

Ewan Aitken



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Tackling the causes and
consequences of
homelessness

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The Housing Emergency

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Presenting to Settled

Journeys of people experiencing homelessness in Edinburgh
and the finances relating to these



Tonight, in Scotland's Capital City, there will be around 5000 households in temporary accommodation,. The average length of time a family spends in temporary accommodation is **507 days.....**

Our new report, *Presentation to Settled*, suggest this number could cost the local authority and other agencies as much as **£88.8 million** from presentation to when the household is found settled accommodation.

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Homelessness and Health



People experiencing homelessness are disproportionately susceptible to poor health. They are at far higher risk of dying young than the general public. At the extreme end of homelessness habitual rough sleepers have a life expectancy of 47...

Scottish Government figures estimate that in 2022, **244 people died whilst homeless (though not always rough sleeping)**, and that nearly 63% of the homeless women who died were aged under 45, and 44% of homeless men who died were under 45.

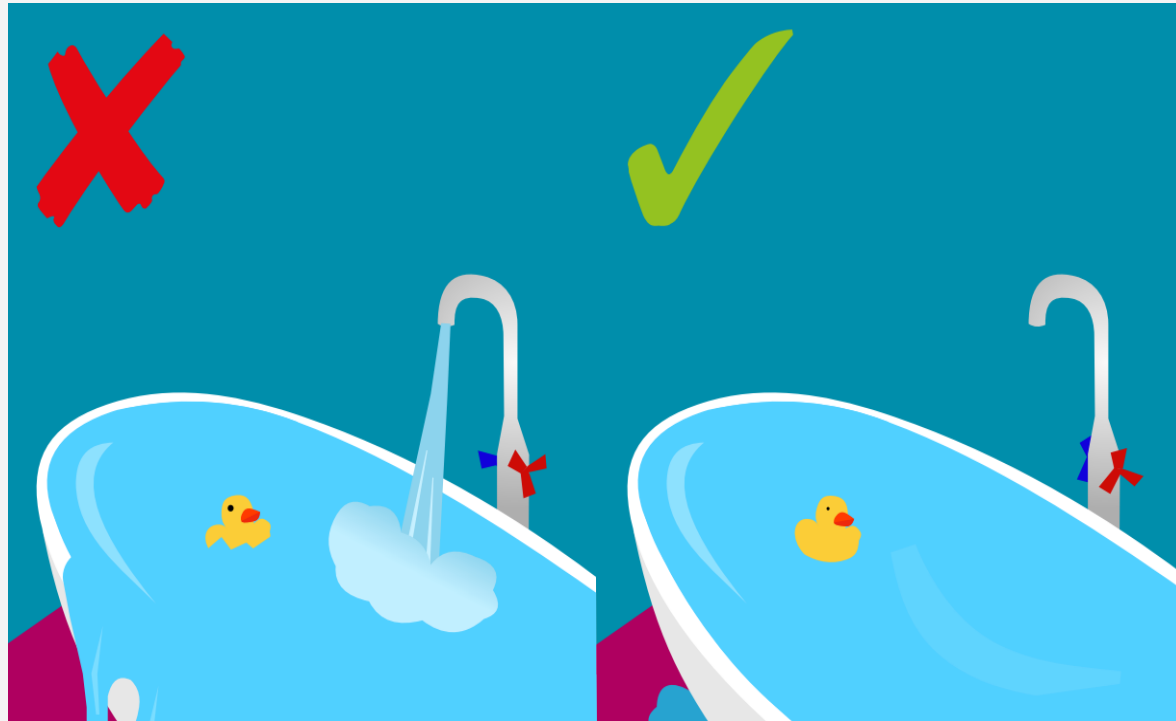
Build More?

We **cannot** simply build our way out of a housing crisis.

Homelessness is not inevitable. It can be **predicted** and that means it can be **prevented**.



Why a Public Health Approach?



Right now, the homelessness system is like an overflowing bath with the taps still running at full blast. We will never empty the bath if we don't turn off the taps. It's no use getting better and better at managing the crisis of homelessness. We need to stop people from becoming homeless in the first place.

Cyrenians PUBLIC HEALTH Approach TO HOMELESS PREVENTION



PREVENTION

SPEAKING TO A 'WHOLE POPULATION' AUDIENCE

EARLY INTERVENTION

TARGETED TO AN 'AT RISK' POPULATION

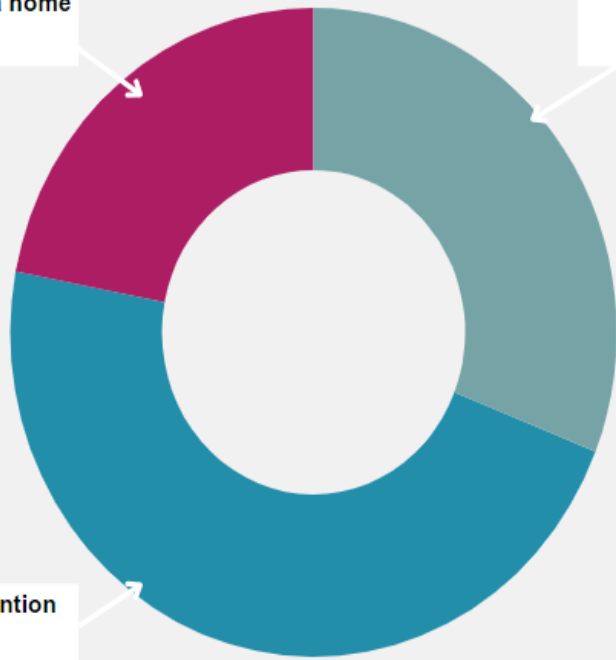
SUPPORT INTO A HOME

SERVICES TARGETED TO THOSE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

TAKING A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO HOMELESS PREVENTION

Public Health Approach Services

Support into a home
22%



Prevention
31%

Early Intervention
47%

Prevention

Royal Edinburgh Hospital Community Garden
 Midlothian Hospital Community Garden
 Young Adult Service (YAS)
 Green Skills Centre
 Veterans
 Scottish Centre for Conflict Resolution (SCCR)
 Food Education
 Golden Years
 OPAL Borders
 OPAL West Lothian
 Fareshare
 Pantries
 Scottish Frontline Network
 St Martin's in the Field
 All in for Change
 Youth Participation
17

Early Intervention

Lothian & Edinburgh Abstinence Programme (LEAP)
 Art & Greenspace
 Justice Employability
 Fairstart
 Quest
 Community Link Worker - Falkirk
 Keep in Touch
 SQA Numeracy
 Creative Natives
 Key to College
 Key to Potential - Edinburgh
 Moving Forward
 Key to Potential - Falkirk

 Amber
 Asked to Leave
 Keeping Families Together
 Promise Mid & East
 Addiewell
 RESET
 Community Link Worker - Edinburgh
 Gambling Harm
 Income Maximisation
 Ability Development Worker
24

Support into a Home

Farm Community
 Lotus Community
 City Community
 Crighton Place
 Social Bite Village
 Justice Outreach
 Foundations
 Homeless Navigator
 Community Link Worker - Edinburgh
 Hospital InReach
 WiSH
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Community Gardens & Justice

X said that he was 'surprised how quickly I felt at ease talking about my project ideas in the garden and sharing my music' ...'thank you for taking time and being interested, I appreciate it'

X has showed a genuine desire to learn and occasionally when it has just been him turning up on a rainy day, we've run through growing theory, plant families, different growing spaces. JN has helped select the crops we have grown this winter. We gave him a tray of each seeds we had planted which he has been nurturing at home alongside ours, using the knowledge learnt during his hours.

X (participant) 'I appreciate being treated as an equal by the staff and volunteers in the garden and would like to come back and visit'



Edinburgh Recovery Activity (ERA)

“ERA is about Connectivity. It has helped me connect with other human beings, engage in conversation and helped me massively with my confidence. It has also helped with my patience and opened me up to new hobbies.”

“Thank you, I needed to be with people today and I needed this. I don’t know where I would have gone if this hadn’t been on.”

“I don’t know anyone who doesn’t know another person who doesn’t need help or a friend. The kindness of others keeps me going, the kindness of ERA extends that. ERA help hundreds of people to be connected and recover as best as is possible. It’s the kindness of others that taught me how imperative it was to keep going and show kindness to others. For me, ERA is all about communication, we die without it.”



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Lothian & Edinburgh Abstinence Programme (LEAP)

“I am very willing to do my bit to contribute to the community and to step in when others need help. We are a team – there is no “I” in team.”

“Anxiety has gone, none in weeks. Slight worries but due to leaving soon. Healthy, eating well, payments set back up. Metal health is so much better.”

“I feel massively a lot better than when I came in, but am also aware that I am still unwell and when stuff happens like aggression, I get knocked easily. But I’m better at coping with it than I was and picking myself back up again and chatting to peers and friends for support instead of getting stuck in my own head. The communal space and quiet support and help from the staff has played an important part in me developing these coping strategies”



Community Link Work

61-year-old person that suffered brain aneurism twice and was unsure how to proceed with her professional life, finances and find new meaning in her life. In a managerial corporate job for over 20 years now.

“Thank you so much for all your time and support. You have taken the time to listen and help me to reflect and identify potential solutions during what has been a traumatic period for me....

As mentioned, I had not felt at the point of being able to make decisions about future direction, but this has given me some ideas and options which is a step forward.”

79-year-old person who lost all their confidence and was suicidal after having long term disputes with upstairs neighbour about a bathroom leak that was left unattended for over six months resulting in flooding her flat with water.

“... But taking things back into **MY** control was the best thing and mentally I am so much better. I was in such a state when I saw you and I did appreciate you listening to me, and you helped me a great deal.”



Hospital InReach Team

“I just wanted to say, “thank you”, for the work you did with this patient. In the (bad old) days before Cyrenians Hospital In-Reach team, the patient would’ve been condemned to the all too familiar pattern of discharge to homelessness, relapse to dependent drinking, readmission, repeat. Instead, your proactive liaising with housing, Citizen’s Advice, social work and addictions services have given the patient a realistic chance of stability.”

“Empathy, you know, just listening and really getting where you’re coming from. No fakeness or judgement – what a difference knowing someone is properly listening and they understand why I am the way I am. Don’t get that very often – I haven’t had a support worker I trusted before.”

“It is really isolating being in hospital, never mind being homeless for the first time at my age. But I never felt alone, I had someone on my side. She just sorted it all out – I’m in a good place now and was interviewed for a flat today.”



Modelling Public Health Approach to Homeless Prevention

Building strong communities where people build strong relationships and help is local and through known relationships.

Creating a “no wrong door” person centred approach built on trusted relationships at the heart of every interaction with Third and Public Sector as an opportunity.

Making sure **no-one** leaves public service support into homelessness – Ask and Act duty of Housing Bill.



Questions?



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