

emmaus



Action on Homelessness

Manifesto

EMMAUS.ORG.UK



emmaus

working together to end homelessness



Our fight for lasting **Change**

Emmaus communities and groups work around the clock throughout the UK to help individuals with experience of homelessness, by providing a place to call home, a sense of belonging, work opportunities, and high-quality support.

Our work is transformational, but for lasting change the government must take urgent action.

The 2024 General Election provides a momentous opportunity to end homelessness for good. This Emmaus Action on Homelessness manifesto highlights what we are fighting for, to make sure homelessness support and prevention is prioritised. We will hold the new government to account on the six core principles of our manifesto after the election.

Charlotte Talbott
Chief Executive, Emmaus UK



"I lost all hope and a reason to live when I became homeless. I was living on the streets and Emmaus saved my life. The government has to make sure everyone has some sort of affordable housing, otherwise street homelessness is going to go up even more and more people will suffer."

– Phil



The UK is failing on ending the cruelty of

Homelessness

HOUSING IS A
HUMAN RIGHT

Homelessness is now
experienced by more than

300,000

PEOPLE IN THE UK¹

and there has been a 27%
rise in rough sleeping,
in the last year alone.²

**It's a travesty this is happening
in the UK today when we have the
resources to stop it.**

**More people than ever are reaching
out to Emmaus for help.**

**Emmaus UK referral numbers soared 20%
in 2023 compared with the previous year.
Together the UK Emmaus federation of
more than 30 communities and groups
supported the equivalent of one new
person every 60 minutes with experience
of homelessness or poverty.³**



Homelessness is devastating for the health and wellbeing of those directly affected, and highlights fundamental flaws in national policy. But it doesn't have to be this way.

**We demand the government takes
urgent action, and we call on all who
care about ending homelessness
to join our fight for lasting change.**

¹ UK rough sleeping stat: Shelter (2023): https://england.shelter.org.uk/media/press_release/at_least_309000_people_homeless_in_england_today#:~:text=Posted%2014%20Dec%202023&text=The%20charity's%20research%20shows%20homelessness,most%20of%20whom%20are%20families.

² UK rough sleeping stat: BBC News (2024): <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-68429271>

³ Emmaus annual review: Annual Review 2022 - 2023 - Emmaus UK <https://emmaus.org.uk/about-us/annual-review-2022-2023-pdf>

We call on the

GOVERNMENT TO:

Act On supported housing

Drive up standards across the supported housing sector by ensuring all providers make the experiences of the people they support their priority.

Create more affordable homes

Build more social rent accommodation for people on lower incomes, to tackle many of the root causes of homelessness.

Take a cross-government approach

Set up a systems-wide task force to end homelessness that brings together a range of relevant departments beyond housing alone.

Invest for the long term

Commit to longer term homelessness funding that focuses on prevention, not just temporary solutions.

On the ground consultation

Engage people with lived experience of homelessness and enable local insights to drive national solutions.

NO-One criminalised for being homeless

Deliver compassionate support, not cruel powers that criminalise people who are homeless.

For further details
of our manifesto read on 

The Emmaus Action on Homelessness Manifesto



**Act on
supported
housing**

Emmaus communities and other high-quality supported housing help people rebuild their lives by providing safe, secure, accommodation and the right support. But not all providers put people first.

The government must step up to make sure all providers make the greatest impact possible. One way to address this is through The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act, which sets out measures to drive out bad providers that are only focused on profit by introducing national standards, including provisions for formerly homeless people.

Though the Act passed through Parliament in August 2023, it is yet to be consulted on or implemented. The next government must make the Act a priority as soon as possible after entering office.



**Create more
affordable
homes**

Affordable housing is central to preventing homelessness. It can provide stability and improve health, tackling many of the root causes that lead to people living on the streets or 'sofa surfing', particularly for those on lower incomes.

Alongside other homelessness charities, we are calling for the next government to build 90,000 social rent homes per year⁴, to get our affordable housing supply to the level needed.

Building new affordable homes is only one part of the solution to the housing crisis. Much more also needs to be done to improve the affordability of private rents and end no-fault evictions.



**Take a
cross-government
approach**

Homelessness is complex and relentless and the government needs to think holistically beyond housing to address the issues.

At Emmaus we know this first-hand as our unique approach offers more than a home. We also provide a strong community, work opportunities and hope. When we asked Emmaus community residents what should be prioritised going into the General Election, many said helping people to rebuild as a person, find work, and get back out into society.

No one government department has all the answers. Ending this terrible injustice will take a systems-wide approach. That's why we back calls for a cross-department task force set up by the next government, bringing together policy on housing, justice, work, health and social care, and more.



**Invest for
the long term**

Investment in ending homelessness is not only morally important, it makes financial sense as well as being the right thing to do. In the year 2022-23 alone, local councils spent over £1.7bn on temporary accommodation for homeless people.⁵

Spending on prevention is important in the long run and has wider benefits for society. The next government needs to review all current spending on homelessness, and commit to replacing temporary and short-term funding with a long-term, ringfenced, homelessness fund that prioritises the issue, and puts spending on a sustainable footing.



**On the ground
consultation**

At Emmaus, we provide a way that works and our manifesto asks are informed by our decades of experience working on the ground, helping people with experience of homelessness and poverty.

Government policy needs to be similarly in touch with the real-life experiences of people and those who help transform their lives, to ensure community insights drive national solutions.

The government must put people with lived experience at the heart of decision-making, to build the best possible evidence base on what works when it comes to ending homelessness.



**NO-One criminalised
for being homeless**

A multitude of personal and social factors contribute to someone becoming homeless and they need support, practical solutions and compassion to rebuild their lives, not cruel criminalisation.

Emmaus UK has been part of a campaign calling for the removal of those parts of the Criminal Justice Bill⁶ which would have give police the power to fine or arrest rough sleepers considered to be a 'nuisance', as well as penalise women for seeking safety and shelter in well-lit doorways. The next government must end the criminalisation of homelessness for good, including revisiting the outdated Vagrancy Act that makes it a criminal offence to sleep rough or beg in England and Wales.



“The government needs to realise that anyone can become homeless, for any number of reasons. I was sofa surfing and know what it’s like to be made to feel worthless. People who are homelessness shouldn’t be punished, they should be shown empathy instead.”

– Lauren

**Read more about the Emmaus Action on Homelessness
Manifesto emmaus.org.uk/manifesto**

Working together to end

Homelessness

We have joined forces with other homelessness charities and organisations to demand action. Together, we are unified in asking political parties to prioritise core principles that will lead to the transformational change that is needed.

Homeless Link manifesto

As a member of **Homeless Link**, Emmaus UK supports Homeless Link's Manifesto to End Homelessness⁷ which has played a key role in shaping our own asks.

Call for more affordable homes

Emmaus UK stands with other homelessness organisations in calling for the next government to build 90,000 social rent homes per year, and has signed a joint letter coordinated by the charity **Shelter**.⁸

Criminal Justice Bill

When it comes to demanding an end to the criminalisation of homelessness, we have supported a campaign led by **Crisis** to change the Criminal Justice Bill and have joined 36 other organisations in writing to the Home Secretary.⁹

⁷ Homeless Link Manifesto to End Homelessness: Our Manifesto to End Homelessness | Homeless Link
⁸ Open letter coordinated by Shelter: General election 2024 - Shelter open letter to all political leaders calling for more social homes - Made In Social Housing - Shelter England
⁹ Criminal Justice Bill joint letter led by Crisis: Letter to Home Secretary James Cleverly on Government proposals to criminalise rough sleeping | Crisis | Together we will end homelessness



Join our fight for lasting

change

Share the Emmaus manifesto on social media with the hashtag **#ActionOnHomelessness** And tag us in on social media...



For more information on Emmaus UK's policy, campaigns and research, including our work helping to shape the Supported Housing Act, visit: emmaus.org.uk/policy-campaigns-and-research/



emmaus
working together to end homelessness

There are 30+ Emmaus communities across the UK including three groups looking to establish new communities in their area.

Emmaus communities in the UK:

1	198	Cambridge	18	208	Sheffield
2	193	Coventry & Warwickshire	19	208	Preston
3	194	Greenwich	20	209	Hampshire
4	195	Dover	21	209	Oxford
5	197	Mossley	22	210	Burnley
6	197	Brighton & Hove	23	210	Norfolk & Waveney
7	201	Gloucestershire	24	210	Hastings & Rother
8	202	Village Carlton	25	212	Leicestershire & Rutland
9	202	Hertfordshire	26	214	Salford
10	203	Leeds	27	214	South Wales
11	203	Bristol	28	214	Hull & East Riding
12	205	Bolton	29	214	Merseyside
13	206	Glasgow	30	217	North East
14	207	Lambeth	31	221	Suffolk
15	208	Colchester			

Emmaus groups in the UK:

- A North Staffs
- B Cornwall
- C South Manchester



Find an Emmaus near you at

EMMAUS.ORG.UK/YOUR-LOCAL-EMMAUS

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