

This blog is written by a member of the independent Commission. These views do not necessarily represent the views of the Archbishops' or the Church of England.

Not having a secure home means not being able to set roots in a place, become part of a community and flourish in the ways that we are meant to. As churches there are many things that we can do to help prevent people falling into the sort of situations that I found myself in. What will you do to end homelessness?



*erience of homelessness*

We know that home is more than just bricks and mortar. It means safety, security, and an opportunity to build your life on a stable foundation.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Housing, Church and Community wants to encourage churches to think about how they can best respond to local housing need. Right now, that's more vital than ever.

During the pandemic, homelessness in the UK has changed dramatically. As lockdown began, thousands of rough sleepers were moved into self-contained accommodation. We discovered that it was possible to practically end rough sleeping overnight, if the political will was there. Evictions were paused, reducing the possibility of a spike in homelessness of all kinds.

As we move forward together, we can't just return to the way things were before, with individuals and families up and down the country facing homelessness. It's crucial that we respond now.

We need to reimagine how we respond to homelessness. As churches, we need to think especially hard. Whilst night shelters and drop in centres are some of the most common forms of social action run by churches, they're difficult to operate right now because of social distancing.

It's key that this discussion is led by those with lived experience of homelessness, and that's why it's great to see that the Joint Public Issues Team of the Baptists, URC, Methodists and Church of Scotland are inviting them to the centre of their discussions. They're amplifying their voices, sharing their stories and asking them what they want churches to do to help end homelessness. [You can find out about their campaign here.](#)

From supported accommodation to social care, campaigning to provision of employment skills, these stories highlight a whole raft of actions churches can take. Many of these responses are already tried and tested – see [the Commission's blogs](#) for details of where they've worked – and they just need rolling out more widely. Crucially, they back up the Commission's determination that churches should *prevent* people becoming homeless in the first place – by dealing with the root causes. This reduces the need for crisis responses and, more importantly, means that one less person faces a night without a place to call their own.

In the last few months, we've proved that homelessness isn't inevitable. Now's the time for us to be brave, to hear God's call as He asks us to live out His word differently in this new reality. So, what will you and your church do to help end homelessness?

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