

the european
end street homelessness
campaign



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IMPACT

REPORT

2021



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campaign



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working together to
#endstreethomelessness

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FOREWORD

World Habitat is an organisation with a unique insight and opportunity to improve housing around the globe. In a world which can appear overwhelmed by deep problems and challenges, World Habitat looks for solutions that can help people thrive. In 2021 – despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, lockdown restrictions and operating limitations – our work to tackle the most extreme form of homelessness not only continued but became stronger. We championed and helped more communities to learn from each other to: address housing exclusion; develop innovations; and pilot new approaches to ending street homelessness.

For the last five years we have led The European End Street Homelessness Campaign – a network of local city campaigns, all working with the same set of principles to end street homelessness in their communities. We are proud that World Habitat continues to host this growing movement of committed and passionate housing advocates – championing permanent housing solutions and fighting for an end to street homelessness.



439

people placed into permanent long-term accommodation

2021 was a year in which the continuing COVID-19 pandemic developed from a global emergency with immediate consequences, to a longer-term policy issue. Initial successes were remarkable in delivering emergency housing, driven in large part by major government responses and delivered by effective local partnership working. These temporary solutions developed into a need for clear commitments to long-term solutions and the resources to back them up. By the end of 2021 it is estimated that £750m was spent on tackling homelessness in the UK alone. A staggering amount, yet much of this was spent reactively, alleviating homelessness on a temporary rather than permanent basis.

In many countries across Europe this level of investment in ending homelessness (temporarily or otherwise) remains out of reach, yet the housing need is often greater. The pandemic, and its consequences for too many across the world, has reinforced the need for permanent housing solutions. Everyone should have a right to a safe place to stay – a home.



40

partner organisations across 11 European cities worked with the European End Street Homelessness Campaign

As our campaign has grown, we saw great successes across the year – sometimes against all odds, and despite COVID-19 impacting on World Habitat’s ability to travel and promote physical learning exchanges. We adapted our approach to supporting local partners so they could continue to make an impact by challenging negative attitudes about homelessness and developing local housing solutions. As a result, we have seen new housing projects starting in Bratislava, the growth of the Housing First programme in Leicester, and major ongoing success as Homeless Network Scotland continue to deliver Housing First across Scotland with their Housing First Pathfinder. Organisations working on the campaign were able to provide 439 people with access to permanent long-term accommodation.

We are not alone in calling for solutions to street homelessness however, and in 2021 we learnt from the successes delivered through the pandemic by making our strongest commitment to date to work hard and campaign with others so that the impact of the European campaign stretches beyond our immediate network. Our social media campaign for World Homeless Day centred on ‘Working Together to #EndStreetHomelessness’, continuing to build solidarity between partners, reaching around a third of a million users and almost ten million impressions on Twitter.



0.33m

Twitter users reached by our ‘Working Together to #EndStreetHomelessness’ social media campaign on World Homeless Day

We cannot operate in isolation, and World Habitat used our global influence to join campaigns across Europe, including:

- ‘#SupportDontDeport’ calling on UK authorities not to wrongfully deport EU nationals found sleeping on the streets
- co-authoring a report entitled ‘Homeful – Exploring housing-led approaches to resolve and prevent homelessness’ for the Chartered Institute of Housing Presidency
- adding a valuable international spotlight on housing rights abuse by joining an Hungarian campaign to protect social housing.

We cannot be silent on housing injustice – and in the coming years our programme will look to influence policy and practice through direct delivery and in coalition with others to achieve our shared goal of ending street homelessness.

Despite the challenges faced by World Habitat in 2021, it does not compare to the challenges of the many individuals without a safe place to call home, or the NGOs and others working ‘on the ground’ that provide vital support services. I am nevertheless proud to highlight just some of the impact of our work in 2021 and extend a huge ‘thank-you’ to all our partners for their commitment and resilience as we all continue to work together to end street homelessness in our communities for good.

Patrick Duce
Programme Lead (Homelessness)

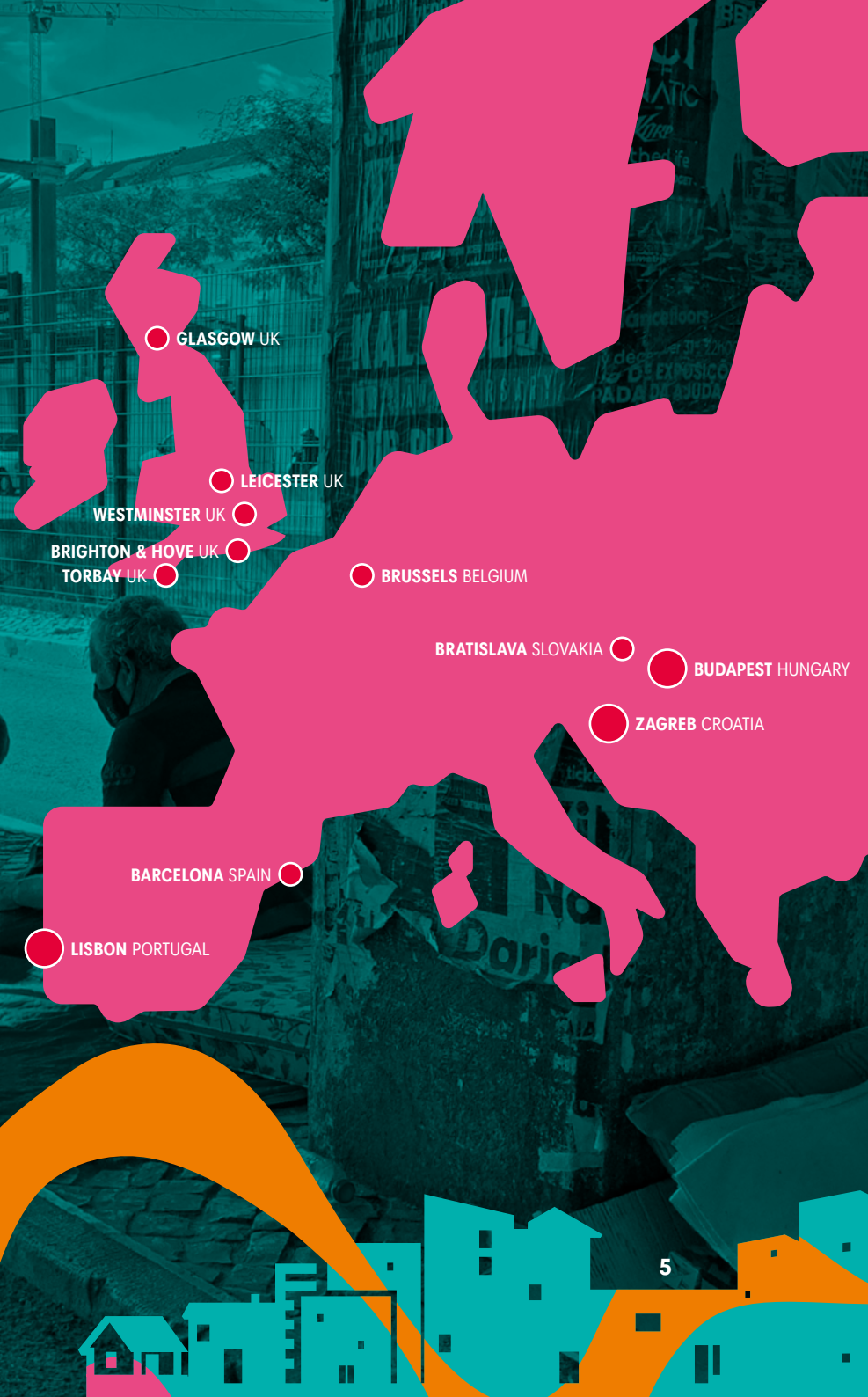


GROWING THE CAMPAIGN IN 2021

World Habitat has over 40 years of insight, expertise and understanding on how to improve housing around the world. The European End Street Homelessness Campaign works with partners who understand how their local housing context needs to change to tackle systemic housing injustice.

This is easier in some cities and locations than it is in others. In 2021, our campaign committed to not only working with those that have the necessary finance, buildings, and political backing, but to also increase our focus on working where the housing need is greatest. Across all our programmes, World Habitat shines a beacon on areas of good practice and takes these positive housing solutions to those that need it.

The homelessness crisis exists right across Europe, and in 2021 we welcomed new partners from Budapest, Zagreb, and Lisbon into our campaign for change. Each one has a specific starting point and unique housing context – but they all have a common desire to share knowledge and learn from others with the same overall aims. All are committed to our key principles and believe that housing is a fundamental human right and a basis for human dignity.



NEW CITY SPOTLIGHT **BUDAPEST**



Hungary endures a ‘perfect storm’ when it comes to housing inequality and street homelessness. With around three million people living in housing poverty in the country, living conditions, rental costs and access to housing for social work organisations is at crisis point.

For those that find themselves excluded from housing, whether they are forced to live on the streets or in shelters in the surrounding areas of Budapest, the Hungarian government’s criminalisation of homelessness places people in grave danger. The support provided by the state does not provide a way out of homelessness, there is no comprehensive national policy to tackle homelessness or housing exclusion, and exact data on street homelessness does not exist.

The 2020 World Habitat Awards Bronze winner ‘From Streets to Homes Association’ (ULE) work to address this with programmes inspired by the principles of Housing First. They joined the European End Street Homelessness Campaign in the summer of 2021, committing to developing their approach and supporting others to learn from it across the region.

By the end of 2021, From Streets to Home Association (ULE) have accommodated 72 individuals in permanent homes and run vital employment programmes for people at risk of homelessness in the city. In December 2021 – through a partnership with the Budapest Research Institute and with funding from World Habitat’s Innovation Fund – From Streets to Home Association developed a handbook on creating a social housing agency. The handbook’s launch in December 2021 engaged 50+ representatives from Hungarian municipalities and other stakeholders.

In 2022 ULE plan to use the handbook, combined with their own direct knowledge and experience, to support municipalities to create new, innovative social housing programmes.

In 2021, as part of a local coalition ULE co-produced the paper 'Housing Minimum' – to inform and influence the stated commitments of political parties ahead of national elections in 2022. The paper's policy recommendations call on Hungarian municipalities to tackle the housing crisis by increasing the amount of housing for social purposes.

This commitment to scaling-out positive housing practice, alongside championing the right to housing at a structural level, is one that sits within World Habitat's vision of working towards a world where everyone has a safe and secure place to call home, as part of a successful community.



“ We have joined the Campaign to share our own experiences with other cities and learn from the best practices and innovative solutions being used elsewhere in Europe. As a member of the Campaign, we can amplify our voice in advocating for the changes we know are needed to tackle homelessness and housing exclusion in Budapest and throughout the country.”

Vera Kovács, CEO, From Streets to Home Association, Budapest

NEW CITY SPOTLIGHT **LISBON**



In 2021 we welcomed the city of Lisbon, in Portugal, as a new partner in the campaign. Our lead partner organisation is CRESCER, an award-winning harm-reduction and homelessness NGO that works primarily in Lisbon but is expanding their approach to include work with municipalities beyond the city limits.

With a strong track record since 2001 of delivering projects to support vulnerable and hard-to-reach people, World Habitat were delighted to welcome CRESCER to the campaign. CRESCER are keen to exchange knowledge around best practice across our network, and also develop its evidence base for what works in tackling homelessness in Portugal.

The country of Portugal has a progressive approach to homelessness – and in particular – harm reduction. National strategies since the 1990s have focused on prevention, treatment and the reintegration of individuals, rather than prioritising punitive measures and criminalisation. Despite this however, poverty remains a key driver of homelessness, and in the city of Lisbon in 2020 there were an estimated 3,780 people experiencing street homelessness.

With chronic homelessness, ill health and challenges with substance use being primary drivers of repeat homelessness – CRESCER set up the project É UMA CASA Lisboa Housing First in 2013. This has now grown to a portfolio of 120 Housing First units and is developing plans to work with surrounding municipal governments to grow even further. Based on a harm reduction approach, which include the key aspects of pragmatism, humanism, and respecting choice.

CRESCER has also been successful in delivering employability projects for people with experience of homelessness and social isolation. É UMA MESA is a European Social Fund (ESF) project that provides training and skills for people working in a high-quality restaurant. For those involved in the project, permanent housing is a key part of their support. During the COVID-19 pandemic, despite the restaurant closing to the public, the training programme continued – and with support from Lisbon municipality – the kitchen was converted to provide over 600 meals a day for people in the city. In 2021, this project was awarded a Silver Prize by FEANTSA, for their work towards ending homelessness.

Over the next few years, CRESCER will work to significantly reduce street homelessness by expanding its Housing First approach to surrounding municipalities around Lisbon, growing their employability projects, and developing a rapid intervention outreach team. By building a strong evidence base they can share and guide others who want to follow its path – which is a fundamental part of being in the campaign.

“ We are grateful for the opportunity to expand our network, and – together – a campaign aligned with CRESCER’s goals which believe, and fight for, the possibility to live in cities where no one experiences homelessness.”

Américo Nave, Executive Director, CRESCER, Lisbon



NEW CITY SPOTLIGHT **ZAGREB**



Croatia is a nation of homeowners, with a very small social rented sector in the major cities. There is no national requirement for the provision of general social housing. The country's Social Welfare Act defines homelessness as 'no place of residence, lives in public, can't meet housing needs'.

Using the law's definition provides a figure of 2,000 homeless people nationally. Using ETHOS definitions (a typology of homelessness and housing exclusion developed by the European Federation of organisations working with the people who are homeless (FEANTSA), 10,000 people would be deemed homeless. One-half of the people who are legally defined as homeless are in the city of Zagreb (700-1,000).

The campaign in Zagreb is led by the national NGO Hrvatska mreža za beskućnike (Croatian Homelessness Network), which is a membership body of NGOs working to address street homelessness across Croatia. The aim of the Network is to connect organisations working to improve legal entitlements to care for those who are homeless, and advocate for people's social rights.

The majority of services being delivered in Zagreb are traditional shelter systems, with the total capacity of two shelters being only 180 spaces - which is far below the estimated numbers in need of housing. However, there is little or no support to move people either from shelters or directly from the streets into social housing. In 2021 this number increased due to the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite members of the Croatian Homelessness Network having to rely on shelters, they remain committed to improving data and evidence for the numbers sleeping on the streets of Zagreb and influencing policy makers to develop more

permanent housing solutions. In 2021 Croatian Homelessness Network began a vital EU-funded research project – New Perspective in Homelessness – that will:

- identify gaps in provision within the Croatian housing system
- highlight the experiences of people working and sleeping in shelters
- review the legal and financial status of people experiencing homelessness.

This research project will, once complete in 2022, provide strong evidence-based policy recommendations to increase the social inclusion of people experiencing homelessness in Croatia. This approach matches our campaign principle of knowing who is out there and working with communities to improve housing systems on a local level.

We will work closely with the Network over the next few years, as we support them to develop local action plans, build partnerships in the region and set clear targets for reducing street homelessness in Zagreb and beyond.

“ It is a great honour to be a part of the European End Street Homelessness Campaign. This is an incredible opportunity for Croatian Homelessness Network to learn about other campaign members through this co-operation and participation, to expand current knowledge to some new experiences and to present our work outside of Croatia and achieve new partnerships in the future. All this is aimed at reducing homelessness in Europe together. Together we can do better.”

Helena Babić, Vice-President, Hrvatska mreža za beskućnike (Croatian Homelessness Network)





KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE IN THE DIGITAL SPHERE

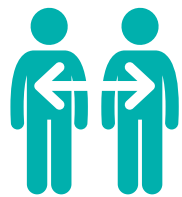
At World Habitat we are committed to finding and sharing good practice from around the world across all our international programmes. We work to facilitate positive change through bringing people together and helping them learn and exchange good practice.

Those participating in our exchange events have the opportunity to gain practical, in-depth understanding of the technical, social and financial aspects of housing solutions and adapt and transfer relevant elements of different approaches to make real change happen in their own context.

“ Our mission is that all the partners we work with have the opportunity to learn and develop their approach, so that ending street homelessness becomes not just about how, but when.”



During 2021, and with ongoing restrictions about meeting in person, we expanded our **exchange** events in the European End Street Homelessness Campaign. Using expertise from external partners, we ensured that our campaign partners learnt from beacons of good practice and the latest research. We were proud to work in partnership with Crisis and the Sheila McKechnie Foundation to deliver these online events – targeting the exchanging and transferring of ideas and using these platforms to build an online community of practice around ending homelessness.



42

people from 13 partner organisations across 11 European cities benefited from our online exchange sessions and opportunities to share knowledge



82%

More than four-in-five participants found the content of World Habitat Homelessness exchanges very useful



91%

More than nine-in-ten exchange participants felt confident about applying skills learnt in their local area of work

What does a 'campaign' mean to you?



“ This exchange on Framing really underlined the values in our communications work and reminded us to never miss talking about the solutions to homelessness when communicating to the public.”

“ We found everything useful, but the social change grid and the problem tree were especially useful in designing homelessness campaigns in a more conscious way.”

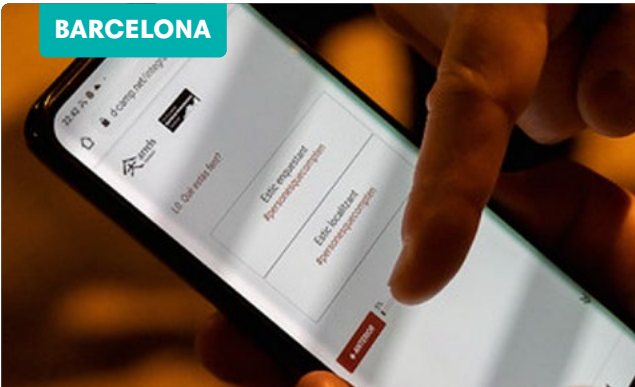


STIMULATING INNOVATION ACROSS EUROPE

Working closely with our partners in each city, the Homelessness Programme has utilised our Innovation Fund to stimulate small-scale actions, pilot programmes, evidence-gathering exercises, and engaging campaigning actions.

We provided a total of nine grants during 2021, as well as delivering a fully-online programme of support covering individual coaching, bespoke support, exchange workshops and social media campaigns. The Homelessness Programme at World Habitat has ensured that ongoing pandemic restrictions have not been a barrier to building a committed and engaged community of action across Europe, delivering real impact at a local level.

BARCELONA



DIGITAL TOOLS FOR SURVEYING PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

Arrels Fundació in Barcelona developed digital tools for use throughout their annual Connections Weeks.

During these surveys, campaigns teams (usually volunteers) collect data and first-hand experiences to ensure services reflect the needs and wishes of people experiencing homelessness.

The new digital tools mean that, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Arrels have streamlined their processes and can co-ordinate and register volunteers in a safer way.

BRATISLAVA



CAMPAIGNING ACTIONS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

In Bratislava, STOPA Slovensko delivered a range of powerful public awareness actions and campaigns.

STOPA commissioned external PR and communications support and visually-engaging photography, and – with their partner PRIMA – created a set of documentaries highlighting homelessness in Bratislava. These videos included stories from people experiencing homelessness, and social workers within partner NGOs. They have increased awareness of homelessness in Bratislava and public support for STOPA and PRIMA's work.

GLASGOW



COMMUNICATING HOUSING FIRST

In Glasgow, Homeless Network Scotland created and produced two short films that demonstrate how Housing First is working in Glasgow, and how their experience is being adopted nationwide.

Evidence shows that Housing First is achieving real success in Scotland and these films enable World Habitat to support and inspire others to understand and ultimately adopt a housing-led approach.

How we allocated our Innovation Fund to cities in 2021

Campaign principles

	The Right to Housing	Housing First	Knowing who is out there	Involving people with lived experience	Tracking progress	Involving the community in solutions	Improving local systems	Learning from and sharing with others
Barcelona	✓		✓			✓		✓
Budapest	✓	✓					✓	✓
Bratislava	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bratislava (2)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Glasgow		✓						✓
Glasgow (2)		✓						✓
Leicester			✓	✓			✓	✓
Lisbon	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Westminster	✓		✓	✓				✓

LEICESTER



UNDERSTANDING MIGRANT HOMELESSNESS

Leicester’s Homelessness Charter carried out research into the experiences of people who are homeless and who have **No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)**.

This research collected data and shared stories from migrants and asylum seekers, resulting in greater clarity about the challenges facing those with NRPF conditions. Findings from the research have been used to better understand – and advocate for – the housing options needed for this cohort, such as a community hosting project.

LISBON



GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE ON DELIVERING HOUSING FIRST

The campaign’s Portuguese partners commissioned a good practice report and guide based on their experience of delivering **Lisboa Housing First** for nearly a decade.

The guide, for use by municipalities in Portugal and other interested stakeholders, shares best practice from CRESCER’s experiences, advocates for and demonstrates the possibilities of Housing First, and inspires and influences others to implement Housing-Led approaches to ending street homelessness.

WESTMINSTER



ROMA RESEARCH PROJECT

Research commissioned by Westminster Homelessness Partnership explores the situation of Roma people experiencing street homelessness in London.

The research links with learning by the Roma Rough Sleeping Team, alongside best practice from other countries’ responses to Roma destitution. The findings, due in 2022, will offer policy and practice recommendations relating to reducing street homelessness amongst Roma people in Westminster and beyond.

LOOKING AHEAD

The last two years have created deep uncertainty for many organisations working both locally and internationally. As we reflect on 2021, World Habitat is proud to have been able to continue to adapt and modify our unique offer – retaining our role as a catalyst for good ideas whilst extending our homelessness campaign.

World Habitat seeks out solutions to the world's housing problems, helping them to grow and develop, and then transfer them to communities in new places where they are needed most. Building new relationships in the past year has been a challenge, but we have found new ways to engage, inform, inspire – and learn from – housing advocates across the world.

In the coming years, a focus of the European End Street Homelessness Campaign will be to draw on the best practice identified through World Habitat Award-winning projects that have successfully reduced and ended homelessness. And we will continue to identify, share and amplify housing practice in beacon cities which have made exceptional progress in ending homelessness.

“ We cannot be silent on housing injustice – and in the coming years our programme will look to influence policy and practice through direct delivery and in coalition with others.”

The climate emergency is the greatest threat to World Habitat's vision: a world where everyone has a safe and secure home as part of a successful community. A home cannot be safe and secure if it is at risk of destruction from avalanches, floods, wildfires, and violent storms. A community cannot be successful if prosperity and societal stability are threatened. Ultimately, homelessness will be the outcome if we do not take the climate emergency seriously, now.

We know that permanent and sustainable housing is central to ending street homelessness, but housing is itself a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Most housing providers are too far behind the necessary transition to achieve a net-zero business model in the timescales needed to avert the climate crisis.

We have a responsibility to ensure that we minimise our own environmental impact as an organisation and use our influence to support others on that journey too. World Habitat has adopted a carbon strategy to help us transition to a net-zero organisation as soon as possible – and no later than 2030. This will involve significant changes to our operating model to prioritise and minimise business travel and make other improvements to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

We will work with partners across the European End Street Homelessness Campaign to set similar targets to improve housing and reduce our collective carbon emissions.

“ The climate emergency is the greatest threat to World Habitat's vision: a world where everyone has a safe and secure home as part of a successful community.”

Our mission is that all the partners we work with have the opportunity to learn and develop their approach, so that ending street homelessness becomes not just about how, but when. We will use our unique position to influence campaign cities to develop into regional beacons of good practice so that the improvements they have made, influence progress towards ending street homelessness regionally and nationally.

Over the next three years, we will:

- continue to develop the network of campaigns in cities across Europe that provide a spotlight on good practice towards ending street homelessness
- be a catalyst by supporting others to accelerate their journey towards ending street homelessness
- enable campaign partners to identify, share and amplify what works in ending homelessness, set milestones and targets for their work, and help them navigate their journey to ending street homelessness
- encourage our programme partners to adapt to the climate emergency and adopt net-zero as a principal, so that they provide more resilient and less-polluting housing
- campaign with others across Europe and beyond, so that the effect and impact of our work can grow beyond the campaign cities and contribute towards a goal of ending all street homelessness.



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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