

# Guidance for Applicants: Upstream Homelessness Prevention Fund

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For further details or assistance with the application process,  
please contact [funding@sfha.co.uk](mailto:funding@sfha.co.uk)

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## Introduction

This fund is a £1 million investment from the Scottish Government, designed to support tenancy sustainment and homelessness prevention initiatives across Scotland. The fund will be administered by the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations (SFHA) and Homeless Network Scotland (HNS). Its overarching aim is to prevent homelessness by funding tenancy sustainment and early intervention activities that help tenants remain in their homes, and by doing so learn more about RSLs future role in relation to the new prevention duties outlined in the Housing Bill

This is a learning programme that will run from June 2025-April 2026. It will support new or existing partnerships between RSLs and the third sector to provide community-based, partnership activities dedicated to tenancy sustainment. Each local partnership funding will include a cash fund to enable individual cash payments of up to £1,300 to practically help prevent or exit homelessness. Guidance on the cash fund will be made available when projects are awarded.

## Key learning objectives

The fund is intended to promote learning ahead of the “Ask and Act” Homelessness Prevention duties introduced in the Housing Bill. This fund will support RSLs, the third and community sector to understand respective roles and connections to other ‘relevant bodies’ and test local route maps to the new prevention duties. In doing so, the fund will support understanding of housing association’s roles to specifically:

- Ask about housing circumstances through existing functions.
- Act on the information received, to prevent homelessness or mitigate risk by using existing powers.
- Refer to local authority for homelessness assistance, if necessary, rather than by default.

## Key impact measures

The fund aims to:

- Minimise abandonments and evictions.
- Reduce voids and tenancy failures.
- Break the cycle of repeat homelessness.
- Provide support to help tenants' homes meet their needs at various stages of life.
- Create learning relevant to the broader RSL network in Scotland.



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### Key activities the fund may support:

The fund can be used to support new or existing partnerships and activities. Examples of the types of approaches the fund will support are:

- Early intervention and targeted, upstream prevention activity.
- Activities designed around flexible support levels to meet the individual/household where they are (tenancy sustainment activities that accommodate both high and low support needs).
- Identifying opportunities for multi-agency approaches to support the ‘no wrong door’ approach for people navigating housing, health and social care services.
- Enabling a cash-first approach to address financial and material disadvantage.
- Exploring new, local partnership models that can be replicated in other places and contexts.
- Building on existing work—using grant to add high value for money by:
  - Funding tried and tested tenancy sustainment partnerships to scale up successes (maintaining effective tenancy sustainment activities) or exploring additional programming.
  - Investing in collaborative ways of working, including the use of shared spaces and staff, data-sharing, and transitional or referred services.
- Identifying and testing the connections between ‘relevant bodies’: their practices, their policies, their ways of working.
- Initiatives that centre tenants and/or people with direct experience of homelessness in the design and delivery of the service and learning components.
- Innovating new initiatives to fill gaps in meeting local needs, including bringing new delivery partners into existing programmes or rolling out new ones.



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## Scoring criteria

Applications will be assessed by a panel using the following criteria:

- **Alignment with the fund's Objectives:** How well the proposal aligns with the fund's learning objectives and impact goals, such as preventing homelessness, reducing tenancy abandonment, and providing early intervention.
- **Partnerships and collaboration:** The strength of the partnership model, including the involvement of local community groups, charities, and other relevant bodies.
- **Impact:** How the proposed activities will create long-term impact and provide value for money.
- **Financial management:** Clear and realistic budget and financial planning, ensuring value for money.

## Eligibility

Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and third sector organisations are eligible to apply for funding. Partnerships with community groups, local authorities, and homelessness charities are encouraged. The application lead may either be an RSL or third sector organisation.

## Amount

We anticipate supporting at least 4-5 impactful partnerships across Scotland however there is no minimum or maximum grant prescribed per application. The evaluation panel will consider the value for money, geography, deliverability, impact, and other factors in totality when awarding projects.

## How to apply:

Applications should be submitted via application form, where applicants will outline their proposed activities, including how they intend to meet the fund's objectives. In particular, the application should:

- Clearly describe the targeted activities and how they address early intervention, tenancy sustainment, and homelessness prevention.
- Include a partnership model and describe the roles of each partner, particularly any community groups, charities, third sector organisations or services that will be involved.
- Demonstrate how the proposed activities align with opportunities for learning and testing the 'Ask and Act' duties in the Housing Bill.
- Provide details of any previous work or existing services that can be scaled up or adapted to address identified service gaps and impact.

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- Or provide details of new initiatives to fill gaps in meeting local needs, including bringing new delivery partners into existing programmes or rolling out new ones.

### Fund Administration:

This fund will be administered by SFHA and HNS. Successful applicants will receive funding to deliver the proposed activities. Quarterly reporting including reporting on spend and progress will be required to assess the progress and outcomes of funded initiatives. A final report should be submitted by April 2026.

### Deadline for Applications:

Applications will be accepted until the **12 May at 17:00**. Late submissions will not be considered.

### Further Information:

For further details or assistance with the application process, please contact [funding@sfha.co.uk](mailto:funding@sfha.co.uk)

Decisions and grant offer letters are expected by end of May, with funding planned for distribution in June.