

TOGETHER WE CAN END FURNITURE POVERTY



**END
FURNITURE
POVERTY**

Furniture Poverty

The inability to afford or access basic furniture, appliances and furnishings that provide a household with a socially acceptable standard of living

Furniture insecurity

- A household has the items they need for now
- But if something essential breaks or needs replacing, they will not have the savings to do so
- Often moving from one crisis situation to another

Furniture destitution

- A household has none or very few of the items needed
- In long-term chronic situation



EXTENT OF FURNITURE POVERTY

- 6m people in the UK are living in furniture poverty – 9% of the UK population
- This rises to 11% in Scotland.
- 55% of people in furniture poverty, 2.6m people, have a disability
- 26% of social housing tenants are living in furniture poverty
- Over 1m adults living in ‘deep furniture poverty’, missing 3 or more items

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IMPACT OF FURNITURE POVERTY

Physical health:

- 7 in 10 had problems sleeping
- 7 in 10 with long term illness or disability said FP made condition worse

Mental health and social wellbeing:

- 9 in 10 felt stressed or anxious
- 8 in 10 felt more depressed

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SOLUTIONS TO FURNITURE POVERTY

- Furnished Tenancies
- Local Welfare Schemes
- Furniture Reuse Schemes
- Grant-making Sector
- Furniture Gifting Schemes

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SOCIAL HOUSING & FURNISHED TENANCIES

- Vast majority, (98%), of social rented properties allocated as unfurnished
- We believe at least 10% of social tenants would hugely benefit from a furnished tenancy, (FT), scheme
- For those fleeing domestic violence, coming from homelessness, or even moving from private to social rental sector – often have nothing

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EFP RESEARCH AND SUPPORT

- Evidencing the benefits for tenant AND landlord
- Cost Benefit Analysis looking at savings at organisational, local and national level
- Case studies with existing furniture schemes
- Blueprint for Furniture Provision in Social Housing
- Providing support for landlords at every stage of their FT journey

FURNITURE FLEX

FRC GROUP

- Aimed at overcoming all landlord barriers to introducing a scheme
- And helping tenants to get the items they need, in the best way
- Flexibility means they only take the items they need
- They can return items at any time
- For new and existing tenants
- It means we can reach many more landlords – and therefore many more social housing tenants
- It's a no brainer!

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MAKE A HOUSE A HOME

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FURNITURE PROVISION THROUGH CRISIS SUPPORT

- We've published six annual reports examining LWA provision
- Help with furniture and appliances is an established function of local authority crisis support
- 39% of LWA budgets spent on furniture and appliances – roughly the same percentage for several years
- SPC in Scotland £8.39; Wales is £7.84 – England is just £1.17

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COST BENEFITS OF LWA

LWA Scheme	Local Authority Benefit	Wider Public Purse Benefit
Cambridgeshire County Council	£1 cost gives £12.90 benefit	£1 cost gives £16.50 benefit
Liverpool City Council	£1 cost gives £9.70 benefit	£1 cost gives £14.20 benefit

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SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND

- 91% of Community Care Grant applications processed within target time of 15 working days in 2024/25 – an increase of 7% on 2023/24
- 100% in ten local authorities but Falkirk least efficient at 46%
- 62% of SWF spent on CCG as opposed to ‘crisis’ element – mainly furniture and appliance awards
- SWF spend per capita on furniture is £5.25

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WORKING WITH GRANT MAKERS & VSCOs

- Crisis Support Working Group
- Grant Makers Alliance
- End Child Poverty Coalition
- Poverty Action Groups
- Health and Wellbeing Groups
- Essential Guarantee campaign

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THE ROLE OF FURNITURE REUSE

- Bulky Bob's
- Over 1m collections of over 4m items, helping 190,000 families
- Ensuring Reuse is always utilised in a positive way
- Trustee of the Reuse Network

RAISING AWARENESS

- Extensive media coverage – Guardian, BBC, ITV, Inside Housing, Podcasts
- Reaching that ‘lightbulb moment’
- Ensuring Furniture Poverty is never ignored or forgotten

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NEXT STEPS FOR EFP

- Continue the work we're doing – still lots to do!
- Concentrating on our objectives:
 - Avoiding Furniture Poverty
 - Alleviating Furniture Poverty
- Longer term plans include looking at different housing tenures
- Different solutions for different groups
- Looking more closely at Scotland and Wales

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