

Impact report

2015-2018



the european
end street homelessness
campaign





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Foreword

World Habitat believes that safe and secure housing is a human right; without it, people cannot achieve their full potential.

The work of World Habitat has repeatedly demonstrated that communities can tackle the most difficult housing problems and find their own solutions, often in the most challenging circumstances. We have worked with organisations tackling homelessness for over 40 years. Our World Habitat Awards were established over 30 years ago as our contribution to the United Nation's Year of Shelter for the Homeless.

Solutions to most of the world's housing problems already exist. But many communities do not have access to the knowledge, support, expertise and experience to make full use of them. Our role is to act as a catalyst, to seek out the solutions, and help them to grow, develop and transfer to new places where they are needed most.

Street homelessness is the most extreme form of housing exclusion. It is just one example of a failure of the housing system, but an important one that we have chosen to focus on through the European End Street Homelessness Campaign. The numbers of people living on the streets of Europe's major cities have increased significantly. Only in Norway and Finland has street homelessness reduced, or even ended. Through this campaign, we are working with an increasing number of European cities to end street homelessness by helping them adopt new ideas which have been proven to work.

Setting up a 'campaign for change' has been a new direction for World Habitat. But we felt that if we truly wanted to help to end homelessness – rather than simply 'managing' it – we needed to work differently. This campaign has started to demonstrate 'how' communities with different challenges – cities without high-levels of government commitment, access to specialist funding or easy access to land or homes – can start to end street homelessness.

This Impact Report provides a summary of the campaign's work from 2015 to 2018, including the challenges and the successes.

David Ireland Chief Executive



Campaign impact summary*



* Figures presented are reported by campaign cities and are inclusive of activity delivered by individual campaigns and campaign partners

Activity in campaign cities



Valencia held the first ever **European Connections Week**, followed by engaging with the Mayor and regional government to secure commitments to a joint **Housing First pilot**.

Torbay Ending Street Homelessness commissioned Crisis to carry out a **Housing First feasibility study**, funded by the Nationwide Foundation. The report has now been adopted by Torbay Council, which has committed **£500,000** over two years for a brand new **Housing First pilot**.

Arrels in **Barcelona** now have **100 flats** across the city housing over **200 people**, including **95 Housing First units**. They have also launched an innovative new project called Flat Zero which provides **emergency accommodation** for people in most need.

Campaign partner RAIS have worked with the Spanish Prime Minister, Pedro Sánchez, to influence a **national homelessness initiative** in **Spain**.

Campaign partners in **Glasgow** have been targeting lasting and widescale **policy change** to deliver on expanding **Housing First** across Scotland.

CR ZERO 2020 in **Croydon** held an event attended by the United Kingdom Housing Minister, Gavin Barwell MP, where he gave his first speech on **the government's approach to homelessness**. They became the first European city to implement a **'By-Name List' approach**.

Leicester's campaign work **brought together a range of partners** including local universities, statutory bodies, the City Mayor, homelessness organisations and faith groups. This led to the development of the **Leicester Homelessness Charter**.

400 Toits in **Brussels** delivered two **Connections Weeks** and a public campaign in the city called 'Challenge Citoyen 2018' which has led to the development of the city's first ever **modular housing project** for homeless people.

Brighton's community-led campaign interviewed over **125 people** experiencing homelessness, galvanised over **100 local volunteers** and has been successful in influencing the Council's **Rough Sleeping Strategy**.

STOPA, our partner in **Bratislava**, organised a **Day of Action** – 'We Are Not Invisible' – to raise awareness of homelessness issues in Slovakia and **campaign for greater protections** for people experiencing homelessness in **national legislation**.

Westminster's campaign formed a **partnership** that brings together **decision-makers** from key charities and public sector organisations. This was the catalyst for initiatives including a **Connections Week** and the **Day Centres Development Project**.



Who we are

The European End Street Homelessness Campaign



In 2014, World Habitat organised a Peer Exchange with the 100,000 Homes Campaign, enabling 14 senior homelessness practitioners from around the world to visit Los Angeles and learn first-hand from their work. As a direct result, several of the participants from Europe were inspired to develop their own equivalent projects.

World Habitat started work with organisations in a number of large European cities who were interested in developing a European campaign, alongside the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA: the representative body for homelessness NGOs in Europe) and Community Solutions (who co-ordinated the US campaign), to develop an action-oriented movement.

The context in 2014-15 for creating the European End Street Homelessness Campaign was:

- homelessness, in its various forms, was increasing in most European countries. In certain countries street homelessness was increasing exponentially
- the growing evidence that Housing First is an effective way to tackle chronic homelessness
- street homelessness was being reduced, using a Housing First approach, in a number of European countries and cities
- how the role of European institutions in 'ending' homelessness, and their efforts to structure a social movement across this geography, was receiving increased attention (in both policy circles and academia)
- the access to significant skills and knowledge from the 100,000 Homes Campaign, and other European organisations such as the Y-Foundation.

Origins of the campaign

The European End Street Homelessness Campaign was set up to help cities work to address the issue of street homelessness and to challenge cities to start ending it for good.

“The problem of homelessness is not just a local problem. It's a national problem, it's a European problem, it's a global problem.”

Adrienne Van Vyve, Project Manager at Infirmiers De Rue / 400 Toits

The campaign was inspired by two World Habitat Awards (WHA) winners – 100,000 Homes in the USA (2013) and Y-Foundation in Finland (2014). Both projects had successfully merged strong community action with improved data and championed the use of Housing First to significantly reduce chronic rough sleeping.

Central to that movement were elements – including meaningful data, collective action and engaging the local community – that were new in Europe and had the potential to change the current model.

In 2015 World Habitat and FEANTSA selected six cities to pilot a European campaign.



Preparing and developing the pilot cities

Over the first nine months World Habitat supported the pilot cities to build local knowledge of the methods used in the 100,000 Homes Campaign, initially around 'Registry', or 'Connections' Weeks. This is a week of local action that brings together the knowledge and commitment of those working in homelessness organisations, those sleeping on the streets and the wider local community.

It gives every individual on the street the chance to tell the full story of their journey on to the streets and their current situation. They are properly listened to. And the information collected from these surveys is then used to make sure services and support truly reflects their needs.

In October 2015, the six cities, along with World Habitat, FEANTSA and Community Solutions met for a Peer Exchange with World Habitat Award winners – the Y-Foundation – in Helsinki, Finland. This exchange enabled participants to learn from an early adopter of the Housing First model and make commitments about how they would take the work forward in their own cities.

“The visit to Y-Foundation transformed my understanding of what is possible in tackling homelessness. It has been a turning point in my career.”

Matt Downie, Director of Policy and External Affairs - Crisis

Growth of the campaign

Our recruitment of additional campaign cities was deliberately open and inclusive and remains so today. While we wanted to focus on a small number of cities initially, we also wanted to ensure the campaign was relevant to as many European cities as possible. In order to encourage a range to get involved, we asked interested cities to agree to a set of principles, focused on Housing First and to have a commitment to end street homelessness. Beyond that, the cities did not need to have high-level government

approval, commitment from a local municipality, or funding, and they have been free to devise their own approaches and plans within the wider campaign.

The majority of the campaign cities have no additional funding to carry out this work. To make change happen they have been involved in a wide range of activities including:

- setting up new partnerships
- overcoming historic distrust of partnership working
- engaging and mobilising their local communities
- gaining local municipality or government support
- finding secure, affordable housing
- creating or significantly developing local systems to map housing and the street homeless population.

The cities are all at different stages in their journey to end street homelessness, working with very different resources and challenges. The campaign is working with a network of cities, who joined us in four cohorts. A larger number of cities have been involved over the last three years – helping us to understand the challenges involved in delivering a campaign like this. A number of cities found that they were not able to fully commit to the campaign or decided that they needed to focus on other activities. We've captured the learning from these early city experiences in two evaluation reports that are freely available on our website.



2015

Potential cities

Barcelona, Brno, Copenhagen, Lyon, Valencia and Westminster



EARLY 2016

Launch of pilot cities

Barcelona, Croydon, Valencia and Westminster



LATE 2016

New cities joined

Brighton and Hove, Brussels, Glasgow and Torbay



EARLY 2017

New cities joined

Alicante and Leicester



LATE 2017

New cities joined

Athens, Bratislava and Sheffield

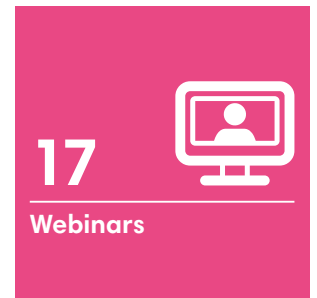
World Habitat Support Programme

The real strength of the campaign is the individuals within organisations who have the passion, drive, commitment and tenacity to help deliver real change in their communities. Our Support Programme helps these key people from across Europe to learn and adapt what has worked elsewhere, to identify the opportunities and challenges in their cities, to create a clear plan, and to work with other committed people who are equally determined to end street homelessness.

The Support Programme provides campaign cities with webinars, Peer Exchanges, bespoke communications support, advocacy training, project visits, regular monitoring calls and consultancy sessions on anything from campaign planning to implementing Housing First.

One of the most powerful elements of the programme is the peer support that the campaign cities offer each other. Ranging from sharing inspiring stories and successes, to offering practical advice and hands-on support, the campaign cities have openly shared their challenges and solutions with each other and World Habitat.

World Habitat Support Programme in numbers





Case study

James* | Brighton and Hove



Volunteers as part of the GalvaniseBH campaign first interviewed James during their first Connections Week in Autumn 2017. James had been sleeping in Queen's Park in Brighton for around five years at the time.

After traumatic experiences in early life, and having a job within a pub, James turned to alcohol. Interventions from his father managed to provide the support that James needed, yet after a break-up with his ex-partner he was sentenced to a short three-month prison sentence.

He dreamed of having his own place in Brighton near where his friends were and to maintain his close relationship with his father.

This year, volunteers from the GalvaniseBH campaign met up with James again, to get an update on his story:

“There have been some major changes for the better in my life. I have now been housed for six months in supported accommodation ... and have a great relationship with my worker, this has really helped. Being housed

is not always easy, I have struggled to cope with many of the rules and this has made me want to leave the accommodation at times.”

“When you are sleeping outside there are no rules, no-one to say what guests you can have back, no boundaries. It's a big jump to living indoors again.”

“Where I live, I can get a job and they will allow me to stay there which is quite unusual for supported accommodation. Knowing that really helps. I've got my CV and I'm looking for work in cafés and catering where I can leave early evening at the latest and get home, being busy will really help me. I'm dead keen to work and I want to get my own place and get settled into a normal life again where I have freedom to make my own decisions.”

“I am hopeful for my future, things are good now, but I still feel close to the streets. Sometimes the lack of responsibility that you have when rough sleeping is really attractive, and I want that again, but I know it's not the right thing. I'm on the path but it is a long one!”

* Name has been changed



Campaign impact

Key principles



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**Housing First
units developed**

Housing First

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

Housing First is quite simple yet provides a radical challenge to many existing homelessness systems across Europe. It means giving people experiencing homelessness permanent accommodation unconditionally, with the support they need to keep it – instead of shelters, hostels and other emergency or temporary options.

The movement is growing, but we need to grow faster. The experience of our cities has shown that a number of critical factors need to be in place to develop Housing First at scale. However, without supportive policy and funding environments, that change will take time.

The campaign has worked to address the different understandings of Housing First – some see it as the solution, while others maintain it is one element of a wider solution to end homelessness. In every location there are structural barriers to bringing in significant Housing First interventions, such as a lack of affordable housing or suitable housing that provides sufficient agency and choice to those who need it. This places even greater importance on understanding local contexts.

“Housing First is based on housing being a right. This is central to why it works.”

“One may need shelter from the storm but you need a home to lead a decent life. Ending homelessness is not a utopian ideology. It's a question of human rights and saving lives.”

Juha Kaakinen, CEO of Y-Foundation, Finland



"I've supported two Connections Weeks. I really enjoyed talking to the people we interviewed. From my own personal experiences, I felt a great affinity with what they were going through. I am also part of Croydon's Housing Solutions Group where I share my own experiences of what it is like to be homeless and the barriers I faced getting housing and support because of my alcoholism and addiction. It felt good to ... be part of and to contribute to the team."

Volunteer with CR ZERO 2020



Launching Housing First Croydon, United Kingdom



Croydon's campaign 'CR ZERO 2020' delivered their first Connections Week in 2016. Evidence collected from surveys identified that there were not enough high-support needs accommodation options for the number of people with severe and complex needs on the streets of Croydon. The Connections Week identified a clear deficit in suitable and sustainable accommodation for the most chronic rough sleepers. While there is a significant amount of supported accommodation within the Borough, the challenge was supporting chronic rough sleepers with multiple and complex needs.

Following the initial survey week CR ZERO 2020 held a solutions group meeting with members of the community, in which participants – volunteers and professionals – came together to develop a set of goals for the campaign. One priority was to develop a Housing First project within the Borough in partnership with the local Council, that could provide a lasting solution for those who had been in and out of services for many years. Initially, it was recognised that no housing solution would be effective without specialist mental health provision to enable chronic rough sleepers to maintain their accommodation.

An event delivered as part of the campaign following their first Connections Week was attended by the Mayor, cross-party local MPs, the Deputy Council Leader, the Greater London Authority (GLA), Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the United Kingdom Housing Minister Gavin Barwell MP. The Minister used this opportunity to give his first speech on the government's approach to homelessness.

After Croydon Council received £500,000 investment from the government, Housing First within Croydon was introduced by a partnership between stakeholders from within the CR ZERO 2020 campaign – London Borough of Croydon, Thames Reach and Optivo, UK. By the end of 2018, the project had five units fully occupied with more people being housed, and by 2020 the project aims for this to rise to twenty units.

Funding from the UK Government's Rough Sleeping Initiative was also able to commission targeted mental health support to residents within Housing First. The work of Evolve Housing and Support and partners in the CR ZERO 2020 campaign also led to a commendation in the 2017 London Homelessness Awards.



Expanding Housing First across Scotland

Glasgow, United Kingdom



Housing First is not new in Scotland, and in the city of Glasgow the quality of data about people sleeping rough is relatively consistent. The work of Glasgow Homelessness Network (GHN) has been to target lasting and widescale policy change to deliver on expanding Housing First across Scotland. Adopting a city-wide Housing First model, they are beginning to close hostels and replace them with self-contained apartments for homeless people.

Focusing on changing the very roots of the homelessness system, the work of campaign partner GHN culminated in November 2018 with the launch of the Scottish Government's Ending

Homelessness Together Action Plan, which included major commitments towards increasing Housing First provision. This includes a £10m investment from Social Bite and the Scottish Government in the Housing First Pathfinder programme, which is now working across five Scottish cities. This will see the creation of 830 Housing First tenancies by March 2022.

“We have moved beyond saying that in Scotland we believe Housing First creates the best base for recovery, to saying that it will be our default offer to people experiencing homelessness and a range of other multiple needs.”

Claire Frew, Policy and Impact Manager at Glasgow Homelessness Network

From Housing First pilots to national strategy

RAIS Fundación | Spain



Homelessness has become a rapidly growing issue across Spain. Rising unemployment and falling incomes mean more and more people are unable to meet housing costs. RAIS is a national homelessness NGO that is delivering the campaign in Valencia and has also used their experience to offer technical support to 'REAPSHA: La Red de Entidades para la Atención a Personas Sin Hogar', a network of 15 NGOs working to end homelessness in the city of Alicante. In both cases RAIS mobilised local volunteers to collect data that challenged existing narratives of homelessness. RAIS is the first organisation to develop the Housing First methodology in Spain.

Following the Connections Weeks in Valencia and Alicante, RAIS worked closely with local mayors and the regional governments which led to Housing First being piloted in both cities for the first time. Since then RAIS has focused their efforts at national and European levels to help extend Housing First across Spain more widely. Their Housing First programme, Habitat, has been growing over several years and by the end of 2018 had expanded to 330 units in 17 cities across the country. RAIS has also been working closely with the Spanish Prime Minister, Pedro Sánchez, to influence national homelessness initiatives across Spain.



Knowing who's out there

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

The campaign is about connecting the knowledge and commitment of those working in homelessness organisations, those sleeping on the streets and the wider local community. It is vitally important

to understand what solutions are needed and – where possible – make sure everyone on the streets in each city is spoken to, interviewed, and asked what support they feel would work best for them.

One of the central tools to enable cities to do this is a Connections Week, when local campaign teams (usually local volunteers) go out on the streets and connect and speak with people experiencing homelessness.

This campaign uses a survey tool called the Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritisation Decision Assistance Tool, or ‘VI-SPDAT’. We’ve supported campaign cities across Europe to develop their own localised version



“We are not invisible!” Bratislava, Slovakia



Access to adequate housing is a universal human right, but what if homelessness is not a widely recognised issue in your city? The support and prospects for people experiencing homelessness in Bratislava are extremely limited, with informal estimates showing around 5,000 people experiencing homelessness in Slovakia’s capital. STOPA Slovensko and partners held a pilot Connections Week in June 2018, using the survey data to prepare their first public campaign report which invited government and NGOs to work with them to find solutions to end homelessness.

The biggest challenge they face is that there is no legal definition of homelessness. This means

that the number of support services is very small and unable to stop the rising number of new people ending up on the streets of the city every day. This is also made worse by the lack of prevention services. Officially homeless people ‘do not exist’ and so the campaign has worked with NGOs like STOPA and their partners within Bratislava, supporting their public awareness campaign called ‘No-one is invisible’. White masks, symbolising being ‘lost’ and ‘anonymous’, were worn as a challenge to the legal invisibility of those who are homeless, as a means of saying: “You do not see us, but we are here among you.”



of this survey. Crucially, this approach helps identify who should be recommended for each housing and support intervention – moving the discussion from simply who is out there, to who is in greatest need.

For many cities within the campaign, the Connections Week findings have also been used to give the first clear picture of what changes are needed on a local level. Cities such as Leicester, Glasgow, Westminster and Croydon already had data recording systems for rough sleepers – so Connections Weeks were designed to complement and enhance, rather than replicate what was already used.

A Connections Week provides important in-depth data and helps create a sense of urgency amongst decision-makers, influencers and the media. It also brings local people into the campaign by providing an important local spotlight and helps break down barriers between people living on the street and people who are not.

Across the campaign there has been a total of 16 Connections Weeks, involving almost 3,000 local campaign volunteers, who have completed a total of 2,654 surveys of some of the most vulnerable and socially excluded people in Europe.



Case study

Kamel | Brussels



Kamel, 64, is from Algeria and was met by the 400 Toits Campaign during their Connections Week in June 2017. He first came to Belgium to study as a librarian. However, after marrying in Belgium and having three children, he divorced and found himself homeless on the streets of Brussels for nearly 17 years.

When he was met by staff from HuNeeds (a partner within the 400 Toits coalition), he explained that in the summer, he slept on café chairs. In the winter the Samu (an emergency night shelter in the city) reserved him a place every night. As he had been rough sleeping for so long, and was such a regular visitor, he did not have to call ahead like many new rough sleepers do in Brussels. The different homelessness organisations across the city know him well after so many years, yet when HuNeeds first started working with him he still had no papers or financial support.

After he began to engage with the campaign, staff from HuNeeds started to work more closely

with him. Previously he had found engaging in administrative and bureaucratic processes too much of a challenge. But after several mornings working with the local municipality, the police and local social services, he regained his correct papers to demonstrate he was eligible for welfare support payments. He shared with staff that he would never have done this alone.

Staff working with Kamel negotiated with a private landlord to hold a flat for the time it took to achieve the necessary references. This combination of timing and support prevented Kamel from getting trapped in a cycle that he had previously been in many times before.

Today Kamel is housed, he is well and he has started swimming again. Every Wednesday he visits staff from HuNeeds over a coffee as he regains his taste for a social life. He has finally visited the seaside again and is slowly but surely reconnecting with his family, something he only dreamed of before. Step by step, the connections are being re-established.



“Only together will we succeed”

Brussels, Belgium



Over the past ten years, street homelessness in Brussels has almost doubled. When the numbers rose to 700 in 2016, the collective community response was to say, “enough is enough” and they joined the campaign. The 400 Toits-Daken Campaign (400 Roofs) started with a mission to permanently house 400 homeless people.

Two years on and the campaign has held two Connections Weeks, completing a total of 570 surveys. The data shows that in one year there was a 50 per cent increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness who cannot meet their basic needs. Complexity of need is deepening, and the hard data, as well as the personal stories of those being surveyed, are stark reminders of the challenges as homelessness continues to rise.

400 Toits also ran a public campaign in the city called ‘Challenge Citoyen 2018’, which

brought together the partner organisations and local university students to develop innovative housing solutions. This campaign reinforced the momentum from the Connections Week, to move the focus onto developing long-term solutions for chronic rough sleepers in Brussels. With several Housing First programmes already in existence in the city, the campaign successfully developed a modular housing programme at the end of 2018.

“Without the co-ordination and mobilisation of all those who are closely and indirectly involved, including the general public, politicians, private investors, academics, architects, (the list goes on...), we, alone, cannot make the deep-rooted changes needed to end homelessness in Brussels. Only together will we succeed.”

Adrienne Van Vyve, Project Manager at Infirmiers De Rue / 400 Toits



Transformation and mobilisation

Valencia, Spain



The city of Valencia held the first Connections Week of the whole European campaign in April 2016. Co-ordinated by RAIS Fundación, a national homelessness charity in Spain, over 280 people volunteered, including many with previous experience of homelessness.

For many cities within the campaign, the survey findings have been used to give them their first ever clear picture of what changes are needed at a local level. A 2015 independent survey by the Valencia City Government counted 63 people sleeping rough in the city, yet the mobilisation of a Connections Week the following year found 404 people sleeping on the streets. More than one-in-ten of people interviewed had become homeless due to their physical health and of

all those surveyed, one in four had chronic health issues affecting their major organs.

Findings from the very first Connections Week in Valencia were shared across the campaign and learning from RAIS' co-ordination in both Valencia and Alicante were shared with other cities who had recently joined the campaign.

“At RAIS Fundación, we thought it was vital to be part of the driving force piloting this European campaign. We thought the campaign clearly connected with us as an organisation through an approach based on transformation, change and citizen mobilisation... aimed at learning more about the reality of homelessness and about homeless people, linked to an effort to change the system.”

Luis Carlos Perea, RAIS Fundación

Tracking progress

“Collecting and sharing person-specific data to accurately track progress toward ending homelessness.”

Accurate data on people experiencing homelessness across the campaign varies hugely. We have learnt that cities with better data on the scale and nature of rough sleeping are more able to design and deliver effective housing solutions.

Knowing who is on the streets and what their specific needs are can help services work better together to identify gaps in service provision and ensure that once people are housed, they stay there permanently. Understanding why people become street homeless is a first step in stopping people from ever becoming homeless in the first place.





Establishing the scale of the challenge

Barcelona, Spain



Barcelona was one of the first cities to join the campaign in early 2016. It is led by Arrels Fundació, an organisation that has a long history of working to provide housing and social support and care to those experiencing homelessness in the city.

Homelessness in Barcelona is a significant and growing issue and Arrels understood for years that the numbers in Barcelona were far greater than were being acknowledged by the local municipality.

In 2016 Arrels delivered a campaign engaging hundreds of members of the local community, which included the city's first Connections Week, known locally as #CensSenseLlar. Rallying their supporters around the Catalan slogan of #NingúDormintAlCarrer ("No-one sleeping on the street") – Arrels were able to survey hundreds of people sleeping rough. They have since completed Connections Weeks every year and are working to change public awareness around the issues of housing and the solutions needed to solve the challenging homelessness problem in Barcelona.

Over three years the Barcelona campaign has completed almost a thousand surveys of local people experiencing homelessness, which highlights the scale of rough sleeping that the local municipality cannot ignore. As well as keeping rough sleeping numbers on the local political agenda, Arrels have launched a project called Flat Zero which provides emergency accommodation for people awaiting placement in one of their 73 Housing First units. In the last few years, Arrels and Fundació Mambré (a housing organisation created by four organisations) have also begun offering repairs to owners of empty properties in exchange for six-years low rent to house homeless people. They now manage 100 flats in the city, housing over 200 people across their different accommodation services.

"To think that we are in Barcelona, a city so beautiful, so rich, so full and what it has are many people in absolute poverty surrounded by wealth. Seeing it with your own eyes is still a pain inside that touches the part of our local social consciousness. We are no longer talking about world inequality but of people living outside our front door."

Anna, volunteer with CensSenseLlar2017



Creating the first European By-Name List

Croydon, United Kingdom



In Croydon, they recognised that they needed accurate, timely information on who is sleeping rough at any one time and of that group, who would be considered a chronic rough sleeper. They understood that this data needed to come from all services working with people experiencing homelessness – and therefore it should be a community-wide initiative.

Building on learning from the Community Solutions model in the USA, the campaign started by developing a City Self-Assessment Tool that was used for their first Connections Week survey. This enabled them to build up a more in-depth understanding of individual chronic rough sleepers in the Borough. World Habitat provided an initial grant of £10,000 to enable them to work with Community Solutions for a year. Community Solutions came to Croydon and ran a set of

Action Labs, working with the local community to design a solution that fitted the local context.

These sessions and the follow-up support have been the catalyst to enable Croydon to implement the UK's first co-ordinated 'Quality By-Name List' (BNL). Intended to include everyone who is rough sleeping in Croydon, it also tracks the numbers of chronic rough sleepers encountered by a broad range of services in the Borough, including more informal accommodation and day services who do not use London's main Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) recording system. Co-ordination and monitoring of the list is overseen by the Rough Sleeping Task and Targeting Group, who liaise with community partners and service providers who are the designated access points for information into the system.

Involving the community in solutions

“People are concerned about the individuals in their communities who have no roof to sleep under and they want to play a meaningful part in helping to find solutions.”

One of the most powerful campaign principles is the importance of community involvement. A campaign to end street homelessness will only succeed if it is able to enthuse local communities with a shared belief that this difficult problem can be solved.

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People moved into permanent accommodation



Young people are part of the solution

Leicester, United Kingdom



For a city like Leicester, it's impossible to engage with the local community in the centre of the city without including the large, vibrant and enthusiastic student population. De Montfort University (DMU) is one of two universities in Leicester, and their DMU Local volunteering initiative helps create positive change across a range of volunteer activities in the city.

Leicester's campaign delivered a Connections Week in 2017. This was the first time there had been a full survey of the city in 16 years. Ninety-three homeless people were surveyed in Leicester across the week.

The Connections Week found that people on the streets in Leicester face multiple and complex health needs with the most severe cases involving physical health, mental health and substance use issues. The majority (95%) of people interviewed had medium to high vulnerability scores. Two in every five people (40%) said that their homelessness had followed a traumatic episode or experience. There was a mixed picture of 'aspiration'

and 'hope' with no clear link between levels of hope, age or length of homelessness.

Led by the expertise of local homelessness charity Action Homeless, this partnership included students who were engaged throughout the training sessions, the interviews, the data inputting and the community report event the week after. On one night over eighty students from DMU volunteered and interviewed 31 homeless people.

"Our campaign involved students at the university and a range of public sector and charity colleagues... [This] helped to secure Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funding for the city, prompted the creation of the new Leicester Homelessness Charter and a longer-term research partnership, to consider the benefits of a Housing First approach, which provides a stable home and personalised support to help homeless people stay off the streets."

Dr Jo Richardson, Professor of Housing and Social Research, De Montfort University

It is clear from the high level of involvement across the campaign that local residents in campaign cities care deeply about the growing issue of homelessness and want to be involved in ending it. But sometimes people can feel powerless or not know what to do or how to help. Our model enables volunteers to get involved in actions within their local communities, which increases their understanding of the complex issue of homelessness.

To end street homelessness, we need everyone to be involved, beyond the usual organisations, and must include the energy, compassion, empathy and goodwill of local communities.





Galvanising public support Brighton, United Kingdom



Brighton and Hove has developed a uniquely community-led campaign. Run by volunteers from major commissioned services from across the city, as well as local authority staff and commissioners themselves, this group is able to build on public support to develop homelessness solutions.

GalvaniseBH held a Connections Week in December 2017, which engaged with 125 people experiencing street homelessness. The results of the survey showed a need for a hub and rapid assessment centre, which the Council is now funding. Following the Connections Week, GalvaniseBH brought together over 100 volunteers from the local community to work together on local solutions. They set up Ambition Development Groups to look at key areas such as Housing First, Self-Help Housing, building modular housing and finding affordable private rented accommodation.

The campaign has also been successful in creating strategic change through the Council's Rough Sleeping Strategy and a new commitment to the values of Housing First from the Council's Housing and New Homes Committee.

“Volunteering for Galvanise was very different because it broke down the barriers. When you're sitting down with homeless people and talking about what life is like for them – it doesn't feel like ‘us and them’ anymore. When I'm out and about in Brighton, I stop and chat and that now feels very natural. The day after Galvanise, I found out about Streets Café in Brighton through other volunteers and I intend to get involved next term.”

Volunteer for GalvaniseBH



Working together for the long-term

Westminster, United Kingdom



One of the most powerful elements in the campaign are the thousands of people who have committed themselves – often through volunteering – to the idea of ending street homelessness. A key challenge for the campaign cities is how to work with volunteers for the medium and long-term – utilising their energy and commitment beyond a one-off action of volunteering. How do you engage the community to get involved in ending rough sleeping all the time?

Led by St Mungo's, agencies in Westminster worked together to deliver a Connections Week in the heart of central London in July 2016. With around 250 volunteers over several nights, they were able to complete over 200 surveys of people experiencing rough sleeping. The Connections Week acted as a catalyst for the agencies to continue to work together and they formed a longer-term initiative called Westminster Homeless Action Together (WHAT).

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 it the most.”

The time for ending – not managing – street homelessness is now. This can only be achieved by thinking radically about the actions we can take, to create improved local systems that provide lasting and genuine pathways off the streets. Too many systems are designed without thinking about the individuals that navigate within them, and this can lead to people falling between the cracks of service provision.

Learning from the campaign has shown us that systems change cannot be achieved by better data alone. Our model of using Connections Weeks to record the stories, interests and aspirations of people on the streets ensures that our campaign cities use these experiences to improve services for everyone.





Delivering systems change Torbay, United Kingdom



Torbay is a small place with big ideas to change, not only the outcomes for people experiencing homelessness, but also the way that the system works in their area to truly meet their goal of ending street homelessness. Over the past few years – as part of its campaign work – Torbay has started to radically transform the way services are run for those who need it the most.

Following significant cuts to funding in 2014, Torbay's homelessness provision was reduced to one Council funded hostel and a single outreach worker funded entirely by charitable donations. Torbay also saw a dramatic rise in rough sleeping and begging activity in the city centre. Services within the area recognised that what was needed was a complete rethink in how services operated.

The City Council and partners Shekinah took some bold and radical steps in thinking about how they could start truly ending rough sleeping. In 2017 Torbay joined the campaign and used their first Connections Week to bring together partner organisations, recruit volunteers, and implement a local rough sleeping referral line.

Torbay commissioned a Housing First Feasibility Study by the national homelessness charity Crisis, to investigate and evidence how a wholesale introduction of a Housing First system could be introduced within the area. The Council subsequently accepted both Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing as a strategic direction and provided £500,000 for two years funding for a Housing First service from April 2019.

Torbay sees Housing First as part of a wider systems change approach to commissioning of all support services across the coastal area. They believe that ending street homelessness can only be achieved by going beyond a partnership and traditional commissioning approach and moving towards genuine alliances between the local Council and traditional commissioned services. Recognising success in the neighbouring city of Plymouth, Torbay has embedded an alliance commissioning model in which all parties share equal risk and responsibility for decision making with the performance of services built on the ethos of "your problem is my problem, and my problem is your problem."



Working better together

Westminster Homeless Action Together | Westminster, United Kingdom



Westminster has the highest concentration of rough sleeping in the UK. This includes a very high proportion of people who have migrated – from across the country and overseas – into the centre of London. This presents significant barriers for supporting people into accommodation and away from the streets. Westminster Homeless Action Together (WHAT) is a partnership that brings together decision-makers from key charities and public sector organisations working in Westminster.

WHAT is committed to increasing joint working, so that outcomes for people experiencing homelessness in Central London are improved, despite the challenges in accessing affordable accommodation. The WHAT approach is also challenging a long history of competition and, at times, difficult relationships with the aim of improving services for those who are homeless in Westminster. This is particularly important at a time of rising homelessness and limited resources.

It does this by delivering three areas of work.

1. Convening a strategic group made up of representatives from both commissioned and non-commissioned services

2. Coordinating a network of local practitioners and community organisations
3. Developing specific rough sleeping initiatives that work across the different agencies.

One example of a cross-agency initiative is the Day Centres Development Project, which has been designed to bring together agencies to create a consistent approach to service provision. This includes developing a joint women's group, sharing information on clients and creating consistent ways of working – so that the most vulnerable clients continue to receive the best support available. This project included a strong “co-production” element with clients from different centres shaping activity and decision-making throughout.

WHAT is now developing its role further in working with the local authority to align statutory and voluntary funding for rough sleeping in a much more strategic way.



A city-wide solution

Leicester Homelessness Charter | Leicester, United Kingdom



Ending rough sleeping is not the responsibility of just one organisation, and our campaign has shown that effective local campaigning should look to involve as many local stakeholders as possible. Leicester has a history of effective partnership working, and their campaign – led by Action Homeless – is formed out of the Leicester Homelessness Partnership which included De Montfort University, DMU Local, East Midlands Housing Group, Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service, Leicestershire Police, The Y, Inclusion Healthcare and Leicester City Council.

Following their Connections Week in November 2017, information gathered through the survey had a wide-ranging impact on the way local systems worked together in the city. Evidence from the survey proved valuable in the local authority's five-year Homelessness Strategy, with Leicester also receiving funding through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)'s Rough Sleeper Initiative.

One of the direct consequences of the 2017 Connections Week was heightened awareness of rough sleeping within the wider community.

It engaged with a range of partners including the universities, statutory bodies and faith groups. Out of this engagement, the Diocese of Leicester conveyed a series of open meetings and momentum gathered to develop a Homelessness Charter for the City. The charter provides a vision, set of values and principles that can be shared by all of those working to prevent homelessness in the city. It also provides a framework for improvement in the way different groups and organisations support people who are homeless or sleeping rough; enabling change; raising awareness; providing advice and developing a more co-ordinated approach.

The campaign in Leicester demonstrated clearly the merits in different members of communities coming together to tackle homelessness. Through the desire and commitment of local stakeholders who may not always overlap, the campaign helped draw attention to the deep contextual issues facing rough sleepers in the city. This has been a catalyst for an ongoing partnership between charities, the local authority, the City Mayor and the wider student and civil society organisations.

“You have to invest time in building trust with all the service-providers. It took a long time but once we had the trust, we could deliver a better approach ... The campaign has been a vehicle, it gave us an ethos to gather people around.”

Campaign partner

“The campaign is great in coalescing a need for systemic change ... The campaign has unblocked the path to closer co-operation.”

Campaign partner





Case study

Wayne | Leicester



Wayne, 39 years old, has been supported by Action Homeless (lead organisation in the Leicester campaign) during the past year. During this time, he had been known to rough sleep with a friend in a car park of a city centre industrial complex.

While rough sleeping, Wayne was regularly regarded as 'entrenched' by existing services in the city, and had not been in a position to accept all previous offers of assistance, including temporary hostels. Collecting scrap metal for sale during the day, Wayne would cope with sleeping rough by self-medicating during the night using New Psychoactive Substances (NPS).

Due to recent government funding initiatives, Action Homeless has been able to introduce some Housing First accommodation. This has enabled them to offer homes that are suitable for people with very high levels of support need. New funding received has provided extra support workers, so that accommodation could be offered to Wayne without pre-conditions, and without access to statutory benefits.

With support from Action Homeless street outreach workers, Wayne was invited to consider whether the accommodation option suited his needs or not. As a result of this flexibility, Wayne felt able to accept the offer where previously others had failed. Although he claimed to have no fear of rough sleeping again, support staff from Action Homeless worked in a strengths-based way, to ensure the things that Wayne felt most important to him were maintained. Staff therefore worked constructively with him as he continued to collect scrap metal, as this was what he felt kept him from committing petty theft and therefore ending up in prison.

Wayne continues to use substances while in the accommodation, but has engaged in new coaching programmes, personalised his room and taken up some leisure activities. Wayne avoids too much engagement with his former peer network in Leicester city centre and over time has started to miss 'the street' less and less. This has been the longest time that Wayne has spent consistently living in one place in six years and it has given him the stability to start to build an alternative to what he calls his "street life."



Learning from and sharing with others

“There must be a willingness to contribute to sharing knowledge with other cities whilst also learning from their campaign.”

One of the campaign’s central beliefs has been the transformative power of bringing together committed people to work collectively on the ambitious goal of ending street homelessness. While the city campaigns are all independent, our role has been to bring these people together so that their passion and commitment is supported. The campaign provides a range of opportunities for cities to learn and share good practice both formally and informally.

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Active cities



Support and learning between cities

Peer Exchanges

The campaign supports cities to transfer ideas and approaches both from within and outside the network, and we help our cities grow by learning from each other in a mutually supportive way.

As cities joined the campaign and engaged local communities through Connections Weeks, we funded participants from across the campaign to attend Peer Exchanges in Alicante, Brighton, Brussels, Edinburgh and Torbay. This enabled key practical learning to be shared.

We also recognise the strength that cities have in providing mutual support through independent

advice, running their own webinars, sharing vital practical documents and attending key events of partner cities. Peer Exchanges are also about autonomous learning, and we respond to direct requests – in 2018 Bratislava asked us to support a visit to Barcelona so they could learn more about their Flat Zero model. This new innovative approach to providing immediate accommodation to rough sleepers in Barcelona led to the development of a new training flat accommodation model in Bratislava.





Reflecting on challenges and growing together

Annual Gathering of cities



Over two days, representatives of all the campaign cities come together to share experiences, reflect on their achievements and challenges, and work collectively to develop shared campaign goals. There is a full programme of training sessions, presentations and site visits. Above all else the Annual Gatherings provide an important and energising event that enables us to focus on how we can individually and collectively work towards ending street homelessness in the year ahead.

These events – which have taken place in London and Amsterdam – have also been used by cities to invite key local funders and commissioners to help develop support for local campaigning. They also provide an opportunity to meet with other inspiring organisations making real progress in ending street homelessness, such as Discus in Amsterdam. In 2019 the Annual

Gathering will be in Bratislava, Slovakia – to show solidarity with the challenging homelessness context in the country while also learning from the inspiring work of their campaign.

“I can’t tell you how much we got out of the gathering this year. The learning is on so many levels. The opportunity to hear about the other cities’ progress and talk to them in detail about how they achieved it, [such] great ideas of how to innovate that we can bring back and implement, and in particular, the learning from Discus, [who] were such an inspiration ... We got great ideas from them, but more than that, they helped us challenge our thinking about how to really achieve change.”

Debbie Freeman, Torbay

“Three words to describe the gathering: Empower, challenges, unity!”

Pavol Sabela, Bratislava



Tools to end street homelessness

The European End Street Homelessness Campaign Toolkit



The evidence for the effectiveness of Housing First continues to grow, however the pressing issue for many communities is how to make the changes required, especially in a climate of reducing budgets, lack of access to affordable, secure housing and hostility towards homeless people. An objective of the campaign is developing practical resources to enable interested communities to deliver their own local campaigns.

Over the past three years the campaign has adapted policies, practices and systems used in campaigns in the USA and Canada, and created some of our own, to build a European model. This was no small task, and we've learnt there is no single recipe for success, but there are common issues, themes and approaches across European cities.

We developed the European End Street Homelessness Campaign Toolkit to help cities that are active

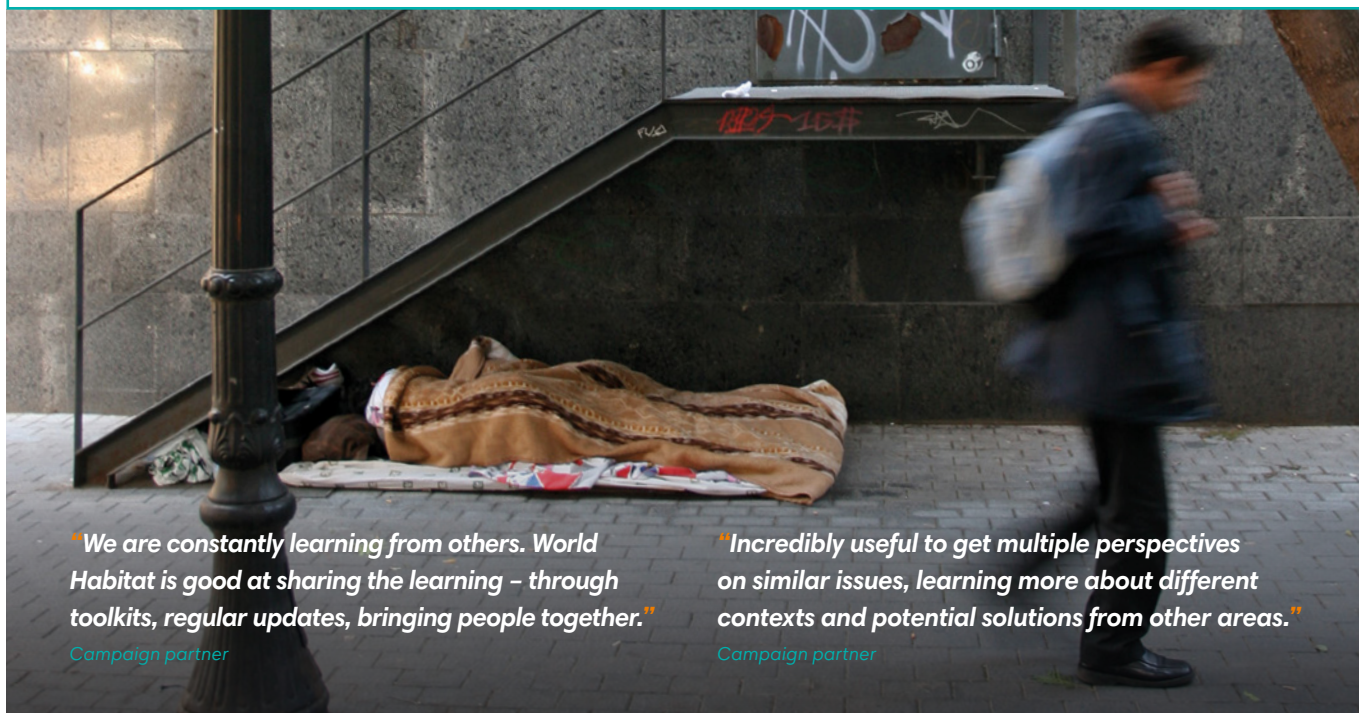
members of the campaign to learn from others' experiences – with a view to increasing our collective impact. The practical tools, campaign materials and case studies provide a range of free resources that can also be used by any community interested in developing a campaign to end street homelessness.

As the campaign cities continue to make progress and as we learn about other amazing examples, we will continue to add to the Toolkit.

Are you interested in finding out more? Get in touch and share your experiences if you feel it could be useful to you in your work – all we ask is that you contact us to let us know:

info@world-habitat.org

www.world-habitat.org/homelessness/toolkit



"We are constantly learning from others. World Habitat is good at sharing the learning – through toolkits, regular updates, bringing people together."

Campaign partner

"Incredibly useful to get multiple perspectives on similar issues, learning more about different contexts and potential solutions from other areas."

Campaign partner



The road ahead: 2019-2021

The campaign is deeply ambitious in its goal to achieve systemic change and end street homelessness. The two key organising principles – Housing First and community involvement – are both deliberately disruptive of the status quo. But campaigns aiming to secure systemic change are not obvious candidates for quick wins: “If it was straightforward it would have been solved already.”

Over the last three years working with a network of committed cities and partners, we have seen important progress taking place across a number of European cities. These are cities that didn't have high levels of government commitment, access to specialist funding or easy access to land or homes.

Together, we have learned about the importance of developing effective local partnerships, clear strategic campaign plans, raising adequate funding and resources, developing robust data systems, finding suitable housing and, crucially, a sense of urgency. None of the cities started working on the campaign with all these factors in place and yet, as highlighted in this report, they have shown how it is possible – even in the most difficult of circumstances – to start to make progress on the journey to end street homelessness.

Over the next three years we have two key strategic aims.

1. We will continue demonstrating that a wide range of communities can take action and make changes that lead to significant reductions in homelessness. Each campaign city will work towards a strategic City Plan, in order to set and report clear targets for reducing chronic rough sleeping. We will also continue to proactively work with our active campaign cities.
2. We will increase our work to proactively transfer learning from campaign cities to ensure it benefits a much wider group of communities across Europe. We will also continue to strengthen our work with a network of other organisations committed to ending street homelessness.



Fostering effective local partnerships



Implementing strategic campaign plans



Raising adequate funding and resources



Developing robust data systems



Finding suitable housing



Maintaining a sense of urgency

Ending street homelessness is one of the biggest housing challenges we face. Street homelessness is never inevitable or acceptable. Yet it is visible in most of our cities. We will not accept this because we know there are ways to address street homelessness – we have seen these for ourselves. Many first signs of progress are being made through this campaign. Progress may be frustratingly slow for many, but the first hurdles are so often the hardest to overcome.

This campaign will keep pushing until street homelessness has ended, and the most vulnerable people in our communities are provided with a home with which to start living to their full potential again.





the european
**end street
homelessness**
campaign



world
habitat






**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.

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