

*Shelter*

The lack of shelter IS a BIG problem.

People have to build tiny shelters from your old pizza boxes that don't even last long all the time, WE could do more, YOU could do more! If you have any old scraps of wood you could help people live a better live.

## How many people lack shelter

The last time a global survey was attempted by the United Nations in 2005 an estimated 100 million people were homeless worldwide. As many as 1.6 billion people lacked shelter in 2015.

## How to help

Go to [8709419.wixsite.com/fightforsheltercom](https://8709419.wixsite.com/fightforsheltercom) to find out how you can help.

# The Story of Homelessness part 1

**Paul Curtis, 68, who lives on a narrowboat: ‘My home was repossessed because I could not pay my mortgage’**

**I became homeless when my marriage broke up. I had taken on a big mortgage and the interest rate went up. I became overstretched when my marriage ended. I had lost an income and then I also lost my job. I was falling further and further behind with my debt repayments. Though I didn’t know it at the time, I think I was having a mental meltdown. I wasn’t able to cope and began drinking too much. I quit my job because I wasn’t happy with the way things were being run at the organisation. I imagined I would quickly find another job, but it didn’t work out that way.**

**I got over whatever it was that was going on in my head. I found a job and a flat and the friends who helped me are still, thankfully, my friends. But I have never got over the fear of homelessness, that feeling of being nowhere.**

# The Story of Homelessness part 2

**My home was repossessed because I couldn't afford my mortgage repayments. More than that, the will had gone. When you get hit by a few things at once it affects your ability to think clearly. You are firefighting all the time.**

**As a stop-gap measure, I stayed with friends. What was supposed to be temporary ended up lasting a year. There was a long period when I was rudderless, moving from place to place.**

**To say I was lucky is an understatement – I never had to live on the streets. The people who put a roof over my head were unbelievably kind and generous and never once made me feel like I was an intruder. But I felt like an intruder. “We are going out, there's food in the fridge. Help yourself. You know how the remote works. Don't wait up,” they would say.**

# The Story of Homelessness part 3

I was very aware it was not my home; my stuff wasn't there and I made no decisions about anything. I was a guest. I would walk around the shopping centre and the streets for hours hoping to exhaust myself, looking at empty allotments and wondering if I could live there.

There's a feeling of powerlessness when you're homeless; you feel lost. My experience changed how I see homeless people. After a while I got over whatever it was that was going on in my head. I found a job and a flat and the friends who helped me are still, thankfully, my friends. But I have never got over the fear of homelessness, that feeling of being nowhere.

I am lucky that I now have a beautiful home in which I am very happy. I live on a narrowboat. I am warm and secure and it's a lifestyle I enjoy – also, what with being retired, it's a lifestyle I can afford. I know I couldn't afford to go back into the world and pay rent; the system is rotten.

Homeless people are victims of government policy over the past 20-30 years and it's going to get worse