



# **Under One Roof 2026**

## **Meet our speakers!**




## Keynote speakers and panellists

	<p><b>Rick Henderson, CEO, Homeless Link</b> Rick is the CEO of Homeless Link and was appointed to that role in July 2012. He is a member of the new Government's Expert Advisory Group of Homelessness and the London Mayor's Rough Sleeping Task Group.</p>
	<p><b>Amanda Dubarry, CEO, Your Place</b> Amanda Dubarry is a senior leader in the housing and homelessness sector with more than thirty years' experience working across charities, housing providers and community organisations supporting people facing complex social challenges. She is currently Chief Executive of Your Place, a frontline homelessness organisation in East London.</p>
	<p><b>Salma Ravat, CEO, One Roof Leicester</b> Salma is a founder and CEO of One Roof Leicester. She has over 20 years experience of running voluntary organisations, and has worked in the homelessness sector for over 15 years. Salma is a strong advocate for partnership working and works hard to build strong working relationships with local and national organisations, policy makers and organisations campaigning for change.</p>
	<p><b>Mark Simms, CEO, P3</b> Mark Simms OBE is Group Chief Executive of P3 Charity and Rugby Portobello Trust, supporting more than 80,000 people each year across homelessness, housing, mental health and community services. He is also a Board Member of the Charity Commission and a leading voice on leadership, governance and systems change within homelessness services.</p>

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	<p><b>Bonnie Williams, CEO, Housing Justice</b> Bonnie Williams is CEO of Housing Justice, working across England and Wales to address homelessness through community responses. With experience across policing, government, local government and the voluntary sector, she is passionate about prevention, community and belonging, and has volunteered for over 30 years, strongly believing in the power of compassionate volunteer support.</p>
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## Breakout session speakers

<p><b>Cheska Asman, Homeless Strategy and Projects Officer, Newark and Sherwood District Council</b></p>
<p><b>Steve Barkess, Head of Homelessness and Complex Needs at Concrete, part of Honeycomb Group</b> Steve Barkess: Head of homelessness and complex needs at Concrete, part of Honeycomb Charitable Service. Prior to joining Concrete Steve worked at the partnership manager at Homeless Link for 7 years support partnership development throughout the west midlands and northwest.</p>
<p><b>Matt Bawden, Director of Progression Housing (Interim), Centrepont</b> Matt is Director of Progression Housing at Centrepont, having previously worked as Head of Support and Housing for London. He is the Nominated Individual with Ofsted with responsibility for a portfolio of 12 Ofsted registered services. Matt has always worked in care and support services in homelessness, leading services including young people's services, specialist CQC registered care, street outreach and housing first.</p>
<p><b>Mark Billings, Homelessness Adviser, MHCLG</b> Mark Billings is a Homelessness Adviser at the MHCLG. He has been working in the homelessness sector for over 25 years at both a local and national level.</p>
<p><b>Kerry Birtles, Executive Director of Support and Wellbeing, Honeycomb Group</b></p>

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Kerry Birtles, Exec Director for Support & Wellbeing Services at honeycomb charitable services overseeing the homelessness, domestic abuse and wellbeing services. Kerry is a social worker by trade and has also held the role of director of social care at Cheshire East council. Born and bred in Stoke on Trent Kerry is dedicated to supporting people who experience any form of exclusion or vulnerability within North Staffordshire.

**Louise Bourne, Director of Progression (Prevention, Support & Care), St Basils**  
Louise Bourne is Director of Progression (Prevention, Support and Care) at St Basils. She is responsible for St Basils overarching Prevention, Support and Care Strategies, ensuring young people are able to take up opportunities and experience progression. Louise has management oversight of all prevention, care and support contracts and services including responsibility for quality, standards and regulatory compliance.

**Martin Burrows, Impact and Innovation Lead, Emmaus UK**  
Martin Burrows is Impact and Innovation Lead at Emmaus UK. His work focuses on helping Emmaus communities develop, learn and sustainably scale innovative and impactful approaches. He has worked in the homelessness sector since 2010 delivering research, evaluation and systems change work.

**Lee Buss-Blair, Head of Operations, Riverside**  
Lee is the Director of Operations for Riverside's Care & Support. He has advised Government on The Renter's Rights Act, the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act, and was a member of the Professionalisation Working Group. He's a Member of Homeless Link's NAC, and Co-Chairs the CIH Homelessness Policy Group.

**David Carter, CEO, Whitechapel Centre**  
David has over 30 years' experience of working in the housing and homelessness sector, the last 18 of these as CEO of The Whitechapel Centre. I've extensive knowledge of housing, homelessness and related issues, including trends, legislation, service needs / gaps, service design, inequalities and innovation. He is passionate about creating change and inclusion, including addressing health inequalities.

**Paul Clark, Housing Strategy Support Co-ordinator, BCP Housing**  
Paul has worked in housing and homelessness for 17 years and is currently the Housing Strategy Coordinator for BCP Council working on the Council's new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy and Housing Strategy.

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<p><b>David, Companion, Emmaus UK</b></p>
<p><b>Sam Dalton, Policy, Campaigns and External Affairs Manager, Emmaus UK</b>          Sam Dalton is Policy, Campaigns and External Affairs Manager at Emmaus UK. He is leading the organisation’s work to influence the implementation of the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act, including through close working with national and local government, and publishing the recent ‘Rebuilding Lives’ report, alongside colleagues.</p>
<p><b>Amanda Dubarry, CEO, Your Place</b>          Amanda Dubarry is a senior leader in the housing and homelessness sector with more than thirty years’ experience working across charities, housing providers and community organisations supporting people facing complex social challenges. She is currently Chief Executive of Your Place, a frontline homelessness organisation in East London.</p>
<p><b>Rachel Gibbs, It Pays to Work Lead, Framework</b>          Raye Gibbs is Employability Implementation Coordinator at Framework, with over a decade of experience delivering and managing employability services. With extensive knowledge of employability and the welfare benefits system, Raye leads the implementation of It Pays to Work and is passionate about improving access to employability through workforce development.</p>
<p><b>Sam Gorrell, Solicitor, Forbes Solicitors</b>          Sam is an Associate Solicitor for Forbes. He works in the Housing Litigation Team and one of his specialisms is tenancy management issues.</p>
<p><b>Kelly Headen, Head of Services, Step by Step</b>          Kelly Headen is Head of Services for Step by Step, a youth homeless charity operating across 6 counties in the South East. Kelly has had an extensive 26 year career within the housing, support and mental health sector. Currently responsible for 3 Ofsted regulated accommodation services- Foyers, Supported Lodgings and Fostering, alongside Wellbeing services - Counselling, Recovery, Housing advice and tenancy support.</p>

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**Andrew Humberstone, Head of Specialist Housing (Regulation Review), emh**

Andrew Humberstone has over 30 years' experience in housing. He has managed supported housing, outreach, and housing options services and as Supporting People Lead for Derby City.

**Sally Hursford, SSHO, The Housing Network****Hayley Jones, Director, YMCA Together**

Hayley Jones is the Director of Homeless Services at You Matter, formerly known as YMCA Together, and has worked in the homelessness sector for over 15 years. Hayley oversees the homeless temporary accommodation, community housing and rough sleeping services at YM. Hayley holds qualifications in Leadership and Cognitive Analytic Therapy (CAT) and is currently studying for an MSc in Health and Social Care Leadership. Hayley is passionate about addressing the gaps and barriers that lead to health inequalities and ensuring compassionate, person-centred support for people experiencing homelessness.

**Isabel Jones, Trainer, Shelter**

Isabel is a Shelter for Professionals Trainer and has been training for Shelter for 13 years. Recently she had a key role in developing and delivering the MHCLG funded courses on the Renter's Rights Act. She previously worked as an advisor for Shelter and for local authorities.

**Bethan Lant, Head of Capacity Building, Praxis**

Bethan has worked at Praxis for almost 25 years. She designs and delivers training to a range of professionals on the interaction of the immigration system with other issues including housing and homelessness, and supports organisations to improve their offer to migrant service users. She is also an immigration caseworker.

**David Leatherbarrow, Contracts and Performance Manager, Two Saints**

I began as an Outreach Worker, supporting rough sleepers into sustainable accommodation. I progressed to Outreach Co-ordinator, managing the team, before becoming a Contracts and Performance Manager with Two Saints. I oversee the SHAP Housing First service across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, ensuring high-quality support and meaningful outcomes.

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**Paul Manning, Deputy Head, East Midlands Strategic Lead, Homelessness Prevention Team, HM Prison and Probation Service**

I am the Strategic Lead for Homelessness Prevention (HP) in the East Midlands Probation Region, part of our Community Integration function. Having worked in Probation for over 33 years in Approved Premises, Sentence Management, Courts, MAPPA Coordination, I have worked within our HP Team, since its inception in 2020.

**Kate Mennell, Head of Key Accounts, Brook Street Social Care**

Kate leads high performing teams across specialist social care recruitment. Known for her collaborative people focused approach, Kate combines commercial insight with strong sector knowledge, supporting teams and clients to build sustainable recruitment models, improve retention delivering high quality outcomes across complex environments.

**Olivia, Expert by Experience, Praxis**

Olivia is a member of Praxis's user-led campaigns group and an expert by experience having undergone her own journey through the immigration system.

**Jo Prestidge, Head of Development, Homeless Link**

Building on over a decade's experience in frontline homelessness services, Jo joined Homeless Link in 2015 and has delivered a range of activity to shape the development of homelessness practice across England, including trauma informed care and Housing First. Jo draws on her experience of frontline service delivery, her understanding of good practice and a Masters in organisational development to consider where and how to support organisations and the broader sector to make positive changes.

**Melanie Reilly, National Supported Housing Manager, Places for People**

National Supported Housing Manager at Places for People, leading all directly managed homelessness services across 16 local authorities. Objective is to provide a high quality support service and spotlighting the issue of homelessness. Worked in the sector since 2004 and am Mum to 4 kids and love to travel!

**Sarah Reynolds, Housing, Health, and Social Care Service Manager, BCP Housing**

Sarah is a registered Social Worker with 14 years' experience in statutory adult services. A qualified Best Interest Assessor and Practice Educator, she previously managed the Homeless Social Work Team before joining BCP housing in 2025. She is

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committed to staff development, safeguarding adults, and working collaboratively to develop services.

**David Scruton, Housing Strategy and Systems Team Manager, North West Lincolnshire District Council**

David Scruton has over 20 years' experience of working in Housing Strategy for both Charnwood Borough Council and North West Leicestershire District Council.

**Alex Smith, Interim Head of National Practice Development, Homeless Link**

Alex is currently interim head of the national practice development team at Homeless Link. Alex has worked at Homeless Link for nearly 7 years, leading various projects on inclusion, Housing First, women's and youth homelessness. Before joining Homeless Link, Alex worked in frontline services in the North East of England and has a particular interest in multiple disadvantage and systems transformation work.

**Jess Smith, Research and Evaluation Manager, Framework**

Jess Smith is Research and Evaluation Manager at Framework, with almost 20 years' experience in housing and employment-related services. She champions strengths-based, trauma-informed approaches. Her doctoral research focuses on employability within SMD-related services. Her previous evaluation work informed Framework's It Pays to Work approach to embedding employability within supported accommodation.

**Laura Smith, Acting Head of Specialist Housing, emh**

Laura has much experience of working with homelessness and complex needs. She has managed operational service delivery for Riverside and for emh. She is currently Acting Head of Service for Specialist Housing for emh Group.

**Jonathan Vellacott, Director of Specialist Services, The Housing Network**

Jon Vellacott joined The Housing Network in January 2025 as Director of Specialist Services. With over 20 years' experience across the Criminal Justice System, including the Ministry of Justice and His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, Jon specialises in service improvement, operational leadership, and delivering positive outcomes for vulnerable people.

**Elise Whittaker, DAHA Homelessness & Supported Accommodation Accreditation Lead, Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse**

Elise Whittaker is a DAHA Accreditation Lead, working to embed domestic abuse awareness across homelessness and supported accommodation services. Her

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frontline experience supporting survivors of domestic abuse and multiple disadvantage informs her work driving improvements in policy, practice, and service responses. She is passionate about ensuring domestic abuse is recognised within homelessness services. Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse

**Teresa Wilson, Operations Director, Brook Street Social Care**

Teresa Wilson - Operations Director at Brook Street Social Care, specialising in workforce strategy and recruitment across the Social Care Sector. Passionate about values led hiring, retention and sector perception, Tera works with care and homelessness organisations to build sustainable staffing solutions through data insight, partnership working and people first recruitment approaches.

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## What We Do

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for frontline homelessness services. We work to improve services through research, guidance and learning, and campaign for policy change that will ensure everyone has a place to call home and the support they need to keep it.

## Homeless Link

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EC3N 1BJ

[www.homeless.org.uk](http://www.homeless.org.uk)

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