

the european  
**end street homelessness**  
campaign



**OUR**

**IMPACT**

2019



# OUR STORY

**The European End Street Homelessness Campaign is a network of local city campaigns, all working with the same set of principles to end street homelessness in their communities.**

It is a movement of people, including support workers, directors of charities, local government officials, community volunteers and people with lived experience of street homelessness. Since 2015 our campaign has brought these individuals and their organisations together to help them learn from each other and show how communities everywhere can develop solutions to end street homelessness.

At World Habitat, we believe housing is a fundamental human right. This campaign promotes secure and sustainable solutions to homelessness, rather than temporary or insecure quick fixes. The origins of the campaign lie in adapting learning from our World Habitat Awards – by combining the community mobilisation and focus on data of the 100,000 Homes Campaign in the USA, and with Finland's Y-Foundation and their national Housing First approach.

## Contents

Our story	2
Our approach	4
Our impact in 2019	6
Voices from the campaign	10

The campaign provides a space for individuals and organisations to learn from each other and share experiences as an international network. We host Peer Exchanges and Annual Gatherings for representatives of city campaigns, while also bringing in expertise from across Europe as we promote the sharing of knowledge and good practice. The campaign has always been a testing ground for new ideas and approaches, and at World Habitat we are proud to support our campaign partners to try something different. In 2019 our Innovation Grant and bespoke Support Programmes were a huge success – we worked in partnership with organisations to define what they needed to make the most meaningful change to the lives of those they work with.

In 2020, however, the world is currently experiencing a global health crisis, with the spread of COVID-19 having an unprecedented impact far beyond the borders of Europe. It brings into sharp focus the urgent need for effective action to provide homes and support for people who are street homeless. In some areas World Habitat are hearing about people thrown out of their accommodation – without fundamental services such as food – and the ending of wrap-around support services. Yet in other areas, we are hearing from our partners about the extraordinary efforts in some communities to find housing, providing food and support within just a few days. Even in these most difficult of times we see inspiring action, communities mobilising and a strong commitment to supporting each other.



“ We act to affect meaningful change in local policy, we can be innovative and look to solutions that are based on the lived experience of our homeless neighbours. We can be a voice that stands up for, and reflects, those voices that are so often overlooked.”

Lara Hockman, GalvaniseBH

This report shares our impact in 2019 before the crisis, building on our previous [Impact Report](#)<sup>1</sup> which shared important outcomes from the first three years of the campaign. We will continue to share the work of our cities – on the World Habitat website – as they shift to targeting an end to street homelessness during the extraordinary challenge of COVID-19.

Through delivering the campaign we continue to build our own body of evidence on what is working – and how others might learn from it. In 2019 we launched an [online campaign toolkit](#)<sup>2</sup> detailing – step-by-step – how others can use the same techniques and processes to bring their community together to campaign for change. This is available for anyone to use for free, and shares the campaign’s learning with others who want to make a positive change in their community.

2019 was an exciting year with new Housing First projects developing in Croydon and Torbay, Connections Weeks in Bratislava and Brighton, and the upscaling of Housing First across five cities in Scotland – including our campaign city Glasgow.

We’ve facilitated Peer Exchange visits for municipality commissioners, Housing First workers and campaign co-ordinators. We’ve also facilitated training of people with lived experience to take more active roles in the way homelessness services are run.

Our campaign shows that communities themselves can take the necessary steps towards addressing some of the most pressing homelessness challenges of our time. As this report so powerfully demonstrates, when communities come together, we all have the ability to make a difference and create the changes required so that everyone has a home of their own with the right level of support.

World Habitat is committed to building on this initial impact, providing resources and bringing together like-minded people – to learn, share and act to end street homelessness. We encourage you to read more about our campaign cities and use our toolkit to find out how you could become part of the change we need, to end street homelessness for good.

Louise Winterburn / Deputy Chief Executive  
[louise.winterburn@world-habitat.org](mailto:louise.winterburn@world-habitat.org)

# OUR

# APPROACH



## The right to housing

Safe and secure housing is a human right; without it, people cannot achieve their full potential.



## Improving local systems

Building co-ordinated housing and support systems that are simple to navigate, while targeting resources quickly and efficiently to the people who need them most.



## Knowing who's out there

Getting to know every homeless person by name by going onto the streets to find them, listen to them and understand their needs.



## Involving people with lived experience

People with experience of homelessness working together with the local community and professionals towards ending street homelessness.



## Tracking progress

Collecting person-specific data to accurately track progress towards ending homelessness.



## Learning and sharing from others

Promoting a willingness to share knowledge and good practice from across the campaign network and elsewhere around the world.



## Involving the community in solutions

People are taking an active role in their communities to help find solutions for those who have no home.

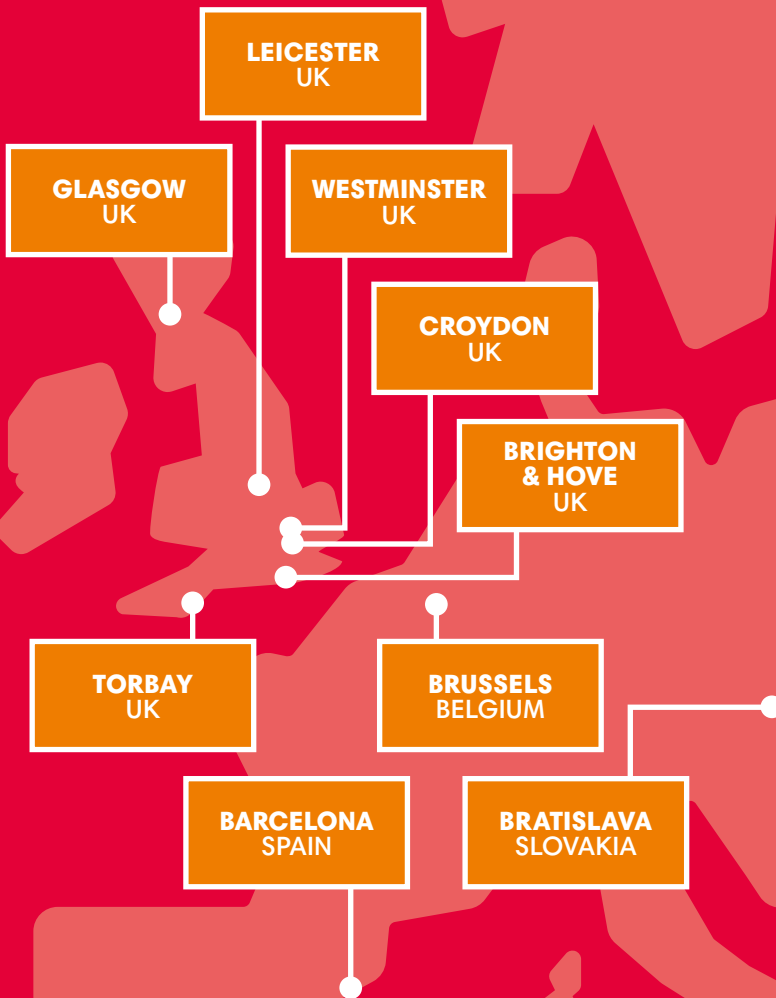


## Housing First

Ensuring homeless people are housed in permanent, safe, appropriate, and affordable housing with the support necessary to keep it.

# OUR AIM IS TO...

- Demonstrate that a wide range of communities can take action and make systemic changes that lead to significant reductions in, or the ending of, street homelessness.
- Proactively transfer learning from our campaign cities to ensure it benefits a wider group of communities across Europe.



# WE ACHIEVE THIS BY...

- 

**1 Delivering the World Habitat Support Programme**  
to a network of city campaigns across Europe. We empower local campaigns to increase their impact.
- 

**2 Gathering and utilising evidence**  
from different organisations working in partnership to end street homelessness across Europe.
- 

**3 Evaluating, learning and sharing**  
what works to show how our activities have been successful in supporting cities to have a positive impact.
- 

**4 Influencing for change to policy and practice**  
so that the transfer of knowledge from the campaign creates the conditions for meaningful reductions in street homelessness across Europe.

# OUR IMPACT

## IN 2019

137



Housing First  
units developed

(campaign total to date: 300)

755



Community  
volunteers

(campaign total to date: 3,136)

428



People moved  
into permanent  
accommodation

(campaign total to date: 644)

654



Surveys  
completed

(campaign total to date: 2,954)

4



Connections  
Weeks

(campaign total to date: 20)

TORREY  
END STREET  
HOMELESSNESS  
CAMPAIGN

# Torbay, United Kingdom

Torbay is a small area with big ideas. World Habitat has been working closely with Torbay Ending Street Homelessness (TESH), a partnership led by Shekinah Mission and Torbay Council. Torbay, like many other coastal towns in the United Kingdom, has significant challenges with people with multiple and complex needs trapped in a cycle of chronic homelessness. Addressing this challenge requires not only more funding, but a different way of doing things.

For the past two years Torbay has started doing just that – and 2019 saw the opening of their first Housing First programme in the area. Their Connections Week data helped reveal a major lack of services, and this pioneering approach is now working to fill those gaps, housing ten individuals with multiple and complex needs across the region.

Through our Innovation Grant we facilitated a Peer Exchange for the new Housing First team from Torbay to visit 2019 World Habitat Awards Silver Winner, Discus Housing First in Amsterdam. Developing new interventions like Housing First is not easy, and this Peer Exchange led to significant adaptations to their staff recruitment methods, bringing a broad mix of skills to their new team.

Like some other areas in the UK, Torbay has received a much-needed increase in central government

funding for homelessness services after years of reduced budgets. Our work in Torbay has further boosted this and has been especially effective in uniting the community. The area now has a coherent, community-led response and our campaign messaging on World Homeless Day in October showed strong support from local businesses, as well as cross-party political backing within the Council and from local MPs in the Torbay area.

While our input has helped to shape the systemic changes happening on the ground, our aim is that the learning from Torbay is captured as it happens. Torbay used funding from the campaign to set up a participatory evaluation of the changes that have happened locally around homelessness. Through a number of workshops involving a wide range of staff from services across the area, they are deepening their understanding of not only what has changed, but crucially how this change happened. Once complete, learning from this work will be shared across the European campaign, in line with our principle of transferring knowledge of what does – and what does not – work.

*To learn more about what it's like to take part in a Peer Exchange through the European End Street Homelessness Campaign, see Dave's story on [page 13](#)*



# Barcelona, Spain

Economic decline and the continued shortage of affordable homes in Catalonia mean that the number of people sleeping on the streets is rising. Evidence from our campaign showed an increase of 34% in Barcelona between 2018 and 2019. The campaign's longstanding partnership with local organisation Arrels Fundació is needed now more than ever. No other organisation in Catalonia is giving such prominence to the scale of homelessness, whilst also engaging the local community to educate the public and address the problem together.

In 2019 Arrels Fundació completed their fourth annual Connections Week, when 560 local volunteers completed 418 surveys with people experiencing street homelessness. This data evidenced the scale of the housing challenge in the city – where some 1,200 people are sleeping on the street and more than 2,100 people are accommodated in temporary shelters each night. In 2019 Arrels guaranteed accommodation for 240 people in a range of housing and emergency bed spaces, including 16 permanent Housing First spaces for people with multiple and complex needs.

As well as using evidence collected during Connections Weeks to address homelessness in the city, Arrels Fundació also provide a critical

co-ordinating function to educate the public about the many options for people experiencing homelessness. When Arrels Fundació produced a free advice guide for people living on the streets, it listed more than 70 existing public and private resources. It was created by people with lived experience of homelessness to give practical advice on where to receive support and empower the public to take action to help signpost those on the streets to local services.

Engaging the community in ending homelessness is a central principle of the European End Street Homelessness Campaign. Like other organisations across the European campaign, Arrels Fundació rely on the support and involvement of local residents from across the city, championing the right to housing and ensuring there is collective engagement on the issue of street homelessness.

Data collected through campaign activities and consistent engagement with local communities has ensured that street homelessness stays on the local political agenda, as Arrels Fundació continue to advocate for change at a municipal and regional level and to focus public awareness around the issue.





# Bratislava, Slovakia

Conditions for people who are street homeless in Slovakia are some of the most challenging in Europe. Bratislava, like many other Eastern European capitals, can be deadly for those who sleep on the streets, especially in winter months when temperatures plummet. With no legal definition of homelessness and no accurate data on how many people are street homeless, the system relies on a limited number of basic – yet life-saving – emergency shelters.

World Habitat has been working with partners in the city to address these challenges and ensure that Bratislava learns from cities across Europe. There is a growing movement of civil society organisations working to develop life-saving social outreach programmes and stimulate debate and analysis of how proven interventions like Housing First and Rapid Rehousing might grow in Slovakia.

The European End Street Homelessness Campaign is a key part of this change that is happening in Bratislava. In June 2019 we hosted the Annual Gathering of Cities in the central Old Town District, which brought professionals – from across Europe – together for three days of learning, knowledge transfer and action planning. It highlighted the limitations of service provision in the city and World Habitat used the event as a platform to show solidarity with local agencies

working to challenge the status quo. World Habitat staff and city campaign partners met with senior officials in the local municipality. This was an opportunity to highlight the work of lead organisation OZ STOPA Slovensko, whilst advocating for the increased supply of social flats and encouraging more partnerships between homelessness agencies working in the city.

In September we supported OZ STOPA Slovensko to co-ordinate their second Connections Week in the historic Old Town District. The local volunteers and trained outreach staff met and surveyed 169 people in just one afternoon. Data showed more than two-in-three (69%) of those spoken to were chronically homeless, with over one-in-five (21%) revealing they have been sleeping on the streets for 10 to 15 years.

Although public sympathy for people experiencing homelessness has traditionally been low in Slovakia, around 40 local community volunteers took part. This is a sign that attitudes are changing, and members of the public increasingly want to be part of the solution. With the support of World Habitat, the campaign in Bratislava will continue to change public perceptions and challenge the status quo that perpetuates widespread attitudes of street homelessness as an inevitable part of society.



# VOICES FROM THE CAMPAIGN

Our campaign works with inspirational and passionate individuals across Europe. These are some of their voices – despite their different circumstances, they are part of a movement working to end street homelessness.



## Paul

### Lived Experience Champion, Leicester's Homelessness Charter

"Before I worked with Action Homeless in Leicester, I had been in and out of hostels and night shelters in the city and doing my own thing during the day. By working closely with the organisation, I was found bed and breakfast accommodation in the interim and then placed into my own tenancy. With support from both Action Homeless and Leicester City Council I've been housed now for over a year and am so grateful to those who helped.

"At the end of 2019 I took part in a training course – for people with lived experience of homelessness – by Expert Link called 'Being the Difference'. The aim is to help people become meaningfully involved in the way homeless services are run. This course – funded by an Innovation Grant from World Habitat – has been so motivating and inspirational.

"No-one else has been able to motivate me like this, I just want to be involved and helpful. I wanted to do peer mentoring and the project has pushed me forward to do this. I know where homeless people are coming from because I have been there. I know how they are feeling and they'll listen to me more.

"People tell me they know how I feel but you have to be in a situation to know what it's like. I'm learning a lot about myself and homeless charities. Action Homeless have been brilliant, I am so grateful for all the support I've been given. Recently I've been to some more strategic meetings with Leicester's Homelessness Charter. With everything I am involved in it is motivating to be part of something good. In my heart and mind, it's time for me to repay the favour."



**“No-one else has been able to motivate me like this, I just want to be involved and helpful ... I know where homeless people are coming from because I have been there. I know how they are feeling and they'll listen to me more.”**



## Lara Hockman

*Community volunteer and Chair of Brighton and Hove's GalvaniseBH Campaign*

"I had been feeling helpless to do anything about the homelessness crisis in my city. I was passing the same faces day-in and day-out for years and did not know what I could do to help in a more meaningful way than sharing a couple of pennies or a smile.

"When I heard about the Galvanise campaign in 2017, I knew I wanted to get involved and took part in the Connections Weeks as a volunteer. In 2019, I became Chair of the GalvaniseBH Campaign working alongside other community members from the local area, and through both these volunteer roles I have learnt so much about the myriad of reasons and circumstances that can lead people to becoming homeless.

"As a long-term resident of Brighton, it has even challenged some of my own preconceptions and misunderstandings about homelessness in my city.

"Most importantly, volunteering with Galvanise also introduced me to the idea of genuine community

action, which turned my feeling of helplessness into one of empowerment. I now realise that as a community we can act to affect meaningful change in local policy, we can be innovative and look to solutions that are based on the lived experience of our homeless neighbours. We can be a voice that stands up for, and reflects, those voices that are so often overlooked."

**“ As a long-term resident of Brighton, it has even challenged some of my own preconceptions and misunderstandings about homelessness in my city.”**





## Dave Davies

*Housing First Team Leader at Shekinah Mission, Torbay*

“In November, I had the opportunity to take part in a Peer Exchange with World Habitat Silver Award Winner, Discus Housing First in Amsterdam. As a member of Shekinah’s Housing First Team in Torbay – which has been operational for only around eight months – this was a chance to spend time with an organisation that has been successfully providing Housing First support for 15 years.

“We spent time with three formerly homeless clients currently housed in permanent accommodation, who were all provided with support from the Discus Housing First staff team. They spoke to us of the difference it made to have permanent accommodation, of now being able to take time to address long-standing issues in their life, and of the flexible support given by support workers. We learnt how the Discus clients we met were ‘ambassadors’, as they can explain how life-changing Housing First interventions are, far more powerfully than anyone else can. This is something we will be exploring ourselves as we develop our service in Torbay.

“We also attended a Discus team meeting and workshops focussing on the practical application of Housing First principles. This allowed us to get a real insight into their day-to-day work, the methodology and tools the team uses, how the team is structured, how team members support each other and how flexibility and choice for people are built into their service delivery. A good example of this is the ‘profile market’, a mechanism used by people supported by Discus to find the worker who can best meet their support needs, giving them choice and control.

“The sessions also highlighted common issues faced by people supported by Discus, the people we support in Torbay and by people using Housing First services across Europe – for example, loneliness, neighbourhood nuisance issues and managing money. These are universal problems where there is no quick fix. Our visit was interesting, challenging and fun. We learnt new things about ourselves and about each other and feel closer as a team as a result.”



**“ We learnt how the Discus clients we met were ‘ambassadors’, as they can explain how life-changing Housing First interventions are, far more powerfully than anyone else can. This is something we will be exploring ourselves as we develop our service in Torbay.”**



# Ferran Busquets

Director of Arrels Fundació and Campaign Lead for Barcelona

"The European End Street Homelessness Campaign has provided Arrels Fundació with a way to connect with other cities tackling similar homelessness challenges.

**“We all have the same aim of nobody sleeping on our streets – in Catalonia we say, ‘Ningu Dormint Alcarrer.’”**

"Thanks to this campaign we have run Connections Weeks in Barcelona every year since 2016 – in 2019 we mobilised 560 volunteers to complete surveys of 418 people experiencing homelessness. The data collected through these surveys has been critical in determining the scale and vulnerability of homeless people in the city. We have moved forward from perception to facts and use this data to push homelessness up the local political agenda.

"During 2019, our organisation provided services to 2,591 people in the city, a 9% increase on the previous year. We have been working hard to better analyse the information we collect, and we have also delivered large community events to engage with our neighbours in Barcelona.

"As a Director, sharing with organisations from other countries in the European campaign has made me realise we face similar problems across different countries. I continue to learn from other professionals from across Europe, discovering interesting initiatives and have the space to share the knowledge and successes of my organisation and my staff."



## Notes

1. *The European End Street Homelessness Campaign: Impact Report 2015-2018:*  
[www.world-habitat.org/publications/european-end-street-homelessness-campaign-impact-report-2015-2018](http://www.world-habitat.org/publications/european-end-street-homelessness-campaign-impact-report-2015-2018)
2. *The European End Street Homelessness Campaign Toolkit:*  
<https://toolkits.homelessness.world-habitat.org>

### Photo credits

Front cover: © Juan Lemus  
Page 3: © Arrels Fundació  
Page 6: © Astrid Lozano  
Page 7: © Toby Madden  
Page 8: © Juan Lemus  
Page 9: © Patrick Duce  
Page 10: © Toby Madden  
Page 11: © David Weight  
Page 12: © Luke Flegg  
Page 13: © Toby Madden  
Page 14: © Arrels Fundació




**Our vision is a world  
where everyone has  
a safe and secure  
home in a successful  
community.**

We are:

- an agent for change
- globally minded
- independent
- innovative
- caring
- well connected.

**World Habitat**

 +44 (0)1530 510444

 [info@world-habitat.org](mailto:info@world-habitat.org)

[www.world-habitat.org](http://www.world-habitat.org)

