants:** through leasing schemes, funding and education. [Med] 3. **Improve access to/ affordability of the private rented sector:** help to rent or deposit schemes and better alignment of benefits and rents. [High] **Coordination** 4. **Commission person-centred services with multi-disciplinary approach:** use MEAM or similar models to help people with complex needs get help with range of problems [High] 5. **Increase supply of supported housing:** ensure provision of	SUSTAINED SUPPORT Roundtable discussions focused in on the following main question. Sustained support for homeless people with more complex needs - how to commission a package of support services that people using Housing First need to sustain their housing: which services are needed, and how best to commission them in an effective and integrated way?	SUSTAINED SUPPORT 1. **Ensure that all homelessness services are trauma-informed, person centred and co-designed by people who have experience of homelessness.** **Key elements of this solution** • Adopt a person-centred, asset-based approach that puts emphasis on coaching, building networks and developing tailored, individual support. • Peer involvement in service design and delivery. • Ensure that there is joint work between housing providers and healthcare professionals to help identify people who might need support with mental health problems at an early stage. • Deliver programmes to help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to develop their self-respect, wellbeing and resilience. This solution could be implemented across England, Wales and Scotland. 2. **Scale up the provision of a high-fidelity Housing First for people with higher support needs.** **Key elements of this policy**

accommodation with attached support for those that need it long term. [Med] 6. **Increase use of Housing First**: invest in Housing First faithful to the principles of the model and overcomes some of the delivery problems experienced to date. [High] 7. **Move to asset-based and co-produced support**: break the cycle of homelessness through person centred support in trauma-informed, safe environments. [High] **Poverty** 8. **Introduce Universal Basic Income**: trial a basic floor with extra entitlements for people most in need. [Low] 9. **Minimise poverty**: take action to address zero-hours contracts, payday lending, welfare cuts. [Med] **Minority groups** 10. **Develop Housing First model for older people with complex needs. [Low]**		• A key worker and peer mentor to provide an intensive case management form of support. • This would sit alongside an offer of permanent accommodation in the social or private rented sector. • Commission person-centred services using a multi-disciplinary approach. This should be co-produced with people who have experienced homelessness. • Specific models of Housing First could be design for particular groups, including women, young people and older people. This solution could be implemented across the UK, but the issue is a devolved matter so would need a specific legislation/ funding mechanism in England, Scotland and Wales. 3. **Ensure that there is more social housing available for people who have experienced homelessness** **Key elements of this solution** • Nationalise housing associations • Introduce penalties for councils that leave homes empty • Introduce a rule so that housing associations let a proportion of their properties to people who have been homeless • Review 'lifetime tenancies' to ensure that stock is targeted at those who need it most These solutions could be applied across England, Scotland and Wales, but policy around housing associations is devolved so would need individual policy mechanisms in each nation **Health** 4. **Ensure that homeless people have greater access to healthcare.** **Key elements of this solution** • Training for healthcare professionals in homelessness and housing issues. • More health drop-in clinics in addiction services and hostels. • Prompt transfer of medical

<table>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>information between GPs to help those who move around a lot
• Cultural shift to more person-centred healthcare and educate people on entitlements and services.
• Ensure that a health budget is included in the commissioning of Housing First
The solutions could be applied across England, Wales and Scotland, but health policy is devolved so would need specific policy mechanisms for each nation.

Overarching
    5. **Commission person-centred services with multi-disciplinary approach to help homeless people with complex needs.**

Key elements of this solution
• Strategic commissioning of person-centred services that can help address a range of problems, including greater stability of funding (eg longer contracts and commissioning cycles to ensure consistency of support and planning).
• Greater use of system 'navigators' such as those used in the MEAM project.
• Better information sharing across a range of services.
This solution could be applied across England, Wales and Scotland.</td></tr>
<tr><td>**OVERARCHING/ OTHER**

Attitudes
    1. **Reshape narratives about homelessness:** shape public discourse to counter negative stereotypes and demonization of people who experience homelessness including migrants and benefit claimants. [High]
    2. **Reshape narrative about domestic abuse:** put survivors voices up front [Low]</td><td>n/a</td><td>**OVERARCHING/ OTHER**

    1. **Provide more specialist services for women facing homelessness.**

Key elements of this solution
• Co-locate women's services to improve coordination for women with complex needs.
• Integrate gendered housing solutions with local support eg ensure first contact teams and homelessness teams work more closely together.
• Early identification of victims of domestic violence to start the process of moving them on from</td></tr>
</table>

Housing

3. **Take action to put affordable housing within reach of homeless people:** incentivise associations to let to homeless people, review lifetime tenancies, refocus Housing Associations' social purpose [Med]
4. **Increase the supply of one-beds, studios and shared social housing:** help homeless people access housing by building more that is suitable for their needs/ affordability range. [Med]
5. **Increase the supply of affordable housing:** increase the housing stock, particularly of quality, secure and genuinely affordable homes in the right places. Advocate (including for supply in rural areas), build using new methods and bring empty homes into use. [High]
6. **Undertake strategic planning for local populations:** ensure housing/ support that is affordable and suitable for older and disabled people is planned for. [Med]

Additionally, Stage 1 underlined that there are distinct groups for whom generic policy solutions aren't always suitable. We did not want to lose sight of the specific needs of the following groups.

- Women: events highlighted the lack of emergency accommodation and support that is suitable for women fleeing domestic abuse.
- LGBT people: homeless LGBT people tend to slip under the radar and need

the home, when needed, at an earlier point. Multi-agency MARAC meetings should be linked with services eg floating support.
This solution could be implemented across England, Scotland and Wales

2. **Provide specialist LGBT-specific services**

Key elements of this solution
• Prevent LGBT homelessness through LGBT-specific services.
• More training for homelessness staff around the specific issues faced by people who are LGBT when they become homeless.
• Drive up standards through charity partnerships.
• Monitor services and collect better data to understand problems.

This solution could be implemented across England, Scotland and Wales.

3. **Ensuring there are migrant specific rough sleeping policies in place.**

Key elements of this solution
• Government should provide additional support with housing for people who have no recourse to public funds.
• Definition of what 'exceptional circumstances' are for people with leave to remain with no access to public funds, to allow them to access support. The definition should be consistent and include reference to homelessness, destitution and child poverty.
• Greater use of voluntary schemes (nightstops, emergency hosting) as an interim response to help house people without recourse to public funds.
• Reinstate legal aid for immigration cases.
• Up skill the homelessness sector in immigration advice.

Immigration policy is not devolved so these recommendations would apply to England, Scotland and Wales.

specific accommodation in which they can feel safe. • BME people: discrimination exacerbates the problems facing homeless people from BME backgrounds • Older people: there was felt to be a lack of strategic planning to provide accommodation for older and disabled people. • Young people, especially care-leavers: support, affordability and access were key issues for young people, and especially difficulties caused by benefits restrictions. • Migrants: events highlighted difficulties for those without recourse to public funds and participants argued that government needed to provide more support to this group to reduce homelessness. • Families: respondents spoke about the long-term effects of child poverty and disruptions to education caused by homelessness. People with mental health problems, addictions, histories of offending and childhood trauma were also discussed in the consultation and at events. Solutions tended to fall into the 'joint approaches', housing first, multiple complex needs bucket.		4. **Challenge public attitudes and stigma surrounding homelessness.** **Key elements of this solution** • More mental health training for staff working with people who have experienced homelessness. • Ensuring that the experiences of homeless people feature more heavily as part of mainstream media. • The sector should develop a counter narrative around homelessness and welfare and ensure that housing is seen as a right, akin to health or education. This solution could apply to England, Wales and Scotland. 5. **Capture more/ better data on the scale of homelessness and effectiveness of the interventions needed to end it** **Key elements of this solution** • Develop a system for better geographic coverage of homelessness statistics and measure all year-round across the UK. • Develop systems to map people experiencing homelessness across a range of different services including housing, health, social care and criminal justice. • Establish clearer sets of targets for homelessness services to work towards. • Within the data gathered, we should aim to build a better picture of the experiences of different cohorts (eg young people/ women) to help better design services around their needs. This solution could apply to England, Wales and Scotland. 6. **Introduce a cross-department government strategy to end homelessness.** **Key elements of this solution**

		• Introduce a cross-departmental government commitment to homelessness prevention that is used as a measure by which to judge any significant policy. • Any new policy would have to be evaluated as to whether it contributes to or conflicts with that fundamental aim and value. • Bring a specialist team into government to reduce rough sleeping, based on the Rough Sleepers Unit. • Third sector organisations could work with the cross-government group to introduce homelessness prevention programmes.

Reflecting the different contexts of Scotland and Wales, the policy solutions were adjusted for Stage 3 discussions in those areas.

Overarching – Scotland

Ensure that the homelessness legislation is effectively implemented across England, Scotland and Wales.

Key elements of this solution
• Increase awareness of homelessness legislation among people experiencing, or at risk of homelessness through publicity campaigns and the use of challenge cards.
• Ensure individuals have access to information about their rights, including about what to do if their statutory rights are violated.
• Introduce a legal right to have an advocate present when someone makes a homelessness application.
• Councils should aim to provide a open access to a 24-hour one-stop shop to provide people with swift access to a range of prevention services.
• Ensure that people with lived experience have a greater say over the design of the process.
• Consistency of application of legislation, particularly relating to local connection and intentionality.
• Staff training to ensure legislation is implemented effectively and consistently.

Scaling up mediation and advocacy services to better prevent homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• Government should investigate which forms of mediation are most effective in resolving homelessness for various groups eg young people.
• Alongside mediation services, local authorities should also invest in-tenancy support for landlords and tenants to help people remain in their homes.
• Co-located independent advocacy services.

Councils should invest in tenancy support, advice, family help and joint work with agencies to prevent homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• Local authorities should to take a more strategic approach to tackling homelessness through co-commissioning of services and providing targeted, early advice.
• This could include mentoring, advice on social media, GP-prescribed advice, effective triage services, mediation and tenancy support.
• There should be more joined-up work between council teams (eg housing, social work, children's services) that come into contact with people are at risk of homelessness and homelessness teams.

Amend the legislation in Scotland to help better prevent homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• Remove intentionality clauses in legislation, to ensure that anyone who is homeless can receive support.
• Introduce a prevention duty.
• Allow discretion around local connection.
• Limit the use of unsuitable temporary accommodation to seven days.

Commission person-centred services with multi-disciplinary approach to help people with complex needs.

Key elements of this solution
• Strategic commissioning of person-centred services that can help to address a range of problems, longer contracts / commissioning cycles to ensure consistency of support.
• Greater use of system 'navigators' such as those used in the MEAM project.
• Build on the multi-disciplinary working and models that encourage one key worker such as Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
• Better information sharing across a range of services.
• Models based on one provider providing housing and other support services (health, employment, skills etc).

Provide more specialist services for women facing homelessness

Key elements of this solution
• Co-locate women's services to improve coordination for women with complex needs.
• Integrate gendered housing solutions with local support eg ensure first contact teams and homelessness teams work more closely together.
• Early identification of victims of domestic violence to start the process of moving them on from the home, when needed, at an earlier point.

Provide specialist LGBT-specific services

Key elements of this solution
• Prevent LGBT homelessness through LGBT-specific services.
• More training for homelessness staff around the specific issues faced by people who are LGBT when they become homelessness.
• Drive up standards through charity partnerships.
• Monitor services and collect better data to understand problems.

Ensure there are migrant specific rough sleeping policies in place.

Key elements of this solution
• UK Government should provide additional support with housing for people who have no recourse to public funds.
• Definition of what 'exceptional circumstances' are for people with leave to remain with no access to public funds to allow them to access support. The definition should be consistent and include reference to homelessness, destitution and child poverty (taking into account devolved homelessness and child poverty policy).
• Greater use of voluntary schemes (nightstops, emergency hosting) as an interim response to help house people without recourse to public funds.
• Reinstate legal aid for immigration cases.
• Up skill the homelessness sector in immigration advice

Transform attitudes to homelessness to public build support for ending it.

Key elements of this solution
• More mental health training for staff working with people who have experienced homelessness.
• Ensuring that the experiences of homeless people feature more heavily as part of mainstream media.
• The sector should develop a counter narrative around homelessness and welfare and ensure that housing is seen as a right, akin to health or education
• Challenge attitudes among elected members and RSLs, as well as the general public.

Capture more data on the scale of homelessness and effectiveness of the interventions needed to end it.

Key elements of this solution
• Develop a system for better geographic coverage of homelessness statistics and measure all year-round across Great Britain.
• Develop systems to map people experiencing homelessness across a range of different services including housing, health, social care and criminal justice.
• Establish a clear outcomes framework for homelessness services to work towards.
• Within the data gathered, build a better picture of the experiences of different cohorts (eg young people/ women) to help better design services around their needs.

Introduce a cross-government strategy to end homelessness

Key elements of this solution
•Introduce governmental strategy to end homelessness, drawing together youth homelessness, complex needs, health, care review, housing strategy.
• Political leadership for a commitment to end homelessness.
• Introduce a government commitment to ending homelessness that is used as a measure by which to judge any significant policy – eg with a link to the new socio-economic duty.
• Evaluate any new policy as to whether it contributes to or conflicts with that fundamental aim and value.
• Third sector organisations could work with the cross-government group to introduce homelessness prevention programmes.
• The strategy should the address welfare and housing needs of young people.

Prevention – Employment – Scotland

Improve employer attitudes to homelessness

Key elements of this solution
• Introduce a national kite-mark that recognises employers' positive commitments to disadvantaged people.
• Government incentives for business to employ homeless people.
• Training to improve employers' understanding of homelessness related issues, such as mental health problems.

Greater support to move homeless people into and sustain employment.

Key elements of the solution
• Greater coordination between housing and employment support.
• Placing a duty on employers to help pay an employee's rent for a limited period after they are made redundant.
• Providing a more personalised form of employment support via Jobcentre Plus.
• DWP should ensure that homeless people are not inappropriately sanctioned. Work coaches should be made aware of the 'easement' and apply it consistently. DWP should continue paying housing benefit/ housing element of Universal Credit while people are appealing sanctions to help avoid homelessness.

Prevention – Welfare – Scotland

Address the gap between rents and benefits.

Key elements of this solution
• Review current levels of Local Housing Allowance and lift the freeze
• Either scrap the SAR or increase the number of people who are exempt.
• Abolish cuts to Universal Credit for 18-21s.

Clarify how Discretionary Housing Payments should work in Scotland.

Key elements of this solution
• In Scotland, guidance on the new powers over DHPs should clarify outcomes and expectations for the use of DHPs and ring fence money to support the fund.

Improve the functionality of Universal Credit.

Key elements of this solution (aimed at Westminster Government):
• Mass media campaign to ensure landlords, employers and tenants know about Universal Credit rollout.
• Pause the roll out of Universal Credit until it works as intended.
• Invest in advice and support for claimants.
• Remove disincentives to save in Universal Credit (eg capital limits, self-employment rules).
• Greater access to jam jar accounts.
• Jobcentre Plus should proactively offer Alternative Payment Arrangements for people who have experienced homelessness.
• Abolish the seven working days.

• Offering interim seven-day grants, rather than loans to people who have experienced homelessness, if the claimant is able to secure a job.
• Improving IT systems to reduce errors in processing claims.
Areas of these solutions are devolved to Wales and Scotland.

Improving awareness of and access to Scottish Welfare Fund.

Key elements of this solution
• Increased funds available for Scottish Welfare Fund.
• Faster processing times for Scottish Welfare Fund.
• Greater regulation of rent-to-own modes that offer cheap furniture and white goods.
Areas of these solutions are devolved to Wales and Scotland.

Prevention – Justice – Scotland

Ensure greater access to legal aid

Key elements of this solution
• Reform long-term funding of the advice sector by enshrining a 'right to justice' principle to underpin the funding of legal advice.

Ensuring that people can access advice services to prevent their homelessness

Key elements of this solution
• Better joined-up working between job centres and housing providers.
• Co-locating advice services with Housing Options teams.
• Provide 'advice on prescription' from GPs and help people deal with financial problems through a multi-agency approach.
• Improve training for solicitors to challenge welfare decisions.
This solution could be implemented across England, Wales and Scotland, but would need nation specific recommendations because this area of policy is devolved.

More preventative work to ensure that prisoners do not become homeless upon release from prison.

Key elements of this solution.
• Provide sustained and integrated support throughout sentences to help prisoners maintain tenancies.
• Educational outreach teams should help prepare prisoners for life upon release.
This solution could be implemented across England, Wales and Scotland.

Prevention – Housing – Scotland

Stronger enforcement of regulation regarding the private rented sector to improve conditions and standards.

Key elements of this solution
• Local authorities should better use existing powers and incentives to improve suitability of accommodation and stamp out rogue landlords.
• Establish/strengthen landlord liaison services to help resolve conflicts and sustain tenancies.

Improve access to social housing for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Key elements of the solution
• Ensure consistency in allocations to homeless households across policies and providers through common housing registers and common allocations policies.
• Encourage better joint working between housing allocations and Housing Options teams within councils.
• Address blanket policies which exclude people because they have a history of rent arrears or anti-social behaviour.
• Monitor and review the number of lettings to single homeless people.
• Provide people moving on from hostels and supported accommodation with priority to move into social housing.

Introducing rent control in the private rented sector to improve affordability.

Key elements of this solution
• Monitor and review implementation of Rent Pressure Zones and new tenancy regime on affordability of market rents.
• Introduce rent limits for existing tenants.

Improve tenancy sustainment in the social rented sector.

Key elements of this solution.
• Social housing providers should ensure that they have early identification procedures to help work with tenants at risk of arrears as well as more joined-up working protocols with local authorities to provide robust support.
• Social housing providers to deliver support for tenants who might be a risk of bullying.
• Pre-tenancies training and independent advice for tenants.
• Ensure RSLs don't charge rent in advance to homeless households.

Improve tenancy sustainment in the private rented sector.

Key elements of this solution
• Ensure new tenancy regime is fit for purpose and does not discriminate against vulnerably-housed households by monitoring early intervention and efficacy of new tribunal

Undertake strategic planning for local populations to ensure housing/ support that is affordable and suitable for older and disabled people.

Key elements to the solution
• Provision of housing should be matched with related support services and coordinated joint working (information sharing protocols, named lead officers and clear referral pathways).
• Assessments should include provision of adaptations to enable disabled people to remain in their existing homes where possible.
• Review accessibility of relevant services in rural areas for those threatened with homeless to stop drift to the cities.

• Target more affordable homes funding at rural areas and recognise it is more expensive to build in rural areas.

Prevention – Health – Scotland

Ensure that health agencies play an effective role in preventing homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• Improve joint working between health and housing, including shared protocol on referrals to Housing Options and hospital discharge services.
• Early identification and join up with police, mental health and drug/alcohol specialists as part of in-reach and outreach teams.
• A cross-government national homelessness strategy which includes the NHS and other healthcare services, including public health teams.
• A statutory duty on Integrated Joint Boards.

Rapid response – Housing – Scotland

More help to rehouse prison leavers into permanent housing as quickly as possible.

Key elements of this solution
• Ensure there is a consistent, high quality, holistic and joined-up approach to 'through the gate' support to avoid people leaving prison with no home to go to.
• Housing Options in prisons and consistency of homelessness assessments for people leaving prison.
• Monitor the implementation of the Sustainable Housing On Release for Everyone (SHORE) developed by the SPS and others.

Developing and delivering comprehensive support packages for people when they first enter emergency accommodation.

Key elements of this solution
• Ensure that there is a dedicated support worker, based in temporary accommodation, available to offer full-time help to clients with the most high-risk, long-term needs and most likely to drop out of accommodation.
• Ensure that duration of support enables ongoing care/transition to move on.

Increase and improve the provision and quality of emergency and supported accommodation

Key elements of this solution
• Provide more places people can get immediate help including Nightstops, host-schemes, specialist emergency accommodation for certain groups e.g. women, LGBT, families, prisoners.
• Provide more specialist emergency accommodation for people fleeing domestic abuse.
• Reduce use of unsuitable hostels and B&Bs.
• Provide more units with holistic support attached for people with complex needs where Housing First is not suitable.
• Identify a regulatory body to inspect the use of unsuitable temporary accommodation.

• Scale up live in rehab for young people with comprehensive aftercare and housing.

Scale up help to rent schemes to enable people who are homeless to access private rented accommodation more easily.

Key elements of this solution
• Financial assistance and guarantees (bonds) to help people secure accommodation.
• Tenancy sustainment support for landlords and tenants.
• Improved coordination between private landlords and councils.
• Developing a landlord and tenant education programme.
• Ensure Housing Options offer private rented sector as a housing option where appropriate.

Use an assertive outreach model to get people the appropriate support and off the streets as quickly as possible.

Key elements of this solution.
• Ensure rough sleepers are aware of what advice and support is available to them through sustained outreach and greater public awareness.
• Develop 'hubs' or drop-in centres where rough sleepers can get help with health, welfare, drug and alcohol support, housing etc in one place.
• Ensure services cater for diverse range of people, with different needs.
• Support workers and peer mentors should help build up relationships with rough sleepers.

Sustained support – Housing – Scotland

Ensure that all homelessness services are trauma-informed, person centred and co-designed by people who have experience of homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• Adopt a person-centred, asset-based approach that puts emphasis on coaching, building networks and developing tailored, individual support.
• Peer involvement in service design and delivery.
• Ensure that there is joint work between housing providers and healthcare professionals to help identify people who might need support with mental health problems at an early stage.
• Deliver programmes to help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to develop their self-respect, wellbeing and resilience.

Scale up the provision of a high-fidelity Housing First for people with higher support needs.

Key elements of this policy
• A key worker and peer mentor to provide an intensive case management form of support.
• This would sit alongside an offer of permanent accommodation in the social or private rented sector.
• Commission person-centred services using a multi-disciplinary approach. This should be co-produced with people who have experienced homelessness.
• Specific models of Housing First could be designed for particular groups, including women, young people and older people.

Build more homes that would be made available to people who have experienced homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• Use modern methods of construction to speed up the rate of housebuilding.
• Increase the number of one-bed and shared social housing units that are built.
• Build more co-housing schemes for older people.
Ensure that there is more social housing available for people who have experienced homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• Introduce penalties for councils that leave homes empty.
• Introduce a rule so that housing associations let a proportion of their properties to people who have been homeless.

Sustained support – Health – Scotland

Ensuring that homeless people have greater access to healthcare.

Key elements of this solution
• Training for healthcare professionals in homelessness and housing issues.
• More health drop-in clinics in addiction services and hostels.
• Prompt transfer of medical information between GPs to help those who move around a lot.
• Cultural shift to more person-centred healthcare and educating people on entitlements and services.
• More services for people with dual diagnosis of mental health and substance issues.

Prevention – Justice – Wales

Ensure greater access to legal aid across England and Wales.

Key elements of the solution
• Reform long-term funding of the advice sector by enshrining a 'right to justice' principle to underpin the funding of legal advice.
• Use the LASPO review to address gaps in benefits advice.
• Reinstate legal aid for Housing Benefit and housing disrepair cases.
Implement the national pathway for homelessness services to children, young people and adults in the secure estate to ensure that prisoners do not become homeless upon release from prison.

Key elements of this solution
• Provide sustained and integrated support throughout sentences to help prisoners maintain tenancies.
• Educational outreach teams should help prepare prisoners for life upon release.

Prevention – Employment – Wales

Improve employer attitudes to homelessness.

Key elements of the solution
• Introduce a national kite-mark that recognises employers' positive commitments to disadvantaged people.
• Welsh Government incentives for business to employ homeless people.
• Training to improve employers' understanding of homelessness-related issues, such as mental health problems.
These solutions could be implemented across the UK, but the issue is a devolved matter so would need specific legislation/ funding mechanism in England, Scotland and Wales.

Greater support to move homeless people into and sustain employment.

Key elements of the solution
• Greater coordination between housing and employment support.
• Placing a duty on employers to help pay an employee's rent for a limited period after they are made redundant.
• Providing a more personalised form of employment support via Jobcentre Plus.
• DWP should ensure that homeless people are not inappropriately sanctioned. Work coaches should be made aware of the 'easement' and apply it consistently. DWP should continue paying Housing Benefit/ housing element of Universal Credit while people are appealing sanctions to help avoid homelessness.
This solution includes non-devolved areas that are relevant to Wales, but would need Westminster Government action.

Prevention – Welfare – Wales

Address the gap between rents and benefits.

Key elements of the solution
• Introduce a studio rate for Local Housing Allowance.
• Review current levels of Local Housing Allowance and lift the freeze.
• Either scrap the SAR or increase the number of people who are exempt.
• Abolish cuts to Universal Credit for 18-21s.
This solution could be implemented across England, Scotland and Wales by Westminster Government.

Improve the functionality of Universal Credit.

Key elements of this solution.
• Mass media campaign to ensure landlords, employers and tenants know about Universal Credit rollout.
• Pause the roll out of Universal Credit until it works as intended.
• Invest in advice and support for claimants.
• Remove disincentives to save in Universal Credit (eg capital limits, self-employment rules).
• Greater tenant choice regarding direct payments.
• Greater access to jam jar accounts.
• Jobcentre Plus should proactively offer Alternative Payment Arrangements for people who have experienced homelessness.
• Abolish the seven working days.

• Offering interim seven-day grants, rather than loans to people who have experienced homelessness, if the claimant is able to secure a job.
• Improving IT systems to reduce errors in processing claims.
Areas of these solutions are devolved to Wales and Scotland.

Improving awareness of and access to emergency funds, such as Discretionary Housing Payments.

Key elements of this solution
• Emergency funds should be part of a well-integrated and responsive system involving government, local authorities and the third sector.
• Greater regulation of rent-to-own modes that offer cheap furniture and white goods.
Areas of these solutions are devolved to Wales and Scotland.

Improve take-up of Discretionary Housing Payments.

Key elements of this solution
• Welsh councils should be given medium-long term certainty about DHP funding

Prevention – Housing – Wales

Working with the private rented sector to improve conditions and standards, including through regulation.

Key elements of this solution
Implement reforms of the private rented sector through the implementation of *The Renting Homes (Wales) Act (2016)* and Rent Smart Wales

Improve access to social housing for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Key elements of the solution
• Review allocations policies to help homeless people access social housing. Address blanket policies which exclude people because they have a history of rent arrears or anti-social behaviour.
• Monitor and review the number of lettings to single homeless people.
• Provide people moving on from hostels and supported accommodation with priority to move into social housing.
Welsh Government should direct local authorities to adopt minimum standards to enable access to overcome postcode lottery. These should include for example: eg standardised allocation policies; minimum provision of welfare assistance/prevention fund for access to tenancy set up/rescue costs/landlord procurement initiatives; better cooperation from registered social landlords in their allocations processes through Welsh Government action.

Improve tenancy sustainment in the social rented sector.

Key elements of the solution
• Social housing providers should ensure that they have early identification procedures to help work with tenants at risk of arrears and more joined-up working protocols with local authorities to provide robust support.

• Social housing providers to deliver support for tenants who might be a risk of bullying.
• Pre-tenancies training and independent advice for tenants.
• Implement trauma-informed approaches to managing social rented sector tenancies.
This solution could be applied in England, Scotland and Wales, but would need specific policy mechanisms for each nation.

Introducing rent control in the private rented sector to improve affordability.

Key elements of the solution
• Cap rents.
• Ban unfair letting agent fees.
These solutions only apply to England and Wales. Housing is devolved however, so a different policy mechanism would be needed in each nation to affect change.

Improve tenancy sustainment in the private rented sector.

Key elements of the solution
• Implementation of tenancy reforms in *The Renting Homes (Wales) Act (2016)* and improved landlord membership of Rent Smart Wales.
• Look to end 'no-fault evictions' and increase the use of the pre-action protocol.
• Provide tenancy sustainment support and advice (for both landlords and tenants) for those most at risk of tenancy breakdown.
• Use advanced notice protocols when people are facing eviction (eg letting agents send the council S21 notices at the same time as they send them to tenants).
They apply separately to England and to Wales and there is already a policy agenda in place for Wales. Housing is a devolved issue however, so different policy mechanisms would be needed to achieve change.

Prevention – Health – Wales

Ensure that health agencies play an effective role in preventing homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• Improve joint working between health and housing, including implementing shared protocols on referrals to Housing Options and hospital discharge services.
• Early identification and join-up with police, mental health and drug/alcohol specialists as part of in-reach and outreach teams.
• Use Public Service Boards to better plan for the needs of homeless people.
• A cross-departmental national homelessness strategy from the NHS and other healthcare services including public health teams.
• Consider introducing a 'duty to refer' who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to local authorities.
The solutions could be applied across England, Wales and Scotland, but health policy is devolved so would need specific policy mechanisms for each nation.

Rapid response – Health – Wales

Improved partnership work between health and housing to help design and deliver more effective homelessness services.

Key elements of this solution
• Facilitate more collaborative working and establishing partnerships through Public Service Boards.
• Consider a 'duty to refer' on public authorities (including health boards and GPs) to notify local authorities about people are threatened by or experiencing homelessness.

Rapid response – Housing – Wales

More help to rehouse prison leavers into permanent housing as quickly as possible.

Key elements of this solution
Implement the national pathway for homelessness services to children, young people and adults in the secure estate.
• Ensure there is a consistent, high quality, holistic and joined up approach to 'through the gate' support to avoid people leaving prison with no home to go to.
This solution could be applied across England, Scotland and Wales.

Developing and delivering comprehensive support packages for people when they first enter emergency accommodation.

Key elements of this solution
• Ensure that there is a dedicated support worker, based in temporary accommodation, available to offer full-time help to clients with the most high-risk, long-term needs and most likely to drop out of accommodation.
This solution could be applied across England, Scotland and Wales.

Increase and improve the provision and quality of emergency and supported accommodation.

Key elements of this solution
• Reduce use of unsuitable hostels and B&Bs for people with complex needs and provide more units with holistic support attached.

Provide more places people can get immediate help including Nightstops, host-schemes, specialist emergency accommodation for certain groups e.g. women, LGBT, families, prisoners.

Key elements of this solution
• Convert empty homes into emergency accommodation.
• Provide more specialist emergency accommodation for people fleeing domestic violence or abuse.
• Set up a regulatory body to inspect the use of unsuitable temporary accommodation.
• Scale up live in rehab for young people with comprehensive aftercare and housing.
This solution could be applied across England, Scotland and Wales, with specific policy mechanisms for each nation.

Scale up help to rent schemes to enable people who are homeless to access private rented accommodation more easily.

Key elements of this solution

• Financial assistance and guarantees (bonds) to help people secure accommodation.
• Tenancy sustainment support for landlords and tenants.
• Improved coordination between private landlords and councils.
• Developing a landlord and tenant education programme.
This solution could be applied in England, Scotland and Wales, but would need specific policy mechanisms for each nation.

Use an assertive outreach model to get people the appropriate support and off the streets as quickly as possible

Key elements of this solution
• Ensure rough sleepers are aware of what advice and support is available to them through sustained outreach and greater public awareness.
• Develop 'hubs' or drop-in centres where rough sleepers can get help with health, welfare, drug and alcohol support, housing etc in one place.
• Ensure services cater for diverse range of people, with different needs.
• Support workers and peer mentors should help build up relationships with rough sleepers.
• Establish targets to move people off the streets with a view to reaching settled accommodation as early as appropriate.

Sustained support – Housing – Wales

Ensure that all homelessness services are trauma-informed, person centred and co-designed by people who have experience of homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• Adopt a person-centred, asset-based approach that puts emphasis on coaching, building networks and developing tailored, individual support.
• Peer involvement in service design and delivery.
• Ensure that there is joint work between housing providers and healthcare professionals to help identify people who might need support with mental health problems at an early stage.
• Deliver programmes to help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to develop their self-respect, wellbeing and resilience.
This solution could be implemented across England, Wales and Scotland.

Scale up the provision of a high-fidelity Housing First for people with higher support needs

Key elements of this policy
• A key worker and peer mentor to provide an intensive case management form of support
• This would sit alongside an offer of permanent accommodation in the social or private rented sector
• Commission person-centred services using multi-disciplinary approach. This should be co-produced with people who have experienced homelessness
• Specific models of Housing First could be design for particular groups, including women, young people and older people.
This solution could be implemented across the UK, but the issue is a devolved matter so would need specific legislation/ funding mechanism in England, Scotland and Wales.

Build more homes that would be made available to people who have experienced homelessness.

Key elements to this solution
• Ensure a suitable mix of new affordable homes.
• Use modern methods of construction to speed up the rate of housebuilding.
• Increase the number of one-bed, studio and shared social housing units that are built.
• Build more co-housing schemes for older people.
These solutions could be applied across England, Wales and Scotland.

Ensure that there is more social housing available for people who have experienced homelessness.

Key elements to this solution
• Ensure a suitable mix of new affordable homes.
• Introduce penalties for councils that leave homes empty.
• Introduce a rule so that housing associations let a proportion of their properties to people who have been homeless.
• Review 'lifetime tenancies' to ensure that stock is targeted at those who need it most.
These solutions could be applied across England, Scotland and Wales, but policy around housing associations is devolved so would need individual policy mechanisms in each nation.

Sustained support – Health – Wales

Ensuring that homeless people have greater access to healthcare.

Key elements of this solution
• Training for healthcare professionals in homelessness and housing issues.
• More health drop-in clinics in addiction services and hostels.
• Prompt transfer of medical information between GPs to help those who move around a lot; work with GP clusters to reduce barriers to homeless people accessing healthcare.
• Cultural shift to more person-centred healthcare and educate people on entitlements and services.
The solutions could be applied across England, Wales and Scotland, but health policy is devolved so would need specific policy mechanisms for each nation.

Sustained support – Welfare – Wales

Ensuring longer term and sufficient funding for homelessness services

Key elements of this solution
• The Welsh Government should maintain the Supporting People programme with a ring fence.
• Move to three-year funding cycles to help with the longer-term planning of services.
This policy applies to Wales, England and Scotland.

Overarching – Wales

Provide more specialist services for women facing homelessness

Key elements of this solution
• Implement and build on the provisions of *The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act (2015).*
• Co-locate women's services to improve coordination for women with complex needs.
• Integrate gendered housing solutions with local support eg ensure first contact teams and homelessness teams work more closely together.
• Better early identification of victims of domestic violence to start the process of moving them on from the home, when needed, at an earlier point. Multi-agency MARAC meetings should be linked with services eg floating support.
This solution could be implemented across England, Scotland and Wales.

Provide specialist LGBT-specific services

Key elements of this solution
• Prevent LGBT homelessness through LGBT-specific services.
• More training for homelessness staff around the specific issues faced by people who are LGBT when they become homeless.
• Drive up standards through charity partnerships.
• Monitor services and collect better data to understand problems.
This solution could be implemented across England, Scotland and Wales.

Ensure there are migrant specific rough sleeping policies in place

Key elements of this solution
• Westminster Government should provide additional support with housing for people who have no recourse to public funds.
• Definition of what 'exceptional circumstances' are for people with leave to remain with no access to public funds to allow them to access support. The definition should be consistent and include reference to homelessness, destitution and child poverty.
• Greater use of voluntary schemes (Nightstops, emergency hosting) as an interim response to help house people without recourse to public funds
• Reinstate legal aid for immigration cases
• Up skill the homelessness sector in immigration advice
Immigration policy is not devolved so these recommendations would apply to England, Scotland and Wales

Commission person-centred services with multi-disciplinary approach to help people with complex needs.

Key elements to this solution
• Strategic commissioning of person-centred services that can help to address a range of problems, including greater stability of funding (eg longer contracts and commissioning cycles to ensure consistency of support and planning).
• Greater use of system 'navigators' such as those used in the MEAM project.
• Better information sharing across a range of services.
This solution could be applied across England, Wales and Scotland.

Challenge public attitudes and stigma surrounding homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• More mental health training for staff working with people who have experienced homelessness.
• Ensuring that the experiences of homeless people feature more heavily as part of mainstream media.
• The sector should develop a counter narrative around homelessness and welfare and ensure that housing is seen as a right, akin to health or education.
This solution could apply to England, Wales and Scotland.

Capture more data on the scale of homelessness and effectiveness of the interventions needed to end it.

Key elements of this solution
• Develop a system for better geographic coverage of homelessness statistics and measure all year-round across Great Britain.
• Develop systems to map people experiencing homelessness across a range of different services including housing, health, social care and criminal justice.
• Build a better picture of the experiences of different cohorts (eg young people/ women) to help better design services around their needs using improved local authority data collection.
This solution could apply to England, Wales and Scotland.

Introduce a cross-department government strategy to end homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• Introduce cross-governmental strategy to end homelessness, drawing together youth homelessness, complex needs, health, care review, housing strategy.
• Any new policy would have to be evaluated as to whether it contributes to or conflicts with that fundamental aim and value.
• Bring a specialist team into government to reduce rough sleeping, based on the Rough Sleepers Unit.
• Third sector organisations could work with the cross-government group to introduce homelessness prevention programmes.

Ensure that the homelessness legislation is effectively implemented across England, Scotland and Wales.

Key elements of this solution
• Ensure individuals have access to information about their rights, including about what to do if their statutory rights are not met.
• Increase the consistency of the local authority support offered across Wales.
• Review priority need with a view to increase the proportion of people accessing accommodation.
• Explore potential for a legal right to temporary accommodation for some groups, eg rough sleepers.
• Ensure that people with lived experience have a greater say over the design of the process.
This solution could be implemented across Great Britain, but the issue is a devolved matter so would need specific legislation/ funding mechanism in England, Scotland and Wales.

Scaling up mediation and advocacy services to better prevent homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• Welsh Government should investigate which forms of mediation are most effective in resolving homelessness for various groups.
• Alongside mediation services local authorities should also invest in-tenancy support for landlords and tenants to help people remain in their homes.
• Co-located independent advocacy services.
This solution could be implemented across the UK, but the issue is a devolved matter so would need specific legislation/ funding mechanism in England, Scotland and Wales.

Councils should invest in tenancy support, advice, family help and improved joint work with agencies to prevent homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• Working with Public Service Boards to increase joint work.
• More joined-up work within councils (eg environmental health and children's services) that come into contact with people at risk of homelessness, and homelessness teams

Amend the homelessness legislation across England, Wales and Scotland to help better prevent homelessness.

Key elements of this solution
• Remove intentionality clauses in legislation, to ensure that anyone who is homeless can receive support.
• Consider placing a new duty on local authorities to ensure that anyone sleeping rough, or at risk of sleeping rough is provided with emergency accommodation.
• In England and Wales, abolish priority need and make sure people have a right to housing.
These solutions could be implemented across the UK, but the issue is a devolved matter so would need specific legislation/ funding mechanism in England, Scotland and Wales.

Ensuring that people can access advice services to prevent their homelessness.

Key elements of this solution:
• Better joined up working between job centres and housing providers.
• Co-locating advice services with Housing Options teams.
• Provide 'advice on prescription' from GPs and help people deal with financial problems through a multi-agency approach.
• Improve training for solicitors to challenge welfare decisions.
This solution could be implemented across England, Wales and Scotland, but would need nation specific recommendations because this area of policy is devolved.