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ENDING HOMELESSNESS ACROSS EUROPE



GLASGOW ROOF INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN

CO-DESIGN, COLLABORATION AND
STORYTELLING TO PREVENT
HOMELESSNESS

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ABOUT GLASGOW

Situated on the River Clyde, Glasgow is a post-industrial city with a growing population of 626,400. Glasgow is Scotland's largest and most diverse city in Scotland with 15% of the population from a migrant background. This has been the key contributor to our population growth over the past decade.

Its position on the River Clyde made Glasgow a magnet for shipping and trade, with its economy being heavily reliant on heavy industry. However, with the post-war industrial decline, Glasgow has reinvented itself with a diverse economy based on services, finance and innovation.

A new generation of service sector employment in tourism, finance, and business services—especially in innovation and creative industries—has developed over the past twenty years. Higher education, in the form of the city's four universities industries are also making a key contribution to the changing face of the local economy.

However, Glasgow has found it difficult to shake its image of the “sick man of Europe”, with lower life expectancy than its peers and still quite deeply entrenched poverty. Glasgow has an unprecedented level of understanding of child poverty, thanks to pioneering work carried out by Glasgow's Centre for Civic Innovation, using data to create Scotland's most accurate picture of child poverty. Their work shows that 26% of Glasgow's children are living in relative poverty, almost two thirds of which are from single parent households.

We know that poverty, poor health, and insecurity are all contributing factors in homelessness and eradicating poverty and homelessness are intrinsically linked.

GLASGOW CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

Currently in Glasgow, there are around 300 people sleeping rough per year however there is only around 25 on any given night. During the pandemic, this dropped considerably to around 5 people. Approximately 5,200 are registered as homeless.

Glasgow City Council has a statutory duty to provide support to those who are homeless and at risk of homelessness and collaborates across sectors to help deliver this support. To move forward, Glasgow must overcome some historic and new challenges.

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SNAPSHOT OF GLASGOW'S HOMELESS IN 2020



*LESS THAN 5 ROUGH SLEEPERS IN GLASGOW DURING PANDEMIC

Infrastructure

Glasgow has no social housing stock following the transfer of ownership to community-based housing associations in 2003. This requires close collaboration with the city's 68 Housing Associations to enable us to exercise our legal duties.

Glasgow also has a growing private sector rental market. This is hard to regulate and is often landlords with one property. There is very little control over the price and quality within this market and the Local Authority provides support to families who find themselves in poor quality and expensive housing.

Poverty and Complex Needs

Poor mental health, substance abuse and involvement in the criminal justice system are some of the complex and multiple needs faced by the majority of those who present as homeless in Glasgow. This is exacerbated by deep rooted poverty that also creates a level of at risk groups who are close to homelessness. Furthermore, our system of Welfare support is managed by the UK Government which does not lend itself well to the local context of support required in Glasgow and Scotland.

GLASGOW'S HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

In recent years, Glasgow has made significant progress in addressing homelessness. The Glasgow Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) runs until 2024 and contains Glasgow's vision to deliver both the systemic shift and early intervention required to eradicate homelessness. The RRTP is a partnership approach that places an emphasis on co-designing

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solutions with those who have lived experience of homelessness, collaboration and practical solutions.

Glasgow spends around £46,000,000 per year on homelessness. This is a combination of support staff costs, property costs, transport, direct support and purchasing of services. It is estimated that with approximately £18,000,000 investment in the RRTP, it would generate £105,000,000 of savings in the first 5 years.

The RRTP identified four specific objectives which detail how we will programme our city wide activity, partnership, time and resources to transition to rapid rehousing. These objectives are focused on the outcomes we want to achieve and reflect our commitments to:

- prioritising the prevention of homelessness wherever it is possible to do so;
- reducing the time spent in temporary accommodation for all homeless people in Glasgow;
- upscaling Housing First as the optimum model for meeting the needs of our most complex and disadvantaged service users; and
- reduce the scale of temporary accommodation in the city through the Alliance commissioning model and redirect resources to the delivery of person-centred housing support services.

In February 2020, Glasgow established the Glasgow Alliance to End Homelessness. This new, collaborative partnership is the first of its kind in the UK and has moved away from traditional methods of commissioning homelessness services towards a more collaborative, human centred approach.

It brings together the Health and Social Care Partnership, NGO's and local people with lived experience of being homeless.

Housing First in Glasgow

A cross sectoral partnership leads 5 Pathfinder Housing First programmes in Scotland. These pathfinders, are responsible for the delivery of Housing First and supports Local Authorities on how to scale it up. They are responsible for the Housing First tracker that monitors its progress.

Up to 31st August 2021, Glasgow had achieved the following:

- 220 tenancies;
- Average waiting time for an offer during the month of August was 24 days;
- 81% success rate
- No evictions;

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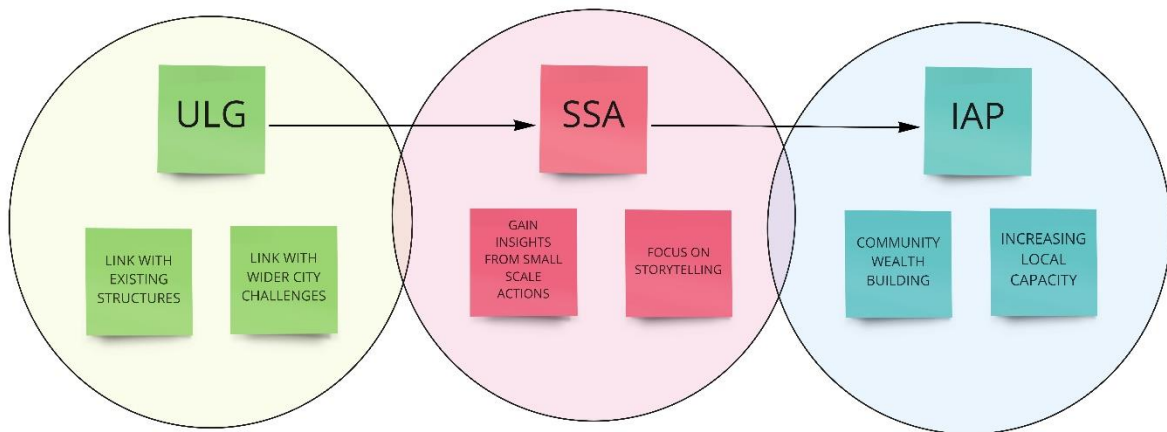
PROCESS

Shaping a New Ecosystem of Design, Data and Innovation

Glasgow approached ROOF in a different way, in part due to the strong strategic and operational infrastructure that was already in place, as outlined above but also due to its commitment to be a more citizen centred, design and data driven city, using storytelling as a means to demonstrate impact and drive change.

The Centre for Civic Innovation (CCI) were therefore brought on board early in the project. The CCI is a pioneering citizen-centred design team within Glasgow City Council, responsible for establishing a design-led approach to the understanding of societal shifts and civic experiences within the city.

Their data driven approach, design led thinking and methods to codesign socially innovative solutions to some of Glasgow’s biggest challenges was a perfect opportunity for us to look at homelessness in Glasgow in a new way but also to support the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans objective that prevention should be prioritised.



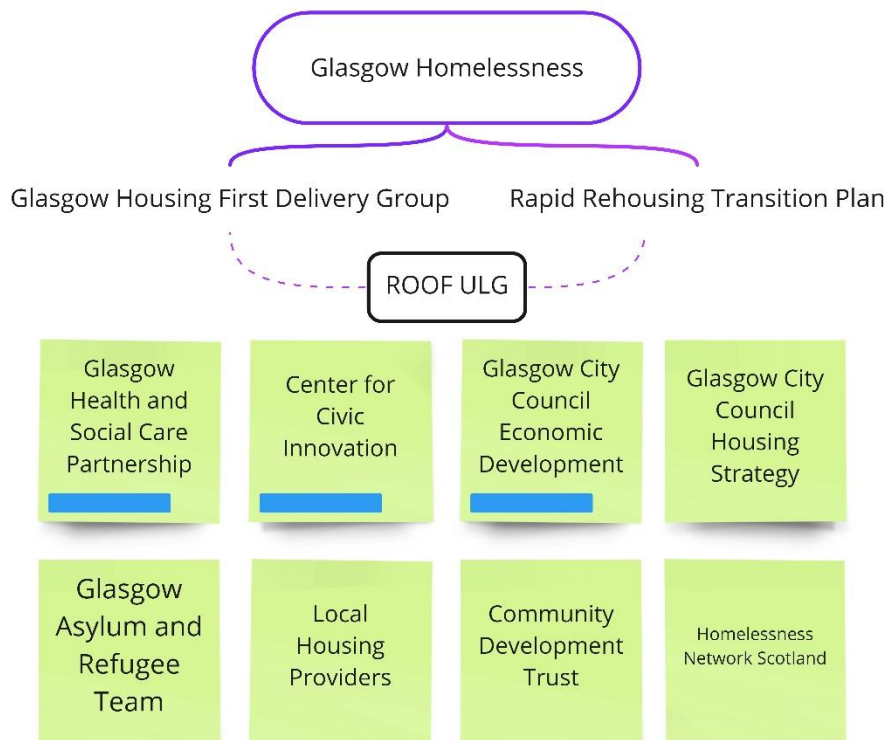
Urbact Local Group

The formation of an Urbact Local Group (ULG) was challenging due to the wealth of existing structures, starting with strong national legislation, existing homelessness and Housing First strategic and operational groups at a city level, and the formation of a city-wide alliance on service delivery.

Glasgow therefore formed a small, core ULG consisting of key people from the homelessness agenda in the city but also from across other municipal departments, to bring a new perspective on what value ROOF could add to our city challenge of homelessness. This small group collaborated with the wider city structures and spearheaded the project at a local level.

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Maintaining the ethos of prevention is better than cure, we kept our ULG small and focussed on one neighbourhood in the city to test our new ideas, foster collaboration and explore solutions.



Insights from Small Scale Actions

There is already a network of services and systems for people who live and work with homelessness after it has happened. But this is often too late and sometimes too slow. All homelessness starts in a community, so a place-based approach to preventing it happening in the first place is key. Our Small-Scale Action was to test if the capacity of local citizens and stakeholders within a neighbourhood could be increased to identify causes and drivers of homelessness. Can an increase in local knowledge and services provide a more effective early warning system?

We delivered training in partnership with the Homelessness Network Scotland, an organisation that advocates for those with lived experience, works at a strategic level and is a pioneer for changes in system and practice.

Aligned with the training, we commissioned a local storytelling organisation to work with participants and gather stories not only of the impact of the training but to gain insights into local experiences of navigating homeless support. This will form a key action of our plan and be the basis of our learning.

Focussing on this hyper-local level mean we can engage deeply with stakeholders involved in the local prevention ecosystem. This includes services working with the community on food

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and fuel poverty, employability and of course, those involved in community development work within existing housing providers.

Design Workshops with Key Stakeholders

Understanding homelessness prevention in Greater Pollok

Based on what you see and what you hear, what are the root causes of homelessness?



ROOF
Ending homelessness

During the spring of 2022, we undertook a series of design workshops with stakeholders from the local neighbourhood. The purpose of these workshops were to:

- *Understand the local systems of homelessness prevention in the neighbourhood;*
- *Understand what is working well;*
- *Gain insights into what the challenges, wants and needs are of local organisations;*
- *Hear from stakeholders what opportunities they foresaw and what ideas we could generate together.*

We also took the opportunity to use the learning from the peer visit in March 2022, working with the other ROOF cities and local stakeholders to gain a better understanding of the homelessness prevention ecosystem in place.



This collaborative approach, that included local housing providers, NGO's, municipal departments, mental health support workers, people providing food and fuel support, amongst others, saw organisations discuss extensively what they see, hear and experience in the local neighbourhood.

These insights allowed us to effectively co-design our action plan than incorporates our ambitions to no only eradicate homelessness but to also eradicate child poverty and build a well-being economy.

FOCUS OF OUR PLAN

From a Story to a Plan

Our ambition as a City is to implement a housing led approach to tackling and eradicating homelessness. As we are well on our way to achieving this, we recognise that homelessness prevention is key to making Housing First work better for those that need it. As highlighted by the Glasgow Alliance to End Homelessness and the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan, homelessness starts in communities.

Furthermore, in 2022, The Scottish Government aims to enforce a new public duty on the prevention of homelessness, which will see a wider, more far-reaching ambition to ensure all public bodies and organisations are doing what they can to prevent homelessness occurring in the first place.

Our plan is to embed homelessness prevention into the fabric of the infrastructure at the community level. Our SSA was to test a neighbourhood wide training initiative to increase the capacity of multiple stakeholders, practitioners and community members to identify what drives homelessness, how to spot the signs that people might be at risk of homelessness and how to intervene to minimise that risk.

Our Integrated Action Plan has a strong focus on storytelling. This is a story about how a citizen in Glasgow tries to navigate support services when they unexpectedly find themselves homeless. The story we will share is evidence that homelessness starts in communities.

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We want to show that data doesn't always tell the full story and by investing in communities, building local expertise, collaborative practice and opportunity, while using storytelling, homelessness can be tackled before it begins.

This is a fictionalised account of a true story relating to a real family whose lives were turned upside down when they were not able to access appropriate housing.

Cindy's Story

Cindy lived in a private tenancy in Easterhouse with her husband and her 3-year-old daughter which suited the family well. Unfortunately, this was not to be the case for much longer for Cindy. She became pregnant with her second child which should have been a moment to celebrate. However, when the Property Owner found out that Cindy was pregnant, they used this as grounds to serve Cindy and her family with a notice to quit. Their reasoning was that they did not want to have two children in the accommodation. Now we know that this is hugely unethical, but is it illegal? It seems that it depends on several factors.

Cindy had set up a strong community in Easterhouse when she moved to Scotland from Senegal 10 years ago. She attended several creative arts groups with her daughter and she had made strong friendships in the local area which provided her with companionship and support. Cindy and her daughter had been attending a local toddler craft group and they had been working on creating artwork for an exhibition.

As a new Scot and like many others, new Scot or auld (old) one, Cindy wasn't fully aware of her rights as a tenant and so accepted the notice to quit from the property owner and began to search for other housing options in her local area. When she found that there was nothing suitable available, she and her young daughter moved in with her husband's grandparents.

As this point in the story, it feels important to say that if someone doesn't know their rights and what they are entitled to or doesn't have either the confidence to fight for them, or a champion to do so for them, then there is a real chance they will not get what they need and have a right to. Cindy sadly wasn't aware of what she should be entitled to and so accepted her situation. She didn't want to be a burden on her friends or the community organisations she attended and so unfortunately, she didn't ask for any help with her living situation until the family had left the tenancy and moved in with her husband's grandparents.

Cindy thought that staying with her in-laws was a temporary fix to the problem and applied to be on numerous housing lists. She trusted the housing system and thought that their living circumstances would count as overcrowding or even homelessness since they did not have their own home. She hoped that this would mean they would be able to secure a tenancy somewhere nearby in the community she had set up a home and a life in.

During the time that Cindy was living with her in-laws and waiting on offers of a tenancy from various housing associations, her marriage broke down and her living arrangements became extremely toxic for herself and her daughter.

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She amended her housing application in light of the fact that she was now a pregnant single parent with a 3 year-old child.

Cindy was offered a flat in Maryhill, an area of Glasgow she had never visited and had no community links with.

She reached out to her support networks and the third sector organisations she was involved in who duly contacted the housing organisations they had a good working relationship with, only to be told that there was nothing that could be done.

This is doubly unfortunate as we know that there are many people in housing associations who want to help people like Cindy. However, it seems that though the staff on the ground may want to help, there is not enough 'joined up thinking' or communication throughout the organisations and those who 'hold the keys' are often a step too far away from the people they are supporting. This means that people like Cindy are not offered appropriate housing in an appropriate place.

Cindy was resigned to the fact that she would need to accept the offer as she had nowhere else to go and no idea if there would be any other options for her. She moved to the flat in Maryhill with her daughter and gave birth to her new baby just weeks later.

The family now live in the flat in Maryhill, but it does not feel like home yet. They do not have appropriate furniture and they are isolated and cut off from their communities. Cindy is still being supported by some third sector organisations doing what they can, however, much of the funding for these small organisations is postcode specific, so there are really limited in what they can offer.

Cindy is not just one person that has been passed over, 'slipped through the net' or been missed in housing allocation in her local area. She is a human with a family and a life and a support network in a community. Yes, she has a tenancy in Glasgow, but having a tenancy in Maryhill where she had never even visited, had no community links or no support, was as good for her as housing her in a different city entirely. She was newly a single parent, with English as her second language, alone and pregnant and she was let down by people who should have been trying to help her.

"I suppose I want to emphasise that there was a wee [girl] involved in this as well, so [she's] 4 and now there's another wee [girl] who's just a month or two old and that's a massive disruption for them and not the best start that Scotland could have given them. She's still in accommodation that's not home yet, it's not got the right furniture, she's not had support to set that up and she's now alone in the house with her two young children which is something for us to think about as well, is protecting the children and the adults in the situation and setting up a better start for them."

Sarah, creative arts practitioner.

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Objectives and Actions

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE					
Create better conditions for better decision making and collaboration: the sharing of information, skills and knowledge to prevent homelessness.					
ACTION	Intended Result	Resources/Assets	Lead Agency	Key partners	Timescale
RESEARCH					
Undertake research to map current information sharing and collaboration systems, and referral processes in homelessness prevention at a local level.	Understand what is working and what is not working well.	Staff time from within Centre for Civic Innovation (CCI), Economic and Social Initiatives(ESI), the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and local stakeholders	CCI	HSCP ESI Local Housing Providers Local NGO's	December 2022
Use research to identify, articulate and share the local indicators of homelessness risk	Understand local trigger points and use to inform practice	Staff time from within Centre for Civic Innovation (CCI), Economic and Social Initiatives(ESI), the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and local stakeholders	CCI	HSCP ESI Local Housing Providers Local NGO's	December 2022

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PARTNERSHIP, COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION					
Build on the relationships we made to facilitate the creation of a homelessness working group with local development days and knowledge sharing sessions	Build and strengthen relationship across the prevention sector, key actors identified and test model	Staff time from within Centre for Civic Innovation (CCI), Economic and Social Initiatives (ESI), the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and local stakeholders	CCI	HSCP ESI Local Housing Providers Local NGO's	March 2023
Establish a cross organisational newsletter with a notification system	Build and strengthen relationship across the prevention sector, key actors identified and test model	Staff time from within Centre for Civic Innovation (CCI), Economic and Social Initiatives (ESI), the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and local stakeholders	CCI	HSCP ESI Local Housing Providers Local NGO's	December 2022
CO-DESIGN AND TESTING					
Co-design a local information/data/communication sharing system between organisations working in homelessness prevention	Reduce and eliminate duplication, provide more responsive support and better	Staff time from within Centre for Civic Innovation (CCI), Economic and Social Initiatives (ESI), the	CCI	HSCP ESI Local Housing Providers Local NGO's	March 2023

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including local “dashboards” to understand demand.	use of collective resources.	Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and local stakeholders			
Co-design and test a joint case management system at local level.	Support is more responsive, delivered when needed (not at point of crisis) and waiting lists for support are reduced.	Staff time from within Centre for Civic Innovation (CCI), Economic and Social Initiatives (ESI), the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and local stakeholders	CCI	HSCP ESI Local Housing Providers Local NGO's	December 2023

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SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE					
Improve people's access to support on homelessness prevention and information about their housing rights.					
ACTION	Intended Result	Resources/Assets	Lead Agency	Key partners	Timescale
RESEARCH					
Work with local people to understand how they want to access information and help, why they may not be accessing help and what it important to them, utilising the local housing providers, through interviews and surveys.	Improved understanding of the risk of homelessness by those experiencing it. Expand on knowledge of what support is available locally and identify gaps and opportunities for improvement.	Staff resource From: CCI ESI Local Housing Associations Local support services	CCI	HSCP ESI Local Housing Providers Local NGO's	March 2023
CO-DESIGN AND TESTING					
Work with the new Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan Housing Option Officers to build on service improvements by mainstreaming the housing options service within core homelessness and housing advice services.	Create a more mainstreamed service linking communities with city-wide strategic infrastructure	RRTP Investment	GCC HSCP	Local Housing Associations	December 2023

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Co-create a knowledge repository for complex services	Build a general (and growing) understanding across organisations and local people about services and benefits	CCI ESI Local Housing Associations Local support services	CCI	HSCP ESI Local Housing Providers Local NGO's	March 2023
Work with policy leads on Community Wealth Building Agenda to embed homelessness prevention in policy development.	Ensure resources and focus on homelessness is clear as CWB policy develops	Staff time from GCC Potential Shared Prosperity Fund	ESI		December 2022
Co-design actions with City Food Plan to ensure food poverty (and fuel poverty) are mitigated and recognised as trigger for homelessness and solutions are complimentary	Build synergy between strategic plans that look at food poverty and homelessness.	Staff time from GCC	ESI	Local food projects Local Support Services Corporate Policy	December 2022
Co-Design training (including rolling out Closer to Home training) to build skills and knowledge in homelessness prevention “when to ask and when to act”.	Support staff and practitioners at a local level can recognise the early signs of homelessness and can act accordingly.	Staff resource from: CCI ESI Local Housing Associations Local support services	CCI	HSCP ESI Local Housing Providers Local NGO's	March 2023
DATA					
Gather more data on auto entitlement to benefits	Reduce bureaucracy, frustration, stress and skills needed to access	Staff resource from: CCI	CCI	CCI Financial Inclusion Team ESI	December 2022

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	the help people are entitled to	Financial Inclusion Team ESI Local support services		Local support services	
Continue to monitor impact of welfare reform and introduction of Universal Credit.	Ensure prevention service model continues to reflect changing nature of demand and financial pressures on local communities and citizens.	Existing Resources Staff Time	GCC Economic Development	Financial Inclusion CCI Local Stakeholder	December 2022

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Understand people's experience of homelessness and the support system to help improve and shape services

ACTION	Intended Result	Resources/Assets	Lead Agency	Key partners	Timescale
COMMUNICATION AND STORYTELLING					
Build a bank of stories from people who use services and/or have experienced homelessness.	Develop a shared understanding of homelessness across the community that can be used by service providers and citizens	Staff from CCI and ESI	CCI	Village Storytelling Centre Local Housing providers Support Services	March 2023

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Develop a local campaign to broadcast the stories to inform and create awareness	Develop a shared understanding of homelessness across the community that can be used by service providers and citizens	Staff from CCI and ESI	CCI	Village Storytelling Centre Local Housing providers Support Services	March 2023
CO-DESIGN AND DECISION MAKING					
Create a network of solvers who can help each other and services by sharing experiences, information, skills and data.	Better collaboration and service provision that is developed by and for people with lived experience.	Staff from CCI and ESI	CCI	HSCP ESI Local Housing Providers Local NGO's	March 2023
Work with local schools to deliver a design challenge about homelessness	Normalised conversations about homelessness, greater understanding of young peoples views, celebrating their creativity and ideas, and embedded knowledge of homelessness from young age,	Staff from CCI and ESI	CCI	HSCP ESI Local Housing Providers Local NGO's Local Schools	March 2023
Create a local problem solving, design challenge to identify new ideas and solutions to combat homelessness at a local level.	Involve people in shaping how services and help is provided in their neighbourhood, people are in charge	Staff from CCI and ESI	CCI	HSCP ESI Local Housing Providers Local NGO's Citizens	March 2023

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Ensure people with lived experience of homelessness are on all decision making boards locally	Homeless people are well represented and decisions are based on their needs	Staff from CCI and ESI	CCI	Community Empowerment Services Local Housing Providers HSCP Citizens	March 2023
BUILDING CAPACITY AND RELATIONSHIPS					
Facilitate a buddy system between families and individuals	Strengthened community network to reduce risk of crisis in the local neighbourhood	Staff from CCI and ESI	CCI	Local Support Services	December 2022
EVALUATION					
Evaluate current services with stories and user research	Services are adapted and improved based on peoples experiences and stories in a qualitative and meaningful way.	Staff from CCI and ESI	CCI	Local Housing Providers Local support services	December 2022

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