

Prevention in practice: a compendium of examples to share

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

How much information do you need?

We'd like enough to understand the context and results, but we don't need chapter and verse. This is a quick project, so the 2-page proforma is perfectly adequate and we'll contact you if we need more details. If on the other hand you have a report or evaluation which you can share and which answers all the proforma questions, please feel free to send that on if easier.

Our project hasn't been formally evaluated...

That's fine. If you know it's worked i.e. had results, and you can see that in your own service data (quantitative or qualitative), we still want to hear about it.

My project had great results but it ended due to funding/staffing etc. Can I include it?

Yes.

What sort of things are you looking for?

Here are just some examples. Have you been involved with a successful approach which

- made a difference to the prevalence of youth homelessness in a local area?
- reduced the need for eviction action in rented housing?
- reduced homelessness, even though you don't work for a homelessness or housing service?
- identified a key at risk group and designed an intervention to meet their needs?
- effectively made use of mediation to reduce homelessness due to relationship breakdown?
- reduced homelessness from the Private Rented Sector (PRS)?
- forms part of a Locality Improvement Plan (LIP)?
- decreased prevalence of homelessness on account of domestic abuse?
- detected a higher than average rate of housing breakdown in a group/place and designed an intervention that works?
- reduced the rate of tenancy abandonments?
- engaged Health and Social Care, Police, Prisons or Education services?

I don't work for a housing/homelessness organisation...

Great! We are especially interested to hear from projects delivered or co-delivered with partners in other sectors which understand the opportunity to ask about and act on someone's housing situation even though they are not housing services.

We don't have all the costs/budget data for our project ...

That's fine. It's great to have information on what your approach or intervention has cost, even if you don't have data on cost effectiveness or savings. But it's still worth sending if you have neither.

I've heard of a good example but it isn't my project...

Great. Let us know what you know and we'll follow it up – just send Lucie an email.

Our project has just started but it's a great idea – can we include it?

We're keen to include examples of projects which are already showing results, to make it as easy as possible for others to assess the relevance to their area and replicate. But we know there may be some areas – perhaps the more innovative ones – where there is no existing example. If you're planning something you believe is pretty unusual and there's unlikely to be evidence of the approach elsewhere, let us know – just send Lucie an email.

Will you let me know if you are using the example in the guide?

Yes we will let you know if we are or aren't using it. If we are, we'll send a copy of the text we intend to publish and will get in touch prior to that if we have any questions.

I don't want to give personal contact details for the publication.

That's fine. A generic service name or email for people to follow up with will suffice.

How are you defining "homelessness prevention" – what counts?

We're taking a wide definition of prevention which includes very different types of interventions. This includes approaches in the following categories:

- **universal** – measures which prevent or minimise homelessness risk for whole populations – such as affordable housing supply or a complete welfare safety net
- **targeted** – specific initiatives focused on groups at higher homelessness risk, such as young people leaving local authority care
- **crisis** – services which kick in when someone is legally “threatened with homelessness in the next two months”. This is the point when local authority homelessness teams must become involved. This may include for example debt advice, or mediation
- **emergency** - support for people at immediate risk of homelessness, including rough sleeping, such as personalised budgets
- **recovery** – approaches which focus on preventing repeat homelessness, such as peer support within Housing First

You might not feel this typology works for your project or approach, or that the work overlaps various stages of the above – that's fine! Feel free to tell us how you'd prefer to categorise or describe your project in your return.

Why do we need a prevention guide?

There hasn't been a guide which collects together practice examples of preventing homelessness in Scotland for at least a decade¹.

So this resource will fill a gap, offering a tool for local authorities and their partners to quickly locate and follow up on successful projects in key areas highlighted by both rounds of the HARSAG and central to Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans (RRTPs).

¹ Scottish Government 2009 guidance contains brief practice examples: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/prevention-homelessness-guidance/> There are a number of Scottish prevention practice guides pre-dating this. Crisis RRTP report (2020) highlights practice examples on prevention, but many of those are ideas and plans only, as opposed to successful interventions.