

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.



The Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Housing, Church and Community believes that churches are well placed to respond to housing need in their local area. Right now, this is more important than ever. That's why we're supporting Hope into Action's 'Call to Alms'. They're asking church members and ministers to join one of their zoominars on the 3rd of June to discuss how churches can play an active role in meeting the growing need for supported housing. To register, click [here](#). To find out more, see a letter below from their founder, Ed Walker.

The Bishop of Kensington, The Right Revd Dr Graham Tomlin - the Commission's vice chair – said: "Hope into Action have proven in the past that they can help churches make a significant difference to housing and homelessness. I encourage people to join me at Hope into Action's 'Call to Alms' zoominar on the 3rd of June. Together, let's do what we can to ensure that no-one is left homeless in this difficult period."

Hi Everyone,

Hope into Action help churches to house the homeless. While we provide the house – with the help of philanthropic investors – and provide professional support, churches provide the key ingredient: a caring community to provide friendship and mentoring while people rebuild their lives.

Since Easter we've been thinking, praying and talking about what we should be saying in this crisis. There are so many things we could say. But this week we are launching a campaign - **'a call to alms'** - to try and get more churches to house the homeless. Why are we doing this?

Three reasons:

Firstly, we see a rising tsunami of need in this country:

- 13000 rough sleepers have been temporarily moved into hotels. No-one really knows where they will go next.
- Domestic violence is up by 150% in some areas of the country.
- Unemployment is up.
- Recession is now upon us.
- Once the moratorium on evictions has been lifted, people expect a rise in homelessness.

The second reason is who else will step-up to meet the need?

- Night-shelters are deemed no longer safe.
- It is unlikely that direct funding from central government will be available to extend hotel provision beyond the initial 12 weeks of the lockdown.

The third reason is: There is a real opportunity now to radically improve the way homeless people are dealt with in this country.

- The homeless have been saying for years they don't want to go to hostels (we replied by calling them 'hard to engage'). Perhaps it is time to listen.
- The Government see this and have phoned us up and asked us to help. They like our model.

Ultimately who else is better equipped and positioned to call churches to house the homeless? And if we don't, who else will? So I believe we have a responsibility to lead into this space. A part of me would rather not do this, would rather bury my head and carry on as before. I'd prefer

to ignore the crowds, in part I also fear success and growth. But then I would be being ruled by 'timidity' and 'fear' rather than power, a humble boldness and 'letting our light shine'.

So: This week, we are launching a campaign called 'A call to Alms'. The objective is to get as many churches to a zoominar on the 3rd June, and hopefully many of them will then end up housing the homeless.

I am leaning into God, and upping my prayer. I'd invite you to join me. Calling churches to house the homeless is, absolutely, spiritual. We need more prayer.

Cheers

Ed

To register for one of the zoominars on the 3rd June, click [here](#).

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