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Living Homeless Under the Patriarchy:

**An exploration of women's lived experiences
during Glasgow's neoliberal era of capitalism**

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1 Introduction

1.1 Introductory Contexts

There is an increasing global trend of a widening gap between the rich and the poor, occurring alongside the increasingly endorsed ideology of neoliberalism- also referred to as 'disaster capitalism' (Klein, 2007). Everyone is impacted by neoliberalism's increased privatisation and deregulation from the state; but marginalised groups are said to be the hardest hit from the welfare system and the labour market changing according to a neoliberal style economy. Within this, individuals are shamed for being dependent on financial help and pushed to work in an insecure labour market that has often low pay and long working hours where there is a priority of producing mass capital and little expenditure. Amongst the exclusionary tendencies of the labour market, people have little support in knowing or claiming their rights due to the decline in trade unions (Klein, 2007; Whyte, 2019).

Human Rights have also gained popularity and endorsement during the time of neoliberalism, causing controversy within academia, due to its focus on individualism, globalisation and also mentioning of the right to private property (Whyte, 2019). However, human rights claim dignity is provided by virtue of being human; whereas for neoliberals, it comes from engaging in the free market (Whyte, 2019). Additionally, although speaking of the right for private property, Human Rights do provide a framework for basic rights and fundamental needs, in which states (including the United Kingdom) are legally bound to follow, that should protect individuals from the consequences of exclusion during the neoliberal era (Whyte, 2019). One of these being the right to adequate housing, which is expressed significantly in Article 11(1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), 1966).

However, with the insecurity of work and lack of support from the welfare system, alongside privatisation of housing, the fundamental right of having a house proves challenging to claim in

reality; as can be seen in the increasing homeless population across Europe (Ravenhill, 2008). Thus, prior to this era of neoliberalism, homeless persons were often represented in stereotypical ways as individuals with drug or alcohol addictions who needed to be fixed. Whereas now, homelessness can be increasingly considered related to structural impacts of job loss, lack of access or limited access to welfare protection (May, 2000). There are also newly recognised conditions of homelessness which will thus be considered in this thesis; sofa surfing, staying in unwanted or an abusive relationship (also called being homeless at home), and temporary accommodation (Edgar & Doherty, 2001). Additionally, there is awareness of a diversity in lengths of homelessness such as short term and long term or periodic homelessness. This diversity has been supported by the human rights framework in their recognition of differences, giving fuel to the notion of housing being a basic need and a fundamental right (United Nations General Assembly [UNGA], 1966).

In the rise of Human Rights; liberal feminism has also seen to have gained prosperity in supporting women to be independent whilst competing in the labour market. With increased independence of women in the labour market however, this has been said to have only benefited a small population of women, mostly from white and middle class backgrounds, who can compete in the private sector for high paid positions (Fraser, Arruzza, & Bhattacharya, 2019). Additionally, as well as increased socio economic independence of women, there has been an increase in divorce rates across the neoliberal era and a decrease in nuclear family households (Edgar & Doherty, 2001). However, this also contributes to some women being vulnerable to socioeconomic exclusion such as lone parents and stay at home mothers with dual earner families being favored during the current time. At the same time as these structural changes, there has seen a rise in women's homelessness across Europe, calling for feminist perspectives to explore the gendered aspects of the phenomena (Mayock, 2016; Bretherton, 2017).

In accordance with the increasing homelessness across Western nations who have adopted neoliberalism, there has been a surge in research exploring the phenomena of homelessness

itself. Some of this research has tended to focus on individual causes and pathways into homelessness; with a lack of knowledge of pathways out and structural impacts to homelessness (Ravenhill, 2000). However, within the UK, there has been a focus on socioeconomic factors in homelessness (May, 2000; Fitzpatrick, Kemp & Klinker, 2000). Positively also, there is a rise in awareness of the hidden phenomena of women's homelessness and more research has explored this over the past two decades, however, there is still a tendency of the research to only explore women who are visibly homeless, such as rough sleeping or in homeless hostels; missing a suggested majority of women who utilise more hidden homelessness conditions (Mayock, 2016).

Within the research of the UK and women's homelessness, Scotland has little focus specifically, although it has a high rate of poverty and homelessness which has seen to increase across the neoliberal era. With the research in Scottish homelessness mainly focusing on health related issues with mostly male participants; it undermines the fact that women are widely known to be more socioeconomically marginalised and impacted by poverty as compared to men, thus, there is an increasing number of women facing homelessness in Scotland today (Bretherton, 2017). Therefore, the following section in the introductory chapter will provide context, specific to Scotland for this thesis research project.

1.2 Background and Context

Scotland is a small nation compared to its surroundings in the United Kingdom (UK), making up around 8.2% of the population (European Commission, 2019). Being best recognised from the film *Braveheart*, tartan kilts and whiskey but also politically in its past support for political parties championing the rights of workers and more recently a rise of favoring Scottish independence. Thus, Scotland can be thought of as having a strong will for social justice for its population.

However, over the past decade (and more), the UK Government has endorsed privatisation and cuts to public and social spending. During this time, there has been a rise in poverty across the UK and in Scotland, where 1 in 4 children were reported living under the poverty line as well as having one of the highest mortality rates in Europe (Livingston & Lee, 2014). Additionally, Third Sector Organisations (TSOs) report concerns of the number of homelessness rising in Scotland, amongst unemployment, poor mental health and low social housing stock (Shelter Scotland, 2018). Therefore, pressure has also been placed on the Scottish Government to prioritise homelessness as an urgent matter. However, the concern of poverty and homelessness varies geographically across Scotland and it has been shown that some cities have more deprivation than others.

With that, Glasgow, Scotland's largest city, has some of the most deprived areas in Western Europe today; making it an interesting and much needed area of focus with regards to increasing homelessness. In being a post-industrial city, Glasgow has experienced many changes in the past few decades, where it has shifted its economic focus from industrial sectors to tourism in developing its arts, leisure and sports facilities (Murphy & Boyle, 2006). As well as this, it hosted the Commonwealth Games in 2014, bringing housing development, attention and increased tourism to the once abandoned city. However, it can be suggested that only the few have seen the benefits of this change as there is an evident 15 year life expectancy between the poorest and the richest parts of the city (McCartney, 2011).

The phenomenon describing Glasgow's deprivation and mortality being higher in comparison to other cities and areas in the UK has been commonly referred to as the "Glasgow Effect" (Lee & Livingston, 2014). However, it has been argued in recent years that by painting Glasgow's areas which have clearly been impacted by the postindustrial era of the 1980's as homogenous, this has dangers of reproducing stigma and showing people of these areas as problems and problem areas (Lee & Livingston, 2014).

Importantly, Glasgow has the highest homelessness across Scotland and Crisis, the UK's leading homeless third sector organisation have called this a "public health emergency" (BBC News Scotland, 2020). In terms of who is visibly homeless in Glasgow, most of the homeless services are taken up by men, with few representing women, for various suggested reasons as women have been shown to seek informal homeless support such as sofa surfing or staying with friends (Aldridge, 2018). Little has been explored with regards to this differing experience of homelessness for women in Glasgow, thus the significance in acknowledging and highlighting their gendered experiences has been stressed (Engendera, 2020).

The position of women in society must also be overviewed in order to consider or understand gendered experiences further in the thesis. In being elected for First Minister, the leader of the Scottish Parliament, Nicola Sturgeon directed her speech in 2015 to women specifically:

"If you are good enough and if you work hard enough, the sky's the limit and no glass ceiling should ever stop you from achieving your dreams." (Scottish Government, 2019)

Evoking hope as she became the first female leader of the Scottish Government; Nicola Sturgeon's speech deemed true for "some" women in Scotland as following this 50% of Cabinet Secretaries, the Scottish Parliament Corporate Body, and Scottish Members of the European Parliament were women. However, according to Engender's (2020) report on Sex and Power, women's equality has not improved for other groups of women, such as; poorer women, LGBTQ+ women and disabled or BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic) women. Also, in terms of the paid labour market, even though women are over represented in the fields of health and social care, still, men are mostly in the managerial positions in these sectors. Thus, the power in decision making is largely in the hands of men across these mentioned fields (political and social); impacting how women's needs are being represented (Engender, 2020b).

From representation in high working positions, to focusing more on who will be directly impacted, which is women in the working and lower classes. These women in Scotland are affected most by the cuts to public expenditure in the past decade, which has impacted protection from the welfare state and support from public services. With these cuts, has come

an increasingly privatized labour market, where women are overrepresented in fields of work which are underpaid and insecure. They are also 85% of paid care workers in Scotland and this is a field which has been underinvested, paid lowly and has poor working conditions with a high staff turnover, although social care work is a highly important field for the functioning of society and driving of the economy (Engender, 2020b).

With this inequality in the labour market, women are also still sharing an unequal burden of unpaid care work and domestic labour in the private sphere (Scottish Human Rights Commission, 2017). For example, women doing an estimated 70% of unpaid care work where child care is increasingly expensive (Scottish Human Rights Commission, 2017). Additionally, with these structural inequalities explained, this can result in women having less resources to safeguard themselves from potential harm, which can be seen in the increased Domestic Abuse against women in Scotland in the past two decades; a commonly spoken about factor leading to homelessness for women in Scotland (Scottish Women's Aid, 2019). Especially important due to the coronavirus pandemic in which domestic abuse cases have been said to have risen by 25% across the UK (BBC News, 2020).

This background with regards to women's socioeconomic marginalisation in the labour market and private sphere is highly important for the issue of homelessness at hand as their positions are reflected in the housing market also where women in Scotland are the majority of renters and the minority of homeowners. In "protecting" women against their subsequent risks to homelessness, the legal framework in place with regards to housing and also human rights, will be briefed in the following section of this chapter.

1.3 International Human Rights Legal Framework

With an interdisciplinary element to this thesis, as well as being social research, it is placed in the context of Human Rights (and diversity), with the view that adequate housing is the right to

every individual and group. Thus, the following section will overview Scotland's Human Rights Legal Framework and then further address the conventions and specific articles in which Scotland is obliged to follow within International Law and European Law whose purposes with respect to housing rights are to protect individuals against homelessness, unsafe or insecure housing.

To consider the background, the United Kingdom (UK) became a state member of the UDHR almost immediately and then joined in signing the legally binding documents of the ICCPR and ICESCR in 1976 (Whyte, 2019). The UK also has Human Rights embedded in its legal system with the Human Rights Act 1998 obliging governments, police, organisations and councils to abide by human rights or they can be taken to UK courts (Scottish Government, n.d.). With the UK Government being organised with reserved and devolved powers, Human Rights was devolved to Scotland by The Scotland Act 1998 and the Scottish Parliament is able to implement international human rights treaties also. The Scotland Act 1998 protects civil and political rights, and, economic, social and cultural rights which include the right to housing and an adequate standard of living are also recognised under international treaties which apply to Scotland (Scottish Government, n.d.).

Now in considering the important aspects of international law which are suggested to protect against homelessness, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was drafted in 1948, and set out to have respect and dignity for mankind (United Nations General Assembly, 1948). Although not a legally binding document, instead, it was a quest to all of humanity for equality (UN General Assembly, 1948). As followed, were the two international human right covenants which were legally binding by the states which signed the treaties (including the UK and thus Scotland) : the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (United Nations, n.d.)

Importantly, the right to “adequate” housing, not just housing alone, is a right which is widely recognised in international law and it was first referred to as early as the 1948 declaration of human rights (Art 25.1). Following this, it was codified within the ICESCR within Article 11 (1):

“The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.” (United Nations General Assembly [UNGA], 1966).

An important aspect of this is an emphasis on the right for “everyone” and to have an “adequate standard of living” and “continuous improvement of living conditions”, not only a roof over one’s head. However, at possible confusion surrounding what “adequate” consists of, the ICESCR committee (consisting of “18 independent experts” that carry out reports to state parties regarding how the states implement ICESCR (OHCHR, 2021)) explained in their general comments 4 in 1991 that adequate housing is not only physical shelter but also:

“the right to housing as the right to live somewhere in peace, security and dignity” (OHCHR, 1991)

However, the Committee of the ICESCR expressed concern about the following of this Article in the UK in 2016 with regards to women. Within their the sixth periodic report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the UK they explained that they are concerned about the social security decrease and this impact on women, as well as availability of affordable housing, lack of social housing and an increase in homelessness within victims of domestic abuse, lone parents, disabled people and asylum seekers (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2016).

Similarly, the right to adequate housing is also mentioned in several other conventions. Such as; The Convention of the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) (Art 14),

The European Convention of Human rights (Art 8), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) (Art 27), The Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Art 5). And finally, the Declaration on the Right to Development (1986) (Art 8) (OHCHR, 2014).

Thus, there is extensive reference to the importance of the right to housing across several covenants, conventions and declarations within the Human Rights Framework in which Scotland is accountable to. The United Nations also stress that each right is interdependent on others, following the principle of indivisibility and thus with adequate housing comes a person's wellbeing, mental health, physical health and dignity (OHCHR, 2014).

However, it can be argued that the reality of adequate housing within the human rights framework being experienced by everyone is not happening on the ground. It is therefore important that marginalised groups who may not have the resources to claim their rights are highlighted. Thus, the following section will present the main purpose of this research with this regard.

1.4 Research Objective and Purpose of the Research

Taking the above context into consideration, the working and lower class people of Scotland can be seen to be impacted by deindustrialization, increased neoliberal capitalism and further austerity by cuts to social security. This has occurred alongside a rise of homelessness, specifically in the city of Glasgow, where there is increased poverty and a widening gap between the rich and the poor. Within this, women have been overwhelmingly impacted in the insecure labour market of underpaid and undervalued work, as well as having the burden of unpaid care work and domestic duties at home. Thus, this has been reflected in their vulnerabilities to have secure and livable housing, as well as facing violence. Therefore, although Scotland has a legal framework which should protect women against these vulnerabilities, this is not seen to be the

reality on the ground as concerns have been raised by Human Rights bodies and academics, as well as third sector organisations to the lack of consideration of women's homelessness.

In assuming that the stereotype of homelessness is a masculine problem and with women being known to live in homeless conditions which are less visible; women are not being acknowledged or heard fully with regards to their experiences. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to give a space for women, in this specific context of the neoliberal capitalist era of Glasgow, to have their voices highlighted, where they are seldom heard. Specifically in terms of feminism, the thesis will look beyond women as a universal group and instead to hearing the voices of all women with varying backgrounds. Additionally, it is to give knowledge to the field of homelessness which is needing additional information regarding the experiences of women in homelessness that are not only typical to men. Also, it is to encourage the members of the public to view homelessness from a different perspective outside the stereotypes present. Finally, it is to encourage the Scottish Government to priorities women's housing needs from a gendered perspective; from one that recognises the marginalised socio economic positions of women in Scotland.

Therefore, the research's key objective is the following:

To explore the lived experiences of homelessness for women in Glasgow, during a neoliberal era of capitalism.

In order to achieve this objective, the following research aims are being examined and explored:

- To examine the homeless women's experiences with the welfare system, labour market and education
- To uncover how the patriarchal structure of society impacts homeless experiences
- To understand women's pathways in and out of homelessness in terms of challenges and supports

1.5 Definitions

Homelessness: In being partly contextualised within human rights, homelessness is considered as more than just not having a roof over one's head, but instead of having housing that one deems inadequate housing, impacting their wellbeing and livelihood. Additionally, in being important to diversity of experiences and particularly gendered experiences, the definition is informed by guidance considering homelessness as multidimensional and as a kind of spectrum in connection to life events and support needs (Engender, 2020a). Thus, by homelessness being socially and culturally constructed, it allows participants in this thesis to volunteer their own experiences as constructed by them, reaching women outside of the homeless service industry, who would normally fall victims of hidden homelessness.

Neoliberalism: The understanding of the ideology of neoliberalism is informed and inspired by socialist academics who explain it as favouring privatisation and freedom from regulation of the state, whilst valuing individualism and gaining self-interest and capital. Also, suggested in threatening collective rights and excluding the marginalised of the society who do not conform to neoliberal ideals (Whyte, 2019; Klein, 2007). It can be seen to have put pressure on the welfare system and to change the structure of the labour market in order to increase capital and reduce expenditure. It is also considered to have influenced the changing structure of families to a certain extent, and is suggested to have been supported by liberal feminism, as it pushes women to also work alongside men, praising dual earner families (Fraser, 2013). Alongside this, it favours self responsibility, rather than depending on others or the state for protection.

Patriarchy: The patriarchy is referred to as a power structure which constructs cultural categories and identities from male dominance that controls not only women, but other groups of men too. Being inspired by Butler, the patriarchy is derived from the notion that women and men have naturally different gender norms in that women are caregivers and men are breadwinners and thus decision makers. However, this system is not natural but has been constructed to withhold white men in power, being repeated over centuries, where society has

endorsed and kept the stereotypes of genders (Butler, 1990). It is intertwined with capitalism and racism and for some, it will be experienced differently than others.

Gendered Perspective: The understanding of a gendered perspective within this thesis is in relation to the patriarchy, in that the inequality of women is acknowledged when discussing social problems. Thus, when exploring the lived experiences of homelessness, women as a group will be explored considering that they are in less equal positions in the private and public sphere, increasing their risk of violence and socioeconomic insecurity (Engender, 2020a). Being informed by Fraser and Butler, the idea of women as a heterogeneous group will be employed within this gendered perspective, with an understanding that women have multiple oppressions and experience social problems individually as well as within a group.

(Liberal) Welfare System: The term welfare system exists within the welfare state in which financial aid is provided to families or individuals to assist them at particular points in their lives when this may be needed with emphasis being placed on wealth distribution and equality (Webster, 2019). However, in being means tested and not having equal access to all, it's understanding in this thesis also considers increased changes to welfare in the UK following increased neoliberalism, the era of Margaret Thatcher and welfare reforms (Klein 2007; Webster, 2019). These changes permit increased eligibility on individuals for welfare support, discouraging dependency, thus, the understanding of the welfare system has the perspective of the welfare system being put under pressure by neoliberalism and thus having neoliberal tendencies.

Marginalisation: Marginalisation is a term which appears countless across social research yet is rarely defined. This thesis refers to it as being the process by which individuals are excluded following performing out with the norm of their society. It results in individuals or groups being unable to participate on a par with the dominant group of that society. It is used in this thesis as an abstract analytical concept and it can refer to social and economic marginalisation, as well as within the private and public sphere. In being associated with vulnerable groups who are prone

to stigmatisation, Fraser (2003) has highlighted how women experience it economically and socially, of the working and lower classes, as well as BAME, LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Allies, Asexual and Pansexual) or disabled women.

Domestic Abuse: This thesis is informed by the Scottish terminology Domestic Abuse. It is also referred to internationally as Domestic Violence, or in Norway, Violence in Close Relationships. However, the terminology in Scotland considers the overrepresentation of female victims. Domestic Abuse is the physical, psychological, emotional, sexual and or financial abuse from an intimate partner or ex partner. It is a gendered problem, as previously mentioned before, where a gendered analysis is taken to solve the problem which arises from the inequalities within our society over centuries between men and women (Scottish Women's Aid, 2021).

Third Sector Organisations: Third Sector Organisations is the terminology used to describe what is commonly known as "Non-Profit" or "Non Governmental Organisations". In the UK, this term is used as it is not part of the public or private sector, being either voluntary or community organisations which are registered as charities. Importantly, they are independent of government and are driven by values to achieve certain social goals; in comparison to producing profit (National Audit Office, n.d.).

1.6 Thesis Structure

To assist the reading of the thesis and to give an insight of what is to come, the structure will now be presented with a brief overview of the eight chapters. Chapter 1 provided first a general introduction to the changing neoliberal structure of society and its suggested implications of rising homelessness. Within the context of Scotland being presented, the importance of having a gendered perspective is emphasised and current legal frameworks within Domestic Law and

International Human Rights Law were briefed, further contextualising the thesis. Then the research objective and aims, as well as the purpose of the research were given and ending with key definitions of concepts and terms used throughout the thesis. Chapter 2 will give a critical and selective account of previous research. This will explore the speculated causes of homelessness. Also, in an attempt to capture women's investigated experiences, the issue of hidden homelessness will be discussed amongst the research. Furthermore, to include the structures which could impact experiences, key research regarding neoliberalism and welfare is discussed with regards to women. Chapter 3 will give a presentation of the theoretical framework for the thesis which allows for feminist perspectives in challenging the patriarchal society using aspects of gender performances, as well as challenging structures of society using recognition and redistribution. Then further, exploring some suggested consequences of marginalisation and social exclusion through stigma. Chapter 4 provides the methodological approach of the thesis which includes the research design, epistemological approach, participants and recruitment, data collection and analysis, positionality, a consideration of ethical concerns, and limitations, challenges and strengths. Chapter 5 presents the key selected findings from the participant interviews, relating to the research objective and aims. The findings consist of three themes and six sub themes; the first theme refers to the structures in society and its impact on women's experiences, the second theme focuses on perceptions of women's homelessness, and the third theme highlights the challenges and supports in homeless journeys. Chapter 6 presents an analysis and discussion of the key findings, utilising the theoretical framework, key concepts and previous research. Chapter 7 gives a conclusion to the thesis, reflecting directly back to the original aims of the research and also presenting gaps that still need to be filled in future research.

2 Literature Review

In the following chapter, selected pre existing research surrounding homelessness will be

presented. Although there has been attention, to a certain degree, of homelessness in Scotland, the research has mainly focused on drug related problems and health (Beaton, Coles & Freeman, 2018; Lamony, Toal & Crawford, 1997; Waugh, Rawley & Clarke, 2018). With only one study found exploring the lived experiences of women specifically in homelessness (Webb, 1992). Thus, further selected research across the UK, Europe and wider will be utilised for the main body of the literature review, as well as some of research in Scotland which were deemed informative. Aspects of suggested individualistic and structural perspectives of causes will be discussed. As well as this, research focusing on the hidden aspects of women's homelessness and considering gendered experiences of domestic abuse will be explored. Additionally, academia discussing women within a neoliberal structured society are considered. This chapter thus aims to inform what is already known about lived experiences of homelessness, during neoliberalism; also considering gender.

2.1 Pathways into Homelessness: “Causations”

The framing of how individuals become homeless is constructed by governments, TSO's, academia, and general members of the public, and this can impact the way in which homeless individuals are viewed and supported. These perspectives also vary across countries, for example, the US (United States) has been said to focus more on individual causes and the UK on structural causes (Fitzpatrick & Christian, 2006). However, there are major disagreements over what is said to “cause” homelessness (Pleace, 2000). And more recently, a ‘new Orthodoxy’ of homelessness in academia has emerged which highlights the fact that changing structural conditions can impact more harshly on certain groups (May, 2000).

2.1.1 Individualistic Perspective

Despite this increase in structural acknowledgement, there is still a predominant theme across some research and media that homelessness is caused by individuals themselves due to personal problems as governments and organisations frame it as a social problem (Fitzpatrick, Kemp & Klinker, 2000; Ravenhill, 2008). Thus, there is a concern from socialist scholars that this individualistic approach to homelessness drives the belief that it is a modern problem which will not go away and that people need to fix themselves; rather than challenging the system of the state and marginalisation (Radley, Hodgetts & Cullen, 2005; Watts, 2013; Allen, 2016; Aldridge, 2018).

Despite this, it cannot be escaped that certain individual factors appear to be a common experience in the backgrounds of homeless people across qualitative research speaking to participants directly. These findings have shown problems in the private sphere such as relationship breakdown, violence or abuse, addictions and poor mental health have all been present in the lives of individuals who are homeless (Ravenhill, 2008). An important risk factor that must be addressed however within experiences of homelessness is trauma, which came up within all participants of Martin & Sharpe's (2008) in depth interviews of their research. However, this research made an assumption that it was a direct cause of homelessness without explaining how it caused homelessness and the participants were mostly males.

There has been a positive increase in interest in research of women's homelessness which has also shown similar individual risk factors and occurrences in experiences as well ones specific to women such as domestic abuse and rape. This research in highlighting risk factors and to women's homelessness, is also limited however as it is mainly exploring women with low education who have experience of long term homelessness (Mayock, Sheridan & Parker, 2015; Mayock & Sheridan, 2012; Ravenhill, 2008; Wardough, 1999). Additionally, qualitative research reviewing women's homelessness advocates for structural perspectives to be emphasised in, however, has predominantly highlighted that relationship breakdown of partners of spouses seems to be a recurrent theme of women's homelessness (Bretherton, 2017; Watson, 2011).

Although focusing on individual factors has limitations and concerns, it is important to note that there is a positive aspect of individual roots being highlighted such as mental health, as now there is a noted raised awareness of psychological factors which can impact women's lives (Watson, 2011: Watson, 2016).

2.1.2 Structural Perspectives

Differing from individual perspectives, research coming from a structural perspective, insists that society is made up of systems in which if they do not support people sufficiently then this can lead to homelessness. For example; housing, welfare, health care and education. There have been some inquiries within academia as to which structural problems lead to homelessness and to which extent they cause homelessness directly (May, 2000; Fitzpatrick, Kemp & Klinker, 2000). However, the impact of structural factors as a risk to homelessness is increasingly acknowledged.

The issues of the capitalist labour market have come up within challenging the capitalist structure of society in a trend in several studies which have shown challenges in entering the labour market and in having access to secure employment amongst the homeless population, as well as high levels of unemployment (Fitzpatrick, Kemp & Klinker, 2000; May, 2000; Ravenhill, 2008). In line with this, in a useful qualitative study of in depth experiences of men who were homeless and accessing a night shelter, May (2000) highlighted trends in unemployment, including those who were long term homeless and had been homeless for the first time for a short period, and concluding that marginalisation in the labour market was common across male homelessness. Another study exploring to what extent employment could support a pathway out of homelessness found a barrier to support from working during homelessness as the labour market proved to be insecure with zero hour contracts, low pay and temporary positions only (Bretherton & Pleace, 2000). However these studies are of course limited in their lack of representation of women.

With regards to education, it is a structural factor which can mainly be seen to be mentioned in terms of homeless populations having low education or to have incomplete secondary school education (Fitzpatrick, Klemp & Klinker, 2000; Mulrenen, Atkins & Cox, 2018). However, little is known of how education has been a preventative structural factor for homelessness. Adding to this knowledge, is a study which explored how homelessness is a barrier to education for students in London. Interviewing sixteen students, findings showed homelessness to interfere in their ability to participate in university life as well as a pressure to have the financial resources for their studies. The research recommended universities to encourage homeless students to come forward for support (Mulrenen, Atkins & Cox, 2017). Other research has supported the method of the previously mentioned study in recommending that in order to reduce negative stereotypes and stigma, academics should focus on exploring participants which are not already represented in media and academia such as homeless students (Ravenhill, 2008). This would give space to challenge structural factors within homelessness.

As mentioned, there is still a lack of research exploring socioeconomic structural factors of women's homelessness and much of the research still focuses on personal problems. In a rare focus of structural problems, an Australian study of twelve women suggested that many of these women were homeless due to economic decline and ill mental health was a consequence to this (Watson, 2016). Suggesting structural factors to play an important role in also impacting individual one's. However, only mothers were interviewed with their children in their care, thus missing other women.

With regards to structural factors being of focus, research has at the same time been concerned that only addressing structural causes can undermine female agency and victimize women; rather than empower them (Bretherton, 2017; Ravenhill, 2008). However, it could be said that there is an interplay between structure and agency as it could also be argued that women are agents but structural causes limit their agency, for example resources and economic factors.

2.1.3 A middle ground between Pathways into Homelessness

Fueling the structural\individual debate is the fact that poverty is a spoken cause of homelessness yet most individuals in poverty do not become homeless (Fitzpatrick, Klemp & Klinker, 2000). Also, there is a commonality between individual and structural factors in that both are involved in a person's social capital, as presented by Ravenhill (2008) in their influential ethnography of the “culture of homelessness” in London, England, where they explained that a person's social capital is their education, economic situation, social network, physical and mental health. Thus, if all of these things are positive for an individual, then this can be suggested to decrease the risks in becoming homeless and increase the chances of a pathway out of homelessness. However, Ravenhill (2008) focused only on individuals rough and accessing homeless services. Still, this is a useful suggestion in how both perspectives cannot be directly told to be causes of homelessness but can increase risks and likelihoods of it happening.

2.2 Gendered Perspective to Homelessness

Focusing now on women, they have been said to experience differences in their pathways through homeless; compared to men. Thus, academics within the fields of (mainly) Social Policy and Urban Studies, have asked that research considers the gendered aspects of homelessness (Bretherton, 2017; Baptista, 2010; Edgar & Doherty, 2001). As well as this, in uncovering the problem for women, TSO's such as Engender, Shelter Scotland and Scottish Women's Aid have produced multiple useful reports on the current state of homelessness with regards to it being an increasing and an unrecognised crisis for women (Engender, 2020a; Scottish Women's Aid, 2019; Shelter Scotland, 2018). For example, Engender (2020) has expressed concern that housing policies are often gender blind with a lack of consideration for these structural barriers faced by women. Some of these reports have also represented the voices of service users of TSO in homelessness and domestic abuse (Scottish Women's Aid, 2019). It is thus prosperous that these reports are diverting from homelessness as a male issue and only involving personal

problems. However, there is a lack of reports from these organisations which reach women who are not accessing such services; hence this research hopes to include those women.

Another factor in the gendered nature of homelessness is with regards to the impact of women's gender roles on their housing security and homeless experiences, which have been said to have been overlooked (Baptista, 2010; Bretherton, 2017; Johnson, Ribar & Zhu, 2017).

2.3 Women Hidden in Homelessness

The discussed lack of a gendered perspective in the underrepresentation of women across homelessness research, statutory statistics, and visibility in homeless services; this has come to be known across academia as 'hidden homelessness' (Edgar & Doherty, 2001; Webb, 1992). The invisibility of women can be seen in that they access other conditions which are not visible to statutory organisations. Hidden homelessness is said to need more research and the problem cannot be quantified and it is not known if it is high on the political agenda or not (Aldridge, 2018).

A prominent and early study of hidden homelessness in women came from Webb's (1992) ethnographic account of single women's homelessness in Scotland. According to Webb (1992), hidden homelessness takes many forms, for instance a nomadic existence of shifting between different households among family and friends, or being trapped, sometimes suffering harassment or abuse, while being unable to secure alternative accommodation. Much has changed in the context of Scotland with regards to women's positions in society in two decades since Webb's (1992) in depth study with regards to increased neoliberal capitalism and an assumed increase in gender equality. It thus seems important for women's homelessness to be revisited, acknowledging the heterogeneous groups of women also, with exploring other women as well as single women; this is something which will be explored in the present research.

Webb's (1992) studies findings can be seen reflected in other examples of hidden homelessness from recent key research of Urban Studies and Social & Housing Policy, reviewing the problem across Europe (Mayock & Bretherton, 2016; Edgar & Doherty, 2001). These larger scale studies found women's hidden homeless conditions in; insecure rented accommodation, sleeping rough in unknown sites, hostels or temporary homeless projects, remaining in an unwanted or violent relationship, sofa surfing, staying in inadequate conditions of friends or family members homes (Mayock & Bretheron, 2016; Edgar & Doherty, 2001). However, it is difficult to compare between countries as many have differing homelessness data of recording methods and definitions of homelessness vary slightly in terms of their inclusivity or exclusivity of women's current state of homelessness.

There have also been research based in Ireland which have highlighted women's hidden homelessness, utilising biographical qualitative interviews and ethnographic observations (Mayock, Sheridan & Parker, 2015). Findings addressed women's experiences of long term homelessness without children, which is advantageous as this group has been mentioned to be missed in research which usually explores mothers. It found that single women tend to avoid homeless institutions as they do not want to be judged for not being 'homemakers' central to the female gender role (as suggested be explored previously) (Mayock, Sheridan & Parker, 2015). Also, cross cultural research has shown that women tend to 'double up' with friends or family members in the UK specifically, to also avoid homeless services or rough sleeping (Johnson, Ribar & Zhu, 2017). However, they do not discuss pathways out of homelessness as their focus was long term homelessness. Pathways out of homelessness has been previously suggested in needing to be explored in terms of women's experiences to prevent homelessness (Ravenhill, 2008), thus it will be an aim to be explored in the present research.

The recording of data of homeless women, has been said to contribute to how this problem is kept hidden and women are unsupported as Engender (2020) contested the persistent lack of visibility of women within homelessness data in their report by explaining that women are the majority of renters in Scotland and minority of house owners, also they are overrepresented in

low paid and insecure employment (Engender, 2020a). Although lacking direct voices from women themselves, this does emphasise that with women being overrepresented in poverty, it only makes sense that they also will be in homelessness (Baptista, 2010). This gap in understanding about women's homelessness is a major gap in evidence about homelessness in general and a failure to understand the nature of homelessness itself. Therefore, something that the current thesis wishes to achieve is to contribute to having a better understanding of the complexities of women's homelessness.

2.3.1 Domestic Abuse intertwined in Homelessness

An arguably less hidden aspect of women's marginalisation in society, is represented in their over representation in being victims of domestic abuse (Scottish Women's Aid, 2020). However, with regards to how this is represented in women experiencing homelessness; there has been a concern that women accessing domestic abuse refuges are among the hidden homeless population, as the UK does not record women in refuge in the homelessness statistics (Mayock & Bretherton 2016; Pleace, 2016). This is problematic in that women's experiences in relation to homelessness and domestic abuse are being missed.

In showing the importance of recognising domestic abuse as related to homelessness; 70% of women in homelessness across Europe have been estimated to experience domestic abuse; with it not only being present prior to but also happening during homelessness (Mayock, Bretherton & Baptista, 2016). However, although domestic abuse is highly present in the lives of women, it is still seldom heard from the perspectives of homeless women in research. There has however been a slight focus on the research of housing, homelessness and domestic abuse in the UK. And findings show that although it is a right for women to have housing if fleeing domestic abuse; this has been said to not be the reality for women on the ground (Jones, Bretherton, Boules & Croucher, 2010; Mayock & Bretherton, 2016; Quilgars & Pleace, 2010).

Also stressing the importance of exploring the problem is from studies based in the UK that found homelessness can lead to a woman to go back to the abusive partner, putting their lives at risk and that this has a big impact on children also (Mayock & Bretherton 2016; Ravenhill, 2008). Additionally, the standard of emergency housing which is given to women can be questioned in terms of how livable it is. However, in the few research exploring both domestic abuse and homelessness, it seems that there have been more reviews of policy and literature; rather than qualitative interviews, which has been stressed in being needed to explore the true nature of the relationship between both problems. Agreeing with this in social policy research, it has expressed concern that domestic abuse is misunderstood as a separate social problem instead of intertwining with homelessness (Bretherton, 2017).

With an attempt to explore the issue, previous research has shed light on the problem as a leading factor in homelessness for women in Malta. Vakili (2013) presented in depth qualitative data from interviews of women in Malta, drawing from her own interviews and two other studies. The results showed a strong association between domestic abuse and homelessness as to why homelessness is most common amongst women (Vakili, 2013). However, interviews directly from homeless women were carried out amongst shelters, thus the study missed many other women out with shelter living.

With a structuralist perspective, Edgar & Doherty (2001) made a useful critical contribution in their review of Women's Homelessness as they expressed the need for domestic abuse to be explored within the context of homelessness from the perspective of a gendered analysis of poverty; explaining that the housing needs of women across Europe do not protect them from gendered life events such as domestic abuse. This argument was further made more recently by Bretherton (2017) arguing that although women and men experience poverty, women's lives are more likely to be met by domestic abuse in which they do not necessarily have economic protection for. This lack of protection and systematic support is recognised by other qualitative studies in which homeless women felt it to be their own responsibility to fix their situation of domestic abuse and homelessness (Watson; 2016, Watson, 2011).

Therefore, this research will aim to fill the gaps identified where women have been hidden in homelessness. In doing this, this study will explore women of hidden homelessness who have experienced domestic abuse and been hidden in homelessness, accessing women's refuge and other conditions. As well as women not experiencing domestic abuse, and those who are mothers and not, in order to cover a diverse representation of women's homelessness.

2.4 Neoliberal Welfare, Women and Homelessness

As this thesis gives a perspective of structural impacts on homelessness within a context of neoliberalism, being touched upon earlier in this chapter, the following subsection will highlight this in terms of women's experiences specifically with regards to the welfare system, suggesting to have an impact on women's ability to protect themselves against housing insecurity.

However, it is firstly important to overview the research concerning the impact of the neoliberal shift in welfare protection, although little is presented with regards to women's experiences, it can inform the impact on homelessness for this research.

2.4.1 The welfare system today

The major characteristic of the welfare system's neoliberalism in the UK can be seen from the changes that took place following the Welfare Reform Act (2012). This is highlighted by Dukelow & Kennet's (2018) in their document analysis in which they explained that the UK, use disciplinary neoliberalism. In the findings, they reported that deregulation, coercion, austerity and debt are all high amongst those countries. Other research exploring the welfare system of the UK specifically has agreed with this and has found a negative impact of neoliberalism, with poverty being framed as a kind of welfare dependency (Reeve, 2017; Webster, 2019). However, this research lacked empirical evidence as it was solely based on analysis of documents.

Further exploring welfare reforms effects and particularly benefit sanctions which are included in these, Webster (2019) of Urban Studies explained the UK to be at its highest rate of benefits sanctions and linked this to homelessness and also making people feel they are not fully participating citizens when they are receiving welfare support. With more empirical evidence, Patrick (2014) in his longitudinal study of individuals impacted by the welfare reforms and cuts, found also that it made people feel like second class citizens, however, this lacked a clear theoretical framework.

Thinking of people's rights specifically, and important to this thesis, Adler (2018) explored welfare regimes benefits sanctions and their impact on human rights. Agreeing with Webster (2019) regarding the harsh effect of neoliberalism, Adler (2018) shows how the state has shifted from legal to market orientated and suggested violations of the right to social security and consequently the right to an adequate standard of living. However, Adler (2018) rightly explained the difficulty in enforcing and taking legal action against the state regarding the protection and implementation of these rights.

Although lacking in representations of individuals lived experiences, the previous study suggesting rights violations was in agreement with empirical evidence from Fitzpatrick, Bramley Sosenko (2016) in their report involving 80 in depth qualitative interviews with members of the public from the UK considered to be living in "destitution" which would involve the struggle for food, shelter, heating, lighting, clothing and toiletries. The study found that individuals experiencing this felt humiliated and degraded, and that this was a representation of broader poverty in which had to be tackled via structural elements such as living costs and better pay (Fitzpatrick, Bramley, Sosenko, 2016). The study highlighted people more vulnerable to this such as immigrant population and individuals with poor mental health, however, it failed to offer a gendered analysis to destitution; something which this research will provide is a gendered perspective and underlying feminist framework to the effects of welfare reforms on homeless women.

A major feature of the Welfare Reforms was the introduction of Universal Credit. Since its roll out, with concerns from academics in social policy and third sector organisations, there has been a surge in academic research exploring its possible impacts on individuals (Larkin, 2018). The majority of research notes the shift in increased sense of self responsibility with Universal Credit, in which the UK are following a neoliberal ideology in encouraging working citizens; concerning that it does not account for those whom may have mental health problems, caring responsibilities or physical disabilities (Larkin, 2018).

Importantly, Larkin (2018), in their legal document analysis, discusses a rights based approach to welfare; compared to a neoliberal approach of workforce significance with increased conditionality to social security based on seeking employment. As well as this, all literature points to the issue that Universal Credit disadvantages those individuals who are less digitally skilled or who lack access to wifi and broadband in their homes. However, much of the literature was analysis of policies and based on previous literature. Additionally, in terms of the impact on women, this has been scarcely reviewed with Larkin (2018) mentioning concerns of Universal Credit being a single payment per household rather than to both partners in the household, possibly limiting female financial independence.

Few studies have explored welfare reform effects and homelessness specifically and mostly this has been in the fields of social policy (Anderson, 2004; Reeve, 2017); thus it is important for it to be explored from the voices of participants in this study. Reeve (2017) based their study on qualitative interviews of homeless individuals and found that many were eager to work however, there were few opportunities and they had been unjustly impacted by sanctions to benefits in which they missed appointments due to transport costs or mental health problems, however, most participants were male. Thus, more qualitative research would be useful to explore women's experiences and specifically those who are or were homeless, thus this will be broached within the interview schedule questions.

2.4.2 Women in the Welfare System

With a lack of research in how welfare reforms have impacted women, and specifically women in homelessness; there has been a surge in acknowledging the importance of welfare support and the role of the welfare system from research in women's homelessness, thus this will now be overviewed. In terms of women's socioeconomic stability and protection, key qualitative research has explained that there has been a shift from women as dependants on men to an increase of women in the labour market. This has happened alongside the time period of a changing neoliberal style economy. This research has also highlighted a decrease in the 'nuclear family', increasing divorce rates, and increasing female headed households. Thus, it has been advised that these structural changes and their impact on women should all be considered with regards to women's risks to homelessness (Baptista, 2010; Edgar & Doherty, 2001; Watson, 2016).

In the shifting structure of the family, the same key research has emphasised the risk of single women to homelessness, in the lack of protection from the welfare system as it is still tailored to meet the needs of nuclear families and mainly working men (Edgar & Doherty, 2001). This is agreed upon by other research critical of policy in the UK with regards to women and welfare and pushed for women to be recognised as individuals as well as mothers (Bretherton, 2017). However useful the literature is, it lacks women's lived experience and qualitative data. Additionally, the welfare system supposedly is helpful for lone parents but not for young, single or older women, as well as asylum seekers and immigrant women. It is also stressed that the welfare system is essential for a woman to have an autonomous household (Edgar & Doherty, 2001). Additionally, reports critical of policy suggest that there lacks analysis of the impact the changing welfare system has on women as well as LGBTQ+ individuals (Engender, 2020).

Further, research which explores women's experiences of welfare, is mostly social policy focused (Lister, 2006; O'Hagan, 2016). Although this does not necessarily capture the voices of women, it has made some important contributions to our understanding of this impact on women. For example, O'Hagan (2016) looks at a critical feminist analysis to policy document

suggestions by the Scottish Government following welfare reforms made by the UK government; to support women from the adverse impacts of this. The study found that the Scottish Government did make commitments to improve women's situations, however, they were not pointing at equality, but rather the suggestions were women friendly including support for childcare.

Additionally, the study leaned towards explaining again the negative impact of neoliberalism where the UK supports 'hard working families' participating in the labour market, however, not one's who cannot and push women to return to work soon after giving birth with also stigmatising people dependent on welfare. To counter this, O'hagan (2016), along with others (Borchost & Siim, 2002; Lister, 2006) suggests social justice, in line with other studies utilising Nancy Fraser's redistribution and recognition for women to be recognised for the work they do at home and in the workplace and be safely supported by the state for this.

2.4.3 Welfare and Women's Housing Security

The extent to which the neoliberal style welfare system is a factor in causing homelessness is not clear, but it still cannot be ignored in how it impacts women's risks to homelessness with the Fawcett Society (2012) reporting huge concern of effect on women with increased austerity in Britain following the beginning of welfare cuts in 2012. Another lack of clarity across research is the extent to which homeless women have access to the welfare system in their specific living circumstances. And it is suggested in research that possibly women in services have more access than women who are living with friends or family as the services can be a "conduit" between women and welfare (Mayock & Bretherton, 2016).

In relation to how this shift to neoliberal ideology is seen in the welfare system of an increased self-responsibility and less dependence, some qualitative research explored this within women's homelessness. From the direct interviews with participants, it demonstrated the suggested negative impact of neoliberalism on women's situation of homelessness. Findings showed that homeless women were impacted by the inequalities brought by the self-responsibility of post

capitalist societies in that they struggled to solve their social problems. For example, they would often experience domestic abuse and used their gender roles within relationships to help themselves with limited resources as they saw themselves as solely responsible for their own problems (Watson; 2011; Watson 2016). However, this research was based only in Australia and mainly young women, additionally the participants were accessed through social services. Thus, it is important that this thesis attempts to explore these ideas with a wider age group of participants in the current context.

Additionally, there have been few studies which have explored women's homelessness from the perspective of their lived experiences within a changing patriarchal society and the consequences of neoliberalism, where this has mainly been discussed over literature reviews or policy analysis (Watson, 2016; Watson, 2011; Wardough, 1999). For this reason, the current research will have an aspect of focus on the lived experiences of these structural factors within this specific context. Taking these into consideration, this thesis will look to bridge the gap between unknown knowledge of homeless women's access and experience of the welfare system within a neoliberal capitalist state. Additionally, this will be done from the views of women, freely, to express their negative or positive experience of the welfare system.

2.5 Stigma and Homelessness

As the suggested impact of neoliberalism and the changing welfare system has been discussed in the previous section, with it showing to frame individuals to feel like second class citizens, and discouraging dependency (O'hagan, 2016; Patick, 2014; Reeve, 2017) and encourage self responsibility rather than support for homeless women ; it thus seems fitting to discuss stigma. Especially as stigma is something knowingly experienced amongst the homeless population (Aldridge, 2018; Allen, 2016; Evangelist, 2017; Teixeira, 2017; Watts, 2013).

Goffman (1963) will be utilised later within the theoretical framework as he explains stigma as an attribute which is discrediting. Thus, the society wants pro-social behaviour and sees behaviours such as welfare dependency, homelessness, addiction as undesirable and unwanted (Watts, 2013). Within this context, stigma is not only something which contributes to ill mental health of homeless individuals but also key homelessness research exploring individuals lived experiences has shown that it is related to social exclusion from society (Ravenhill, 2008).

A quantitative study looking into public attitudes of homelessness found that most people in the UK thought of homelessness as a middle aged man 40-60 years old who has addiction problems and gambles (Teixeira, 2017). This is consistently reinforced by the media portraying this image and by harmful research which misses many other homeless populations such as young people and women (Teixeira, 2017; Watts, 2013). Another study, which arguably reinforces stereotypes due to its sole focus on rough sleeping and having only 3 out of 12 participants who are female; found that Stigma can lead to homeless looking somewhat deviant, needing coerced and reskilled (Radley, Hodgetts & Cullen, 2005). Thus, stigma is something which has been explored to an extent as being psychologically harmful and also which impacts how homeless individuals receive support.

With regards to homeless women, research has shown that stigma is inflicted as it has been historically linked with prostitution (Mayock & Bretherton, 2016). Additionally, studies have found stigma and discrimination by social workers who assumed that women who were homeless were selling themselves for sex or being sexually exploited. This contributes to women hiding and puts them off of seeking help from the local authority or shelters (Mayock & Bretherton, 2016). Attached to the stigma, shame was also expressed by women who felt this way by how people looked at them and this impacted their self-esteem, for example being vulnerable and homeless. Victimisation also contributed to these feelings (Mayock & Bretherton, 2016). In addition to this, a study in Sweden showed women felt they had to be clean to avoid the label of 'homeless' as it is usually associated with being unclean. It was

shown that making the body clean brought respect from the public (Mayock & Bretherton, 2016).

With stigma being a recurrent theme across homelessness research and proven to lead to further marginalisation and social exclusion, the current research will explore this. However, this will be explored with regards to women who have had differing conditions of homelessness, not only rough sleeping, with the aim of challenging stereotyping and stigma.

2.6 Women as a Heterogeneous group

With the stereotypical image of homelessness being challenged in some research as the case of homeless women is included more often; there still lies difficulties in gaining the recognition and representation of all women in the research. One group which are highlighted by statistics (and less by research) in being unequally impacted by the harsh benefits system and austerity in Scotland, is young people (Gaetz, 2013, 2014; Nichols, 2014; Pleace, Fitzpatrick, Johnson, Quilgars & Sanderson, 2008; Quilgars, Fitzpatrick & Pleace, 2011). Young people have been seen to appear more often within the homeless population and specifically, there is an increase across Europe in the number of young homeless women (Aldridge 2001; Baptista, 2010).

In addition, young women have been seen to have added gendered barriers such as an increased risk of sexual violence and the problem with male oriented homeless services (Aldridge, 2001; Watson, 2011). Although there is research on youth homelessness, much of it is policy related; rather than the voices of young homeless individuals (Pleace, Fitzpatrick, Johnson, Quilgars & Sanderson, 2008; Quilgars, Fitzpatrick & Pleace, 2011; Quilgars, Johnson & Pleace, 2008). It has thus been highlighted that research must look more broadly to homeless young people with different journeys and pathways in and out of homelessness.

From the fields of social policy and concerns from third sector organisations, it has been expressed that as well as young women, women who are also elderly, LGBTQ+, disabled and

BAME women are part of the marginalised groups within homelessness and need increased recognition (Engender, 2020a; Watson, 2011). It is also important to note that there are many challenges in reaching such groups, due to high stigmatisation, women are less likely to participate. Despite these challenges, this thesis will take guidance from previous key women's homelessness research that recommends women to be explored as a heterogeneous group with multiple oppressions and not as a uniform group of individuals (Watson, 2016; Watson, 2011). Therefore, this research will aim to explore various backgrounds of women as far as possible, in order to represent a diverse experience of women in homelessness who are seldom heard.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The current thesis has a qualitative design with an epistemological stance of interpretivism and a subsequent ontological approach of social constructivism; allowing the social world to be understood through the interpretation and construction of the participants (Bryman, 2016). Additionally, the research is driven by the research questions and there is an inductive approach with also being inductive in producing a theoretical framework. The following section will explain this rationale related to my research question.

As the the present research project is looking to explore specific lived experiences of participants, a qualitative research design has been chosen as this is concerned with exploring meaning and understanding of a certain context and population such as the phenomenon of women's homelessness (Wesely, 2009; Williamson, Abrahams, Morgan & Cameron, 2014). More specifically, a qualitative design allows us to deeply understand how the participants understand such experiences, in terms of hermeneutics (Geertz, 1973). Additionally, it is concerned with focusing on describing the participants' perspective and reaching comprehensive conclusions of the social phenomena through their eyes which should be at the centre and the main compass of the research (Daher, Carre, Jaramillo, Olivares & Tomicic, 2017). Thus, with the flexible and

participant focused nature of this chosen methodology, it is fitting for the current feminist project which aims to allow for women's voices to be heard; giving in depth and rich results of their experiences.

Although qualitative research has been explained to produce rich results, it does have its disadvantages which have been argued. For example the researcher can be biased in terms of their background, with a risk of the researcher carrying with them their personal and academic previous experience, influencing the research at hand (May & Pope, 1995); therefore, this was considered by the researcher and hence why the interview questions were made open ended and flexible.

3.2 Epistemology

When considering epistemology, there are two main considerations which can be chosen for a research project- positivism and interpretivism and a major deciding factor of which will be taken is the particular research field and whether the research is qualitative or quantitative in nature (Bryman, 2016). Thus with the current project being qualitative in design, it has the epistemological foundation of interpretivism.

Firstly, Epistemology is a kind of philosophical foundation. It can be explained by how we know what we know and the way in which we discuss nature or the kind of knowledge and the routes we take in finding this out which in turn impacts the way we see the world and make sense of it and therefore have relationships with other beings through this (Al-Saadi, 2014).

This research project, as explained before, aims to highlight the unique experiences of participants and with interpretivism as an epistemological foundation to research is the key to understanding and exploring the social world and from a bottom up, rather than a top down approach (Bryman, 2016); it seems to be the most sensible fit. Additionally, an advantage to this in comparison with positivism is that the interpretative position of the researcher will allow for in depth and rich data, otherwise unachievable from a positivist approach (Bryman, 2016).

3.3 Participants

The sampling procedure for this research was purposive sampling which is where the researcher aims to select fewer cases of research participants in a strategic way to ensure that the sample of participants are relevant to the research questions that are posed (Bryman, 2016). With this, purposive sampling depends on the researchers knowledge and understanding of the field being studied to build a rapport with participants (Barratt, Ferris & Lenton, 2015). With my three years work experience in social care, I was able to use purposive sampling as I had a social network of organisations and knowledge of where to reach this group of women..

Initially, I had a specific criteria: participants should be currently experiencing homelessness and be between the age group of twenty and twenty-five years, due to the lack of research in young women's homelessness. However, it was difficult to limit the phenomenon exclusively to this group due to difficulties in reaching participants during the COVID-19 pandemic, thus, the sample criteria was broadened and increased in diversity. Then, I altered the criteria making it open to any woman who had experienced homelessness in the past ten years (during the neoliberal era)- this included women who are currently homeless. Also, I wished to look for women who were mothers and not, being of different ages and civil status.

In recruiting participants, I contacted my own social network of organisations supporting homeless women directly such as domestic abuse third sector organisations and homeless projects in Glasgow. However, due to restrictions on social distancing and travel related to the COVID-19 pandemic, they had little time and opportunity to assist in recruiting participants. Despite this, the organisations were kind enough to share my project on their social media platforms, as were local community groups, friends and family. As well as this, I spent an afternoon discussing my project on the instagram platform of Young Women's Scot, answering questions and raising awareness of women's homelessness in Scotland; within which I advertise my project. I really wished for women to be in a comfortable and safe place mentally and physically in which they had an enthusiasm to share their story, for this reason, I did not offer

any reward for participation and allowed women to voluntarily contact me via email or telephone.

Over a few weeks of my project being shared online, I had various women contact me. In the end, I got a diverse group of seven participants who ranged from twenty-one to sixty-nine years old, and had all experienced different forms of homelessness in Glasgow. All but one participant had exited homelessness at the time of the interview. Two participants had become homeless following domestic abuse and had lived in a women's refuge led by third sector organisations; three participants had experienced homelessness from their early to mid teens and left their family home due to violence or abuse; one participant had become homeless following substance misuse; and another participant experienced homelessness after separating from her partner. In terms of time spent in homelessness, participants ranged from three months to ten years being homeless. Additionally, adding to diversity, three out of seven women were not mothers when they experienced homelessness and one woman's children were in the care of child protection services during her homelessness. Also, two women were born in England and one of these women had an ethnic minority background, where the rest of the participants were from Scotland. In terms of education, all but one participant had completed college level education and two participants had university level education. See below Table 1 where important aspects of participant's information is presented, keeping their anonymity.

Table 1: Participant(s) sociodemographic and homelessness (HI) background

Participant Pseudonyms	Age (years)	Condition(s) of HI	Time Period HI	Maternal Status	Education	Employment
Zara	30-39	HI at Home Friend's Home	2019-20 20	Mother (Child under 12y)	University Graduate	Stay at home Mother

Sharon	40-49	Women's Refuge	2019-2020	Mother (Child under 12y)	College educated	Civil Servant
Anna	20-29	Young Person's HI Hostel	2018-present	Mother* (Children under 12y)	College education ongoing	Student
Betty	60-69	Women's Refuge	2014-2015	Mother (Adult Children)	College educated	Civil Servant
Kelly	20-29	Rough Sleeping, Sofa Surfing, HI at Home	2009-2011	Mother** (Children under 12y)	University Graduate	Council Worker
Rosie	30-39	Sofa Surfing, HI Hostel, HI at Home	2005-2020	Non Mother	College educated and ongoing	Student Hospitality Worker
Debbie	40-49	Sofa Surfing, HI at Home, Temporary Accommodation	2005-unknown	Mother* (Age(s) unknown)	College educated	Volunteer

*Children are not in participants care

**Participant had no children during homelessness

There were thus seven interviews carried out with these participants following discussing the project prior to participation with the research, being sent a digital information letter and gaining signed consent. The original plan was to travel to Glasgow, Scotland for the interviews, however this became increasingly difficult due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Thus, six out of seven interviews were conducted in November 2020 via zoom voice call and video. Then one

out of seven were conducted following relaxations of rules and regulations in Scotland in December, with the location chosen by the participant, at a homeless project in Glasgow with use of a confidential room.

3.4 Chosen Data Collection Method

Qualitative interviews were employed for this project as they provide the tools that allow for people's values, beliefs and experiences to be heard in depth, and particularly people who are unheard and often misrepresented. Thus, linking this to part of the theoretical basis of the project, it is important that this research promotes the recognition of women through their voices being heard and their participation as peers, as well as works against stigma and stereotyping by giving this space for them to share their unique experiences of homelessness. Additionally, as this has a feminist perspective, it is important to discover the participants views by allowing space for their descriptions and voices to truly be heard in depth, rather than making assumptions based on policy documents and rhetoric about the matter at hand.

To conduct interviews, a semi-structured interview guide was developed which is flexible, allowing changes to occur such as follow up questions, missing out questions or changing the question order. This method allows in-depth results but also allows a certain amount of power over the situation in the hands of the participants with flexibility if they wished to miss questions they were not comfortable with, thus leading the interview in the direction they wished to whilst covering important topics.

3.5 Data Analysis

One challenging aspect of qualitative research is that you can end up with an extensive amount of databases, in this case, transcripts, thus there is a difficulty in finding depth and richness amongst the mess (Bryman, 2016). Therefore, the choice of analysis and subsequent method of organisation of the data was vital to the research in order to reflect the participants' point of view. This is also relevant as the study is based on an interpretive stance in that the experiences of participants is essential where we interpret what they have said in a way that is close to their

reality. In fact, there is a kind of double and triple interpretation as we interpret what they said and further interpret what it conveys in terms of meaning and with detailed desired understanding (Bryman, 2016).

The current thesis is looking at reflecting a diverse group of experiences in depth and wishes to interpret meaning based on participants points of view; data is being analysed with the application of theoretical framework and inspired key concepts utilising critical feminist perspective of Butler's view on Gender and the patriarchal societies impact, as well as Goffman's take on social interactions and Fraser's (2003) Recognition and Redistribution. Thus, two which give a wider social context with regards to the systems and structures of society from a gendered perspective and one which deepens their impact on a personal level. Therefore, it is useful to apply thematic analysis, a method which is used frequently by qualitative researchers and can bring out meaning from data across a small sample in which it relates themes to theory and literature (Bryman, 2016). The themes selected were constructed by myself and built upon codes within the transcripts which were highlighted to relate to the research questions and theoretical basis (Bryman, 2016).

In order to carry out thematic analysis, I followed a modified version of a guide by Bryman (2016) which suited the small sample of participants I have; thus, not all steps were taken, however, the main ones included the interview recordings being transcribed verbatim. Following this, transcripts were read and reread, then information was coded relevant to the research question and objects and following this, themes were extracted from the codes which related to literature read and the theoretical foundations of the project. These themes were then compared to one another with unique findings also being brought out and then explained as to why they were important for conclusions to the thesis.

The three key themes (not including the eight sub themes) identified were as follows:
Socioeconomic survival within neoliberal capitalism, The Role of Gender within Experiences and Navigating pathways through homelessness.

3.6 Positionality

In terms of the researchers position, qualitative researchers are the central instrument of the research and will become part of the research, however, our position in society and in relation to the participants' experiences also influences research (Byrne, 2001). This is where my positionality as a researcher comes into play. Positionality is something which is determined by where the researcher stands in their relationship to the participants such as gender, class, and education and usually it is categorised as being either an insider or an outsider (Merriam et al. 2001).

In my case, I would consider myself to be an insider with regards to a great extent of factors in relation to the participants. Firstly, I am also a woman from Glasgow, this was of course of great advantage as I understand the context of where the research is situated in terms of what life is like in that part of the world and the cultural perspectives. Secondly, I have some relevant work experience from third sector organisations which has given me a greater insight into the processes and pathways women may go through whilst homeless. Therefore I can say that this relevant experience is helpful in creating understanding and building a rapport while interviewing. However, this was also a disadvantage to a certain extent as I had to avoid being biased and allow the participants to share their own experiences from their point of view without direct interference of the researcher.

As well as this, I have a working class background, similarly to most of the participants which is a contextual understanding in terms of where we come from, the occupations of our families and education. This was another advantage to rapport building and reduced a sense of superiority from my own end to the participants; however, some of the participants had experience of hardships I do not.

In other cases I am an outsider, importantly in terms of the fact that I have not experienced homelessness, thus I have not walked in the participants shoes. This can be a negative as

participants may hold back information sharing in the fear I do not understand or may judge them. This can also be a positive however as I cannot put my own experience onto the participants and shape their story according to my own. Additionally, some of the participants were in situations of domestic abuse and although I have experienced work with this, I have not been in that situation.

Taking this into consideration, with the many things I have in common with the participants and previous knowledge of their situation in general, I had to be aware of this not to shape their answers and influence the project as much as possible. Thus, steps were taken in remaining professional, and carrying out the research from the perspective of a master's student, as far as possible. With this, positionality involves power dynamics and it was also important that I did not exploit this power so to do this I made sure that all participants had freedom to answer what questions they wished to and were informed about voluntariness of participation enabling them to withdraw at any time as well as having full knowledge of the project's goals.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical Considerations are vital when beginning to conduct social research and should be a central aspect of your research plan (Bryman 2016). It is important because when research is ethical, it ensures the mental and physical safety of both researcher and participant and also adheres to professional codes of conduct and responsible methods of data collection (Bryman, 2016). With this in mind, I took the time to think through and ensure that the processes of this research were completely ethical, especially due to the fact that there are sensitive topics being discussed. Also, it has been recommended in studies specifically exploring the lives of homeless women to be trauma aware and sensitive (Williamson, Abrahams, Morgen & Cameron, 2014), thus, this was considered. Additionally, there is a danger of research reinforcing stereotypes and stigma that participants may face in day to day life from members of the public and professionals as well as misrecognition (Ravenhill, 2008). Therefore this was also kept in mind and a part of the ethical considerations due to the theoretical basis of stigma and recognition.

In order to consider ethics, the procedures of the research were sent to and approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data and also their guidelines on receiving consent and informing participants were followed. Additionally Bryman's (2016) intertwining and interlinked ethical guiding principles of Reducing Harm, Informed Consent, Invasion of Privacy Prevention and Deceit Prevention were followed. Therefore, the subsequent factors considered and procedure followed to uphold ethical principles will be explained below:

With regards to reducing harm, a first step was in having informed consent. This can prevent psychological harm being done in that the participants understand what participation entails and they can choose whether to participate or not. Thus, participants were given the opportunity to read about the study from the information letter and give informed consent once they were ready to do so. Additionally, this allows for the ethical principle of preventing deceit permitted from researcher to participation as it ensures that the participant is fully aware of the details of the project. Therefore, I made it a key priority to be transparent to the women I interviewed for them to know why I was carrying out the research and what it was for.

To carry out informed consent, I produced an information letter via the guidance from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data which entailed everything involved in the study and also the aims and objectives. Adding to this, there was an option for participants to sign the consent form attached to this letter in which they would agree to participate or not. It was important to continue the participants' control and participation as well as recognition as equals that they had the option to withdraw from the study even after participating and they were made aware of this.

Another aspect of harm reduction was that all participants but particularly participants who had been in violent relationships, were kept anonymous and given a pseudonym. This can also be seen to be linked to the ethical principle of privacy as it is connected to confidentiality of records (Bryman, 2016). Thus, I ensured participants would be anonymous in the study and also

allowed them to choose a time for their interview where they had privacy around them and I ensured I had a private room which was booked at the University of South Eastern Norway in which only I could hear the interview. Interviews were also recorded and stored in a password locked computer in which was only known to myself and the names of the participants were not mentioned on these recordings. Further, the recordings were deleted following being transcribed.

Privacy is also especially important to prevent psychological harm as many third sector organisations are wary of allowing research for their service users due to the history of privacy being invaded throughout their lives from social workers' questions and police also (Allen, 2016). Thus, being trauma aware, I ensured that participants volunteered to take part in the research and were happy to be asked questions; rather than being pressured or with an incentive. Additionally, I ensured the questions asked were open and not directly personal, allowing them to freely disclose what they wished to.

To further reduce the risk of harm to participants, I provided a debrief after the interviews in which I discussed other subjects such as future, family and hobbies with them so that they could wind down from anything they discussed that may have been psychologically challenging.

3.8 Limitations, Challenges & Strengths

A clear challenge to the study was that I was carrying out the data collection and writing the thesis during the COVID-19 global pandemic. Like all students during this time, this brought personal challenges. As well as personal, it brought practical difficulties to data collection and recruitment as it meant that the majority of interviews had to be carried out online and participants were harder to reach. This made it challenging to build a rapport with participants as easily as it would have been in person; thus time spent on recruiting increased. It also made the interviews more challenging as most participants were not comfortable on video so cues usually given by facial expressions or body language were missed as to whether the participant was comfortable or not. However, a strength in this was that the study managed to capture the

experience of being made homeless during the global pandemic as two participants were homeless during this time.

Within sharing their stories, it was challenging to get women to discuss their pathways out of homelessness as many focused on how they ended up homeless. However, when I explained and supported them in sharing the other side of their stories this brought strength to them as you could hear they were happy in sharing this and also in the study as most of the previous research only focuses on homelessness causes. This also prevented reinforcing stereotypes and individualistic causes of homelessness.

Additionally preventing reinforcing stigma was that the sample of women was diverse as the women are a wide range of ages, have various occupations, some are mothers, some are not, and have experienced diverse forms and durations. However, the lack of BAME women and women from the LGBTQ+ communities is a limitation. I can argue that with these women being a smaller minority, it was increasingly challenging to reach them during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to my background of work experience in third sector organisations of domestic abuse and homeless, I had a lot of preconceived ideas of what women's experiences would be, therefore a challenge was in remaining neutral during interviews. I believe I managed to do this to the best of my ability and making the research qualitative helped in being aware of becoming partial and close to the research participants. This being said, without a doubt, my previous experience was an advantage to the study in comforting participants and being aware of the context of the problem.

4 Theoretical Framework

With the aim of giving a solid critical feminist framework to the thesis, aspects of Butler's (1990) infamous *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, allows us to explain the gendered challenges faced by homeless women in the context of the patriarchal system in which they live. Thus, selected aspects of Butler's theory will be utilised as an analytical tool in explaining how women ought to act according to societal norms through Gender Performativity. Furthermore, this will give space to discuss how power is used from the structures of society which set these norms as a form of control over women; socially excluding those who do not abide by fraught gender categories and how also how gender can be deconstructed and reconstructed amongst deviation.

Also giving strength to the feminist framework of the thesis, but with an angle more focused on the impact of neoliberal capitalism for homeless women, Fraser, within several academic texts highlights the fact that women are bearing the brunt of gender inequality, where they continue to do most of the unpaid labour and their paid labour is undervalued and insecure (Fraser & Honneth 2003; Fraser, 2013). Against identity politics, the framework posits the need of both Redistribution in terms of equality of resources and Recognition in terms of valuing women and their participation, together for Gender Justice. In being critical of liberal feminism and bringing the focus to highlighting women as homogeneous individuals with varying needs and goals; *Feminism for the 99%: A Manifesto* by Arruzza, Bhattacharya, & Fraser (2019) is also utilised as an expansion of Fraser's ideas. This approach then allows for the inequalities within the systems of societies to be explored and analysed with their impacts on women's public life, private life and consequential insecure housing.

Adding to the richness of analysis as it comes from a less structuralist approach to a more interpersonal; Goffman's (1963) theory of Stigma will be utilised. This is of importance as it cannot be only the state which is challenged about justice but society as a whole and encounters with people are key to individuals self esteem, respect and identity where they receive affirmation from the others (Parekh, 2004). During social encounters, stigma is formed, which can be explored using the framework in how women manage their identities as homeless

individuals and cope day to day in their interactions. This can be fruitful in addition to Butler and Fraser in showing how women manage their daily oppression they face in encounters following misrecognition, maldistribution where they also deviate from gender norms.

The three theories will now be separately presented in terms of the selected aspects that will be used for analysis and also their critiques will be considered, beginning with Butler and followed by Fraser, for the feminist framework of the research project and finalising with Goffman.

4.1 Judith Butler: Gender Trouble (1990)

In her most noted work, "Gender Trouble" Butler (1990) wished to provoke and challenge the status quo of feminism, as will also be seen later by Fraser; abolishing this one category of women which is pronounced by liberal feminists as they speak on behalf of other women in other classes and cultures, telling them in which ways they are oppressed. However, where Fraser is useful in challenging recognition and redistribution, as a fellow critical feminist, Butler can add a deeper theoretical perspective to the idea of Gender in Western liberal society, thus allowing the thesis to further challenge the patriarchal society and its impact on homeless women.

The root of this framework both comes from and challenges the notion of gender in Western culture. This notion presents sex, gender and sexual orientation as tightly connected in how they are viewed and made distinct in the structure of male vs. female; and this forms the basis for binary gender and the cultural value of sex (Butler, 1990). For example, a baby born with a vagina will grow up and behave like a woman, specific to what a woman means in that specific culture and she will be sexually attracted to men. However, Butler (1990) believes that one is not "naturally" male or female, not going against biological differences, but in character, behaviour and acts.

In challenging this notion of distinct categories of male and female in society, with an aim of being critical of oppressive systems, Butler (1990) insists that we cannot support the cause of women's equality by ignoring the system in which we live and in which this gender is constructed. For instance, gender in the present thesis is constructed from a Western European perspective and context which would differ from gender in a Southern part of the world; although commonalities will occur as both are within a patriarchal system to a certain degree.

In this case, the idea of what a woman is in the Western World has been established for centuries in that a woman is to be typically feminine in nature (sensitive and caring), presentable in appearance, love children and to take care of her home. Although there have been changes in women now entering the labour force, this patriarchal idea of what a woman is, still exists and is prominent. However, Butler (1990) would explain that this continuous existence of the fraught category of a woman is upheld through Gender Performativity, imposed and supported by the patriarchal system.

With Gender then being a construct and phenomenon that is produced and reproduced, all of the time, Butler (1990) frames this as a kind of performance, but not in the theatrical sense. It is a performance that we repeatedly engage in, sometimes without realising it, through our behaviours and acts. It is also reinforced and reproduced by societal norms. Butler (1990) further explains that this repetition and reproduction gives us the idea that gender is natural but this is a kind of dissolution. For example, pink and blue have been a relatively new idea in the 20th century which was assigned to males and females in a binary fashion, thus it is also historically variable. However, this conflicts with a stable gender category of male and female which is kept by the patriarchal systems and structures in the Western world. Thus, Butler (1990) wishes to deconstruct this approach of performativity in order to expose the traditional power structures and hierarchies.

Butler's work has been critiqued from Transgender and Queer theorists in which they believe that trans or non binary people are expressing their inner gender and true sense of self rather than performativity, thus, there is a danger in patronising and invalidating individuals whom believe that gender feels right for them (Olsen, Key & Eaton, 2015). However, Butler has discussed this in that she in fact does not disagree or go against the sense of self in individuals but she does not agree that there needs to be distinct categories of gender for political action to take place (The Conversation, 2015). The theory could also be critiqued in explaining individuals who act against their gender from a very young age as this does not completely agree with the idea of social construction in their performance.

Within this performance, the fraught categories of gender are reinforced by the reactions of others when one fails to adhere to the societal norms of that gender. In explaining this systematic control involved in keeping these gender norms, it can be suggested that Butler is inspired by Foucault's idea of power as knowledge and knowledge as power where she aims to give recognition to individuals who fall out with the discourse of gender normativity, as she explains:

"Discrete genders are part of what 'humanizes' individuals within contemporary culture; indeed, those who fail to do their gender right are regularly punished" (Butler, 1990 p. 522).

Therefore, there are harsh punishments for those individuals who do not abide by the binary categories of gender such as dehumanizing, negative attitudes and violence or social and economic penalties. Thus, when the deviance and prohibition of behaviour, identity and acts which are outside of gender norms are proclaimed, women are oppressed, as are other marginalized groups because this "Gender Trouble" of going against norms, threatens mens status and prohibits power in disrupting the patriarchy (Butler, 1990).

This happens as binary performance does not exist out of nothing, but instead they are selectively produced by the patriarchal system in which women should serve men in terms of reproduction, being mother and wives; instead of deviating from gender norms thus producing

a heteronormative gender (Butler, 1990). As well as within women's private life, this performativity can be seen reflected in societal structures of labour, where women in underpaid social care work where men are in higher paid jobs which involve societal power and decision making; for example, government positions.

Unlike other theories, Butler (1990) includes a greater scope of agency for women as she explains that gender is not stable and has changed throughout history. This can be seen in simple examples of how women now wear trousers, are in the labour market and have the right to vote. Therefore, resistance is a possibility and gender is temporal as an act and there can be transformation in the breaking of these repetitions of gender performances (Butler, 1990). Within this wish for social change, like Fraser (2003), her aim is to challenge structure, not be focused solely on the political identity of gender.

However, possibly limiting agency is the idea from the theory that in order to be a subject of an intelligible gender to make this change, you must be defined as one by someone in a position of power within the cultural, political and social structure. Thus, if someone is not recognised as an subject that is worthy then they are not one in the context of power which suggests that the discourse has to make the change, not the individuals who are not recognised as subjects (Butler, 1990). This can be challenged to be in line with liberal feminists that feel they need to liberate women in the Global South, where there are many small grassroot organisations which are liberating themselves through advocacy and collective work (Grewal,1999).

In summary, this thesis interprets this framework as a commitment to increase the broadness of the category of what it means to be human and to challenge the structures that control this. In this case, the patriarchal system dictates what kinds of women are valued in society and can be included; and what women go against gender norms and should be marginalised. Thus, this framework asks to prevent those who go against the heteronormative in being punished by social exclusion and violence of all forms; instead, giving them a worthy life.

4.2 Redistribution and Recognition (Fraser & Honneth, 2003)

Following on from the clear challenge to the patriarchal nature of what is expected of individuals within their specific Gender and how this can be used to control women. Another aspect of challenging this system is by looking closer to the socioeconomic as well as the sociocultural struggles of women. As an analytical tool, Fraser's take on Redistribution and Recognition within her dialogue with Axel Honneth and further in more recent texts (Fraser, 2009; Fraser, 2013), has been previously used to explain struggles of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and equal status, however, rarely in discussing homelessness or poverty. This theory seems appropriate therefore, as a new analytical lens to women's lived experiences as homelessness is thought to impact both the material lives of women in terms of their equality of Redistribution and also their Recognition (or lack of) as rights claiming citizens within Gender Justice.

Taking firstly the concept of redistribution, Fraser explains it as sharing both goods and burdens which can be directly linked to our material equality. For example, goods being; income, property, access to paid work, education, healthcare and leisure time. Whereas burdens are mortality and morbidity, such as, deprivation of food and environmental safety (Fraser & Honneth, 2003).

Fraser insists redistribution is essential for the struggles against the oppression of women as well as all other marginalized groups. Especially with regards to Gender Justice, redistribution can refer to the class like differentiations rooted in the economic structure of society in which constructs division of labour, both paid and unpaid, assigning women to the unpaid reproductive labour or "pink collar" insecure and poorly paid work (Fraser, 2013). Also, since the 1970's, there has been a concern of the shift from material equality aims of redistribution to a sole focus, from liberals, on sexual difference struggles within the fight for Gender Justice of recognition (Fraser, 2013). However, redistribution claims alone do not mean Social Justice as it is the dominant culture or group which decides who has the right to voice their claims and what

is the representation of the good life (Parekh, 2004). Thus, since we are not in a cultural vacuum, Fraser is also weary of redistribution for justice alone, as she notes with regards to women how the claims for welfare support can subsequently stigmatise women as dependent single mothers or "scroungers", hence, insists on redistribution being accompanied by claims for recognition (Fraser & Honneth, 2003).

Now taking the concept of recognition, against identity politics, recognition to Fraser is not about suffering a distorted identity or impaired subjectivity but it is instead when there are institutionalised patterns of cultural value that impede on someone from participating as a social peer in social life. This thesis therefore abides by Fraser's 'status model' of recognition: seeing others as peers and having reciprocal recognition and status equality; contra to if people are superior\inferior and if individuals cannot participate together on an equal par then there is misrecognition and status subordination (Fraser & Honneth, 2003).

From this framework, recognition of women within the status model is essential for Gender Justice. And this can be seen from Fraser's (2013) explanation of misrecognition of women in neoliberal societies, where women are second class citizens, putting them at risk to violence and marginalisation in public and private life. As well as this, where the ideal worker is the ethnic majority male worker and participator in society; devaluing reproductive labour and unpaid work and naturalising gender injustice but rather valorising waged work (Fraser & Honneth, 2003; Fraser, 2013).

The concept has received critique as it has been raised that the need of recognition from a dominant culture group is a symptom of the problem of oppression and internalized stereotypes of inferiority and superiority with oppressed people being left with the idea they are missing something that only the oppressor can give them thus reproducing hierarchies and injustice that the theory tried to overcome (Garrett, 2010). Additionally, McNay (2008) proclaims that it can support government manipulation to your relationship with yourself and

lead to preoccupation with individualised consumerism, stopping radical social transformation. However, together with Redistribution as follows, it can be seen how this could be combated.

Recognition and Redistribution for Gender Justice in Neoliberalism

This theory is rooted centrally within the political conjunction of the rise in neoliberalism and globalisation and a specific focus on women as a marginalised and oppressed group during this time. With the rise of neoliberalism, came the second wave of liberal feminists thriving, and although feminists set out to critique the economic struggles of women, in the end they rose to the tendency of identity politics, where they only advocated claims for recognition. Thus, Fraser (2013) suggests that feminism's focus on the emancipation of women has hosted this rise in neoliberalism and inequality of women in a new capitalist world. This impacts all women to different degrees and extents; as with middle class women they aimed to break the glass ceiling, and working class, or marginalised women aimed to work to be dignified and better themselves; however the neoliberal reality can see low wages and exploitation (Fraser, Arruzza & Bhattacharya, 2019).

Thus, Fraser and her colleagues (2019) most recent publication in the manifesto "Feminism for the 99%" not only focuses on Recognition but also on Redistribution, having both concepts together for Gender justice. This is an anti-capitalist movement which is against the neoliberal feminism that advocates for women to fight for Recognition in fields paid labour where middle class women have more chances of achieving; this feminism is only the feminism for the 1% and further promotes and exploits working and lower class women who are involved in the social reproduction and make this profit making within capitalism possible (Fraser, Arruzza & Bhattacharya, 2019).

From Parekh's (2004) contribution to the strengths of both redistribution together with recognition, they insist that recognition alone plays into the hands of the dominant class as long as the economy, wealth and full social order of society remains intact; diverting from the focus on social justice. Relating Parekh's interpretation to Fraser's theory of Gender Justice, it can be

said that second wave feminisms concentration on recognition of identity where women can be in high positions of government or corporate companies; allows the state authority to go unchallenged and the wealth to remain to the middle and upper class of society, leaving behind the lower and working class women whose work remains undervalued.

Having redistribution together with recognition, instead champions the rights and needs of marginalised women, outside the category of women as a universal group, and instead demands an increase to public spending and social services (Fraser, Arruzza & Bhattacharya, 2019). With this redistribution claim for resources; it also claims recognition of these women in reproductive and unpaid labour being valorised.

Thus, in favour of these ideas, the current thesis will steer away from a sole focus on identity and difference, the tendency of second wave feminism, and instead consider both cultural and economic struggles of women in homelessness. With this, it is of importance to the current research that gender justice within women's experience of homelessness is viewed with regards to both Recognition and Redistribution and how this is being impeded or not via misrecognition and maldistribution within a rising neoliberal society.

4.3 Stigma: Notes on the management of a spoiled identity- Erving Goffman (1963)

Having already presented theories which challenge the excluding structural aspects of society; this final theory can be useful in exploring how this impacts individual homeless women's everyday lives. It can also be used to explore how homeless women manage the information regarding the homelessness stigma within interactions and amongst other stigmas across excluded groups within the neoliberal system of capitalism.

Stigma originally meant difference or something outside of the realm of norm and is now often associated with a trait which leads to the social exclusion of a person from the rest of the society, correlating with high poverty, poor education and low life chances (Bates & Stickley, 2013). The development of knowledge of stigmas impact can be seen to have thrived following the most prominent theory of stigma by Erving Goffman (1963). Goffman (1963) constructed that a stigma is something which discredits ourselves and we adapt a certain role due to this; focusing on two kinds of stigma; one which is visible and one which is invisible. Goffman stigma being obtained through a kind of process and this can be through various channels, such as: 1) Character traits or having an attribute which shows weakness and diverts from what is normal like having an addiction, unemployment, alcoholism; 2) having a group identity of a specific race, religion or nation which is not within the norm of your context you are living; 3) Having a physical stigma such as a body abnormality which is visible like a handicap or scar (Goffman, 1963).

In explaining what a stigmatised person is, Goffman (1963) addresses this to “the normals” (readers). The idea of a normal, is a person without a stigma, and in the context of neoliberal society for example, a white male worker in a corporate company who is married with children and owns his home can be perceived as the extreme end of an absolute normal.

The normative concept is something which underlines the theory and has been faced with great critique with countering suggestions that have been to instead have come from the perspective of the stigmatised rather than the normals. Additionally, activists of disability rights working against the dehumanizing of disabled people directed critique at the suggested blunt and unempathetic description of the process of stigma (Brune, Garland-Thomson, Schweik, Titchkosky & Love, 2014). It can also be argued that by focusing only on the normals perspective; stigma can be reinforced rather than prevented.

Although this theory will be used to advance the knowledge of the impact of stigma on women's lives that have experience of homelessness; it will aim to have the perspective of the stigmatised women themselves rather than those they meet in institutions or in public places.

It is important to note that this theory was situated in the context of social interactions where social information is gained and passed to expose stigma during these interactions. What information is gained and how it is passed depends on the visibility of the stigma. Visibility is also significant in how the individual can manage their interactions where impressions are formed from the normal; however, Goffman (1963) also suggests that we look at visibility as perception as some stigmas although known are not visible but heard for example, an individual who is mute or has a stammer. Thus, someone does not have to have a visible stigma to be noticed.

Contrasting this, having a visible stigma means that an individual will be noticed almost instantly, where this stigmatised person will be discredited and feels the effects of stigma without being able to conceal it. During visibility of the stigma, the person is discredited and often unrecognised openly as the receiver attempts to avoid acknowledging the stigma which causes tension during the interaction (Goffman, 1963). Furthermore, and of particular focus to this research, less visible stigmas will allow the potential of stigmatisation to be avoided and the person is thus, discreditable, not yet discredited, until they are exposed through rumours or other knowledge is passed to the normal (Goffman, 1963).

Within these social interactions, where information is passed, an impression of the stigmatised person is made by the normal. How this impression formation is managed will now be explained with regards to some key concepts of information control; passing, covering and distancing and revealing (Goffman, 1963). Alongside visibility or invisibility, a stigmatised person will have a chance to manage their impression formations, especially if the stigma is less visible. This impression formation is not focused only on an interaction between strangers, but can be

adapted to domestic settings as well as in free public spaces; all of which stigmas are managed and operated. (Goffman, 1963).

The discreditable will manage information about themselves across what is called “the daily round” that is going through his or her day from work, to home, to the shops or to the park walking (Goffman, 1963). Of course, the place the person is and with whom will determine how much information they should manage and what techniques to use to do so.

One way a stigmatised discreditable could manage information during an interaction is through what is termed as “Passing” which essentially means to be passed as a normal person rather than a stigmatised. An example of this process could be when a stigma is not visible or known yet to the stigmatised such as an undiagnosed sexually transmitted disease, allowing the person to “pass” as normal. This is until the person is diagnosed and then they may have to disclose it to their partner, only allowing them to pass as normal to other people, but not their partner and the doctor who diagnosed them (Goffman, 1963).

Another method to manage impression formation would be to distance. “Distancing” will allow any situation where an impression is formed which projects stigma from the normal to the stigmatised to be avoided. Distancing is said to be used by the stigmatised when they enact roles associated with others or utilise institutions or social identities that are inconsistent with their real or desired self conceptions so as to avoid stigma or unwanted identity (Snow & Anderson 1987). Another way of distancing would be from institutions, for example, if a woman is receiving support from a domestic abuse organisation, she may not want to be portrayed as a victim so she may not attend the organisations events where she could be spotted by normals, only using it when it is necessary for her.

Finally, individuals can also reveal their stigma but partially, making some “slips here and there” to. Goffman (1963) believes that revealing voluntarily the stigma to others is the final stage in what he calls a person's ‘moral career’ where they have reached maturity and acceptance.

However, this can be argued against as for some individuals for fear of their lives, such of ethnic minorities in specific countries of homosexuals, it is not possible to reveal the stigma despite maturity and acceptance of it themselves.

A critique which is central and considered for this research project is that this theory of stigma originally can be said to ignore the fundamental influences of class and power which impact a person's positions within society; ignoring issues such as race, gender and ethnicity. And additionally can give the idea that stigma is only created between people's interactions rather than being influenced by structural forces which shape what are stigmas and what are not such as political, social and economic forces (Brune, Garland-Thomson, Schweik, Titchkosky & Love, 2014). For example, something a stigma in one cultural context is not in another, such as childless women in the Western world compared to the South. This can be suggested in making it difficult for Goffman (1963) to be engaged with and supported by social transformative academics.

However, it can be said that Goffman's (1963) original ideas of how individuals manage stigma can be utilised and the theory itself can be adapted to understand more broadened social interactions, for example, beyond only between individuals and to institutions and structures relationships with individuals. As well as this, Butler (1990) and Fraser (2003) can strengthen Goffman (1963) and ensure that structural forces of power against the powerless are not missed in this thesis.

6 Findings

In the following chapter, a thick description of the masters thesis findings are presented. This description is of the significant data within the interviews which I have collected and refined under themes, and in relation to the overall research objective and aims of this thesis.

6.1 Socioeconomic Survival within Neoliberal Capitalism

This theme sets context to the varied nature of backgrounds of participants and encapsulates how women's lived experiences of homelessness were impacted through their starting education and further negatively affected by the neoliberal style of labour market and subsequent welfare system.

6.1.1 Challenge to be Educated with little rewards in return

Despite all participants having education of at least a college degree, the majority of the participants described how they did not complete their full optional secondary school education whether due to disruptions in their home life, lack of interest in academia or other life circumstances such as childhood abuse. This was demonstrated by Kelly (late 20's):

“School became quite difficult for me around the age of thirteen, I had moved primary school twice and then secondary school I was at three different schools throughout then finally I quit school at the age of fifteen, I would have been a summer leaver anyway so I think I left with five qualifications in total and I didnt go back to school after that”

Kelly was homeless in her mid teens for a time period of around one to two years and this was following both fleeing violence from home and being thrown out of her family home, whilst experiencing abuse from her primary care givers (mother and stepfather). Kelly now has a university degree, however, explains how she was bullied at school and felt unsupported by school staff who did not notice the abusive homelife she had. Therefore, like several other participants, school was not positive for Kelly, but also like the others, she managed to apply herself to higher education despite this lacking in her early life.

Following primary and secondary school, all participants had previously or were currently participating in higher education and it quickly came to light that there was no straightforward route amongst all participants through one line of chosen education. With this, everyone shared a commonality in their varied and changing interests across their lives from hairdressing with a change to hospitality; art to office administration and business to criminology. These variations in educational courses can be demonstrated by Anna (early 20's):

"I did college 3 times. I did childcare, I didn't get to finish it due to circumstances. Again, I did hairdressing and I didn't get to finish that due to the same kind of circumstances but I just finished a course in anatomy and physiology, so I've got that."

Anna had experienced homelessness from leaving the care system, with mental health problems suffered following childhood sexual abuse and was still experiencing homelessness at the time of the interview, however now has secured a permanent tenancy. Her experience is shared in common with another three participants, finding it difficult to complete and sustain the education during conditions of homelessness. In common with other participants, she also briefly touched on the fact that challenges brought by her conditions of homelessness, made it difficult for her to focus and concentrate on her studies.

In also changing her path of education during homelessness from a young age, in her early 30's, Rosie, had managed to find herself in an educational course at college which she was enjoying, however which was disrupted, bringing economic challenges and worries:

"Me going through domestic abuse and having to explain that to college was embarrassing, I had to take time off while my face healed because I didn't want to go to college with black eyes. I am fine now and it's in court, It's kind of hard though if you lose attendance, you lost your bursary"

Rosie is just out of homelessness and has her first permanent tenancy, provided by the council, following a serious domestic abuse incident from her ex partner. Also, Rosie has several problems adding barriers to education, such as court dates and emotional difficulties and having to expose this to college. Additionally, disruption to education means losing financial benefits of education during the already testing time of COVID-19.

Other participants, who did not discuss difficulties in completing their education, also showed multiple changes in fields of educational choices in an attempt to pathways to socioeconomic security as they seemed to not find suitable work which was directly related to their educational degree. This is demonstrated by Zara (late 30's):

*"I started an accelerated law degree so I did that and graduated in 2015 but didn't do the traineeship after that, so I have the law degree but nothing after, so I worked as a legal secretary and did office temp and used it too when I worked for an MP (member of parliament).
But then after that we decided to have a child so I focused on that."*

With a postgraduate degree, Zara has the highest education amongst all participants and has tried varied academic fields of humanities and changing jobs as she explained, in an attempt to utilise her working skills, prior to making a joint decision with her ex partner to be a stay at home mother. After a few years of unpaid care work as a mother, Zara was made homeless when her ex partner ended their relationship and Zara had no rights to property, employment or immediate family support.

This insecure results following education in gaining suitable paid work was also found by another two participants who felt their initial education did not provide the economic security they needed in terms of employment as shown by Karen (In her mid 40's):

“I excelled in art and textiles and went to college and did two diplomas in art and design. Struggled to find any job related to it, I could never pinpoint what I wanted to do from it because it was a general art course, most people know what they want from it but I didn’t.”

Karen became homeless following domestic abuse, in the form of psychological violence from her ex partner, whom she fled from with her child into a women’s refuge. At the time of the interview, Karen had not long moved into a permanent home provided by the council following living in women’s refuge accommodation. Karen hinted at various points that art was a passion of hers, however, it was not sufficient enough in order to support herself and her son financially. Thus, Karen took training routes in office administration instead.

Another participant, with an extremely varied work background with little formal education, turned to education with a clear goal and it seemed to be positive in terms of her socioeconomic security. Betty (late 60’s) explains:

“I went back to college and learned all about computing and everything as well- just because it needed to be done. Because when I first started there were no computers, I did a bit of computing when I worked at the primary school but then I went to college at night in Glasgow in town and did bookkeeping, typing and everything. Microsoft office, excel and those things, I re trained myself”

Betty worked for her husband's business as an informal bookkeeper (responsible for finances and payroll) and took care of their children throughout their marriage (for over twenty-five years). Betty began to take a more formal role in the business but then left it with no financial security following leaving her abusive ex husband. Thus, Betty explained how education added to her skills in being able to be financially independent in her field of office administration.

6.1.2 Struggles of stability within the Labour Market

From varying journeys through education, this naturally leads onto the varying pathways of employment and the participants' quests to secure employment throughout their lives, before, during and after homelessness. It emerged from the interviews that all respondents had faced difficulties within the labour market; displayed in their experiences of temporary work, zero hour contracts, redundancies and a consequential struggle to secure permanent employment.

Similarly to the trend in education, five participants seemed to have experienced a wide range of changing employment roles from sectors within hospitality, office administration, factory work, and retail. Sharon explains her experience of this within her field of office administration:

“one of my first temporary jobs was working in [a job in office administration] and that was a temporary job for a year and I got made redundant then a few weeks out of work and got my next job, that was a permanent role, that was four years for a planning consultancy.... That’s the one that started redundancies while I was pregnant. I then went to work for an architect and in X as a PA to a director, worked there for six months and they couldn’t afford to keep me on. Then another company for two years, they got out of paying me any redundancy and I was out of work for six months which was extremely difficult. Caleb was at nursery and I was trying to cover the private nursery fees which was really expensive.... After that I went to work as a temp (temporary worker) for a mat (maternity leave) cover for 6 months.”

From Sharon’s extract, the nature of her employment is clear to be insecure and quick changing, with a pressure to also pay for private child care. These issues were raised by three other participants who were also mothers. At the time of the interview, Sharon had managed to finally secure permanent employment she found stable and was with the public sector, rather than the private. However, Sharon further explains why she still works extra hours:

“I am trying to earn as much as I can because I think it’s important to try and do more with my son. He’s never really experienced family holidays. I know we won’t have a whole family unit

again but myself and my ex have new partners so at some point I'm hoping to afford to take him on holiday by earning more cash for funds for that, for memories for him to look back on."

Here, it is demonstrated that working full time and in a secure job is still not sufficient enough in being able to provide other things rather than basic needs which she wishes for her son; thus it requires her to work overtime to provide this.

Like Sharon, Kelly seems to have made occupational choices for the best interests of her children as she is working in a call centre sector for the police; contrary to she would prefer-working to support homeless people directly:

"I have tried to secure employment in homeless agencies and the income is actually quite appalling and I think you know you want people that can actually make a difference but you don't want to pay them anywhere near as much as the effort that it takes to work in these services. Money is not everything but I've got a family to feed so for me the job that I am doing pays a lot more, essentially it's a call centre but it pays a lot more than any jobs associated with my degree or homelessness."

Although a desire of wanting to help, like five other participants that wish to volunteer in the homelessness sector, Kelly demonstrates that there are barriers to this kind of employment with this not being a field of employment which provides socioeconomic security to her and her family.

As briefly mentioned in the previous extract from Sharon and also found in the majority of respondents, Betty states her experience of redundancy whilst just leaving homelessness:

"I was going out the door and he (manager) said 'can I have a word with you?' and I thought 'I've done something, have I missed something? Have I forgotten something' and he said 'I'm

really sorry to tell you but we are making you redundant' and I nearly fell off the chair I said 'what!' And he said 'yeah with this new system what I'm going to do is, the accounts people, the four of them, they are going to take on the admin for their clients and if I give them a new client they'll just put them onto the system, the system will send them a letter.' And I said 'okay that's fine' but I felt like the feet had been taken away from me and I thought 'what am I going to do?' I needed a job, I needed the money." (Betty)

The angst in Betty's voice reflecting on the shock from that time was very apparent as this was in the midst of her homelessness. As explained by Betty, her new work in a private firm was not secure and technology could replace her position. Fortunately, Betty, like Sharon, managed to secure permanent employment through the civil service following this, keeping her financially secure.

In a different industry from Sharon, Kelly and Betty, another four participants shared the experience of insecure work with regards to zero hour contracts in the fields of retail and hospitality industries. Rosie presents this in her field of hospitality:

"So it is a lot zero hours so one week you can do sixty to seventy hours, crazy amounts then the next week through the summer when I'm doing festivals I would do all day and then the night clubs at night I only got about four hours sleep....yeah there's issues with zero hour which most people in hospitality are on and everyones pretty much are zero hour, there is no job security, it's not like when our parents are younger and you need something to buy a house. It is so much harder now but when my Mum and Dad were my age they were settled with two babies, a house, contracted employment."

Like other participants, Rosie spoke of the insecure employment's stressful impact throughout and the barriers this also causes in securing permanent housing. Additionally, Rosie highlights how this has changed over time, comparing her experience to her parents' experience, when

then, it seemed easier for people to sustain their living and provide for their families through secure employment.

Contrasting participants' general consensus on the insecurity of temporary and no permanent work, two participants who were mothers, seemed to favour temporary work or voluntary work. This was explained by Debbie (in her mid 40's):

“I have not worked full time for the past ten years. I enjoy working at the [homeless] project third sector organisation) because it’s voluntary and I like structure, it’s what I like doing and I also like the fact also that if there’s anything with my kids or that then I can just say sorry I can’t come in, I’m not tied to any kind of contract.”

Debbie became homeless following suffering from addictions and living in her ex partners home. Following this, she secured a tenancy as she was homeless and pregnant, however, she lost care of her children but was now in contact with them regularly and on good terms with social work, since she is no longer using drugs. In this extract, Debbie reflects on how she prefers voluntary work which can give her structure but is still flexible enough that she can be there for her children; being also in common with Anna.

6.1.3 Unsupportive and Degrading Welfare

Moving on from finding a place in employment, is then to the system of social welfare benefits which is supposed to protect individuals from times of socio economic hardships and specifically, homelessness; when employment and education does not. All of the seven participants had experienced using the welfare system during their time of homelessness. Also, some participants had utilised it during times of financial struggles in the past and also continued to need it for support during circumstances after their homelessness.

Six out of seven of the participants felt that welfare benefits were not a sufficient supportive mechanism. This was within their situation of homelessness and after, in terms of being able to

cover more than their basic needs and with regards to meeting them with the urgency that reflected their living situation at the time. This was voiced by Zara:

“It wasn’t too difficult to put in the claim but the wait was really difficult, I had six weeks before any decision was made. For me, my partner ended the relationship... and said I need you out of here and I knew then I would have to declare as homeless.... So he would be asking me to buy food, I couldn’t just go buy anything. He would say give me a list of what Isla (daughter) needs but not me, I ended up borrowing money from friends, it was a massive struggle, because I don’t have family either I found it really hard. So I don’t think there’s enough in place for that situation. I know there has to be checks in place for handing money out but even when the amount came through it wasn’t the biggest amount but it was something, I could buy food.”

The distress from the wait for benefits and the little money which Zara was given during homelessness, was clear from her voice and expressions of concern. Zara was also addressed that the welfare system does not provide full support needed to women who find themselves in her situation following being stay at home mothers.

As well as a long wait for benefits and not meeting basic needs, four participants also described a challenging application process in order to eventually be given welfare support. Kelly remembers this very well:

“Honestly I think it was quite degrading. I remember attending the job centre, I have always, like I am very self conscious so I am always conscious about my appearance and I always put makeup on. They said I didn’t look like someone who was struggling, I was told to come back having not washed my hair and look a bit scruffy. I had to look like I needed it and apparently being presentable didn’t fit the remit of getting it (money).”

Although sofa surfing and rough sleeping during her time of applying, in terms of how Kelly presents herself, it was clear that she did not come from a background which was of the lower class and she expresses that this seemed to go against her when seeking support from welfare during her time of homelessness. Additionally, due to homelessness, Kelly was not in the position to be able to sustain or apply regularly for employment, which was a criteria for welfare, but she found there was a lack of understanding about this.

As well as this, shared in common across four participants was the strict eligibility criteria for benefits and feeling a specific lack of understanding towards women's circumstances was also emphasised, shown from Kelly's extract:

"I fell pregnant with my son, I had to quit college, I was no longer earning, I was on JSA (job seekers allowance), I was pregnant so I wasn't getting any jobs, I know they are not allowed to discriminate but when they have someone turning up to the interview with a massive bump I think it's obvious someone has better skills than you. So I found that humiliating, you are applying for jobs, doing your best but you know someone else is going to get the job. I was also seventeen when I was pregnant so there is a huge judgement that comes with that and also I was really young I suffered from something called hyperemesis but the job centre deemed me fit to work so I wasn't entitled to sickness allowance, I had to actively apply for jobs right up until I had my son."

Here, Kelly highlights a suggested low tolerance of welfare for support in that if you are sick, welfare may not deem you sick enough and so you may still have to be searching for work in order to receive financial support. Additionally, being pregnant at the time and humiliated whilst competing with workers more fit to work, also adds to Kelly's experience of the welfare system as unsupportive.

As well as the verbalised dissatisfaction with welfare support, it was also found in common across half of the participants that they were not forthcoming in discussing welfare support. Rosie, who had been supported by welfare for different reasons in and out of homelessness periodically, spoke proudly of when she was in paid work:

“I could pay my full way, It’s not like I’m on benefits”

Here, Rosie was explaining how she was deserving of a home whilst living with her ex partner because she was not relying on benefits at that time; showing that if she was on benefits then she would not be paying something by herself and would therefore be undeserving of shelter. Rosie also discussed repeatedly that she had worked a lot in her life and she came from a family of workers too as she voiced a sense of pride about this and an unjust way about how she ended up in unstable living conditions.

Further adding to a shyness around welfare support, in another short extract, Debbie asked:

“Is this confidential?”

This was in response to the question as to whether she had experience with the welfare system and she appeared worried and concerned to reveal that she had, and continues to receive support from the state now that she is out of homelessness.

6.2 Societal Perceptions of Women

The following theme will present the respondents' view of how the public perceive their homelessness with regards to their gender roles in society.

Respondents were given an opportunity of reflection on what members of the public may think of them and this was also brought up by the participants themselves throughout the interview.

All participants produced negative accounts of the views from members of the public about their homelessness which was inscribed in a kind of blame. Zara explains this:

“I would be looked at very negatively, there is an assumption that you should never let yourself get into this situation, there is a lack of understanding of how this happens, I never thought it would happen to me it just happens to other people. But even though I had been close to it previously when I had lost jobs and financially insecure I have been very close but I was always able to with not being a mother being able to scrape by. But when I had my daughter, you can’t struggle with what you had before. I had been close to the edge for years but you couldn’t pick yourself up like you would otherwise. They would also say you shouldn’t have a child if you can’t afford it, if you’re on benefits you shouldn’t have a child is a massive thing people say but that wasn’t my case when I had my daughter, but things happen.”

The perceived judgement and failing to understand Zara was clear from her expression of disappointment. Through explaining how there were added socioeconomic pressures with supporting her daughter as well as herself, Zara told how the public would blame her for not being able to take care of her daughter without financial and housing support from the state.

Debbie adds to the judgement felt as a mother in explaining her experience of blame but from a different perspective; as a woman that was homeless and had a drug addiction:

“As an addict, you’re frowned upon, as a woman and an addict, you’re supposed to be maternal and people think it is a choice. It can be maybe violence and you don’t have an option and you have to leave. People expect you to be in the house, be the mother of the kids, if you are using (drugs), people would say why don’t you look after kids. It’s not as simple as that, no one wants to be. There is a lot of judgement put on women.”

It was clear Debbie felt strongly about how she was perceived as a person with addictions and added:

“When I was homeless I was allocated and I had no problem. But when I was suffering with addiction, usually your voice, you know, this is my experience, you don’t have a voice. Even if they do listen to you, you’re being judged, you have given all your power to these people, you give them all that power, they take your power and it’s used against you.”

Thus, in emotionally explaining, Debbie felt like being a mother gave her support for homelessness, however when she was experiencing her drug addiction she did not get the same response and told that she was not heard with authorities having power over her.

With this sense of blame and focus on being a mother, it was also common across several participants that they were only deemed deserving of support for their homelessness once it had been shown that they had experienced a kind of violence. Rosie demonstrates this from her experience of domestic abuse:

“Domestic abuse is such a traumatic thing, you don’t want to wear it like a badge but you feel like you almost have to to get what you need and to be okay. It is not nice, no one wants to be classed as a victim, no one wants to have that stigma...There is no help until you go through something traumatic, you won’t get any help otherwise.”

Rosie explains how she did not wish people to know about her private life, but that if she does share this then then she will not receive sufficient support.

Like Rosie, Kelly also experienced homelessness with a lack of support from judgements made that perceived her not in an urgent need of help:

“ I don’t know what the word is I’m trying to find but there is a huge element of judgement especially for women it is that bit worse, women are supposed to be home makers, be able to sustain things, going on the reaction that I had from people when I decided this year to stop hiding from my past is almost like they expect people that are the lower class of society to have been the people that are homeless and because I don’t fit that, I have a job and stability now, it’s almost like ‘you don’t look like that, you don’t look broken enough’”

As explained, Kelly still experiences judgement today following many years after her homelessness. It was evident throughout Kelly’s interview that she felt strongly about women not being missed by the system that is supposed to support them and the importance of challenging what a homeless person looks like.

6.3 Pathways during and out of Homelessness

This theme presents the commonality of the need of staying safe throughout homelessness, shedding light on the varying homeless conditions of participants. In addition to this, the significance of a social network for support is highlighted throughout homeless journeys. Finally, participants shared perspectives on life after homelessness; delving deeper into the experiences of women’s pathways out.

6.3.1 Seeking Safety in Places

From the varying life experiences and backgrounds of respondents, there was a range in homelessness living conditions also, from sofa surfing and rough sleeping to homeless hostels and women’s refuge accommodation; but all women shared a general requirement throughout

their homeless experience which was in their attempt to remain safe. Anna explains this within her description of her current homeless accommodation:

“It’s that sense of security again. Obviously there are people there you can talk to like the staff are there 24\7 and you can go down and have tea with staff and have a general conversation. They’re there and they will support you in any sort of way.”

Here, Anna tells of how, given her past experience of abuse from family members, the staff keep her supported in the accommodation she is living in and give her a sense of safety with stability and consistency of always being present. This idea of being kept safe by staff in accommodation was shared amongst the other two participants that lived in a women’s refuge, as well as shared enthusiasm from staff support.

Participants who did not stay in supported homeless accommodation also had in common that they felt the importance of safety and decided to avoid homeless specific accommodations and instead chose sofa surfing as their safer option. This is presented by Zara who made intentional choices whilst navigating her pathway out of homelessness:

“I didn’t know how difficult the system was to navigate and having a child is terrifying in terms of being in emergency accommodation which is why I stayed living with my ex even though that was horrific. The safety element and the fear involved in being a woman in the system, who are the neighbours?”

Zara explained that to keep herself and her daughter safe she made the decision to stay at her (once permanent) home until the state housing secured her permanent accommodation. The discomfort in this decision, motivated by her will to keep herself and her daughter safe, was visibly and verbally expressed in having to remain in her ex partner's house. And like other

participants, she utilised sofa surfing at friends for temporary relief and comfort during her short term homelessness.

Debbie was also a respondent who shared that she decided to stay with her partner, although it presented vulnerability and a sense of insecurity, as the other options of homelessness could be potentially worse:

“When you don’t have your own tendency you feel quite vulnerable, because you are relying on somebody else, do you know what I mean?... I was dependent on my boyfriend and thinking back, you accept the unacceptable just to have somewhere to stay that night, like the way they were talking to you or maybe the way that they were treating you.”

Although withheld details of what she accepted, Debbie hints at being treated badly by her partner but having to put up with this as the other options may be unsafe such as homeless hostels or rough sleeping. This was also consistent amongst another two participants who had relied on partners for accommodation which was not theirs legally.

Having also made certain choices of homeless conditions due to keeping safe, Kelly explained how she had varying living conditions of homelessness:

“There has been so many, sofa surfing, stayed with my friends mum in an area called [a local area in Glasgow] which is one of the areas I didn’t feel safe in after the sexual assault that had happened. Then my aunt that I stayed with was in [a local area in Glasgow]. Looking back now the conditions were actually quite dire, she was an alcoholic and I didn’t realise at the time how disgusting the house was or I probably did to an extent but the cleaning facilities like her shower was cold so I couldn’t take a hot shower it was just, the conditions actually were just filthy, she had cats that peed everywhere so the bed that I slept in was covered in cat be but I was you know constantly reminded that that was their house and not mine.”

Having experienced a sexual violence, Kelly explains how she thus had to be selective of which areas were safe. Within Kelly's interview, it became apparent that she faced multiple kinds of homelessness and when she had stayed with her aunt to avoid the unsafe area, this also was not a safe place for her. Like other participants, Kelly chose this tactfully however as the other option was to be in a youth homeless accommodation service which would have been far from her boyfriend (now husband) who provided her with support.

The previously explained participants managed to avoid the homeless hostel accommodations which they feared. However, highlighting her feelings of unsafety, Rosie demonstrates her earlier experience of homeless hostels:

“The prettier you are in these places or the more feminine you are makes you at risk and puts you at risk, I mean you can try and dum that down and not wear makeup and not do your hair but you will still be singled out because you are young and female. You are a target for so many bad things to happen to you. In the hostels I got a lot of unwanted male attention from people I would not speak to”

Having experienced long term homelessness Rosie, had a great amount of experience in varying living conditions, however, preferred sofa surfing like the other participants mentioned, for safety, and also emphasises how being a young woman specifically put her at risk in hostels.

6.3.2 Available Supportive Social Networks

In addition and in connection to feeling secure and safe whilst navigating their pathway out of homelessness, there was an overwhelming sense of importance from respondents with regards to their support from specific social networks. Within this, inevitably, there were variations with regards to which social groups or organisations provided this vital support. Regardless, the

interviews showed that individuals were essential in respondents being supported emotionally, mentally and practically during a crucial time.

Reflecting the fact that most support seemed to come from outside the immediate family of participants, six out of seven participants expressed that they have an estranged relationship with immediate family members, and thus sought support from other avenues. However, the reason for the broken relationship varied, for example Zara explained:

“My Mum was who I was close to but she passed away from cancer in 2015 she was the main person I was in contact with. I am not in a relationship with my father and sister, so my only support system is my friends. I don’t have a family I could have stayed with or things like that.”

Zara did have support prior to homelessness, however following the passing of her mother, she did not and this was similar with another two participants who had lost their parents. However, for the other participants with estranged family relationships, there seemed to be sporadic support from family, if they needed emergency funds or a bed now and then for one night, but not something which was consistent as was presented by Kelly:

“With my family members, the relationships were all very estranged or broken, while I might receive support from my Mum one week, the following week she didn’t talk to me. Up until I got the flat in [a location around Glasgow] and restarted the relationship with my grandparents I didn’t have them either. There wasn’t anything consistent, I didn’t have any friends from school or growing up. Other than my husband and Say Women (third sector organisation) that was all I had”

Kelly’s now husband provided consistent support that her family did not offer, as she was fleeing from their abuse. As well as her husband, she mentions “Say Women” whom she spoke positively about supporting her over the years from her experience of sexual violence, this is in

line with five other participants that shared the importance of women's organisations support in mitigating the system of housing for them:

“The only thing that got me that flat was the letter from Say Women because without that my application wasn't going anywhere so if I had other things that made me worthy of a flat then yes I would have got one easier and having a child would have filled that criteria but because I was on my own I wasn't hitting any of the points scoring system I think so without the letter, because it basically said she's extremely vulnerable, she's engaging with this service leaving her to sofa surf puts her at risk of further harm so without that element of risk or vulnerability there wouldn't have been anything.”

Here, Kelly captures the idea that her homelessness was not looked at as urgent or needing a permanent house because she was able to sometimes sofa surf. Thus, the only way Kelly explains she managed to get out of homelessness was from Say Women writing a letter confirming that she was vulnerable and had experienced sexual assault. Kelly sounded grateful to Say Women and now volunteers for the organisation, however, she also challenged why her voice was not enough to gain her a tenancy.

Rosie confirms the necessary support from organisations in her description of Women's Aid supporting her on her pathway out of homelessness:

“Women's Aid (third sector organisation) did help me with food and stuff, my worker got me vouchers for food but until I got my white goods I couldn't live here, my Women's Aid worker helped me get those as quickly as they could. Obviously having someone on your team helps push things forward a bit, having someone with a title helps definitely, unless you do you're just another number, you are faceless.”

Again, we can see that the third sector organisation played a major role in making Rosie's permanent tenancy “liveable” and they were able to contact authorities to speed up the

process, as well as providing her with basic necessities. From Rosie's extract, the feeling of being unheard and unrecognised can be felt as she explains that the organisation was needed in her getting help, she was not enough.

As well as seeking support outside the immediate family and going to third sector organisations, for three of the participants, they shared in common the importance of getting information and help from friends who had similar homeless journeys. With a lack of family to support them, this was a clear necessity in a time of heightened stress, as told by Zara:

“One of my friends had experienced something similar, she had gone through the homeless process and she was quite amazing when I said to her. She said I had to go to Easterhouse and text me the phone number and at the time was a massive thing, at that point the thought of having to google things to find out.”

She added:

“Looking back it was simple but at that time everything was really stressful so for my friend to be able to give me the information was great. And she came along with me to my meeting. It was amazing to have someone there.”

Following the death of her mother and homelessness being new for Zara, the process of homelessness appeared to be daunting, thus, like the other participants, having a friend who had knowledge and experienced a similar situation was a key support to her being able to get her own tenancy.

6.3.3 A Life After Homelessness

Another important part of respondents' experiences, which focuses on the challenges at the other end of their journeys of homelessness, is the hard work that begins once gaining a

permanent home. This was an unexpected outcome which emerged from all interviews and was clearly an extremely important part of the women's continued stories that they wished to share.

A seemingly positive experience would be to be offered a permanent home and to get out of homelessness, however, for three participants were offered housing from the state which did not feel liveable for them, such as in the case of Betty:

“When we (herself and support worker) went into the flat the flat stunk and it was just like up this close that didn't feel nice to me, I didn't feel nice, I didn't feel that I wanted to be there.”

She added:

“If it had been down the road with a nice garden with no rubbish it would have been fine and probably near nice people. And that was all they ever offered me. But I suppose I didn't push it, I did sign the letter and said keep my name on the list but they won't offer me because they know I have this but I keep my name on the list.”

Betty describes why she rejected the offer from the council housing when she was homeless and in a women's refuge, and as she spoke about it you could still feel her disgust regarding the area being unclean and unsafe, similarly spoken about by other participants, it was not liveable for her. In Betty's case, she was able to reject this offer as she ended up having enough money from the sale of her family home in order to buy a small flat by herself. However, for other participants without the financial back up, they could not reject the offer.

Having accepted their permanent homes, four participants shared an aspect of this hard work being making their new house feel like a home and sustaining this, as evidenced by Rosie:

“A lot of people think once you get keys for a house you are not homeless anymore, you have then got to find the money for gas and electrics then your white goods, then money for food, then have the money to heat your house, especially at this time of year, buy the things to cook with, buy the things to sleep in, it is, it takes time.... I am still at college, still working, then because of COVID I lost my job, I am on furlough but it's not my wage I would be getting and I am zero hour. It is really difficult and people think when you get your house all your problems are solved but it's not, it's a whole new chapter, it is difficult.”

From Rosie's extract, and the other respondents in agreement, it was voiced that the difficult journey out of homelessness is still ongoing when a person is offered their own home. It was consistent across the four participants that they needed financial support to provide white goods and furniture from third sector organisations as well as the welfare state support; this was in order to make the house feel like a home.

Additionally, Rosie found COVID-19 brought added financial challenges due to employment insecurity in her industry which was not operating within the pandemic. This also brought further practical challenges to another two participants that were on their pathway out of homelessness during the pandemic in terms of waiting times increased for furniture deliveries and repairs in their new homes.

As well as for practical reasons, COVID-19 pandemic has also had emotional and psychological impacts, explained by three participants in which it reminded them of trauma they once experienced at the time of their homelessness:

“it actually goes back to the start of COVID especially when there was a kind of lockdown and I really struggled with that, really struggled with it and when I started picking it apart I realised I don't want to say locked up but I was locked in my room essentially for periods of time and it was almost like reliving the trauma that I didn't realise was actually ever there ” (Kelly)

In Kelly's brave account of her experiences, she reflected here on how COVID-19 brought back her trauma that was experienced during her time of homelessness following abuse from her family. Thus, showing how the psychological impact of homelessness did not leave her once she was given a permanent home, even years later.

This psychological strain following homelessness was also evident amongst most participants, who were receiving psychological support from third sector organisations and who were also verbally displaying their struggle in accepting their experiences; whilst fighting against blaming themselves for their situation. In this fight against blaming, five out of seven participants were actively volunteering for a homeless organisation in order to raise awareness and help women in similar situations:

"I think some women look down on it and they shouldn't. I talk about it all the time saying how great it is and how much they look after women. But I don't think, I don't think certain women, if they're more better off or something but they don't really, they think it's people that come from like no money, a council estate and its not, anybody can use it and I think sometimes you don't know what goes on behind closed doors." (Betty)

Betty spoke passionately in telling of more awareness needed around the differing background of women that domestic abuse and homelessness can happen to. Whilst being on the board of trustees for the third sector organisation which gave her women's refuge, Betty explained she wishes to further raise awareness.

6.4 Findings Summary

Firstly, the backgrounds of each participant amongst their shared experiences in education, labour market and the welfare system were demonstrated:

There was a commonality in education being both a challenge and something which was strived for and formal secondary school education was not completed across most. Additionally, there were varied educational interests with younger participants expressing that their life experiences disrupted this. Also, for those who had completed their higher education, it did not amount to the level of economic security needed. Contrasting this, one participant spoke of education being beneficial in her economic independence. And the participant with the highest education decided to be a stay at home mother and not use her education, with her partner providing financial security before separation.

Moving on to the labour market, all participants struggled to find secure and stable employment. This was due to the fact that there was a tendency of insecure work outside of public sector fields. Mothers spoke of an added pressure, where childcare was expensive and they had to be selective in their work to provide enough for their children. Additionally, a comparison was made to previous generations when work was more available with more security. However, two participants contrasted others in that they found temporary positions and voluntary work fit them more due to their commitment and flexibility needed for childcare.

Furthermore, there was a general consensus that the welfare system did not cover more than very basic needs before, during and following homelessness. Additionally, there was a shared experience of a difficulty in access to welfare, with a lack of understanding of life circumstances such as homelessness, motherhood and ill health. Although a shared disapproval of the welfare protection, there was also a shared shyness in expressing this; compared to a pride in discussing work.

Following from this, homeless experiences which struck as specifically gendered including how participants are perceived by members of the public was presented:

An aspect of homelessness which was seen as specific to women, was in the participants' experience of the public's perception of them. Mothers expressed that they feel judged for not protecting their children from homelessness, with the one participant who had exposed her history of addiction feeling this is stronger due to her drug abuse. These judgements were connected to women being considered homemakers. Additionally, respondents who had experienced violence shared that they felt it was the only thing that allowed them to be heard, as before they did not look like they needed support.

Going forward to the final overarching experiences which were common across participants was in their ways of navigating through and out of homelessness:

In the pathway during and out of homelessness, all participants verbalised their focus in staying safe in their accommodation. In doing this, they sought to avoid male orientated homeless hostels and instead supported accommodation tailored to women. Additionally, some participants chose to sofa surf to stay safe from hostels. Also, being a mother heightened the need for safety in accommodation. And a consequence of avoiding unsafe homeless accommodation was relying on partners, where women often felt insecure and unsafe but that it was the best option.

Significant in support during homelessness was social networks and in this, most respondents had estranged relationships with immediate family members thus sought other sources of protection. The other support was from friends who had similar experiences that could help with information and emotional support. Also, partners were important for financial help and consistency. Women's third sector organisations were vital in mitigating the system as a voice

for respondents. However, one participant did have support from her family, but felt that women's organisation was specialised in dealing with domestic violence.

Once out of homelessness, there was a general consensus that the hard work was only just beginning in terms of emotionally and practically. Participants felt that it was challenging to make their new home feel like a home due to the standard of housing being low and affordability of goods needed. Additionally, the emotional strain homelessness took on participants was apparent even years after with the effects of emotional stress, self blame, and also blame from others. And with the current pandemic, many respondents see this add challenges in their life after homelessness- socioeconomically and personally.

7 Analysis & Discussion

7.1 Coping Under Neoliberal Conditions

Education and its impact on women's lived experiences, provides necessary findings as there is little research exploring this, as well as mainly speaking to women with low education (Mayock, Sheridan & Parker, 2015; Mayock & Sheridan, 2012). Adding new findings, all women had participated in higher education in the current thesis. This could be because they had a wider age range, educational and socioeconomic background, were no longer homeless (mostly) and also had experienced short term homelessness- allowing for women to have more opportunities to partake in education at different points in their lives.

The pitfalls in the education system were the difficulties in completion and sustainment of studies during homelessness (and outside) involving an interference of factors such as: domestic abuse, ill health during pregnancy, poor mental health, and childcare. In explaining these barriers, there was little mention of seeking support from the educational institutions. This can

be interpreted utilising Goffman's (1963) theory of Stigma, given the fact that homelessness has been found across much research to be a stigmatised and an undesirable characteristic (Aldridge, 2018; Allen, 2016; Evangelist, 2017; Teixeira, 2017). The participants were not visibly homeless to the institutions whilst in education, making them discreditable, not yet discredited. Thus, hiding their homelessness helped them to manage the impression formation of the institutions, to prevent consequential exclusion or judgement during their education. Therefore, it can be interpreted that although women require support to complete education, stigma associated with homelessness prevents them asking for this and also prevents this support being readily available within the institutions.

However, one participant did expose her experience of domestic abuse to her college institution, to prevent her financial support from stopping during her absence. The way in which homelessness was hidden yet domestic abuse was revealed, can be interpreted by doing gender, within the concept of Gender Performativity (Butler, 1990), as well as stigma. Domestic abuse can be considered less stigmatised and more acceptable to disclose than homelessness as it is within the role of women under the patriarchal system. Additionally, it can be suggested that the institutions of education could be questioned in how they reflect that women are fraught gender categories which are judged and excluded if they divert from their gender role under the patriarchy and experience life circumstances such as homelessness. A suggestion in raising awareness of homelessness to counter judgement, was made by a study exploring the impact of homelessness on university students in London. However, this study highlights financial difficulties in students being able to afford educational resources needed for the study (Mulrenen, Atkins & Cox, 2017). This was not relevant to the current thesis, suggestively because education is free in Scotland, putting less financial constraints on students.

Butler's (1990) framework of holding women to strict gender roles and punishing them for diverting from these, can provide further insight into this finding of education being unssupportive in producing employment. Therefore, the respondents who studied within traditionally male dominated fields, and fields that were not favoured by the neoliberal

economy, faced consequences of exclusion in the labour market following their studies.

However, a double punishment is seen for the participant who made the decision to be a stay at home mother and not use her education. With this, she was conforming to the traditional role of a woman under the patriarchy, however, not according to neoliberal ideals as she was not conforming to the ideal of a “dual earner” family; facing subsequent socio economic exclusion and homelessness following her relationship breakdown.

Education was conversely expressed as a support to one participant, as her training in computer skills supported her economic independence. The importance of this is supported by *Feminism for the 99%: A Manifesto* (Fraser, Arruzza, & Bhattacharya, 2019). For example, the increase of women’s equality has allowed for women in those fields to be valorised by neoliberalism, such as computing, benefiting women; compared to other participants in less secure fields such as humanities, hospitality, retail, the arts and social care. Additionally, this participant lived through a time where neoliberalism was not as heightened in Glasgow, thus had arguably more socioeconomic security than younger participants nowadays.

Employment which followed women’s discussions on educational pathways added knowledge to women’s homelessness experiences as it showed a varied range of career pathways. The findings agree with research which highlights the shift to women’s increasing activity in the labour market, with the decline of the traditional male breadwinner model (Baptista, 2010; Edgar & Doherty, 2001; Watson, 2016). Also, as participants spoke of the will to find work; this is in line with male orientated studies of homeless men who are eager to find work (Reeve, 2017), thus this can be suggested as a shared experience across the homeless population. This shows, too, the influence under the neoliberal era, where citizens are being encouraged to work to solve their economic hardships and to be self responsible. This can be interpreted as going against the stigma of dependency across marginalised groups in their fight to perform to the norm of working individuals.

In terms of fields of employment, most women in this study within private sectors reported insecurity, zero hour contracts, low wages, short term work and facing redundancies in the labour market. However, public sector work was more secure, yet seldom, where there was also a noted shift in decrease of secure work in the past compared to now. This was reported in other research on men in which there was insecurity of work and high unemployment across an exploration of labour market experience (May, 2000). Therefore, suggesting that neoliberal characteristics causing labour market marginalisation is a shared experience of men and women with homeless experiences, to some extent. This is consistent with results in Australia, showing women to be largely impacted by marginalisation in the labour market during neoliberal times with increasing self responsibility to support themselves through paid work (Watson, 2007; Watson, 2016).

Taking a gendered perspective (Fraser, 2003; Fraser, Arruzza, & Bhattacharya, 2019), it can be interpreted that although women are frequently in paid labour; marginalised women's paid work is not being valorised as they do not have equality with men and middle class women in other fields (favoured by neoliberalism which produce high capital); leaving them with maldistribution in low paid and insecure work- benefiting others of society. Also, unpaid care work is considered undervalued and unrecognised as commercialised childcare was reported as extremely expensive, giving women an added burden of childcare.

This is also important in that it echoes previous large scale research reviewing women's homelessness across Europe within academia, which shows that when women are marginalised in paid labour; this has a knock on effect for being able to own their own homes (Edgar & Doherty, 2001) And as only two participants in the study owned their home, and only one owned it independently, without support from a partner, this is also reflected in the 'New Orthodoxy' of causations of homelessness, considering some individuals to be impacted greater from structural changes compared to others (May, 2000). Since both participants who are homeowners have been a part of dual earner families, this can be interpreted in that they were

performing their gender (Butler, 1990) in a neoliberal society and thus, would be deemed deserving of a home.

Contrasting to the labour market being challenging for homeless individuals (Bretherton & Pleace, 2000); were the findings of two participants who preferred the temporality of work for child care purposes. This can be explained by the domination of male participants in the previous study (Bretherton & Pleace, 2000), assuming they did not have childcare responsibilities in which flexible working hours would suit better. The concept of distancing can be used to interpret this, in which individuals feel they have to stay far from stigmatised groups or associations to manage impression formations of stigma from the others (Goffman, 1963). Thus, having accessed homeless specific services, those participants were already close to this stigma and did not feel they could or they needed to be distanced from worklessness as much as the others.

Also, with the one participant making the choice of being a stay at home mother, despite the pressures to engage in paid labour in society; this is significant in showing women's agency which has been expressed as important in presenting women's pathways through homelessness, in order to not victimize women (Bretherton, 2017; Johnson, Riber & Zhu, 2017; Ravenhill, 2008). Despite this, the findings show that agency interplays with structure, in that these women, although they had agency, still did not have the resources to make their own choices and prevent their homelessness. This is also shown in previous findings of exploring women within the welfare system in which those who are not 'hard working families' are not rewarded financially (O'Hagan, 2016).

The welfare system was also advised in exploring amongst other structures in society, as previous research has asked for perspectives on this as a risk factor to homelessness (Anderson, 2018; Evangelist, 2017; Texeria, 2017). Thus, in agreement that the welfare system deserves challenging in terms of protecting against homelessness, participants reported it insufficient,

only covering basic needs; also agreeing with reports that increasing austerity in the UK will increase women's risks of homelessness (Fawcett Society, 2012).

Also, with regards to mothers in the study, those on Universal Credit felt their needs were little met for themselves and their children. This is reported in previous research on the impact of Universal Credit which found that social benefits did not cover the needs of those with caring responsibilities (Larkin, 2018). Additionally, it echoes the suggestion for women to be looked at as individuals and not only within the family unit, allowing them to be more economically supported (Edgar & Doherty, 2001).

The insufficiencies of the welfare system reported by participants during the neoliberal era can therefore be explained from the insistence of the requirement of both recognition and redistribution for gender justice (Fraser, 2003). As women receive economic support (a kind of redistribution), however, as they are not recognised as autonomous individuals of society, such as middle class men and women competing in the labour market, as well as their unpaid care work being undervalued, they experience maldistribution.

In the little research of homeless women's experience of the welfare system during this neoliberal era, this research added knowledge in the gap which suggests more exploration into homeless women's welfare support access (Bretherton, Pleace, Benjamsen, 2017). Findings were new that showed when homeless, it can be difficult for women to meet the conditions set by the welfare services in order to gain access to money, such as actively applying for work and attending job interviews. This echoes previous findings of the welfare system in general having a strict eligibility criteria for economic support, as Larkin (2018), in their document analysis explained that welfare support should have a rights based approach rather than only pushing people into the workforce in line with neoliberal ideals. This suggests (using gender performativity) that women are being punished for not abiding by the norm of society in participating in the paid labour market as they are not deemed worthy of economic support unless they do this (Butler, 1990). It also represents a misrecognition in which they are not

being fully understood by the system in their challenges of homelessness and as women which will disrupt their ability to engage in paid work; resulting in maldistribution (Fraser, 2003).

Although speaking of accessibility problems, the findings did not uncover issues regarding sanctions like others did in male homeless individuals (Reeve, 2017). This is possibly due to the fact that the respondents were largely not in long term homelessness and not reliant on welfare for too long, therefore, did not encounter problems similar to men in longer term homelessness.

As well as difficulties with access to social benefits, the findings showed experience of welfare as degrading and humiliating to homeless women, where participants were both shy in speaking of this and also expressed this verbally. This is also documented in other studies exploring welfare support usage across the general population; where it makes individuals feel a sense of being a second class citizen and a sense of punishment for their socioeconomic struggles (Fitzpatrick, 2016; Patrick, 2014; Adler, 2018). Additionally, the experience of humiliation and degradation occurred in other studies dominated by male participants about their experiences of living in destitution (Fitzpatrick, 2016).

Welfare usage and its dependency as a stigmatised attribute, in the context of a neoliberal capitalist society with an achievement oriented ideology of individualism can be understood as a stigmatised attribute (Goffman, 1963). Also, managing information control with regards to becoming discredited by this can be interpreted as participants distanced themselves and attempted to pass as individuals not depending on welfare, as they associated themselves more with paid labour than welfare support; suggesting they understood this as an undesirable characteristic and although they were being supported by welfare, wished to avoid this association. However, the participant who spoke openly, shared her stigmatised experience of humiliation and this was a voluntary disclosure which shows a sense of acceptance of her stigmatised welfare dependency (Goffman, 1963). Although, this participant is now a home owner and has been out of homelessness for much longer than the other participants who still

use welfare support. Thus, as both recognition and redistribution are required for social justice (Fraser, 2003; Parekh, 2004), it can be suggested that liberal feminism shifts its focus from equal pay rights to supporting the importance of welfare support for women who cannot be homeowners, in order to abolish its stigma and the effects of neoliberal ideals of individualism.

7.2 Perceptions constructed by Gender Roles

Felt perceptions of homelessness allows this research to go deeper than previous research (Mayock & Bretherton, 2016), as it is also retrospective and reflective, following homelessness and outside homeless service living. The current findings did not affirm previous ones which have found women to experience judgement surrounding homelessness being linked to prostitution and a lack of cleanliness (Mayock, 2016). The absence of these findings can be interpreted as being due to most participants not accessing homeless hostels or rough sleeping, thus they are outside the circle of a culture of homelessness where these stereotypes occur more (Ravenhill, 2008).

Additionally, with women being less visible in their homelessness, it can be suggested that they receive less stigma of a sexualised nature, thus (unconsciously) distancing themselves from this experience which occurs more on the streets of the homeless population. Also, women in this study are thus seen to be reconstructing the notion of women in homelessness, away from the previously thought of women in prostitution, showing how norms can be deconstructed and reconstructed when women's voices are included in the discourse (Butler, 1990).

With regards to mothers, they felt judged for not being homemakers, in the sense that they could not provide a home for their children; this is supported by previous research finding the same (Mayock, Sheridan & Parker, 2016). Thus, showing that women's traditional gender roles under the patriarchy are still very prevalent, despite increased activity of women in the labour market. This suggests that neoliberalism amongst the patriarchy puts a double pressure on

women compared to men, not only to work, but also to hold a home together for their families. Therefore, homelessness occurring in women, receives more judgement and pressure on women to fulfill both expectations.

Also, in terms of a greater judgment with regards to addictions, compared to homelessness, this adds knowledge in how women are accepted less in having difficulties which are stereotypically masculine in nature. The feeling of disempowerment expressed by this participant was also seen echoed in other research exploring (mostly) men's experiences, in that homelessness can be attached to a stereotype of a person needing coerced and also reskilled (Radley, Hodgetts & Cullen, 2005). However, with regards to this being gendered, by utilising Butler's (1990) take on power we can explain that exposing a male typical problem of addiction under the patriarchal system negatively impacts how women are supported with this and results in being controlled; rather than seen as worthy human beings deserving of support as equals to men. Additionally, this can be seen as more stigmatised than homelessness for women in the neoliberal society as the participant received less support, reinforcing the importance of advocating to look at homelessness as a heterogeneous experience for women; as some may suffer from addictions as is presented in a typical way of male homelessness.

Following judgement, those who were fleeing abuse expressed a disapproving sense of victimization when disclosing the abuse which was supported by previous findings in women's homelessness research showing shame around this (Mayock & Bretherton, 2016). Participants felt that victimization and disclosure was unavoidable in that they would not receive sufficient support for a pathway out of homelessness without disclosing abuse. This was a new finding across the research regarding homelessness and domestic abuse; but also was in line with previous research finding domestic abuse to occur frequently in homeless women (Mayock, 2016; Vakili, 2013).

As before, we can explain women's success in achieving help following a domestic abuse disclosure due it being a perceived norm of a woman under a patriarchal system. Also, the

support only being given once domestic abuse is disclosed agreement supports concerns that domestic abuse and homelessness are not viewed as intertwining problems but as separate phenomena (Bretherton, 2017). Additionally, this also is supported by reports on women's homelessness from Engender (2020) stating that housing policies do not fully understand the structural barriers for women, as can be seen here where women are not supported socioeconomically until they face domestic abuse.

Also, this reflects other key studies, showing that homelessness seems to be viewed as a problem which should be fixed by people themselves, although these studies were seldom exploring the voices of women and more focused on men or document analysis (Radley, 2008; Hodgetts & Cullen, 2005; Watts, 2013; Allen, 2016; Aldridge, 2018). However, interpretation of the findings in the current thesis can also show women resisting this idea, in which they discuss their circumstances of homelessness and wishes for more support and to be believed.

7.3 Escaping homelessness to a “peace” of mind

In their attempt to survive and escape homelessness, findings showed women to avoid male dominated homeless accommodation, and instead to; sofa surf, stay with friends and family members, and to stay in unwanted or violent relationships. This is greatly supported by other studies showing women hide their homelessness (Mayock & Bretherton, 2016; Webb, 1994; Edgar & Doherty, 2001). Specifically, this is consistent with the qualitative study from Webb (1992) regarding women's homelessness in Scotland which found women to hide in similar ways and experience varying lengths of homelessness also. Thus, although twenty-six years later, these are still routes women take; showing there to be little to no improvement regarding supporting women's homelessness in being less stigmatised. And also suggesting that there have been few developments with regards to homeless services being adaptable for women, in making them feel safe enough to access these. However, arguably now, there is more impact from neoliberal capitalism within the labour market, although little of this was explored by

Webb (1992); thus it can be suggested that problems have been added to women in homelessness and with regards to housing insecurity since then.

Findings also highlighted the experiences of women who had been homeless in domestic abuse refuges, escaping from their circumstances of also being homeless at home, during abuse. These women can also be considered temporarily hidden in homelessness as previous research has concerns that in the UK specifically, these women go unrecognised (Bretherton, 2017; Pleace, 2016; Mayick & Bretherton, 2016). In being able to illuminate these often invisible experiences, it can be explained by the categories of homelessness endorsed by this research under the framework of human rights. Therefore, if these categories were more widely known and endorsed on the ground, and in research, gendered issues such as domestic abuse in relation to homelessness could be more increasingly supported.

Additionally, the women that were in refuge stayed there until they were given permanent tenancies; contrasting other findings showing women living in temporary homeless accommodation to go back to the abusive partner, further leading to domestic abuse (Mayock, Bretherton & Baptista, 2016; Ravenhill, 2008). These differing findings can be explained by the fact that the women in this study were being protected by domestic abuse workers, safeguarding them and providing them with emotional support, during their stay in women's refuge and after also. Thus, showing the importance of these organisations in safeguarding women.

With regards to the hidden problem of homelessness displayed in women's varying conditions, it can be explained by homelessness itself being a stigma within a neoliberal capitalism era where the norm is for individuals to work and be self dependent (Whyte, 2019). Additionally, it is further stigmatised as an attribute for women as it has become the norm and the accepted to see men homeless; where women should be taking care of the home and holding it together. Thus, being hidden in homelessness is part of how women manage the impression formations from others; using the technique of distancing by not associating with homeless specific services (for the most part) (Goffman, 1963). Therefore, it can be suggested that it is more

difficult for women to be accepted as homeless, compared to men, especially where it is not their fault they are homeless, unless they had proven visible violence perpetrated against them.

However, not only was hiding in the findings due to safety from stigma and thus possible exclusion and acceptance, but it was also found to be an issue of protection for physical safety; which they did not feel around homeless services or sleeping rough on known sites due to male violence or harassment. Thus, it can be suggested that homeless services work in a gendered way and recognise women as heterogeneous with various needs, burdens and life circumstances, differing to men such as domestic abuse, child bearing and care, as well as having women only staff members to increase safety. However, this cannot be achieved by the homelessness industry without redistribution, from the state in focusing on the problem of women's homelessness.

Varying social networks of support were found and have been a key interest of previous research, particularly on how women rely more on informal support (Baptista, 2010). This was a particular finding in this thesis, as the majority of participants had estranged relationships with their family members, thus they sought out other supports. Having estranged relationships with family members is a key recurring theme across women's homelessness studies, where there is mentioned repeatedly; family breakdown and family conflict (Edgar & Doherty, 2001; Mayock & Sheridan, 2015; Ravenhill, 2008) as well as a history of abuse and neglect (Edgar & Doherty, 2001; Ravenhill, 2008; Watson, 2016).

It could be suggested that the commonality of an estrangement with close family, was the increasing ideology from neoliberalism which supports individualism. Additionally, where the relationships with family members were not abusive, however, women sought other options, this shows how they had a sense of individualism in order to solve their own problems, agreeing to some extent with previous findings of the same nature (Watson, 2016). Also, careful in not suggesting these relationships as a direct cause of homelessness, in agreement with other

research, these individual factors can increase the risk to homelessness, where more structural factors create the conditions for it to take place (Fitzpatrick, Klemp & Klinker, 2000). However, differing from the previous findings, where they did seek other options, this was then from TSO's, thus, there was still a sense of dependency.

This needed support can be explained, in that the freedom given by neoliberalism and liberal feminism in the labour market for women, is not sufficient enough for all women as it has not benefited the women in this study; where it possibly has to some extent for the middle and upper class women. Thus, a feminism which recognises the needs of marginalised women who cannot find appropriate work or housing, having structural problems amongst a sense of individualism in the society, is necessary. For this, ideals must be shifted to problems in redistribution as now, marginalised women, as well as other groups, are left in being picked up by TSO's; where the state is not recognising their needs.

Keeping in mind their agency, although estranged from immediate family, some women, as mentioned in previous studies (Bretherton & Mayock, 2016), managed to exhaust other, specific informal social networks for support; rather than housing and homelessness specific services; from friends, partners and extended family members. With regards to friends, this was a strong support for a few participants, as they sought support from friends who had experienced similar problems in the past and helped them navigate through the system to eventually have their own tenancy.

Additionally, the participants who expressed having a strong friendship network experienced shorter periods homelessness compared to others. This can be interpreted from their high level of social capital, where Ravenhill (2008) concludes that it reduces risks to homelessness. This high social capital can also be seen gained from the employment in the public sector of these few participants who were over thirty-five years old. Therefore, the younger women's longer length in homelessness could be explained by their reduced social capital in no mentioning of a strong friendship group. Butler's (1990) inspiration of power as knowledge and knowledge as

power can interpret here how these women had increased knowledge from social sources in labour market, education and friendship groups thus were able to succeed in becoming more humanised quicker than other women in the neoliberal society following homelessness. Therefore, knowledge and social circles are suggested to play a role in women navigating a smoother pathway out of homelessness.

Another social support which proved effective in contributing to a pathway out of homelessness was from women's TSO's which provided women with consistency, a safe space, practical and emotional support. The idea of consistency in being effective for women can be explained by the fact that inconsistency could reveal the supporter is dissatisfied with the stigma of homelessness but consistency shows acceptance and willingness to help the person in need. It was seen that these TSO's were advocates for women in fighting for their support from welfare in terms of housing and economic support. This finding is supported by research that domestic abuse services have been a conduit for women in welfare service accessibility (Bretherton, & Mayock, 2016). Additionally, this challenges previous findings from women's homelessness across Europe in which Edgar & Doherty (2001) suggest that women exhaust family and friends for support; rather than services. However, women in this thesis did not go to homeless specific services, rather women only services. Thus, women feel comfortable going to services for domestic abuse as they are tailored to women but not homeless services as these are male oriented and stigmatised more, as mentioned previously.

The pathway out of homelessness was an informative finding this thesis presents, where little has been explored of women following their homelessness. One challenge in the pathway out of homelessness was in the inadequate housing offered from the state in terms of its safety, presentation, cleanliness and sufficiency of materials which make a house function as a home. The disapproval of these conditions expressed by women, are further supported by the human rights framework which encourages a home in being one which is not only a roof over one's head but is private, safe and improves wellbeing of a person (United Nations General Assembly

(UNGA), 1966). As expressed by almost all participants, only one participant was able to overcome this challenge quickly and without emotional stress as she could afford to buy her own tenancy.

This can be explained by the fact that this participant was participating throughout her life in the neoliberal labour market alongside her partner, thus was part of a dual earner family. And although she was homeless following the domestic abuse due to the patriarchal nature of consequences of leaving a heteronormative relationship; she had the financial back up in the end from paid work and being a house owner during the time of the relationship. Whereas, all other participants had to endure the challenges of a house being of not an adequate standard.

Another challenge in the “new chapter” of life following homelessness was of course the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. In capturing how this impacted women’s journeys out of homelessness, this was new knowledge to the field entirely. COVID-19 contributed to challenges in sustaining new tenancies and being able to make a house, more like a home, with socioeconomic constraints. With the pandemic adding stress to job insecurity; it also proved that the neoliberal nature of the labour market failed to support women participating in undervalued paid work. With it being predicted that women and men in higher and more secure positions being unaffected to the same extent during COVID-19, this is again a reason for liberal feminism to shift their focus and women’s organisations advocating for women’s rights to secure housing to have a focus on redistribution and more structural factors which impact women’s pathways out and ability to sustain their tenancies.

As well as adding economic stress and difficulties in making new tenancies liveable; COVID-19 also showed psychological strains on participants in ways in which they were isolated and reminded of their past traumas, whilst in their new tenancies. This is a new finding in the pandemic specifically with regards to homeless women but also trauma in homeless women has been noted in several previous research papers (Mayock, Sheridan & Parker, 2015; Mayock & Sheridan, 2012; Williamson, Abrahams, Morgans & Cameron, 2014). Thus, showing that

psychological aspects are another challenge in life after homelessness, suggesting there to be recognition of women's wellbeing in understanding the long lasting impact of homeless experiences. For this to be recognised and women to move on with their lives, redistribution of welfare in terms of mental health funding for homeless women and other marginalized groups could be considered.

Also, women who had experienced homelessness in the past (more than two years ago) decided to take part in volunteering to help homeless organisations. This is supported by Engender (2020) who advocates that women can exercise and claim their rights once they have a habitable home. Additionally, this can be interpreted as a kind of resistance in women going against their gender role norm of staying quiet under the patriarchy which controls them (Butler, 1990). In doing this, they are helping to shake up the patriarchy in the neoliberal society and show recognition to the other marginalized homeless people in which they help, making the problem more visible. However, with some participants not doing this, those who were still in homelessness or only closely left, this can be interpreted using the distancing technique of managing impression formation (Goffman 1963), where they do not wish to be closely associated with the stigma of women's homelessness. Where the other women, from Goffman's perspective, had come to accept the stigma. Therefore, it could be suggested that due to stigma some women continue to hide in a certain way from their experiences, even after homelessness. However, all the women's participation in this research shows that they are willing to shake up the categories of fraught gender norms under the patriarchal society, by sharing their experiences, even though anonymous, when given the space and resources to do so.

8 Conclusion

The key research objective is to explore the lived experiences of homelessness for women in Glasgow, during a neoliberal era of capitalism. In order to examine these experiences, the impact of the welfare system, labour market and education on homelessness for women were explored. As well as this, their experiences were analysed from the perspective of a patriarchal society. Further, the nature of this exploration was strengthened by highlighting challenges and supports during pathways both in and out of homelessness. To achieve the main objective and to deepen the understanding of how their experiences of homelessness were gendered and to understand the dimensions of its invisible characteristic, theories of Gender Performativity (Butler, 1990), Recognition and Redistribution (2003), and Stigma (Goffman, 1963) were utilised as analytical tools. With research having little explored women's homelessness outside women accessing homeless and housing services (in visible homelessness), women with varying backgrounds and conditions of homelessness were sought to participate. Therefore, this thesis is relevant in terms of the diversity of this social and structural problem. Additionally, in the importance of adequate housing for all as a fundamental right and basic need, as well as the highlighted inequalities in socioeconomic insecurity of women by the committee of the ICESCR ; this thesis is relevant too for human rights.

This research affirmed the notion of women's homelessness being a largely hidden phenomena, as most participants, in self identifying as homeless, exposed conditions in which they were intentionally avoiding known homeless sites of rough sleeping and homeless specific services. The hidden nature of these problems reflects the impact of the patriarchal society on women's lived experiences as they felt safer from male violence in their conditions of their invisibility. It also revealed the gendered stigmatisation placed heavily on women for not conforming to their gender role norms in being closely connected to a home as they made efforts to navigate around this stigma whilst not associating with stereotypical homeless locations, services and supports.

Challenges that were patriarchal and individualistic in nature were faced during homelessness and can be seen in women's reception of recognition of deserving support for exited

homelessness following disclosures of violence. Experiences of domestic abuse and sexual violence are assumed to be norms for women, under the patriarchy, thus are more accepted in the help they require. Where before their disclosure, women's experiences of support for exiting homelessness were unsupportive, misrecognized and in even more stigmatised problems such as addictions, powerlessness was felt.

This study has important findings in that it showed women's lived experiences of structural factors in society, throughout their homelessness and after. Most women reflected the neoliberal ideals in their will to be educated for work. Despite this, the labour market did not secure women's socio economic stability in that it was mostly insecure and with added constraints of expensive childcare. Additionally, in terms of experience in the welfare system, this proved to be largely inadequate in support and further stigmatised women; encouraging work in the insecure labour market and discouraging dependence on the state. This is represented in women's lives before homelessness, and after homelessness also, suggesting to be important factors of other marginalized groups and a continuation of challenges within permanent homes.

Intertwining with societal structures as risks of housing insecurity, estranged family relations providing little support reflects adopted notions of individualism in influencing support.

However, all women had to depend on alternative social networks, with women with more social capital exiting homelessness quicker. Additionally, the challenges placed on women by the patriarchal society with neoliberal ideas could be seen in younger women with weaker social networks and especially those who have been unable to compete in the labour market as dual-earner families.

Thus, it is suggested that 'corrected' recognition is recommended of women in homelessness, inspired by Fraser (2003) This recognition is advised to reflect the lived experiences of women's homelessness in being multidimensional across their heterogeneity. It should have deep consideration for how women are facing maldistribution in the structures of society of education, the labour market and the welfare system; in which they are participating, however are misrecognized in the inequalities they face. This is suggested to have consequences on their protection against housing insecurity. Thus, with a more structural perspective in perceiving

homelessness, women can be helped to have their paid work and unpaid work valorised, giving socioeconomic security in their lives and building social capital across these structures, protecting them from housing insecurity. As well as this, they can be deemed deserving of support for homelessness, as a basic need and fundamental right.

To further this recognition and increase a focus on redistribution, future research could examine women of more diverse backgrounds and also continue to explore women's relationship with the structures of society in exiting homelessness, to understand protective factors in their pathways out.

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Annexes

Annex 1: Information Letter with Consent form

Information Letter for the following research project:

“Women’s experiences of a condition of homelessness in Glasgow: a structural and gendered analysis to the problem of homelessness in Scotland today”

In this letter information will be given to you about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

This research project is to look into the experiences of women’s different conditions of homelessness in the city of Glasgow and is part of the completion of the researchers masters program.

It is to capture the voice of women within the problem of homelessness and will involve topics like accommodation and housing, economic issues, employment, social relationships, gender and welfare system.

Who is responsible for the research project?

The University of South Eastern Norway is responsible for the project.

Why are you being asked to participate?

You are being asked to participate as your gender and experience of losing a home is within the target group of the study.

What does participation involve for you?

If you choose to take part in this study, you will be asked to partake in a confidential interview which will be in a relaxed setting of your choice and either in person, on telephone or on video call.

The topics which will be discussed can be surrounding your own experiences, economic issues, employment, welfare system, social relationships and gender. You can choose from questions asked and you do not have to answer anything you do not wish to.

The researcher will avoid personal or sensitive topics.

It will last anytime between 30 minutes and 50 minutes depending on how much you would wish to discuss.

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you can still withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

You will be anonymised and given a pseudonym in the stored data

The data will be kept in a password locked computer only accessible by researcher

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end May 1st 2021. After this date, your data given will be destroyed.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, contact:

Masters Student/ Researcher: Becky Coleman

Email- beckycoleman95@gmail.com

Tel- +47 973 27 448

Project Supervisor: Oddvar Hollup

Tel- +47 31 00 95 14

Email- oddvar.hollup@usn.no

Yours sincerely,

Becky Coleman - Researcher

Oddvar Hollup- Project Supervisor

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project [insert project title] and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

to participate in research interview

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. July 1st 2021.

---2/12/2020-----

(Signed by participant, date)

Annex 2: Interview Guide

Employment History & Education

1. Can you tell me about any education you have, formal such as school and informal ?

2. What has your experience been of employment over the years?

For example, what kinds of jobs have you had?

3. How do you support yourself financially?

4. What has your experience of the benefits system been?

5. What does having a home mean for you?

6. Can you tell me a bit about your condition of homelessness?

For example, temporary accommodation, sofa surfing, hostels, friends or family homes, rough sleeping

7. In terms of the homeless accommodation, what is (or was) the condition of it like for you?

For example, size, accessibility, cleanliness, affordability, suitable

8. What is your relationship like with your family and friends?

For example, who are the people closest to you and how are they involved in your life?

9. How has your social circle been involved during your time of homelessness?

For example, have you had support from them or have you relied on other ways of coping?

10. Do you have any friends which are involved in similar situations or new friends you have met during this time?

11. What has your contact been like with organisations such as social services, third sector organisations or community services?

12. How have you felt you have been listened to and heard during this time by support networks?

13. How do you feel you are looked at by the public in terms of being a woman in homelessness?

14. In your opinion, how has being a woman impacted/shaped your experience of homelessness?

Annex 3: Finding Themes and Sub Themes

Codes 1-24	Participant Quotations (Zara, Sharon, Anna, Betty, Kelly, Rosie & Debbie)
<p>1. Welfare Reforms bring difficulties</p>	<p>Zara “I think it probably would have been easier to have it separate but I’m not finding it difficult to pay as I have all my money coming through but you have to make sure you pay when everything comes in but I have experience of my managing money like that. I do think though it will be a worry for many other people who would have had their housing benefit straight to the housing association and not left without money until the end of the month. As I have worked for years I am used to budgeting but it is a very small amount of money and I need to make sure everything is paid right away so I know what I have. But if you think of people coming out of the care system, young people it would be a nightmare organising it. The system is assuming you have the knowledge of how to do these things but that’s not the case for most people, the point of the benefits system is for the people who fall through the cracks. And I struggled with it and I have two degrees, and also it is usually when these things happen people are not at their best. It feels like so many things are complicated when they don’t need to be.”</p> <p>Sharon “Yes a lot of more hoops to jump through in getting universal credit, it was a lot more difficult, you have really got to state your case of why you should get it. I do understand to a degree why because there are a select people who are claiming for the sake of claiming but then there are people who genuinely need help and have paid their taxes over the years so you shouldn’t have to jump through hoops to do that.”</p> <p>Rosie “I was on it for a couple of months because I really struggled to find work when I got back to Glasgow. I had left my nightclub, the nightclub lost its licence due to noise complaints and I was staying with a partner at the time and there was an incident with DV and I moved back to my parents then I got back with him and then that went to shit and then I moved in with my cousin and I had to go on UC for a wee while. And its a really weird system actually so they put you in debt before you do anything else, you are forced to take advances, so you already are paying them back before money. In</p>

	<p>don't know how it will work, going from fortnightly to monthly is a big jump for people. People in benefits wait a whole months and get their money and then its gone because you have lived on nothing. I am lucky me and my cousin who lives in Glasgow she got paid on a different day so we could help each other.”</p> <p>Debbie “Universal Credit is an absolute nightmare, absolute nightmare, how can people that have not got access to computers and they get sanctions but personally I haven't had problems but the difference between 15 and 16 years ago today is quite insane. Also, working in the hub, my kids aren't in my care but when I had my three kids living with me I was able to claim child tax credits for 3 and now apparently it's only 2 youngest so that in itself is cutting money and for essentials”</p>
<p>2. Welfare Support only covering basic needs</p>	<p>Zara “It wasn't too difficult to put in the claim but the wait was really difficult, I had 6 weeks before any decision was made. For me, my partner ended the relationship on 27th of December and said I need you out of here and I knew then I would have to declare as homeless. So he was going to be away or there and I would be at my daughters. So he would be asking me to buy food, I couldn't just go buy anything. He would say give me a list of what Milly needs but not me, I ended up borrowing money from friends, it was a massive struggle, because I don't have family either I found it really hard. So I don't think there's enough in place for that situation. I know there has to be checks in place for handing money out but even when the amount came through it wasn't the biggest amount but it was something I could buy food.”</p> <p>Sharon “ I am accessing benefits, child benefits, universal for all parents anyway and I just started claiming Universal Credits, I wasn't away of it until two months ago so all this time I haven't been. That's it. I do bits of art work for people on the side to try and earn a bit of cash that way and I've just started to do body shop I signed up a week ago, it's slow but we are getting there. I am trying to earn as much as I can because I think it's important to try and do more with my son. He's never really experienced family holidays. I know we won't have a whole family unit again but myself and my ex have new partners so at some point I'm hoping to afford to take him on holiday</p>

by earning more cash for funds for that, for memories for him to look back on.”

Rosie

“ So I get 100 pound a week from them, then I get a through care bursary which is a little higher bursary and I can pay my rent. I am still not left with a lot, but it pays my rent and I don't have to worry about that at least.

I had been on the brew, periodically, but I can't live on that amount of money so I had always tried to get work quite quickly, just because, I have used foodbanks, I have used the charity that I volunteer with, they helped me which is why I started volunteering, I actually started volunteering before my domestic violence had happened, I had donated some stuff to them. But then, yeah, so I had been on the foodbanks, used a couple of places in the east end when they do the pantry where you get 15 quid stuff for 2.50, especially during this I have been very reliant, a lot of my friends in hospitality are in the same boat, there are a lot of people using the service who aren't homeless but can't afford to heat and eat. So people think that homelessness ends when you get a property but it doesn't there are so many other things.”

Debbie

“Also, working in the hub, my kids aren't in my care but when I had my three kids living with me I was able to claim child tax credits for 3 and now apparently it's only 2 youngest so that in itself is cutting money and for essentials!”

Kelly

“It was a mess I remember viewing it and saying I didn't want it because I had never stayed somewhere that was in such bad condition it looked like people had ripped wallpaper off the walls, there was no flooring or anything I think flooring has to be removed from council flats for health and safety reasons but it was horrible and although I was desperate at the same time I tend to compare a lot of things to my life growing up and I say we stayed in a new build house, I had never really experienced conditions like that and I do recall saying I didn't want it but because it was emergency accommodation you come off the list so I did accept it but I wasn't entitled to any funding to help get it to a nice condition so I wouldn't even call it liveable, I wouldn't put someone in it. It had water it had the necessities but the appearance of it, it wasn't a home and I don't think anything I could of done within my own remit could have made it a home. I did get a bit more support from my family then who were trying to get me on track and they had came and wallpapered and provided pots and pans and things but for

	<p>the majority of it, it was a high rise flat so it didn't really matter about curtains and things. It wasn't a nice place to be at all."</p> <p>Betty- "I only had to pay them and then my food, I mean I didn't have anything extra really, I didn't have anything left. I still had to put fuel in my car and run my car and I could still afford that, not that I was going far, just to meet the kids and things like that, I would usually go and stay at my sisters on a Saturday night over the southside just for something to do. And Mark would come and stay with me sometimes. So that was all I did really. A night out with friends now and again. I could sort of afford to do that and then"</p> <p>Anna "I normally get paid on a Tuesday so I would work out on the Monday what I need for that week and if I need a top up or whatever I would put that priority and obviously if I just need stuff that's not essential and I will work out my money and see if I can afford it and if I can I'll get it but I can't it's not essential so it's not as if it's gony cause stress or anything."</p>
<p>3. Being on Welfare Support as a Negative Experience</p>	<p>Zara " But other parts like the discretionary housing payment from the council for moving things, I got a really cheeky email. I applied when I was still living with my ex, it said you had already moved and got housing benefits so that was what the payment was for. It was like I was trying to defraud the payment. I was shell shocked first to reply. Then I wrote an email back to them explaining. I ended up having to borrow money and I needed that money to get the removal costs and I ended up going to one of my friends and saying can I get money. The discretionary housing fund is there for people in my situation and I was knocked back from it like I was defrauding, that was hurtful and counter productive."</p> <p>Sharon "Yes a lot of more hoops to jump through in getting universal credit, it was a lot more difficult, you have really got to state your case of why you should get it. I do understand to a degree why because there are a select people who are claiming for the sake of claiming but then there are people who genuinely need help and have paid their taxes over the years so you shouldn't have to jump through hoops to do that"</p> <p>Kelly- "Honestly I think it was quite degrading. I remember attending the job centre, I have always, like I am very self conscious so I am always conscious about my appearance and I always put makeup on. They said I didn't look like someone who was struggling, I was told to come back</p>

having not washed my hair and look a bit scruffy. I had to look like I needed it and apparently being presentable didn't fit the remit of getting it (money)."

"So there was quite extensive job applications and then courses where they would say I had to do them in order to get the money, but I think it was eventually stopped because I ended up, there was quite a period of time I was going back to my aunts house who was an alcoholic and it was difficult getting from one place to the next unless I had that bus ticket, so it was difficult securing employment and any courses and sustaining it until I got the SVQ role."

"Later on down the line when I fell pregnant with my son, I had to quit college, I was no longer earning, I was on JSA, I was pregnant so I wasn't getting any jobs, I know they are not allowed to discriminate but when they have someone turning up to the interview with a massive bump I think it's obvious someone has better skills than you. So I found that humiliating you are applying for jobs, doing your best but you know someone else is going to get the job. I was also 17 when I was pregnant so there is a huge judgement that comes with that and also I was really young I suffered from something called hyperemesis but the job centre deemed me fit to work so I wasn't entitled to sickness allowance, I had to actively apply for jobs right up until I had my son."

"I think more so being asked to look not presentable, you know you are asked to detail everything, like why you are not in employment and I think for me I was quite private at the time and I didn't want to tell them my home circumstances and putting that out there for someone to scrutinise, I found that really degrading and I just don't think you were supported to get money, it was the case of, there's other things out there other than benefits which was true but at the time I was just trying to survive and didn't need the lecture from anyone about what other options I had.

Rosie

"I could pay full rent, I can pay my full way, it's not like I am on benefits but nobody would help me and it's quite sad that it took a domestic violence situation for me to get help. My worker fought my corner and said she deserved her own tenancy and her own home. Keeping the tenancy is just as hard work as getting it really!"

"Yeah, I was on ESA for 2 years but obviously you have to go for medicals with someone who isn't a doctor and you have to jump through all the hoops and I am like if I could work I would be working right now so you

	<p>have to go through why you are not fit to work which destroys your mental health. Again, I was sofa surfing, staying at friends house, I was basically living out of a bag until this house. My belongings were at my parents where they were safe. This is the first time since before I went into care that I have had more than one suitcase full of stuff. So it is kind of nice to have a house that I have actual stuff in, it has taken a long time.”</p> <p>Debbie “Is this confidential?”</p>
<p>4. Insecure Employment</p>	<p>Zara “In retail I was on a zero hour contract, not manager role but in store. I was in the job for 2 years but come december you would work every hour there was because you needed it but then January it was cut right down so you would struggle, others had parental support but I didn’t and even a limited social life was a massive struggle. At Christmas you would have a big wage then the next month they would have absolutely nothing. So you would get a big wage then get cut and have nothing, so that was insecure. Also office temping was a temping role but long term and came down to the løast 2 for permanent positions but almost got them then didn’t. Then I decided to go back and do legal secretary then in the meantime while applying I did office temping so admin temping when I fell pregnant, there always seems to be work but it was just insecure, you didn’t know and when doing temping roles you are quite tired to do applications in the evening too. And you are not even on anything big but you have guilt for the next month of oh I shouldn’t have bought that or done that because I have no money now. There was no opportunity to make it permanent because they liked me but I was covering for a permanent person.”</p> <p>Sharon “The one before that wasn’t as positive, I was there for 2 to 2 and a half years for an architect firm and the team I was working with, was the architect then my little team, the admin team. So you had the finance manager, the office worker. It was a clique, I came in with all my ideas and people didn’t like it, they weren’t interested in taking anything on board, they would nit pick at everything and I felt like I was really bullied. I pulled a grievance at work and the two directors were saying “are you sure you want to do that? It’s a very serious allegation” and I said “I know and I wouldn’t do that if it was warranted”. There was nowhere to sit down and eat your lunch, you had to go out and eat. I used to get told off for eating at my desk. They wanted to do many things for me to do everything away from my desk. I felt I was being pulled apart. I have always prided myself in being</p>

relaxed and easy going but I felt I was on edge constantly. When my Dad passed away I was not supported at all, no understanding of what I had been through. And minor errors like misspelling something on email would pull me up for it. That grievance was still going through when I got the job at transport Scotland. Nothing was done about it but I'm glad I did it. I hated getting up in the morning."

"Yeah it was all very risky but I've been in worse situations, one of my first temp job was working in XX and that was a temp job for a year and got redundant then a few weeks out of work and got my next job, that was a permanent role, that was 4 years for a planning consultancy, I covered the two Scotland offices. That's the one that started redundancies while I was pregnant. I then went to work for an architect and in XX as a PA to a director, worked there for 6 months and they couldn't afford to keep me on. Then another company for 2 years, they got out of paying me any redundancy and I was out of work for 6 months which was extremely difficult, Caleb was at nursery and I was trying to cover the private nursery fees which was really expensive, I had to call my parents to help me out with that one. After them I went to work as a temp for XX a mat cover for 6 months."

"I found it extremely difficult to get a permanent job, when I first moved here people wouldn't take me seriously because I think they thought I would move back to England. I found it difficult to find permanent work I could settle into and progress in and this is the first job that I Feel I can actually go somewhere with and that's encouraged.

They asked me a lot of questions about whether I would go back to England, having been here a few years that then wasn't the case but in the beginning the right kind of job and skill set was really difficult to find something at the level I felt I should be at. Moving here I had to take a substantial pay cut but now 15 years on I am back at that same pay I was. Now I am in the position if I work hard then I will get the rewards and it is encouraged as well."

"I got this job 2 years ago in April as a temp for a few weeks then got kept on, it just kept getting extended. They then decided they wanted to keep me on but I had to go through the whole interview process. Because it's a government job and I'm a civil servant now it's a scoring thing, so I did have to jump through all the hoops to get there"

Anna

“Yeah. It was alright, I just wanted something temporary for getting money in for Christmas and that so it was okay and obviously my health and kids are more important than a job.”

Betty

“Well actually last year I got made redundant but I didn’t think it was insecure, I was working in an accounts office. I really felt, especially my age, I was 68 LAUGHS, and they said, he had always said, when I first went to work for Bradley I thought he was one of the nicest guys you could ever meet he was always nice to people. I was going out the door and he said can I have a word with you and I thought I've done something, have I missed something, have I forgot something and he said I'm really sorry to tell you but we are making you redundant and I nearly fell of the chair I said what! And he said yeah with this new system what I'm going to do it, the accounts people, the accountants, the four of them they are going to take on the admin for their clients and if I give them a new client they'll just put them onto the system, the system will send them a letter. And I said, okay that's fine, but I felt like the feet had been taken away from me and I thought what am I going to do. I needed a job I needed the money.”

“ I'm now going part time on January 4th and Im going to do a wee bit longer hours but instead of working 35 hours I will be working 21 hours a week and 3 days one week and 2 days the next so I can spend time with my Dad and look after my Grandson, so Ill be a bit skint but lives to short and I want to look after my Grandson. So actually when I look back on it now , he did me the best favour ever, I don't think Bradley would have let me did that. And its secure, as long as I want to be there, they will keep me there, not that I do want to work until I am 90, but if I do want to work until I am 90 then there will be a job there. And I do think you should have thought of this years ago!”

Kelly

“I would definitely say I have had that, I have issues of securing and sustaining employment, the post before, the first one was only a 6 month period and it was always I didn't know what to do how to stick something out so going back to college to do something and then I had to drop out because I was really ill with my first pregnancy, so going to uni and doing the four year degree was testing for me because that was the longest I had ever, aside from primary school I had never ever engaged in something that long, so yeah in terms of employment this is the longest I have had. And I did have to overcome obstacles to get the job, I had applied for the job, I was successful and then I had vetting issues relating to engaging with the

police growing up so I had to essentially appeal the decision and overcome the vetting rejection but I did it and I did it now.”

Did you expect that to happen?

“Not necessarily because I didn't have any criminal convictions, I had been in trouble with the police, I had been to court and then it was, I can't even remember the verdict now whether it was acquitted, not guilty and now they don't retain information so I will never know, The problem with police vetting is they don't look at convictions, you know like in court they need to find you guilty beyond reasonable doubt but with police they just need to find the balance of probability so they look at your previous record and say whether you are guilty or not so that was their basis of refusing employment so that's the only obstacle I had to overcome with that so it's now surfaced and been appealed so it won't give me any issues going forward I think.”

“And I just think it would be good for me to be able to approach people who were in a situation and try and set them on a different trajectory. I don't know if your experience would be similar in the sense, I have tried to secure employment in homeless agencies and the income is actually quite appalling and I think you know you want people that can actually make a difference but you don't want to pay them anywhere near as much as the effort that it takes to work in their services. Money's not everything but I've got a family to feed so for me the job that I am doing pays a lot more, essentially it's a call centre but it pays a lot more than any jobs associated with my degree or homelessness. As much as I would love to help people, financially, the organisations that want to employ people to help don't pay enough and I think that's also a massive barrier to helping and these people are just getting by themselves and , I don't know.”

Rosie

Rosie- “I am really lucky I get a lot of help from the charity I used to be with, without them I wouldn't have got my bed or the van to take things to. I couldn't have lived here, I am still at college, still working, then because of COVID I lost my job, I am on furlough but it's not my wage I would be getting and I am zero hour. It is really difficult and people think when you get your house all your problems are solved but it's not it's a whole new chapter, it is difficult.”

“The hospitality industry everything is zero hour unless you are a manager. Personally, I prefer to be paid for the hours I work, I don't want to be a manager with salary because you end up working for free and you live and breathe where you are, you just don't sleep or see anyone. I was nightclubs for a long time, anti social hours, it's expensive, you don't see anyone and sleep all day. So it is a lot zero hours so one week you can do 60-70 hours,

	<p>crazy amounts then the next week through the summer when I'm doing festivals I would do all day and then the night clubs at night I only got about 4 hours sleep but it helped me out I could bank my money and have a security net. But this year, everything was obviously cancelled, it can be quite, it is quite scary times for our industry, nobody knows what is going to happen, so many places have closed. So yeah there are issues with zero hours which most people in hospitality are on and everyone's pretty much on zero hours, there is no job security, it's not like when our parents are younger and you need something to buy a house. It is so much harder now but when my Mum and Dad were my age they were settled with two babies, a house, contracted employment."</p> <p>"I struggled for years I either had a job and couldn't afford a flat or find one then I got the flat and I didn't have a job, you are stuck between a rock and a hard place and you are trying everything and you work all these casual jobs and they are cash in hand and not reliable and you are trying to get a house but you don't have money or contracts to prove. There is no help until you go through something traumatic, you won't get any help otherwise."</p>
<p>5. Being Motivated through Homelessness to Help Others</p>	<p>Zara "It feels like, I would love it if something good came from what had happened to me, it seems like a really useful thing you are doing and it would be amazing to help. I hope I can read it when I've done it. The final paper!"</p> <p>Anna "Yeah, I think I'm in a good place that I'm able to move on now but obviously back when I moved in I wasn't ready for anything but now I'm ready and I am able to move on. But I will miss the staff, my key worker keeps saying that I should go back and volunteer in working there and help other people out."</p> <p>Betty "I had to wait a year, I went on the board and then they told me you can't be on the board, we've just found a rule, because I was a service user, I had to be away for a year so I waited a year and then I've been on the board ever since. So it is just giving a wee bit back, I don't think I actually do a lot, I go</p>

to the meetings, read the policies, I go into the offices now and then to help, look over stuff and fill forms when I have a day off or things like that. And I go to the meetings, I have only missed one meeting this year and that was when my Dad was in hospital. And the board has a really strong, we have a really strong board now, the council are trying to make us one service. But we have a really strong system and great policies. Our CEO is amazing, she is worth her weight in gold. Her PA secretary is great too, she has help. She is great too. The girls are all nice, we usually have a meeting now, an AGM, what we do is we usually all go, like we have our AGM in a private room then we all go for dinner somewhere but because of this, with COVID, we can't go this year and we are having a zoom meeting in December, just the board, but next year we will do it. .

I spoke once in front of the police, I don't know how I did it (laughs) but I just tried to explain how women felt and how desolate you are and that you need other people to look after you and if it wasn't for women's aid what would women do."

Kelly

"I think I've just got to a stage where I want to be able to raise awareness, I want to help people and because I have come to terms with it. I am on the advisory board for say women now as well and all these things, I think to accept myself I need to stop hiding away from everything I have been through."

Rosie

"Obviously volunteering has helped, it's nice to be surrounded by nice people and it makes a difference to your life, it is nice to be around people that genuinely care about you, it helps your mental health whilst you're helping other people. You have to be grateful for what you have as well, these cold nights I wouldn't want to be out there.

The young girl helping, a young Irish girl, she begs across from my work and I saw her being approached by quite a few Asian men that hang about St. Enoch and I said I work here if you are ever scared come and get me. Because I've been there and I wouldn't want anyone in that situation, it takes one minute for me to buy her a cup of tea. We ended up with quite a good friendship, she just got offered a temporary flat in Springburn, she got out the hostel and she is now in a temporary flat and you can't have any furniture in those temp houses so I got her, I put an appeal out on Kindness fb page and asked if people had anything and I managed to get her everything she needed by the next morning and everybody was really nice and she burst into tears because she didn't know that stuff like that is available."

	<p>Debbie</p> <p>“I enjoy working in the hub because it’s voluntary and I like structure, it’s what I like doing and I like the fact also that if there’s anything with my kids or that then I can just say sorry I can’t come in, I’m not tied to any kind of contract.”</p>
<p>6.Blaming Oneself and Acceptance of Homelessness</p>	<p>Sharon</p> <p>“ I should have done it years ago leaving my partner, we have had a turbulent relationship, it has been very up and down and I have had my family on the phone in tears and said I need to leave even when my son was a baby but I didn’t have the courage to do it and I am being penalized for it but I didn’t do it years ago I have done it now. It’s good to talk about it though even though it’s not easy it can help.”</p> <p>Anna</p> <p>“My key worker has helped me get counselling that I wasn’t ready to get. She helps me with that. Em just been like his side of the family like his Mum and his Gran and stuff. Em, his Mum’s helped because she’s my sons grandmother so she’s helped go through the process of the whole situation that he’s going through so she’s helped with that as well but obviously some of his family has went through what I’ve went through with my Stepdad and they’ve helped me overcome that and obviously not blame myself for what’s happened in the past”</p> <p>Betty</p> <p>“And I am sure people stepped back from us a bit because he started to think he could get away with it a bit more and that’s when I realised Ive got to do something about this.And I didnt want my kids thinking they had to accept this kind of behaviour from someone and I probably should have done it sooner but hindsight is a great thing. You think, can I live without all of this, my house and that. But you can and you can be without it and be happy. And that’s what I say to my friends. I say you will be happy one day!”</p> <p>Kelly</p> <p>“ I’ve got to a stage as well where I don’t care what people think of me anymore to then being extremely self aware and anxious but then again I can think I don’t care anymore if someone wants to judge me then they can. So that has been it, a case of you can go through what I have been through and come out the other end. And up until this year I hadn’t really fully accepted that everything that had happened had happened, Id held myself responsible for so long. I’ve got to a stage now where I want to hold</p>

	<p>other people responsible and thats never ever going to happen but it would be incredibly helpful for me if like my Mum for example had said do you know what I should have never done that to you growing up and if my Dad was to acknowledge that he should never have left when I was sleeping on streets. When I look back now they were all saying I was a bad teenager but I wasn't I was a broken child. And I do want to eventually go to social work and school for the lack of support they gave me and how often they turned me away.And through my own experience I have been reading up about different research topics and I think massively I slipped through the net, I think I've been incredibly lucky as I say to be in the position I am now.”</p> <p>“So up until now I've always just tolerated them, we get on and I would never deprive my kids of that relationship so it's been there just for the sake of it but I've found it really difficult this year because I've remembered all of that and started to acknowledge what I've been through without making myself being the bad one. For so long everyone was saying to me you done that as a teenager, you did that to your parents, you swore at them and stayed out late and now I'm like do you know what this is what they put me through so it's put a strain on relationships. I have only in the last few weeks decided to not have anymore contact with my Mum. My Dad has not moved back from Kuwait but I struggle with that, he had quite a nice life and he has a child and that child has always had him consistently in their life so it's put a strain on relationships. So I am able to maintain them but just not with great respect, if that answers the question.”</p>
7.Blame and Judgement from Others	<p>Zara “ I would be looked at very negatively, there is an assumption that you should never let yourself get into this situation,there is a lack of understanding of how this happens, I never thought it would happen to me it just happens to other people. But even though I had been close to it previously when I had lost jobs and financially insecure I have been very close but I was always able to with not being a mother being able to scrape by. But when I had my daughter, you can't struggle with what you had before. I had been close to the edge for years but you couldn't pick yourself up like you would otherwise. They would also say you shouldn't have a child if you can't afford it, if you're on benefits you shouldn't have a child is a massive thing people say but that wasn't my case when I had my daughter but things happen.”</p> <p>Sharon “That's tricky. It's mixed really, some would say “oh God what have you done to get yourself into that position” others would say “what happened,</p>

what would have happened for you to get here?”. A lot of people that knew me and my ex would have just seen us as a happy couple as you put that facade on but behind closed doors its a different story. A lot of people see it as a shock, one minute I live with him and we are pretending to be a happy family and the other I am in a women’s refuge. I had his Mum on the phone who said “what did he do, did he even lift his hands to you?” and I said “it doesn’t have to be physical abuse”. But she will never understand that. Just because they had seen the happy side, thinking everything is fine then I am in a women’s refuge and they would think how did that happen, not understanding the process I had gone through and that it was my only option.”

Anna

“ Em. I don’t know because you can get people that look at it differently like some people think they’re suffering from domestic violence or some people feel like they just need a bit more support. But all in, you don’t know anyone’s background so you can’t judge it until you know that person when they open up to you and you can understand it from their point of view. People look at it from a negative. Everyone has their own story to tell but it’s quite good seeing how many different agencies there is to help women like women with children or women on their own and there is a lot of support out there for women.”

Betty-

“I think some women look down on it and they shouldn’t. I talk about it all the time saying how great it is and how much they look after women. But I don’t think, I don’t think certain women, if they’re more better off or something but they don’t really, they think its people that come from like no money, a council estate and its not, anybody can use it and I think sometimes you don’t know what goes on behind closed doors.”

Kelly

“ I don’t know what the word is, I think you are very judged and it is only this year that I started using the terminology that I was homeless because I think it’s associated with like drug addicts, people that have been involved in crime because a few times I have said it this year and people have had the response “you dont look like you’ve ever been homeless” and I don’t know what that means, what does someone that has been homeless look like or act like. I don’t know what the word is I’m trying to find but there is a huge element of judgement especially for women it is that bit worse, women are supposed to be home makers, be able to sustain things, going on the reaction that I had from people when I decided this year to stop hiding from my past is almost like they expect people that are the lower

class of society to have been the people that are homeless and because I don't fit that, I have a job and stability now, it's almost like you don't look like that, you don't look broken enough."

Rosie

"Domestic abuse is such a traumatic thing, you don't want to wear it like a badge but you feel like you almost have to to get what you need and to be okay. It is not nice, no one wants to be classed as a victim, no one wants to have that stigma."

"Me going through DV and having to explain that to college was embarrassing, I had to take time off while my face healed because I didn't want to go to college with black eyes. I am fine now and its in court, Its kind of hard though if you lose attendance, you lost your bursary and its difficult and I said I wish I did this when I was younger when I didn't have this going on and obviously online study is difficult, its difficult to concentrate in your own house with all the distractions. I have to get up and I am looking at my house and trying to study and I am like I need to clean that and eat something, I am very distracted very easily."

"Most of my stuff was at his house because I was in the process of moving in here, he was supposed to help me paint and stuff but just wasn't and wanted to keep me at his. I was working full time, I was at college and just didn't have time to get it done. My cousin helped me do it all and once my face had healed enough for me to come because I didn't want to move in and have all my neighbours see it but everyone still knew everyone still saw it. It was really bad. She really helped me, so aye, it has been, aye if you don't know where to look for these you are not going to get the help."

"I think at this time, I think this pandemic has taught people that we need to look out for each other and people on the street are not different to anyone else, they are still people and deserve their dignity and to have that option of being, they are still human and I think they can be so dehumanized by people who say oh it's your fault, people can say you went back to that, you've put yourself in this situation, a lot of it yeah probably but it's usually past trauma and they don't know what to do or how to deal with it. It is, especially for younger women, I mean, girls usually they are fleeing some form of violence or abuse and then they don't trust anyone, so how can you ask for help if you don't trust anyone."

Debbie

"As an addict, you're frowned upon as a woman and an addict, you're supposed to be maternal and people think it is a choice. It can be , maybe

	<p>violence and you don't have an option and you have to leave. But generally, people don't have the tolerance, they don't tolerate it, I think people are scared, if you think of the normal people on the street begging, I would go up and check if they are alright but normal people wouldn't go up. People expect you to be in the house, be the mother of the kids, if you are using kids people would say why don't you look after kids. It's not as simple as that, no one wants to be. There is a lot of judgement put on women."</p> <p>"When I was homeless I was allocated and I had no problem. But when I was suffering with addiction, usually your voice, you know, this is my experience, you don't have a voice. Even if they do listen to you, you're being judged, you have gave all your power to these people, you give them all that power, they take your power and it's used against you."</p>
8.Vulnerability in partnership	<p>Zara</p> <p>" It wasn't too difficult to put in the claim but the wait was really difficult, I had 6 weeks before any decision was made. For me, my partner ended the relationship on 27th of December and said I need you out of here and I knew then I would have to declare as homeless. So he was going to be away and I would be at my daughters. So he would be asking me to buy food, I couldn't just go buy anything. He would say give me a list of what Milly needs but not me, I ended up borrowing money from friends, it was a massive struggle, because I don't have family either I found it really hard. So I don't think there's enough in place for that situation. I know there has to be checks in place for handing money out but even when the amount came through it wasn't the biggest amount but it was something I could buy food."</p> <p>"Security, before I was in a relationship with my partner I rented a lot of places and moved around loads and loads. But even that is security as when you sign the lease you have it, my home, I can have stuff, somewhere to relax. I found when he ended the relationship and put my homeless application in it was a strange period of being in a home that was a home but now wasn't. I had no idea about anything, it was a new situation, lack of security and lack of autonomy in a way and the ball was not in my court when he ended the relationship."</p> <p>"Definitely has shaped it, if I wasn't a mum it would have been far easier, just thinking about yourself you are like right that's fine and if I hadn't been working I could have got work again easier but all of these doors were</p>

closed to me because I was a mother and had to rely on no funds as I made the choice to be a stay at home Mum. And having Milly was the first and foremost important thing to do.”

Rosie

“it is it's difficult and then you are in on the time because you are not working and you are under each others feet all the time, but we got on quite well but that will test the closest of friendships. I was staying with her until I got this, I would stay between hers and my ex partners, and so nothing, I never really felt secure anywhere, really we would fight and I would go to his and me and him would fall out and I would go to hers. So none of them was mine, I was putting all this money into both houses and not getting anything back. You are paying, not so much rent but electricity, food, cleaning, buying things for each house and then its not yours, you can walk away and leave it all in the end do you know what I mean?”

“Yeah sofa surfing was more secure and more familiar, you are with a friend but also you would get into relationships, when I was younger and rush them and move in and not have anywhere else to go and then you feel you are a project for people, especially men for my instance and you don't want to live with them and you are not ready but you are somehow living with them because you don't have anyone else. Living with someone is different, it is very intimate and it is never your house so you are constantly on egg shells and you over compensate; you will either put more money in than the other person or get used and it gets flung in your face constantly like “I let you stay there”. It isn't all rosy and its not secure, you are constantly living in this fear like they could kick me out at any time you know. Especially when they realise that things don't work as quickly as they should and you are not getting the house you were supposed to and houses fall through and you are stuck there.”

Debbie

“What happened with me was I had my partner, my wee boys Dad, I never had my own tenancy until 14-15 years ago but I never had a tenancy because I was with my partner, my ex partner for 11 years and but in that time that was in his house. If we fell out I could go back to my mum's at times or other times I would stay with friends. When you don't have your own tendency you feel quite vulnerable, because you are relying on somebody else, do you know what I mean?

And shit happens and then you are asked to leave. I was dependent on my boyfriend and thinking back you accept the unacceptable just to have

somewhere to stay that night, like the way they were talking to you or maybe the way that they were treating you.”

Betty

“I only had to pay them and then my food, I mean I didn’t have anything extra really, I didn’t have anything left. I still had to put fuel in my car and run my car and I could still afford that, not that I was going far, just to meet the kids and things like that, I would usually go and stay at my sisters on a Saturday night over the southside just for something to do. And Mark would come and stay with me sometimes. So that was all I did really. A night out with friends now and again. I could sort of afford to do that and then, once I went back into the house, em, because everything Seamus was still paying, Seamus was actually still paying all of the expenses in the house in the business. But I had worked in the business for years, what we did, is the money just went into the house, we paid bills and saved up for holidays but then when I left I didn’t have control of that. So a lot of it was setting up standing order and direct debit so he was only keeping the business going for so long until we sold the house and then obviously cos then if he kept it going as well. I got advice on, my lawyer that helped me said I should've got something out of the business and what he did was just let it go em and once the house was sold that was it, he said I am just going away to work and he worked all over, down south, inverness, more or less a sole trader so the business, he just let it go. Em, and that was probably because he thought “you're not getting anything out of my business.. That was horrible. I felt that he did that deliberately”.

Sharon

“Yeah, they changed the rates of Working Tax Credit so then we were no longer eligible as they reduced it so we were 7 or 8 years we didn’t get anything. It was at the start a big change for us but then my ex changed jobs a few times and had better wages and it balanced. But that didn’t help our situation because he said I’m earning all of the money here, so it put a rift between us, not that there wasn’t before.”

“When I was considering leaving my ex partner, I didn’t know what to do. If I knew about this I would have left years ago, I always had hanging over me, I can’t afford to move out, and he’s going to ask money from me. So there’s nothing I can do, I can’t afford private rent. So for years and years I was stuck. If I had known there was the option of Women’s Aid I would have left sooner. So if this was made more knowledgeable to people then some women would have acted sooner. If I hadn’t had spoken to my friend who told me about it then I would maybe still be there. I was at breaking point, I had to get out, but it made the process quicker for me.”

<p>9. The Option of Sofa Surfing</p>	<p>Zara</p> <p>“They said there would have been the option for temporary accommodation but I just wasn't sure and I didnt have money to take public transport so the best thing for my daughter for no upheaval was as awkward as it was sleeping in her room and taking her to classes. So it seemed like that was best for her even though it was a horrible situation looking back even though for me it would have been the best to take a temporary flat anywhere and not in the same environment. Keeping her in a routine and being able to stay with her friends was her best. It was really really horrible though, really horrible, when home stops being that place of security, are they going to be in, can you relax, are they not in, when you here the key in the door and they are back you cant relax. It was a really hard time. When friends went away they let me stay with them which was breathing space, I didn't realise how stressful that house was until I was away and realised I can sit down and not worry about the door opening.”</p> <p>Anna</p> <p>“ I was staying in my aunties house but obviously that wasn't suitable but again that wasn't suitable because I was pregnant with my son but I was sleeping on the floor so that's when they put me into the mother and baby unit. She only had one bedroom and she needed the bed because she had bad sciatica so she needed it which is understandable.”</p> <p>Kelly</p> <p>“Fortunately, when I was 15 going through the most difficult point of my life, I was made homeless but I was told by social work that I didn't really fit the criteria for a children's home so they wouldn't place me in one and also there was a kind of threat that if I chose to sofa surf and rough sleep that they would place me in a homeless unit but it was be emergency accomodation and could have been as far away as Aberdeen. I had met my husband when I was 15 and the prospects of having that, the only stable thing in my life taken away terrified me so I went through a period of just lying to social work, I continued to rough sleep and my partner was the same age but he was in part time employment, he was a year older sorry. So he supported me a lot financially and then when I was staying with my</p>

aunt or when I was allowed to stay there rather, my mind was finding her with I think child benefit money for me. That's kind of all I got, I got help from family members until I could apply for JSA when I was about 16 so up until then it was relying on other people and then it was beneficial when I turned 16"

"Yes, so they would have put me up in emergency accomodation and because I was still under 16 at the time it would have been a children's unit and they were quite reluctant to do that because I hadn't been in trouble up until that point. I was quite vulnerable and they just didn't think I met the criteria for people in a children's home. They did threaten me with if you refuse to go down this route and return home then it would be Aberdeen they mentioned that where I would be going. So after that I ended up staying with a friend's Mum and she put me up for that time."

"It eventually did come to light and they were happy with it for a while but then didn't like the fact that I was in a relationship and again it was the threat of if you don't return home or your aunts, my mums sister then it would be a case of putting me into a children's home so it was just bidding time. I was very close to 16 at that point so I managed, social work were under the impression that I did return to my aunts house where in fact I had been rough sleeping and sofa surfing."

"There has been so many, sofa surfing, stayed with my friends mum in an area called XX which is one of the areas I didn't feel safe in after the sexual assault that had happened. Then my aunt that I stayed with was in XX. Looking back now the conditions were actually quite dire, she was an alcoholic and I didn't realise at the time how disgusting the house was or I probably did to an extent but the cleaning facilities like her shower was cold so I couldn't take a hot shower it was just, the conditions actually were just filthy, she had cats that peed everywhere so the bed that I slept in was covered in cat be but I was you know constantly reminded that that was their house and not mine. I mean there were the odd days where my partners parents did allow me to stay, they stayed in a two bedroom house in XX with 2 siblings so it was very very cramped when I could stay. I can't even remember now, I remember travelling to Edinburgh one day to stay with a friend that then when we got there his mum had realised that I still wasn't 16 at the time so I had to get the train back and then Buchanan Street obviously they had got the wee chairs so it was just a case of taking turns to try and sleep on the chairs, and it was scary, it was really scary. The same with Govanhill Park that was quite scary and then there's an ASDA in XX and there was a night they had a bench in the foye and we had used that as well but were asked to move on.

It was difficult, I think it was just about survival really. I had all of my things that were important to me, I was really self conscious so my straighteners I would have had then with me regardless and my make up, my access to a phone, but it was just, it felt unclean and then when I stayed with my Aunt there was the cats urinating on everything so anything I did have was ruined by that. I recycled what I did have. I lost a lot of my possessions throughout that time until I finally got the flat I stayed in from the age of 16 so I don't actually really remember, when I did stay in that flat I think I became a bit of a hoarder like anything I did have I got a lot of, I had excess amount of clothes and I couldn't even tell you where I got them but I think it was that fear of not having anything again."

Rosie

"I was on ESA for 2 years but obviously you have to go for medicals with someone who isn't a doctor and you have to jump through all the hoops and I am like if I could work I would be working right now so you have to go through why you are not fit to work which destroys your mental health. Again, I was sofa surfing, staying at friends house, I was basically living out of a bag until this house. My belongings were at my parents where they were safe. This is the first time since before I went into care that I have had more than one suitcase full of stuff. So it is kind of nice to have a house that I have actual stuff in, it has taken a long time."

"this is my only proper tenancy and I am 32 years old. It is kind of scary, you just get no help, and if you can't make the deposit and if you can't make the deposit and you have to fill a house. I mean I got keys for this property in september and I didn't move in until the middle of october, I was paying rent whilst sofa surfing until I could get money to get things in it so that it is liveable for me. It is liveable now. A lot of people think once you get keys for a house you are not homeless anymore, you have then got to find the money for gas and electrics then your white goods, then money for food, then have the money to heat your house, especially at this time of year, buy the things to cook with, buy the things to sleep in, it is, it takes time. I am really lucky I get a lot of help from the charity I used to be with, without them I wouldn't have got my bed or the van to take things to. I couldn't have lived here, I am still at college, still working, then because of COVID I lost my job, I am on furlough but it's not my wage I would be getting and I am zero hour. It is really difficult and people think when you get your house all your problems are solved but it's not a whole new chapter, it is difficult."

"Yes, so in hostels, I was just out of care and I obviously it was an emergency so you would phone and it would be about a breakdown in

	<p>relationship, breakdown in family, as well I was quite young the last time I was in the homeless hostel, it put me off, that's why I was sofa surfing and my friends experienced homelessness as well and you know if you can help a friend that's why I would rather do that than them being in one of those places especially if they are younger. The prettier you are in these places all the more feminine you are makes you at risk and puts you at risk, I mean you can try and dump that down and not wear make up and not do your hair but you will still be singled out because you are young and female. You are a target for so many bad things to happen to you. In the hostels I got a lot of unwanted male attention from people I would not speak to, i've never been a judgemental person but it is scary”</p> <p>Debbie</p> <p>“What happened with me was I had my partner, my wee boys Dad, I never had my own tenancy until 14-15 years ago but I never had a tenancy because I was with my partner, my ex partner for 11 years and but in that time that was in his house. If we fell out I could go back to my mum's at times or other times I would stay with friends. When you don't have your own tendency you feel quite vulnerable, because you are relying on somebody else, do you know what I mean?</p> <p>And shit happens and then you are asked to leave. I was dependent on my boyfriend and thinking back you accept the unacceptable just to have somewhere to stay that night, like the way they were talking to you or maybe the way that they were treating you. In terms of Temporary accommodation, it was alright, it wasn't bad and they have all got the same furniture, the same plates, the same beds and the same everything but I suppose that must be better than staying in a big hostel.”</p>
10. Supportive Third Sector Organisation Accommodation	<p>Sharon</p> <p>“It was good in the refuge, we were in two different refuges, first one was quite far from my son and my friends, not miles but 45 minutes to an hour with transport so hard for school and things, took a lot of time out of the day and time together quality and to relax but the facilities were fantastic. The people were amazing to my son and continue to be amazing. It was a nice place to live but my ex found out what area we were living and we had to move so we then moved to one a bit closer to here I was a bit apprehensive but reasonably comfortable for my son to travel by himself. I was happy with him doing that but his Dad found out and went a bit ballistic but again the team were amazing, really helpful, there if you needed anything, I could</p>

ring them if there were any issues or if I needed to talk to anybody. So I felt I had a support network.”

Anna

“Eh, the now I stay in the XProject in XXX. It is a shared flat and you share it with another flatmate but you’ve got your own bedroom and toilet so it’s just really your kitchen and sitting area. The staff are lovely, they help, they participate in activities and the people that stay there are really quite nice as well. Some of them keep themselves to themselves. But it’s that sense of security again. Obviously there are people there you can talk to like the staff are there 24/7 and you can go down and have tea with staff and have a general conversation. They’re there and they will support you in any sort of way. Yeah it’s important. I find it hard to be around boys that I don’t really know or like to share because in a group situation then I feel a bit more safer and stuff. Yeah, em, the flat is just like a normal house just with a flat mate or your best friend staying over. You’ve got like your kitchen with everything you need, your livingroom has a tv and stuff and your bedroom is your own so you can have whatever you want in your bedroom, like I’ve got lots of pictures up with my kids and stuff so it makes it feel a bit more homely.”

“(not as positive) No, before it I was in a mother and baby unit with my daughter. No, sorry I was in there when I was pregnant with my son but then they took my son from the hospital and I was in the mother in baby unit. Which was really hard because there were mothers and babies and I was in there with the toys and stuff and I found it really hard to cope and I wasn’t really staying there, I was mainly out. So that’s when I got into the Project XX and I got more confident through them and it’s helped me speak out and stuff.”

Betty

“I was a lot stronger but they helped me through that, they gave me support and looked after me, em but always there you know they would come and visit you nearly every day and then they could phone me any time 24 hours a day.”

“That was okay. The first house I was in with them was a flat actually and it was fine, I was there for about 3 weeks and I was sharing it with this young girl but she was never there I don’t know where she was. Then Linda who was looking after me one day said I am going to move you Lesley I’ve got a house I can put you in and that means they two can be the same age together. So I moved to this house and that’s when, that was a 3 bedroom semi detached house and in a little cul de sac and that was nice, the flat

was nice, and the street the flat was on was alright like people all round about us but it was just that they had decided to move me. And they said well that way she can have Mark and Gail staying. When I was in that house there was only ever one other lady with me and she didn't object to Mark or Gail being there and she was nice and the kids didn't bother her.

So the house was shared?

Yeah, for a short time, not for all of the time. But she was fine, she was lovely. And she didn't mind. The staff told her I had my kids with me and she met Mark and Gail and sometimes if they visited she was watch telly and we would stay in the kitchen. I invited her to sit with us and she ate with us a few times. She wasn't there that long, she went back and I don't know what happened to her. So I was mostly in that house on my own, which was great really!"

"Oh no. If accommodation is full then maybe but not for me, there was a space and if it was full you did have the option of another district but a lot of women like me want their own area. Some women want another area too for safety. But we (women's aid) never turn any woman away, that's our policy, we would do something for them, it is getting harder obviously with COVID you have to call and a distanced meeting and everything but our policy is to never turn any woman away and that day I got taken to that flat em and they said you are sharing it with a young girl and they phoned her and said Lesley is in the flat, but she was hardly ever there and then I was only there for a few weeks and I was in the house and that's when, everything sort of moved on then so they did really. I am sure they do it for everybody, I see how the girls work and how much they help and the children's workers looking after, before the COVID we had a teenage club going on where children's workers would go and do that, they would go to the school and tell children about things so that if they need any help they can come to our children's workers. We have a big big network, our girls go above and beyond, I am sure they all do in women's aid but ours is just, I just see the work they do and I am in awe of them. Young young girls too that are just absolutely brilliant."

"That was definitely the hardest thing leaving my permanent home, the rest is all bricks and water, I missed them so so much. When I used to meet them for a coffee in the beginning I used to scream all the way back holding onto the steering wheel and I don't know how I did it but that's where it all came out and I got back to the house and it was fine- I couldn't scream in their but I could scream in the car. But that doesn't last, it got easier, I could have them over night, could watch the telly together and do the normal things, cook them dinner."

11. Partner as a Support	<p>Sharon</p> <p>“my new partner gave me money to pay off my debt and when my Mum’s house sells I will get inheritance and can pay him back and he knows that but without him I would be struggling to make ends meet. There was no way I could afford private rent at all.”</p> <p>“He got in touch when he knew things weren’t right and I put a post up on facebook- he has been my main support through all of this. If I need to vent, if I have had a bad day, he lets me get it off of my chest until we are ready to talk about something else.”</p> <p>“But a lot of my friends and my partner does understand it. I hadn’t really looked at it until I got talking to my partner and I would talk to him because I find it easy to talk to him and he would come up with like “it sounds like this” “it sounds like that” and he would send to me what the government says about it like Gaslighting. And then I would say Oh My God yeah that is it and I would never think of that until he said it. So to have that understanding from somebody else is so supportive. A part from my exes Mum pleading for me to move back with him I hadn’t heard from exes family or my family about it.”</p> <p>Anna</p> <p>“Eh, no. I don’t stress about money and if I do I have my partner to help and his side of the family that would help as well.”</p> <p>“Just going back to what I have been through he was the one that actually, that was the first one I told about my childhood. He was the one that got me to open up and basically get him sent to prison and get him out of my life and move on. Em and obviously he has been there for the two kids and he has helped with that situation as well and if I’m feeling down he knows the signs to look for like so obviously if I shut myself he knows there is something wrong and he’ll help try and get me to open up and see what it is that he can help or do to make me feel better so he’s quite good with that.”</p> <p>“He is staying with family members right now but the place I am in are looking to get us a house together cause he is my biggest support.”</p>

He was allowed to visit and stay overnights but because of the global pandemic he's not been allowed lately but they are more lenient in letting you go out because obviously he is my biggest support so when I stay in it does affect my mood and stuff. So they do let you go out and stay out as long as I'm keeping safe and stuff they do let me go out and spend some time with him just to keep my mood as best as possible."

Betty

"And that unhappiness is horrible and some people say to me do you not want a man in your life and I say "no I don't need a man in my life to be happy". I am happy, I get up in the morning and sometimes think ugh I need to go to work but I don't have that same feeling. I don't get up in the morning with that horrible feeling in my gut, like you don't know what will happen that day or at night"

Kelly

"I had met my husband when I was 15 and the prospects of having that, the only stable thing in my life taken away terrified me so I went through a period of just lying to social work, I continued to rough sleep and my partner was the same age but he was in part time employment, he was a year older sorry. So he supported me a lot financially and then when I was staying with my aunt or when I was allowed to stay there rather, my mind was finding her with I think child benefit money for me."

"There was absolutely no one else that was consistent, I will take that back, when I did eventually engage with say women I ended up receiving support from them for 7 years, it was the only service that I found and completely by chance that I found them, I still can't get over that. And don't get me wrong I did go awall quite a lot but they were always there to go back to. I had a key worker called Lauren. There was nobody that was consistent. With my family members, the relationships were all very estranged or broken, while I might receive support from my Mum one week, the following week she didn't talk to me. Up until I got the flat in Motherwell and restarted the relationship with my grandparents I didn't have them either. There wasn't anything consistent, I didn't have any friends from school or growing up. Other than my husband and say women that was all I had, the social workers, when I turned 16 didn't engage with me anymore, I don't know I think because they didn't have to so I didn't get any support you know from them either."

"Fortunately, when I was 15 going through the most difficult point of my life, I was made homeless but I was told by social work that I didn't really fit the criteria for a children's home so they wouldn't place me in one and also

	<p>there was a kind of threat that if I chose to sofa surf and rough sleep that they would place me in a homeless unit but it was be emergency accomodation and could have been as far away as Aberdeen. I had met my husband when I was 15 and the prospects of having that, the only stable thing in my life taken away terrified me so I went through a period of just lying to social work, I continued to rough sleep and my partner was the same age but he was in part time employment, he was a year older sorry. So he supported me a lot financially and then when I was staying with my aunt or when I was allowed to stay there rather, my mind was finding her with I think child benefit money for me. That's kind of all I got, I got help from family members until I could apply for JSA when I was about 16 so up until then it was relying on other people and then it was beneficial when I turned 16....</p> <p>A lot of the time, when we sofa surfed we did it together but when it did come down to rough sleeping he ended up rough sleeping with me so he kind of left his family home in order to do that.”</p> <p>Debbie</p> <p>“The only person I was consistent with was my partner, the relationship with family had broken down so I didn’t have support to be honest at all. My saving grace was that I had fallen pregnant and then I got priority for a house, honestly, and I had been housed quickly, although the area was an area I didn’t want to put in I did quite quick.”</p>
12. Being a Mother and homelessness	<p>Zara</p> <p>“Definitely has shaped it, if I wasn't a mum it would have been far easier, just thinking about yourself you are like right that's fine and if I hadn't been working I could have got work again easier but all of these doors were closed to me because I was a mother and had to rely on no funds as I made the choice to be a stay at home Mum. And having Milly was the first and foremost important thing to do.</p> <p>I would be looked at very negatively, there is an assumption that you should never let yourself get into this situation,there is a lack of understanding of how this happens, I never thought it would happen to me it just happens to other people. But even though I had been close to it previously when I had lost jobs and financially insecure I have been very close but I was always</p>

able to with not being a mother being able to scrape by. But when I had my daughter, you can't struggle with what you had before. I had been close to the edge for years but you couldn't pick yourself up like you would otherwise. They would also say you shouldn't have a child if you can't afford it, if you're on benefits you shouldn't have a child is a massive thing people say but that wasn't my case when I had my daughter but things happen."

Sharon

"Stability, I can't even put it into words really. It means a lot, I feel more secure, I feel that my son is a lot happier because when we were in the refuge obviously given the type of the accommodation he couldn't see his friends there but now he has the freedom to bring his friends home from school, go out and meet up with them, go to his dads if he feels like it. I cant even put into words how amazing it feels for me. Don't get me wrong my friends are important to me as well but my focus has always been my son and his happiness, Im a grown up, I can make due. And we have been through all of the changes this year and losing his Gran as well, its not been easy for him and I've just tried to get things as normal as possible for him and have this and say look this is your home."

Betty

"That was definitely the hardest thing leaving my permanent home, the rest is all bricks and water, I missed them so so much. When I used to meet them for a coffee in the beginning I used to scream all the way back holding onto the steering wheel and I don't know how I did it but that's where it all came out and I got back to the house and it was fine- I couldn't scream in their but I could scream in the car. But that doesn't last, it got easier, I could have them over night, could watch the telly together and do the normal things, cook them dinner."

"Mark and Gail were definitely in my side and they had seen it and were older at the time that I left so I mean mark was 17 and Gail was probably coming up for 22 em so they were really supportive like when they were coming and saying "Mum Dad has been doing this and saying oh are you going to see your Mum again" and I said "do you want me to come back?" "When he was saying that he didn't want them coming to see me. And the house wasn't selling and that was quite long for the kids but then I got back in the house so that was fine. But they were right at my back, I saw them every single night really until they could come and stay with me so it wasn't so bad then, because I was meeting them every night it was only for a coffee or something at tea time. But once they could come and stay with

me that was easier. I stayed at my sisters nearly every weekend too em and then Mark would come with me if he wasn't doing anything with his friends he would come and he always came on a sunday for sunday dinner”

Kelly

“Yes and no, it would have been a much worse scenario, even at 17 I was still really young but I think if I had been under age or just turned 16 I would have been able to access support more which I did learn when I fell pregnant with my son when I was 17 that there was other support services but only when I fell pregnant could I get access to them. Its difficult because it would have put me in a higher priority in terms of being able to gain housing or benefits but then at the same time it would've been a horrific situation to bring a child in because I didn't know where I was sleeping from one night to the next.”

“Growing up I was never was able to walk to school so I can't believe that my sons will always be able to walk to school they've got friends in the area they stay in. My son is going to be 9 next week, apart from we moved out the flat since he was 6 months old but this has been his home since birth and it feels really surreal that he has got somewhere that is home to him, even if there is things that still bother me. I have given him place that has security and stability.”

Anna

“No, before it I was in a mother and baby unit with my daughter. No, sorry I was in there when I was pregnant with my son but then they took my son from the hospital and I was in the mother in baby unit. Which was really hard because there were mothers and babies and I was in there with the toys and stuff and I found it really hard to cope and I wasn't really staying there, I was mainly out. So that's when I got into the Project XX and I got more confident through them and it's helped me speak out and stuff. I was staying in my aunties house but obviously that wasn't suitable but again that wasn't suitable because I was pregnant with my son but I was sleeping on the floor so that's when they put me into the mother and baby unit.”

Debbie

“When I was homeless, I just had contact with the council, there was nothing then, no support just on the council list. But I never had any social work when I was homeless but a lot of dealing with social work through addiction. I was homeless during my addiction, then when I had my children I had a lot of dealing with social work because of my kids, When I look back they did try and keep my family together, they did everything they could, I

	<p>didn't think that at the time I hated her, but now when I look back she was brilliant. When I was using I hated social work I was totally against them, trying to take my kids and all that shite. Now that I am clean, I have to prove that I am not using, they test everything and I have to prove to them, and today I have a really good relationship with them.”</p> <p>“When I was homeless I was allocated and I had no problem. But when I was suffering with addiction, usually your voice, you know, this is my experience, you don't have a voice. Even if they do listen to you, you're being judged, you have gave all your power to these people, you give them all that power, they take your power and it's used against you.</p> <p>My experience of homelessness itself wasn't bad because I had fell pregnant and prioritised, that's not the right way but you know, because imagine having a baby and having no where to go, it's hard enough with a baby normally, to think I don't have anywhere to bring this child up. Imagine in the street being pregnant! What chance would that wee baby have.”</p>
13. Importance of Friends for Support	<p>Zara</p> <p>“My Mum was who I was close to but she passed away from cancer in 2015 she was the main person I was in contact with. I am not in a relationship with my father and sister, so my only support system is my friends. I don't have family I could have stayed with or things like that.”</p> <p>“I was granted a section 5 which meant I was homeless then they gave me this flat in the Calton, I can walk up to Dennistoun in 15 minutes, obviously COVID means baby groups are not on but we can meet in parks. And all the women who were in my baby groups when I explained this happened they came here and were amazing and my Mum friends helped me paint the walls, it was lovely getting all of that help from them. It was the thing that made me so happy and when I went to the interview, my worker was absolutely amazing, and asked me to explain and I told her everything and she was absolutely amazing, I think having the right person in that situation helps so much. I think she knew I needed somewhere in that area and when this came up it was perfect.”</p> <p>“A lot of emotional support but also practical they had cars so could help me move, also help me with painting then when lockdown rules kicked in we were planning on having a painting partner, but we just took it in turn, one of my friends came and took my keys and wallpapered a wall for me.</p>

We anti bateriad the keys and things. It was an amazing support system, everyone really helped out me and picked up my shopping too. They were good friends before but everyone really went above and beyond, you don't know how people will react but it was amazing how much they went out of their way. They said they would look after milly too.”

“One of my friends had experienced something similar, she had gone through the homeless process and she was quite amazing when I said to her. She said I had to go to Easterhouse and text me the phone number and at the time was a massive thing, at that point the thought of having to google things to find out. She had been through it before and got a flat from Readvale, they were fantastic. I didn't get a flat with him. They've got a low turnover because it's so close to dennistoun. But they cant do anything if they don't have anything available. I feel like if I had to find all that information out myself I would have definitely found it a struggle. There was something about having a team for North and a team for South. Looking back it was simple but at that time everything was really stressful so for my friend to be able to give me the information was great. And she came along with me to my meeting was amazing to have someone there, and they asked me if I had applied before and I was like no this is all totally new to me.”

Sharon

“ I have one friend, going back a long time, she was married when she was young, he was 2 or 3 her son, she was in a physically abusive relationship, she ended up going to refuge. I don't think her situation was as nice as mine, it was more like a hostel, sharing with lots of other people and a young child. I don't think she was there too long and she got housing, she since remarried and has a son same age as mine. She has helped me, she put me in touch with women's aid. I have another friend who's mum had gone through it so she has been through being a kid at refuge, she's helped me understand a little bit of what Caleb's going through. Also, her and her husband have helped me to get ahead around financial things, put me in touch with a lawyer, they've always been there to talk to if I needed to and her husband has been a rock and put me in touch with a lawyer who is high up and talked to me without charging me anything. Then he put me in touch with someone else and I got legal aid. So I have had quite a lot of support from friends, none from family.”

Rosie

“We (family) can't live together so that causes massive issues which is why I relied on friends. I still don't have that relationship with my family and we just get on better when we don't live in the same house so it is, it's difficult

	<p>but it's just one of those things really, so yeah I have been quite lucky but most of my female friends have experienced some level with this when they have become intentionally homeless when they had issues with partners and had to flee and then again moved and became intentionally homeless if the partners found out where they are.”</p> <p>“Yeah, when you are fleeing stuff, when I was running away from my parents I had an abusive parent when I was younger then had an abusive boyfriend and it is a cycle of abuse because that is all you know and somehow unknowingly to you you like for that person and until you deal with it you will end up in the same situation time and time again until you deal with it, change yourself and get some boundaries and realise it's not healthy and not normal and when you do get something healthy it's difficult because you don't know how to behave. You've not had a relationship that's normal, I was surrounding by a lot of alcohol and a lot of drugs and men who just wanted one thing. You either go two ways, I always ended up pulling out of that through friends but a lot of women don't have that luxury but they don't have friends like I have or family. You end up with problems because you are surrounded by people that have a really bleak existence.”</p>
14. Estranged Relationship with Family	<p>Zara “ My Mum was who I was close to but she passed away from cancer in 2015 she was the main person I was in contact with. I am not in a relationship with my father and sister, so my only support system is my friends. I don't have family I could have stayed with or things like that.”</p> <p>Sharon “No I am not in touch with family, that's been tough, I lost my Dad 4 years ago and not long after that my mum's health got bad and I lost her in May. I've got two sisters and I get grief from both of them. They say I'm not in touch and have distanced myself but they've not been in touch with me the whole time I have been going through this year. My Mum passed away and we had to sell the house, I'm a twin and my twin sister felt that I took her for granted and left her to do everything but she lived a one minute drive away from Mum's house but I live a 7 and a half hour drive away and don't have a car. It is unfortunate that this has all happened during COVID and it's all had a knock on effect and the pressure is getting to everybody now.”</p>

Anna

“Eh. It has changed, cause obviously when I was staying with my Mum my stepdad was there and due to the circumstances I didn't feel safe but obviously growing up and getting where I am then it felt more , I felt more that sense of security that I'm safe and people there are going to protect me.”

And I wondered if you have any contact with immediate family?

“I don't no.”

Kelly

“Home life was difficult, my Dad moved abroad, I didn't get on with my Mum and my Stepdad at the time and I was quite often I want to say thrown out the house, quite often I didn't have anywhere to stay so I would stay with other family members then I was getting bullied at school. I went through a traumatic event when I was 14. I don't know if you want information about that. I don't want to traumatise you. I was the victim of quite a horrific sexual assault and that led to quite a lot of problems at school so it was more to do with the bullying side of things and the instability at home that resulted in me leaving school, the final year or final two months I had moved to a school in Glasgow to sit my exams. I was staying with an alcoholic family member at the time so I wasn't able to form any bonds or do anything that would support me to stay in school which led me to leave.”

“Yeah, school for one, I approached the school and it was the same response I got from each of these organisations that I should be grateful for having a house and a family that worked and they had cars, there was a lot of families out there that didn't have anything and they seemed to neglect to take on board that I was saying my life was horrific regardless of these things I had. I couldn't be grateful for something when there was so much emotional abuse, physical abuse, it was and kind of mental abuse, I know I said emotional but so it was a case of well just forget about they things because you've got a home and a family and nice things. Again with the organisations, I wish that they would look beyond the appearance I had at the time or where I was coming from because there is always more than meets the eye. I don't know if that is just through my experiences with things that I do look beyond that. But I think if you're working in these services you need to believe what someone is saying for a start and dig a bit deeper. And I wish people had asked more questions, maybe I wasn't as forthcoming as I am now because I felt this urge to protect the people that were hurting me. For example, I used to get grounded all the time but that essentially meant being locked in my room without food and without

anything and to me that's torture and I just can't imagine doing that to my kids. There was a period it was three months the only time I could go out was when I was at school and I was scared to tell school because one I didn't want my parents to get in trouble and 2 the school wouldn't believe me anyway. It's taken me in becoming a parent to realise that was abuse. I wish they had all spoke to each other, if the school spoke to social work maybe something would be identified. Also after school when I was a young adult if services spoke to each other I might have been better supported throughout."

Rosie

"Yeah, when you are fleeing stuff, when I was running away from my parents I had an abusive parent when I was younger then had an abusive boyfriend and it is a cycle of abuse because that is all you know and somehow unknowingly to you you like for that person and until you deal with it you will end up in the same situation time and time again until you deal with it, change yourself and get some boundaries and realise it's not healthy and not normal and when you do get something healthy it's difficult because you don't know how to behave. You've not had a relationship that's normal, I was surrounded by a lot of alcohol and a lot of drugs and men who just wanted one thing. You either go two ways, I always ended up pulling out of that through friends but a lot of women don't have that luxury but they don't have friends like I have or family. You end up with problems because you are surrounded by people that have a really bleak existence."

"Yeah, it has been quite good. There have been times where, you know you'd had no one LAUGHS and times when I had to run back to my Mum and Dad with my tail between my legs and say hi I don't have anywhere else to go. We can't live together so that causes massive issues which is why I relied on friends. I still don't have that relationship with my family and we just get on better when we don't live in the same house so it is, it's difficult but it's just one of those things really, so yeah I have been quite lucky but most of my female friends have experienced some level with this when they have become intentionally homeless when they had issues with partners and had to flee and then again moved and became intentionally homeless if the partners found out where they are. How can you live somewhere where they know where you are? People don't realise that the work starts when you leave an abusive relationship and it's worse not knowing what they are doing and where they are that's why women end up speaking to their partners again. I would rather know where he is and what he is thinking rather than being ambushed in the street."

Debbie

	<p>“When I was homeless, I was that fucked up with the drugs that I didn’t have a big group of friends, it was only people I used from. The only person I was consistent with was my partner, the relationship with family had broken down so I didn’t have support to be honest at all. My saving grace was that I had fallen pregnant and then I got priority for a house, honestly, and I had been housed quickly, although the area was an area I didn’t want to put in I did quite quick.”</p> <p>Betty (Counter)</p> <p>“Mark and Gail were definitely in my side and they had seen it and were older at the time that I left so I mean mark was 17 and Gail was probably coming up for 22 em so they were really supportive like when they were coming and saying “Mum Dad has been doing this and saying oh are you going to see your Mum again” and I said “do you want me to come back?” “When he was saying that he didn’t want them coming to see me. And the house wasn’t selling and that was quite long for the kids but then I got back in the house so that was fine. But they were right at my back, I saw them every single night really until they could come and stay with me so it wasn’t so bad then, because I was meeting them every night it was only for a coffee or something at tea time. But once they could come and stay with me that was easier. I stayed at my sisters nearly every weekend too em and then Mark would come with me if he wasn’t doing anything with his friends he would come and he always came on a sunday for sunday dinner”</p>
<p>15. Workers “mitigating” the housing and homeless system for women</p>	<p>Zara</p> <p>“ I was granted a section 5 which meant I was homeless then they gave me this flat in the Calton, I can walk up to Dennistoun in 15 minutes, obviously COVID means baby groups are not on but we can meet in parks. And all the women who were in my baby groups when I explained this happened they came here and were amazing and my Mum friends helped me paint the walls, it was lovely getting all of that help from them. It was the thing that made me so happy and when I went to the interview, my worker was absolutely amazing, and asked me to explain and I told her everything and she was absolutely amazing, I think having the right person in that situation helps so much. I think she knew I needed somewhere in that area and when this came up it was perfect.”</p> <p>“My housing officer, initially not not hearing but she was just a bit like ticking boxes she was only kind of when she realised I was desperate I seen a change but she did go above and beyond to get it. Then my other housing officer was absolutely amazing. The way the system was I would</p>

have got put somewhere initially but they knew being the mother of a very small child and not being white, being ethnically different, there is nothing in place in the system to help but I feel like they did things themselves to mitigate that to keep me safe. Those measures should be there anyway.”

Sharon

“Margaret at women’s aid helped me with that (applying for benefits) and it was quite an easy and straight forward process.”

Anna

“Well I am on income support and I get that every 2 weeks but with the college course it was my key worker at YPeople so she got in contact with social work and they have paid for that because I am a care leaver so that was quite good.”

Betty

“Actually, it wasn’t even that bad I don’t think, like the girls were great, they do everything and go with you and all you’re doing is you’re going in and signing on. It wasn’t actually that long until I got that job. I was in women’s aid for about, maybe nearly, not quite a year and then they had outreach for a while, just to make sure I was okay.

They were great, I went to the first meeting and I saw a young girl, maybe your age now maybe and she was lovely and she was the one that took me to the flat and got there and got settled and gave me a big bag of shopping (laughs). But the next day Linda and Shona came, Linda was my worker but her and Shona went around together and they came and visited me and told me everything and em just sort of said what you doing what we did, they were lucky in women’s aid, Jackie was a lawyer and they said we will take you to the housing, to sign on, to see the lawyer but it won’t all happen at once because it will be too overwhelming. They were great, so it was like first go sign on, then go to the housing then I sent the lawyer.”

Kelly

“ Yeah, and that’s another thing to mention. When I was finally 16 and able to apply to the emergency council flat, they wanted all of the information so again I had to give them absolutely everything, they wanted confirmation from Say Women. I was supported by them at the time and they wanted a letter from the key worker that supported me to say how horrific things were and what I had been through and why they thought I should get emergency accommodation so again I felt quite degraded that they wanted a sob story of how bad things were for me before they were prepared to offer me anything. And the case didn’t go to court, so essentially without that letter confirming that I was engaging with support services they didn’t believe

anything that I had been through so I felt that in order for them to believe that I needed a letter detailing the level of support I was receiving and for what reason before I was then offered accommodation.”

“Like I had said, when I finally got the council flat I wasn't really meeting any of the criteria because I didn't have children, because I had been sofa surfing so they seen it as essentially well you do have somewhere to sleep. The only thing that got me that flat was the letter from Say Women because without that my application wasn't going anywhere so if I had other things that made me worthy of a flat then yes I would have got one easier and having a child would have filled that criteria but because I was on my own I wasn't hitting any of the points scoring system I think so without the letter, because it basically said she's extremely vulnerable, she's engaging with this service leaving her to sofa surf puts her at risk of further harm so without that element of risk or vulnerability there wouldn't have been anything.”

Rosie

“ But no women's aid did help me with food and stuff, my worker got me vouchers for food but until I got my white goods I couldn't live her, my women's aid worker helped me get those as quickly as they could. Obviously having someone on your team helps push things forward a bit, having someone with a title helps definitely, unless you do you're just another number, you are faceless. But you have your own story and there is a need but there are so many people in need. It's difficult and you feel you are competing with people in other situations which it shouldn't really be like that.”

“But it takes weeks to get anything from welfare which isn't great when you have nothing, the charity that I volunteer with, they were the ones that got me my bed and tried to help me with blinds and things like that, I managed to get a lot myself with working and friends but women's aid also helped me with bits and pieces. You don't realise how much money you need, a lot of the women donated things like glasses, cutlery, kitchen stuff and when I got things from welfare I donated it back. But without things like that, I would have been in here for weeks with nothing. So these charities including women's aid is really helpful, they give you someone to lean on when without them you feel like your own world will fall apart. It's nice to have your own house but when you are sitting in it and it's not liveable and nothing in it you are thinking this is just draining money off of me. So yeah to get the help from people I wouldn't be where I am and I will be internally grateful for everything they did without them I wouldn't have got through it and studying and in my house. 2 months later I am in a different place

	<p>which is because of their support, I am grateful, sometimes the systems do work. It is, knowing where to look, a lot of people don't know where to look or what is there for help.”</p> <p>Debbie (counter)</p> <p>“When I was homeless, I just had contact with the council, there was nothing then, no support just on the council list. But I never had any social work when I was homeless but a lot of dealing with social work through addiction. I was homeless during my addiction, then when I had my children I had a lot of dealing with social work because of my kids, When I look back they did try and keep my family together, they did everything they could, I didn't think that at the time I hated her, but now when I look back she was brilliant. When I was using I hated social work I was totally against them, trying to take my kids and all that shite. Now that I am clean, I have to prove that I am not using, they test everything and I have to prove to them, and today I have a really good relationship with them.”</p> <p>“The council were good, it was so many years ago, I had a good experience, it was really quick, I had a house so quickly, and the area was mental but I still had a house. It was alright though it suited me at the time. When I was homeless I was allocated and I had no problem. But when I was suffering with addiction, usually your voice, you know, this is my experience, you don't have a voice. Even if they do listen to you, you're being judged, you have gave all your power to these people, you give them all that power, they take your power and it's used against you.”</p>
<p>16.Importance of knowledge and information for pathway out of homelessness</p>	<p>Zara</p> <p>“One of my friends had experienced something similar, she had gone through the homeless process and she was quite amazing when I said to her. She said I had to go to Easterhouse and text me the phone number and at the time was a massive thing, at that point the thought of having to google things to find out. She had been through it before and got a flat from Readvale, they were fantastic I didn't get a flat with him. They've got a low turnover because it's so close to dennistoun. But they cant do anything if they don't have anything available.I feel like if I had to find all that information out myself I would have definitely found it a struggle. There was something about having a team for North and a team for South. Looking back it was simple but at that time everything was really stressful so for my friend to be able to give me the information was great. And she came along</p>

with me to my meeting was amazing to have someone there, and they asked me if I had applied before and I was like no this is all totally new to me.”

“I think it probably would have been easier to have it separate but I’m not finding it difficult to pay as I have all my money coming through but you have to make sure you pay when everything comes in but I have experience of my managing money like that. I do think though it will be a worry for many other people who would have had their housing benefit straight to the housing association and not left without money until the end of the month. As I have worked for years I am used to budgeting but it is a very small amount of money and I need to make sure everything is paid right away so I know what I have. But if you think of people coming out of the care system, young people it would be a nightmare organising it. The system is assuming you have the knowledge of how to do these things but that’s not the case for most people, the point of the benefits system is for the people who fall through the cracks. And I struggled with it and I have two degrees, and also it is usually when these things happen people are not at their best. It feels like so many things are complicated when they don’t need to be.”

Sharon

“When I was considering leaving my ex partner, I didn’t know what to do. If I knew about this I would have left years ago, I always had hanging over me, I can’t afford to move out, and he’s going to ask money from me. So there’s nothing I can do, I can’t afford private rent. So for years and years I was stuck. If I had known there was the option of Women’s Aid I would have left sooner. So if this was made more knowledgeable to people then some women would have acted sooner. If I hadn’t had spoken to my friend who told me about it then I would maybe still be there. I was at breaking point, I had to get out, but it made the process quicker for me.”

Anna

“I’ve been here for nearly 2 years I think, em , but they’re actually working towards getting me my own house outwith the project because I have been there so long and they have noticed that I have been able to maintain a flat and keep up with the fuel and stuff so I am working towards that as well.”

Betty

“To add, I think women’s aid should be more advertised in places because I don’t know if doctors suggest it. They didn’t even say to me “do you want to stay there” and it was one of the first questions women’s aid asked me “would you like to leave and stay with us” and I said “yes, of course I

	<p>would!” that was the first time someone asked me that. It took me by surprise, I didn’t expect them to ask me that, I didn’t know what they were going to do, I knew I needed help, she asked me a few things and then she said “would you like to stay with us” and I said “yeah! That would be great”. No one else considered me leaving, you have got to do that, you have got to make the move I think and em, Seamus would never have left, never, he would have just kept going and going and going definitely that is what I got to know that he was never. I said why don’t we split up and he would say what is wrong with you why do you want to split up. I said none of us are happy, you’re drinking too much. He would say I am fine everythings fine I don’t know what you are moaning about.</p> <p>But yeah I think they should have big posters advertised about women’s aid because I never see it.”</p> <p>Kelly</p> <p>“It was quite horrific looking back. I didn’t have the skills to know how to support myself really so I didn’t think I’ve got this money I need to buy food, I would just rely on food elsewhere.”</p> <p>Rosie</p> <p>“ I wasn’t reliable when I was younger, I tried to keep a job but then a party happened, I am more reliable now LAUGHS. You are trying to deal with this trauma, you don’t get help to deal with it you get a box of meds, nobody helps and you are on a counselling list for 18months to 2 years and by the time you are offered it I said I don’t need it because I have tried to work through it myself. And I think to be fair it terrified me at the thought of having a house because nobody taught me how to run a house, nobody showed me, you know like council tax, I had no idea. Now I am just at the stage were I am finding out how to run a house properly and that’s quite scary at this age and I was married. But with that relationship, my ex paid all the bills because his salary was really big and I spent all my savings in America and came back with absolutely nothing. So, it’s been difficult, it is really hard to sort of just have your own house and I think the responsibility that comes with that, you have to make sure your rent is paid and they always shout about paying your rent first but if you’re hungry you’re going to eat first.”</p>
17.Life events stopping education or employment	<p>Zara</p> <p>“37 grew up in England in Milton Keynes until I was 18 then went to uni in Scotland, Stirling, did my English degree for 4 years and been in Glasgow ever since. I have did a different range of jobs since then. I had been in a relationship with my partner, I was a stay at home Mum and before that I</p>

was doing office temping, worked for an MP too then decided to be a stay at home Mum and wasn't working when all of this happened...

English degree and I actually went back, sorry it is all over the place and I started an accelerated law degree so I did that and graduated in 2015 but didn't do the traineeship after that, so I have the law degree but nothing after, so I worked as a legal secretary and did office temp and used it too when I worked for an MP. But then after that we decided to have a child so I focused on that."

"if I wasn't a mum it would have been far easier, just thinking about yourself you are like right that's fine and if I hadn't been working I could have got work again easier but all of these doors were closed to me because I was a mother and had to rely on no funds as I made the choice to be a stay at home Mum. And having Milly was the first and foremost important thing to do."

Sharon (Counter)

"Just now my employment is fab. I got this job 2 years ago in April as a temp for a few weeks then got kept on, it just kept getting extended. They then decided they wanted to keep me on but I had to go through the whole interview process. Because it's a government job and I'm a civil servant now it's a scoring thing, so I did have to jump through all the hoops to get there So I managed to do that, finished my probation and then 2 weeks later got promoted. The team I work with are fantastic they've been great for the kind of year I have had and continued to have issues with my ex. They've been extremely understanding of all of that and I am still involved in women's aid as an aftercare facility and work have been fantastic about that as well. They've even said take an extended lunch and we will cover it. They've got mental health support workers in the office as well, my line manager is one of the mental health first aiders, he continues to support me and we are close friends as well now, I know I have him to talk to."

Anna

"The childcare one was when I was staying with my Mum and my wee brother went into hospital so it was quite hard. The hairdressing one was when my wee girl got taken from my care so again it was quite hard to concentrate. About two years ago I maybe worked in KFC but I was pregnant and the heat wasn't good for me so I had to give it up obviously to look after my son. But then the same circumstance happened with my daughter, he got taken into care, so that's why I started college courses later instead."

Kelly

"A number of years later, before that, I started an apprenticeship in business and administration when I was 16 and when that ended I went to college and then fell pregnant with my first son, it's difficult to try and piece together all of the different times. Then I took a break from studying and work while my oldest son was an infant and then I started an access to university course in 2012 and that then gave me the qualifications I needed to start my degree so I started university in 2013 and graduated in 2017."

Rosie

"Me going through DV and having to explain that to college was embarrassing, I had to take time off while my face healed because I didn't want to go to college with black eyes. I am fine now and its in court, Its kind of hard though if you lose attendance, you lost your bursary and its difficult and I said I wish I did this when I was younger when I didn't have this going on and obviously online study is difficult, its difficult to concentrate in your own house with all the distractions. I have to get up and I am looking at my house and trying to study and I am like I need to clean that and eat something, I am very distracted very easily."

Debbie

"I was at school I was expelled from school. Just kind of , I was more capable of what I done, I could have tried harder, I was too interested in carry on. I did not apply myself in school so I left with 7 standard grades and I really good pass in English, I got a credit gade and everything else was foundation. And then I went to college and I was only 16 and I went and done technology class and pharmacology course along with that and I graduated in that. I then went into work, I went to work in Halls its a factory, and I loved that I done that for 2 years, I would say that was probably the longest I have been employed is two years I enjoyed it, I really did and then I got a job with a debt collector in Edinburgh on the phone chasing people for money. Round about that time I started to take heroine and I got sacked from there for attendance and different stuff. Then that was kind of the start of my journey and I was claiming benefits from there.

In 2000 I went back to college, I did my access to nursing course in 1999 down in Falkirk and I set a higher in human biology and a higher English, in that year because I needed the 2 highers to train to be a nurse but like a say my addiction then came in. But I did pass that course, I got two higher and accepted into two different universities, I got accepted into Stirling and Mayfair Uni, I chose to go to Mayfair. I only did that for the first year, then my drug use got really bad."

<p>18. Homelessness is Frightening as a Woman</p>	<p>Zara</p> <p>“It has made me a lot more scared, with temporary accommodation I think if I was a man I would be able to go anywhere in a temporary flat but you don't know if you will be in danger and who will be there. And also the system seems to be geared more towards men and the people I spoke to were fantastic but I felt they had to go above and beyond to help me to make sure I was okay. My housing officer said I matched initially at a different flat and she swapped me for this one and said it would be better and safer, which is great but she shouldn't have to do that.</p> <p>I think it is easier for men to go through, not an easier situation it would still be horrific but less of a fear element than a woman when there is another layer is there going to be a predator, there is an added level of anxiety for women.”</p> <p>“ I didn't know how difficult the system was to navigate and having a child is terrifying in terms of being in emergency accommodation which is why I stayed living with my ex even though that was horrific. The safety element and the fear involved in being a woman in the system, who are the neighbours. I loved where I ended up but the idea of not knowing where you will end up there is a massive fear element.”</p> <p>Sharon</p> <p>“I was in a flat and it was better than I expected. The first flat we were in exceeded what I expected because it was a new build, refurbished, lovely and modern flat. Then we moved to XX and it was completely different but it was nicer, it was probably smaller a lot, the rooms were smaller and I gone from sleeping in a double bed to a single bed. But I had my own washing machine, we had internet. For an 11 year old to have the internet to play games and things was a big thing. They were really comfortable places and they tried to make it as homely as possible. I'm not going to lie I was petrified of moving, I was having anxiety attacks the week before I moved, I was physically shaking, couldn't stop crying and it was quite a traumatic experience, not one I would like to go through again. But I know now it was the best thing I ever did.”</p> <p>“Knowing that the other women in the refuge, you didn't know what levels of abuse they had been through, you feel protective over your own child and you don't know what to expect. And while I was there we had one woman kicked out because she had a fella over. Where we are now, they're all older people and pensioners. They are lovely, so warm and welcoming and friendly. It's just a nice atmosphere and really makes a difference. Just bumping into people, it's a nice feeling that you can just be relaxed. Even when I was living with my ex, I had got to the point when I was dreading</p>
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going home but to know I can come back here and not have to worry about that. It's nice to come home and I'm not on edge and I can just be me, the first time I've gotten to be me for years (cries)."

Anna

"It's alright because you're allowed to have overnights so sometimes she's out and I am in and it's fine or sometimes we're both in together. But as I said some of them keep themselves to themselves and some of them do come out and talk to you. And it's two girls and two boys that share- it's never mixed. But the activities are mixed and different age ranges too because it's 16 to 25 year olds that they deal with."

How important is it for you for it to be mixed or not?

"Yeah it's important. I find it hard to be around boys that I don't really know or like to share because in a group situation then I feel a bit more safer and stuff."

Kelly

" Like I say I had my important possessions always with me and again that terrified me some nights like the night in Buchanan street bus station I remember three youths going about looking like they were up to no good and I was terrified of being the victim of a theft or a robbery. Thankfully I wasn't but it was scary."

"I think they said they didn't accommodate women anyway at that time so they were associated with another place that would accommodate women but I was often reminded that I was likely to be a victim of further crimes if I stayed in them because the people that were there were undesirable, that's not an opinion of mine but it was what they said to me. There was a lot of men and I think given my experience, and where I think even though I lacked the support, I was terrified by men and intimidated by them given what I had been through but that never taken into consideration because I had a partner, they said well you've got a partner and he's male."

Rosie

" So I ended up in hostels and hamish allen, it was really scary, I don't have an alcohol or drug problem but I could have easily ended up with one because it was in my face all the time and other adults wanting to share the cost and I am quite strong willed but many are not. I see it on the streets, young people nothing and then weeks later on valium because they are not happy, on the streets and reality is not what they ant. I just think you know, there needs to be more of a system in Glasgow and anywhere really, these young women are vulnerable and they shouldn't be put in the places I was put. They are not safe for women, you will either have people propositioning you for sex, people trying to make you work for them for sex, people sellign

you drugs. I have seen it with young girls too who have sat on the street begging and being propositioned continually whilst I am sitting with her and having a cup of tea with her for just 30 minutes and I see that. It is scary that people think they can approach you and ask these things, they wouldn't do it in a normal situation, so why do they think they can when you are homeless, it bothers me, just trying to get money together to get what you need. It's scary when you see the young ones come in, some of them are really out of their face and you think something is going to happen to you, and you do care about them, it is just one of those things unfortunately and you can get totally lost in the system as well."

"The prettier you are in these places all the more feminine you are makes you at risk and puts you at risk, I mean you can try and dump that down and not wear make up and not do your hair but you will still be singled out because you are young and female. You are a target for so many bad things to happen to you. In the hostels I got a lot of unwanted male attention from people I would not speak to, I've never been a judgemental person but it is scary, people who are on drugs at that level are not nice and they don't think of you they just want money for the drugs you need and I totally understand that, I understand the mind of an addict and I have had similar issues of that when I was younger, I just didn't go to that level I was lucky I got out quite quickly but I seen it with friends. The hostels for me, I would try and avoid, I more went to friends and someone that would help me out, I can get a piece at anyone's door. But it is not normal, you shouldn't be able to depend on others you should be able to have your own tenancy."

"I think men are obviously, people would like to say we are equal but we are not. Certainly, I have never seen a man propositioned for sex in the town when he has been begging and I have always been cat called, women are seen as objects by men and that is just the way it is and people can disagree with that but it's true. We are at risk for the simple fact that we are women, they are bigger than us, you can be so overpowered by men and if you do try and keep yourself safe you are then worse you are called mouthy, cheeky. Men are harder, young girls shouldn't be on the street, it's not safe, there is too many people that want bad things like that and one luer you when you're desperate they'll lure you to do things you don't want to do, not because you are weak but you're stuck and you don't have a way out not another option. That's why some girls end up in prostitution or an abusive relationship when the person will say I will take you away from this and of course you go running, that's the best option you have."

19. Fleeing from Abuse

Sharon

"I felt refuge was my only option, I had looked into leaving him 3 years before and my sister advised me to talk to them about things and my options, finances because I owed a lot of money but there was no way I could even afford to save for a deposit for private rent. I had friends suggesting but I just could not afford to do it. It was a friend that mentioned why don't you go to women's aid. But I hadn't seen my relationship in that light, I knew we were going through difficulties but I thought every relationship goes through things but now looking back I see what was happening. I do feel that was my only option. I was told on a Thursday and had to move in on Monday, it was fast. Even with this place being housing association, the only way I can afford this is because my new partner gave me money to pay off my debt and when my Mum's house sells I will get inheritance and can pay him back and he knows that but without him I would be struggling to make ends meet. There was no way I could afford private rent at all."

Anna

"Eh. It has changed, cause obviously when I was staying with my Mum my stepdad was there and due to the circumstances I didn't feel safe but obviously growing up and getting where I am then it felt more , I felt more that sense of security that I'm safe and people there are going to protect me."

Betty

"Not really, my name is still on the council list, I still have no points, maybe I will get an old age pensioners house when I am like 100. I did put my name on the council, I got offered one house in this horrible horrible street which is terrible to say but it was, that's just the way it was and I knew eventually I would have to buy somewhere but at the time, it wasn't really that I was thinking of homelessness when I went into women's aid but that he had to know I was serious this time and that I wasn't coming back. My aunt Deana stayed near she was in XX and a didn't want to go over southside because my kids were here, I had to be close by. So really, I went to women's aid because, and I didn't actually know anything about going to a homeless unit. Whereas I know about it now, not even through women's aid but just through family talking about things, so you can just phone somebody and tell them you're homeless, if you're young but I can't do that. But I felt women's aid was a step in the right direction for me because I did feel that Seamus was verbally abusive, controlling, he was horrible to me, horrible horrible things he was saying to me. And it starts so slowly that you don't realise it and all of a sudden you realise "I'm not thinking about myself".

When I got out of it and I was getting better I did have a nervous breakdown, not a fully nervous breakdown, I was on anti depressants for a while. Just because I couldn't think straight. I couldn't get my brain to function, like, it wasn't me and I didn't know what was wrong with me and I was really unhappy and I took, I felt as if I couldn't get out of it. Nothing was making me feel good or anything and I thought, that's, I think with the anti depressants I did get a bit better and I started thinking I need to do something now or I will be unhappy for the rest of my life."

Kelly

"when I was 15 going through the most difficult point of my life, I was made homeless but I was told by social work that I didn't really fit the criteria for a children's home so they wouldn't place me in one and also there was a kind of threat that if I chose to sofa surf and rough sleep that they would place me in a homeless unit but it was be emergency accomodation and could have been as far away as Aberdeen. I had met my husband when I was 15 and the prospects of having that, the only stable thing in my life taken away terrified me so I went through a period of just lying to social work, I continued to rough sleep and my partner was the same age but he was in part time employment, he was a year older sorry. So he supported me a lot financially and then when I was staying with my aunt or when I was allowed to stay there rather, my mind was finding her with I think child benefit money for me. That's kind of all I got, I got help from family members until I could apply for JSA when I was about 16 so up until then it was relying on other people and then it was beneficial when I turned 16."

Rosie

"Yeah, when you are fleeing stuff, when I was running away from my parents I had an abusive parent when I was younger then had an abusive boyfriend and it is a cycle of abuse because that is all you know and somehow unknowingly to you you like for that person and until you deal with it you will end up in the same situation time and time again until you deal with it, change yourself and get some boundaries and realise it's not healthy and not normal and when you do get something healthy it's difficult because you don't know how to behave. You've not had a relationship that's normal, I was surrounding by a lot of alcohol and a lot of drugs and men who just wanted one thing. You either go two ways, I always ended up pulling out of that through friends but a lot of women don't have that luxury but they don't have friends like I have or family. You end up with problems because you are surrounded by people that have a really bleak existence."

<p>20. Women and Men Experience Homelessness Differently</p>	<p>Zara</p> <p>“It has made me a lot more scared, with temporary accommodation I think if I was a man I would be able to go anywhere in a temporary flat but you don't know if you will be in danger and who will be there. And also the system seems to be geared more towards men and the people I spoke to were fantastic but I felt they had to go above and beyond to help me to make sure I was okay. My housing officer said I matched initially at a different flat and she swapped me for this one and said it would be better and safer, which is great but she shouldn't have to do that.</p> <p>I think it is easier for men to go through, not an easier situation it would still be horrific but less of a fear element than a woman when there is another layer is there going to be a predator, there is an added level of anxiety for women.”</p> <p>“if I wasn't a mum it would have been far easier, just thinking about yourself you are like right that's fine and if I hadn't been working I could have got work again easier but all of these doors were closed to me because I was a mother and had to rely on no funds as I made the choice to be a stay at home Mum. And having Milly was the first and foremost important thing to do.”</p> <p>“I didn't know how difficult the system was to navigate and having a child is terrifying in terms of being in emergency accommodation which is why I stayed living with my ex even though that was horrific. The safety element and the fear involved in being a woman in the system, who are the neighbours. I loved where I ended up but the idea of not knowing where you will end up there is a massive fear element.”</p> <p>“It has made me a lot more scared, with temporary accommodation I think if I was a man I would be able to go anywhere in a temporary flat but you don't know if you will be in danger and who will be there. And also the system seems to be geared more towards men and the people I spoke to were fantastic but I felt they had to go above and beyond to help me to make sure I was okay. My housing officer said I matched initially at a different flat and she swapped me for this one and said it would be better and safer, which is great but she shouldn't have to do that.</p> <p>I think it is easier for men to go through, not an easier situation it would still be horrific but less of a fear element than a woman when there is another layer is there going to be a predator, there is an added level of anxiety for women.”</p> <p>Sharon</p> <p>“With guys, men being homeless, they're expected to be able to deal with it better, left to get on with it. With women, you need to be doing this, that and right for your child. In terms of women that don't have kids, I couldn't</p>
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comment if it would be easier for them than it would be for guys. I just think guys would find somewhere to stay easier than women. As a Mum, you've got that bit of extra support from the government, so there is a little bit more security knowing you will get something and there is more chance because the government know you've got a child. But if you are a single woman I don't think it would be as easy and I think they would have the same kind of struggles as a guy would, maybe more so. I think more because they are not the primary carer of a child so they don't get the same kind of rights as a woman does being a parent. So in that respect, everything goes against them, and for a lot of guys their pride would get in the way a bit and wouldn't seek the help. But women would bury their pride and do whatever they need to do to support their child."

Anna

"No, I think it's the same but some of the stuff women go through, men don't talk about it because some men are more, they've got more pride and they don't want to show what's wrong with them so they shield themselves and make it as if its different reasons so they don't get judged. I think men go to the streets more and they feel like they can't go to someone but a lassie would feel not safe on the street, God knows what would happen, but it could happen to a man as well. I think a man would just deal with it differently."

Betty

"I think men, in a way, maybe not younger men now because I am sure Gail's Martin does just as much for the kids and they both work but he does take a lot to do with the kids a lot, he takes them out and picks him up, takes him out himself, takes him out for his tea. I met him and his pals out with the prams and I was laughing so much, changed days. They all seem to take to do with their kids. Seamus didn't really, when I was pregnant with Mark he used to take Gail out on a Sunday when I was being sick and I think then he was more hands on with Gail, he would come and bathe Gail. But once we had got up here, I got up here when Mark was one month old, Seamus was working away so I don't know if that's why. He was up and down a lot. He never, after that he never really did a lot with him, I would say "come and help me with Mark" and he would say "no just you do it" and Gail was starting to get into her clubs and things and he stepped back, maybe not intentionally, but I took more to do with the kids... So I think the difference is always I had responsibility for the kids, I mean don't get me wrong some men do, my Dad took us, I know he had my Granny and Grandpa but my Dad always worked"

“Em, I think they’re probably, well maybe because they are physically stronger, I don’t know I think it could be just as bad mentally. It depends on the guy, everybodies an individual and I think men have a lot more socially that they could do before COVID, like they could go into the pub in the way home, have a pint, pass the time, get a takeaway. I mean, if you go into our local pub there are quite a lot of guys in it all the time, I don’t go in often but if you go in and I have been in a function in the bowling club and I still think its a man’s place, not a pub for everybody. It’s all men when you go in, mostly, they are trying to, the guys are trying to change it but because of covid its shut down again. I think that’s the way men have it easier, they don’t need to go home right away, I mean, you could probably nowadays go in somewhere in town nice and people won’t look at you but you are not going to go to a pub every night or even have a glass of wine every night, not me anyway. I just think, if you are going to have a glass of wine you will meet someone, a friend, go for dinner, do something, even when you were young you always met someone, you wouldn’t just drink on your own.”

Kelly

“Em, I think they’re probably, well maybe because they are physically stronger, I don’t know I think it could be just as bad mentally. It depends on the guy, everybodies an individual and I think men have a lot more socially that they could do before COVID, like they could go into the pub in the way home, have a pint, pass the time, get a takeaway. I mean, if you go into our local pub there are quite a lot of guys in it all the time, I don’t go in often but if you go in and I have been in a function in the bowling club and I still think its a man’s place, not a pub for everybody. It’s all men when you go in, mostly, they are trying to, the guys are trying to change it but because of covid its shut down again. I think that’s the way men have it easier, they don’t need to go home right away. So I think men and women have it harder for different reasons and easier for different reasons but I think men can have it just as bad depending on who they are, where they are and what has happened, some men will miss their kids and there are some horrible women out there, there is and that’s just the way of the world.”

“I think it’s more accessible in terms of services as a lot of services out there are for men or utilised more by men, I don’t think it’s the same, and this is just all my opinion but I just feel like there’s not the same element of judgement towards men as there is to women. The impression I got when I attended (service) and my partner was there was that these aren’t places that are safe for women and my response to that would be well make them safe then. I think they should just be made to be safe for anyone, however on that note, my husband was encouraged away from it because of his ethnicity and it did appear to be predominantly white males that were

	<p>accessing the services. I just think they are more accessible to males and there is not the same criteria applied to men as there is to women but that's just how I felt about the situation.”</p> <p>Rosie “I think men are obviously, people would like to say we are equal but we are not. Certainly, I have never seen a man propositioned for sex in the town when he has been begging and I have always been cat called, women are seen as objects by men and that is just the way it is and people can disagree with that but it's true. We are at risk for the simple fact that we are women, they are bigger than us, you can be so overpowered by men and if you do try and keep yourself safe you are then worse you are called mouthy, cheeky. Men are hardier, young girls shouldn't be on the street, it's not safe, there is too many people that want bad things like that and one luer you when you're desperate they'll lure you to do things you don't want to do, not because you are weak but you're stuck and you don't have a way out not another option. That's why some girls end up in prostitution or an abusive relationship when the person will say I will take you away from this and of course you go running, that's the best option you have.”</p> <p>Debbie “I think, in my experience, it was easier for me to be housed than if I was a man, my opinion is it is harder for a man to be housed because I see men, young guys being missed in the system and it's worrying. I don't think for me it was as bad, men seem to get it worse than women. Nowadays you are waiting years and years because no council houses with cuts and see all the young guys that are addicts and they have nowhere to go. It's generally younger guys, it's not older people. You don't get old junkies, people don't survive it, they don't survive it.”</p>
21. A home is more than “bricks and water”	<p>Zara “Security, before I was in a relationship with my partner I rented a lot of places and moved around loads and loads. But even that is security as when you sign the lease you have it, my home, I can have stuff, somewhere to relax. I found when he ended the relationship and put my homeless application in it was a strange period of being in a home that was a home but now wasn't. I had no idea about anything, it was a new situation, lack of security and lack of autonomy in a way and the ball was not in my court when he ended the relationship.”</p> <p>“They said there would have been the option for temporary accommodation but I just wasn't sure and I didnt have money to take public transport so the</p>

best thing for my daughter for no upheaval was as awkward as it was sleeping in her room and taking her to classes. So it seemed like that was best for her even though it was a horrible situation looking back even though for me it would have been the best to take a temporary flat anywhere and not in the same environment. Keeping her in a routine and being able to stay with her friends was her best. It was really really horrible though, really horrible, when home stops being that place of security, are they going to be in, can you relax, are they not in, when you here the key in the door and they are back you cant relax. It was a really hard time.”

“Security, before I was in a relationship with my partner I rented a lot of places and moved around loads and loads. But even that is security as when you sign the lease you have it, my home, I can have stuff, somewhere to relax. I found when he ended the relationship and put my homeless application in it was a strange period of being in a home that was a home but now wasn't. I had no idea about anything, it was a new situation, lack of security and lack of autonomy in a way and the ball was not in my court when he ended the relationship.”

Sharon

“Stability, I can't even put it into words really. It means a lot, I feel more secure, I feel that my son is a lot happier because when we were in the refuge obviously given the type of the accommodation he couldn't see his friends there but now he has the freedom to bring his friends home from school, go out and meet up with them, go to his dads if he feels like it. I can't even put into words how amazing it feels for me. Don't get me wrong my friends are important to me as well but my focus has always been my son and his happiness, I'm a grown up, I can make due. And we have been through all of the changes this year and losing his Gran as well, its not been easy for him and I've just tried to get things as normal as possible for him and have this and say look this is your home.”

“Secure in the fact that I know I'm far enough away from his Dad, he knows where we live, wasn't my choice to tell him but he didnt leave me much choice, he used my son against me to get the address out of me but its a secure entry downstairs, I've got a spyhole in my door, a lock, a chain, all of that adds to my wellbeing and makes me feel relaxed. And also to be able to say you can't come in. I know at a point he can still get in if someone comes out downstairs but I still won't let him in fully. To have that and be that far away and not worry about bumping into him, even when I've went to the shops I've not bumped into him, so I am a lot more relaxed than I used to be at the beginning of the year.”

“Where we are now, they’re all older people and pensioners. They are lovely, so warm and welcoming and friendly. It’s just a nice atmosphere and really makes a difference. Just bumping into people, it’s a nice feeling that you can just be relaxed. Even when I was living with my ex, I had got to the point when I was dreading going home but to know I can come back here and not have to worry about that. It’s nice to come home and I’m not on edge and I can just be me, the first time I’ve gotten to be me for years (cries).”

Anna

“Security and warmth. Yeah, cause obviously you’re not out in the cold and you can go back and be safe when you’re in the house. It has changed, cause obviously when I was staying with my Mum my stepdad was there and due to the circumstances I didn’t feel safe but obviously growing up and getting where I am then it felt more , I felt more that sense of security that I’m safe and people there are going to protect me.”

Betty

“But I felt women’s aid was a step in the right direction for me because I did feel that Seamus was verbally abusive, controlling, he was horrible to me, horrible horrible things he was saying to me. And it starts so slowly that you don’t realise it and all of a sudden you realise “I’m not thinking about myself”

“Family, really, having the kids round and things like that, and that’s what I missed. I used to meet the kids every night somewhere first at WA. They weren’t allowed to come to the house at first, WA have got to get to know you. They eventually did come to the house and stay over. They came and met Mark and then said that they had meetings and he could come and stay over night so that was great. Because at the beginning that was awful, really awful. And they went through a really hard time, I said do you want me to come back. They said “don’t come back Mum, we will get through this”. So they were a great support as well, so yeah I really think home is your family and love, and your family.”

“That was definitely the hardest thing leaving my permanent home, the rest is all bricks and water, I missed them so so much. When I used to meet them for a coffee in the beginning I used to scream all the way back holding onto the steering wheel and I don’t know how I did it but that’s where it all came out and I got back to the house and it was fine- I couldn’t scream in their but I could scream in the car. But that doesn’t last, it got easier, I could have them over night, could watch the telly together and do the normal things, cook them dinner.”

Kelly

“For me, somewhere you are safe, comfortable and somewhere where you have got necessities or access to necessities and for me now, previously it wouldn’t have been family but now with my own family it would be somewhere where you have got family support around you.”

“Growing up I was never was able to walk to school so I can’t believe that my sons will always be able to walk to school they’ve got friends in the area they stay in. My son is going to be 9 next week, apart from we moved out the flat since he was 6 months old but this has been his home since birth and it feels really surreal that he has got somewhere that is home to him, even if there is things that still bother me. I have given him place that has security and stability.”

Rosie

“Just that it is mine, its safe place, it’s my house, my name that is on it, my safe place, especially after what has just happened I mean for me to lock my door and feel secure and safe in my home with my things and the way I want it to look nobody can tell me I don’t like that, nobody can tell me to not do something, I can listen to music, I can watch tv. It’s not the biggest of houses but it’s mine. It is just security that nobody can take it from me, it’s my responsibility to keep it and have it the way I want. I think it will be a constant working process to get it the way I want it to look it’s just a bit of security. As a young woman as well to just shut your door and not be bothered by anyone and have somewhere safe where I could go that is just me and people can only come here if they are invited whereas if you stay with friends there are maybe people that you don’t like that are still being brought around you because it is not your home but here I don’t want anyone over. I am a little bit of a loner now these days, I like my own company and I don’t feel the need to be with someone the whole time, after the domestic violence I just wanted some time to be myself. Domestic violence destroys your idea of yourself and your self esteem someone has told you you are bad or this or that. My ex was narcissistic and a bad person and gas lighty. It is my time, my home, time for me to build and be who I want and be what I am doing, it is huge for me I cried when I got the keys for here. Everything that is in it I got through friends or help I have been really lucky, I have painted it all myself. It is, it is the first time I have felt secure to have all my things in the one place that is not my parents. Because even in care I was always worried about things getting stolen and taken, and hostels and people’s houses I didn’t take anything valuable with me. But there, it is mine, it is just nice.”

	<p>Debbie</p> <p>“Having a home to me means to be able to be safe, everybody has the right to feel safe and secure. I can’t imagine, now, how it is for people coming in and they don’t know where they’re going to live the next night. My experience of homelessness, years ago, I wouldn’t say it was as traumatic as how it is today. Everybody should have a place that they can call home. It is much worse these days than it was.”</p>
<p>22. Location as more important than the house</p>	<p>Zara</p> <p>“I knew that was the case when going to apply, and I explained to the housing officer “I don’t have a family but I’ve been taking my daughter to the baby groups for a couple of months but I would consider the mum’s I have as my support system there but they are all in Dennistoun, as long as I can be there, even if I have to walk I don’t care”. But my housing officer said something like “well you don’t get to choose, you could end up in a high rise” and I said something like “I don’t care I’d love a high rise if it is one that I can walk to get access to say the same people”. But I don’t know whether they get people that request anything but I think they don’t like the idea of people requested anything.”</p> <p>“Yes, definitely and for me because I don’t drive, if I was somewhere far away from the toddler groups, I would be willing to take public transport but there’s a cost for that. But I knew there weren’t council houses in Dennistoun but she’s been friends with the same babies since she was a few months old, as well as having her parents split and going between two houses she would have to deal with that too. After I explained that to the housing officers she was really good, because you are in a bad position and vulnerable at that time so it was probably a lot to do with how I was feeling at the time. I was granted a section 5 which meant I was homeless then they gave me this flat in Calton, I can walk up to Dennistoun in 15 minutes, obviously COVID means baby groups are not on but we can meet in parks.”</p> <p>Sharon</p> <p>“Knowing that the other women in the refuge, you didn’t know what levels of abuse they had been through, you feel protective over your own child and you don’t know what to expect. And while I was there we had one woman kicked out because she had a fella over. Where we are now, they’re all older people and pensioners. They are lovely, so warm and welcoming and friendly. It’s just a nice atmosphere and really makes a difference. Just bumping into people, it’s a nice feeling that you can just be relaxed.</p>

I mean I was told I didn't have to move in straight away but because of where we were placed in women's aid compared to where my sons school was, the flat was a 2 min walk from school I thought I just wanted to move so it was better for my son. He's got his friends, his Dad. For the first 2 weeks we didn't have a cooker or freezer I borrowed a microwave and coolbox."

"It was good in the refuge, we were in two different refuges, first one was quite far from my son and my friends, not miles but 45 minutes to an hour with transport so hard for school and things, took a lot of time out of the day and time together quality and to relax but the facilities were fantastic.

I feel that my son is a lot happier because when we were in the refuge obviously given the type of the accommodation he couldn't see his friends there but now he has the freedom to bring his friends home from school, go out and meet up with them, go to his dads if he feels like it. I can't even put into words how amazing it feels for me. Don't get me wrong my friends are important to me as well but my focus has always been my son and his happiness, I'm a grown up, I can make due. And we have been through all of the changes this year and losing his Gran as well, it's not been easy for him and I've just tried to get things as normal as possible for him and have this and say look this is your home."

Betty

"I am in the area I wanted, my friends are here, my daughter is just down the road and I liked being here, I like where I live and that's what women's aid said but he's around. I said that doesn't bother me because he is not going to be in my face, and then eventually he moved away. And this area is where he came from and I came from the South side but we moved up from London and I liked it here and I had a social network.

I did put my name on the council, I got offered one house in this horrible horrible street which is terrible to say but it was, that's just the way it was and I knew eventually I would have to buy somewhere but at the time, it wasn't really that I was thinking of homelessness when I went into women's aid but that he had to know I was serious this time and that I wasn't coming back. My aunt Deana stayed near she was in XX and a didn't want to go over southside because my kids were here, I had to be close by. So really, I went to women's aid because, and I didn't actually know anything about going to a homeless unit."

"Mainly because of where it was, I didn't feel safe in it. It was all these closes when you went in the close it was like garbage all over the place and bits of stuff lying in the garden. You could walk 5 minutes down the road and it was okay but there wasn't. When we went into the flat the flat stunk and it was just like up this close that didn't feel nice to me, I didn't feel nice,

I didn't feel that I wanted to be there and when you came out I walked round after it, and I had the dog with me. The first thing she said to me was "you can't bring the dog here, you're not allowed" and I thought "why are you so horrible to me". And I saw other dogs on people's balconies. So then I took a walk around and there was so much rubbish and it was depressing, it didn't look nice. And down the bottom of the road some of the closes were beautiful, the gardens were beautiful. So it just didn't feel nice, really, to me. If it had been down the road with a nice garden with no rubbish it would have been fine and probably near nice people. And that was all the ever offered me. But I suppose I didn't push it, I did sign the letter and said keep my name on the list but they won't offer me because they know I have this but I keep my name on the list."

Kelly

" when I was 15 going through the most difficult point of my life, I was made homeless but I was told by social work that I didn't really fit the criteria for a children's home so they wouldn't place me in one and also there was a kind of threat that if I chose to sofa surf and rough sleep that they would place me in a homeless unit but it was be emergency accomodation and could have been as far away as Aberdeen. I had met my husband when I was 15 and the prospects of having that, the only stable thing in my life taken away terrified me so I went through a period of just lying to social work, I continued to rough sleep and my partner was the same age but he was in part time employment, he was a year older sorry. So he supported me a lot financially and then when I was staying with my aunt or when I was allowed to stay there rather, my mind was finding her with I think child benefit money for me. That's kind of all I got, I got help from family members until I could apply for JSA when I was about 16 so up until then it was relying on other people and then it was beneficial when I turned 16. So they would have put me up in emergency accomodation and because I was still under 16 at the time it would have been a children's unit and they were quite reluctant to do that because I hadn't been in trouble up until that point. I was quite vulnerable and they just didn't think I met the criteria for people in a children's home. They did threaten me with if you refuse to go down this route and return home then it would be Aberdeen they mentioned that where I would be going. So after that I ended up staying with a friend's Mum and she put me up for that time.

It eventually did come to light and they were happy with it for a while but then didn't like the fact that I was in a relationship and again it was the threat of if you don't return home or your aunts, my mums sister then it would be a case of putting me into a children's home so it was just bidding time. I was very close to 16 at that point so I managed, social work were

	<p>under the impression that I did return to my aunts house where in fact I had been rough sleeping and sofa surfing.”</p> <p>“It was in the area I had chosen, I didn’t really like the high rise aspect of it because I felt quite claustrophobic, I felt stuck in this tower, I mean it ended up being okay because it was opposite where my grandparents had stayed and I stayed with them a couple of times throughout my adolescents so I knew that eventually I was somewhere that I had my own place and I still had and I had restarted the relationship with family so I knew they were nearby. The tower block itself wasn’t actually too bad, it was mostly elderly people that were placed in them so I kind of felt safe in that aspect. There were a few streets around that I didn’t feel safe at all but I was told since it was emergency accommodation I couldn’t reject it anyway so it just wasn’t the most comforting or secure place.”</p> <p>Rosie</p> <p>“Em, I just picked here, I knew the area quite well and I picked here because it was quite far away from where my ex lives and quite far away from people I knew but nobody expected me to be over here. I have family in Paisley and Renfrew which is only 15 mins away but I grew up over here, this is where I first was and had friends from so I know the area quite well but nobody expected me to come back here. I wanted to go somewhere where nobody knew me and have a quiet life. My ex has no reason to be over in this area which is another reason I picked it.”</p> <p>“I’m the only girl in my close and there are lots of guys which could be intimidating but they are all nice. I’m the top floor so if my ex ever came and bothered me I do feel quite safe if anyone came and tried to get past before he got to me.”</p> <p>“ How can you live somewhere where they know where you are? People don’t realise that the work starts when you leave an abusive relationship and it’s worse not knowing what they are doing and where they are that’s why women end up speaking to their partners again. I would rather know where he is and what he is thinking rather than being ambushed in the street.”</p>
23. The hard work starts after homelessness	<p>Zara</p> <p>“I put my application in on the 1st of January but got my keys March 12th so the 12th of April by the time I got painting done, I didn’t have a budget for furniture so friends arranged transport, so 13th of April when I properly</p>

moved in. So once I had keys I would sleep on the sofa whenever I could just to be away when he was around a lot and he would be with Milly but I still didn't have carpets so 14th of April it was properly habitable so it was quite a long time."

Sharon

"So I never really did anything about it, I feel like I would have had a lot of financial support but I didn't know anything about it. When I moved in there was a fitted kitchen and that was it. I wasn't prepared for it really, I don't expect, I'm not one of getting brand new stuff anyway, I don't mind that but yeah I could have been a bit more prepared."

Betty

"Mainly because of where it was, I didn't feel safe in it. It was all these closes when you went in the close it was like garbage all over the place and bits of stuff lying in the garden. You could walk 5 minutes down the road and it was okay but there wasn't. When we went into the flat the flat stunk and it was just like up this close that didn't feel nice to me, I didn't feel nice, I didn't feel that I wanted to be there and when you came out I walked round after it, and I had the dog with me. The first thing she said to me was "you can't bring the dog here, you're not allowed" and I thought "why are you so horrible to me". And I saw other dogs in people's balconies. So then I took a walk around and there was so much rubbish and it was depressing, it didn't look nice. And down the bottom of the road some of the closes were beautiful, the gardens were beautiful. So it just didn't feel nice, really, to me. If it had been down the road with a nice garden with no rubbish it would have been fine and probably near nice people. And that was all the ever offered me. But I suppose I didn't push it, I did sign the letter and said keep my name on the list but they won't offer me because they know I have this but I keep my name on the list."

Kelly

"It was a mess I remember viewing it and saying I didn't want it because I had never stayed somewhere that was in such bad condition it looked like people had ripped wallpaper off the walls, there was no flooring or anything I think flooring has to be removed from council flats for health and safety reasons but it was horrible and although I was desperate at the same time I tend to compare a lot of things to my life growing up and I say we stayed in a new build house, I had never really experienced conditions like that and I do recall saying I didn't want it but because it was emergency accommodation you come off the list so I did accept it but I wasn't entitled to any funding to help get it to a nice condition so I wouldn't even call it liveable, I wouldn't put someone in it. It had water it had the necessities but

	<p>the appearance of it, it wasn't a home and I don't think anything I could of done within my own remit could have made it a home."</p> <p>Rosie "It is kind of scary, you just get no help, and if you can't make the deposit and if you can't make the deposit and you have to fill a house. I mean I got keys for this property in september and I didn't move in until the middle of october, I was paying rent whilst sofa surfing until I could get money to get things in it so that it is liveable for me. It is liveable now. A lot of people think once you get keys for a house you are not homeless anymore, you have then got to find the money for gas and electrics then your white goods, then money for food, then have the money to heat your house, especially at this time of year, buy the things to cook with, buy the things to sleep in, it is, it takes time. I am really lucky I get a lot of help from the charity I used to be with, without them I wouldn't have got my bed or the van to take things to. I couldn't have lived here, I am still at college, still working, then because of COVID I lost my job, I am on furlough but its not my wage I would be getting and I am zero hour. It is really difficult and people think when you get your house all your problems are solved but its not its a whole new chapter, it is difficult."</p> <p>" I could pay full rent, I can pay my full way, it's not like I am on benefits but nobody would help me and its quite sad that it took a domestic violence situation for me to get help. My worker fought my corner and said she deserved her own tenancy and her own home. Keeping the tenancy is just as hard work as getting it really!"</p> <p>"And for me, I normally eat work, so being off, that's kind of, I've kind of had to be a bit more sensible and thrifty with money, it is, it is difficult having your own and living on your own, you are responsible for everything. At least I don't have to pay council tax which helps massively, makes a massive difference but it can be quite scary like you have to choose between paying my rent and not getting into arrears or not eating this week"</p>
24. Not Looking Broken Enough	<p>Zara "My housing officer, initially not not hearing but she was just a bit like ticking boxes she was only kind of when she realised I was desperate I seen a change but she did go above and beyond to get it. Then my other housing officer was absolutely amazing"</p> <p>Sharon "A lot of people that knew me and my ex would have just seen us as a happy couple as you put that facade on but behind closed doors its a</p>

different story. A lot of people see it as a shock, one minute I live with him and we are pretending to be a happy family and the other I am in a women's refuge. I had his Mum on the phone who said "what did he do, did he even lift his hands to you?" and I said "it doesn't have to be physical abuse". But she will never understand that."

Betty

"And a lot of women are a lot worse off for me, like physically abused, I was never physically abused, sometimes I used to think just hit me and I will get the police. But never, it was all that picking away at your confidence and telling you you don't look nice. I think I used to think if there was physical I would have proof but he was always nice in front of everyone to a certain point."

"I think a lot of people can't believe it. They can't believe that you've used women's aid. What they think who use women's aid is somebody that doesn't have any money, doesn't have anything, doesn't have anybody on back up. And that's not true, we have had different women from different sectors of life."

"I think some women look down on it and they shouldn't. I talk about it all the time saying how great it is and how much they look after women. But I don't think, I don't think certain women, if they're more better off or something but they don't really, they think its people that come from like no money, a council estate and its not, anybody can use it and I think sometimes you don't know what goes on behind closed doors."

Kelly

"The home we stayed in with Mum was in a new build area, not a kind of wealthy area but social work became involved and it was a case of that you should appreciate what you have, you don't belong in a children's home. Because I was doing well in school, that's where I feel I slipped through the net, my home life was horrendous, most times I didn't have anywhere to stay yet social work were saying you should be grateful for this."

"Honestly I think it was quite degrading. I remember attending at the job centre, I have always, like I am very self conscious so I am always conscious about my appearance and I always put make up on. They said I didn't look like someone who was struggling, I was told to come back having not washed my hair and look a bit scruffy.

So you were to look worse to get money?

Yeah, I had to look like I needed it and apparently being presentable didn't fit the remit of getting it (money)."

"I think more so being asked to look not presentable, you know you are asked to detail everything, like why you are not in employment and I think for me I was quite private at the time and I didn't want to tell them my home circumstances and putting that out there for someone to scrutinise, I found that really degrading and I just don't think you were supported to get money, it was the case of, there's other things out there other than benefits which was true but at the time I was just trying to survive and didn't need the lecture from anyone about what other options I had.

You were young, did that have any impact on that experience?

Massive, yeah. Massive, I think my age, the fact that I was a female and add that to the fact that I did appear presentable, I hadn't been involved in like any crime at that point, for them, there was no reason why I should need any additional support from anywhere."

"I remember going there when I had just turned 16 to try and get, just to give you context: I had applied to the council for housing for a council house but because I hadn't registered homeless they couldn't put me on emergency accommodation list so I presented at hamish allen centre. I always had my belongings with me and I remember quite well, I had a pair of GHD straighteners and I had a wee rucksack with everything and I suppose they were luxury items but they were mines and I remember going there and they refused to accommodate me because I didn't fit the clientele. She said if I stayed there that night my possessions would be stolen because nobody had luxury items like that and I was almost laughed out of the place, like I can't believe you have come here with a paid of GHDs in your bag but to me that's all I had. I appreciate now looking back how it might have looked but I was a very naive 16 year old so and then my husband was with me at the time as well and he had elected to make himself homeless because he didn't want me sleeping on the streets myself and then the housing officer who was meeting with us phoned his parents to clarify he was homeless and didn't have anywhere to stay. So it was barbaric really, his parents said he could return but not with me so that again was being rejected, the two of us for the emergency accommodation and I think it was that night that we slept in either govanhill park or buchanan street bus station I can't remember, it was one of the two."

"Yeah, school for one, I approached the school and it was the same response I got from each of these organisations that I should be grateful for having a house and a family that worked and they had cars, there was a lot of families out there that didn't have anything and they seemed to neglect to take on board that I was saying my life was horrific regardless of these

things I had. I couldn't be grateful for something when there was so much emotional abuse, physical abuse, it was and kind of mental abuse, I know I said emotional but so it was a case of well just forget about they things because you've got a home and a family and nice things. Again with the organisations, I wish that they would look beyond the appearance I had at the time or where I was coming from because there is always more than meets the eye. I don't know if that is just through my experiences with things that I do look beyond that. But I think if you're working in these services you need to believe what someone is saying for a start and dig a bit deeper. And I wish people had asked more questions, maybe I wasn't as fourth coming as I am now because I felt this urge to protect the people that were hurting me. For example, I used to get grounded all the time but that essentially meant being locked in my room without food and without anything and to me that's torture and I just can't imagine doing that to my kids. There was a period it was three months the only time I could go out was when I was at school and I was scared to tell school because one I didn't want my parents to get in trouble and 2 the school wouldn't believe me anyway. It's taken me in becoming a parent to realise that was abuse. I wish they had all spoke to each other, if the school spoke to social work maybe something would be identified. Also after school when I was a young adult if services spoke to each other I might have been better supported throughout."

"I don't know what the word is, I think you are very judged and it is only this year that I started using the terminology that I was homeless because I think it's associated with like drug addicts, people that have been involved in crime because a few times I have said it this year and people have had the response "you dont look like you've ever been homeless" and I don't know what that means, what does someone that has been homeless look like or act like. I don't know what the word is I'm trying to find but there is a huge element of judgement especially for women it is that bit worse, women are supposed to be home makers, be able to sustain things, going on the reaction that I had from people when I decided this year to stop hiding from my past is almost like they expect people that are the lower class of society to have been the people that are homeless and because I don't fit that, I have a job and stability now, it's almost like you don't look like that, you don't look broken enough."

"Through my own experience I do look beyond somebody's presentation and beyond the bigger picture. One thing I was going to mention was disguise compliance, where families, social work, there is often an element of disguise compliance where social work try to engage with someone and the families appear to be engaging so then the person actually needs help

goes unnoticed because of disguise compliance and it looks like the families are supporting and engaging but they are not in reality. I think that's what happened to me like my Mum and Dad were quite happy to have social work and come to meetings so social work listened to them, I was bad, I was doing all these things wrong but social work should have asked what's going on here and why is she doing all these things. And I think that's something I am trying to feedback to the advisory board now and they are approaching a number of housing associations and that should be incorporated into it, these people aren't just got themselves into this situation, what has happened that has led to this and what can be done to help them move on from it, not a case where they've got this they've got that, we have given them a house and they should just accept that it's their house. There are so much more things that need to be considered."

Rosie

"Domestic abuse is such a traumatic thing, you don't want to wear it like a badge but you feel like you almost have to to get what you need and to be okay. It is not nice, no one wants to be classed as a victim, no one wants to have that stigma."

"I struggled for years I either had a job and couldn't afford a flat or find one then I got the flat and I didn't have a job, you are stuck between a rock and a hard place and you are trying everything and you work all these casual jobs and they are cash in hand and not reliable and you are trying to get a house but you don't have money or contracts to prove. There is no help until you go through something traumatic, you won't get any help otherwise."

Finding Possible Themes and Sub Themes

Survival within Neoliberal Capitalism

1. Welfare System as unsupportive and degrading
2. Neoliberal Labour Market Struggles
3. Blame and Self Acceptance

Navigating your pathway out of Homelessness as a Woman

1. Avoiding "big hostels"
2. Fleeing and Frightening
3. An important small support system *workers, friends, family, partners*
4. Not looking broken enough

A Home is more than "Bricks and Water"

1. The hard work begins after homelessness

2. The True Meaning of a Home

Possible Themes and Sub Themes	Coded Data
<p>Unsupportive and Degrading Welfare</p>	<p>Debbie “Universal Credit is an absolute nightmare, absolute nightmare, how can people that have not got access to computers and they get sanctions but personally I haven’t had problems but the difference between 15 and 16 years ago today is quite insane. Also, working in the hub, my kids aren’t in my care but when I had my three kids living with me I was able to claim child tax credits for 3 and now apparently it’s only 2 youngest so that in itself is cutting money and for essentials”</p> <p>Zara “It wasn’t too difficult to put in the claim but the wait was really difficult, I had 6 weeks before any decision was made. For me, my partner ended the relationship on 27th of December and said I need you out of here and I knew then I would have to declare as homeless. So he was going to be away or there and I would be at my daughters. So he would be asking me to buy food, I couldn’t just go buy anything. He would say give me a list of what Milly needs but not me, I ended up borrowing money from friends, it was a massive struggle, because I don’t have family either I found it really hard. So I don’t think there’s enough in place for that situation. I know there has to be checks in place for handing money out but even when the amount came through it wasn’t the biggest amount but it was something I could buy food.”</p> <p>Rosie “So I get 100 pound a week from them, then I get a through care bursary which is a little higher bursary and I can pay my rent. I am still not left with a lot, but it pays my rent and I don’t have to worry about that at least. I had been on the brew, periodically, but I can’t live on that amount of money so I had always tried to get work quite quickly, just because, I have used foodbanks, I have used the charity that I volunteer with, they helped me which is why I started volunteering, I actually started volunteering before my domestic violence had happened, I had donated some stuff to them. But then, yeah, so I had been on the foodbanks, used a couple of places in the east end when they do the pantry where you get 15 quid stuff for 2.50, especially during this I have been very reliant, a lot of my friends in hospitality are in the same boat, there are a lot of people using</p>

the service who aren't homeless but can't afford to heat and eat. So people think that homelessness ends when you get a property but it doesn't there are so many other things."

" I could pay full rent, I can pay my full way, it's not like I am on benefits but nobody would help me and its quite sad that it took a domestic violence situation for me to get help. My worker fought my corner and said she deserved her own tenancy and her own home. Keeping the tenancy is just as hard work as getting it really!"

"Yeah, I was on ESA for 2 years but obviously you have to go for medicals with someone who isn't a doctor and you have to jump through all the hoops and I am like if I could work I would be working right now so you have to go through why you are not fit to work which destroys your mental health. Again, I was sofa surfing, staying at friends house, I was basically living out of a bag until this house. My belongings were at my parents where they were safe. This is the first time since before I went into care that I have had more than one suitcase full of stuff. So it is kind of nice to have a house that I have actual stuff in, it has taken a long time."

Kelly

"Honestly I think it was quite degrading. I remember attending the job centre, I have always, like I am very self conscious so I am always conscious about my appearance and I always put makeup on. They said I didn't look like someone who was struggling, I was told to come back having not washed my hair and look a bit scruffy. I had to look like I needed it and apparently being presentable didn't fit the remit of getting it (money)."

"So there was quite extensive job applications and then courses where they would say I had to do them in order to get the money, but I think it was eventually stopped because I ended up, there was quite a period of time I was going back to my aunts house who was an alcoholic and it was difficult getting from one place to the next unless I had that bus ticket, so it was difficult securing employment and any courses and sustaining it until I got the SVQ role."

"Later on down the line when I fell pregnant with my son, I had to quit college, I was no longer earning, I was on JSA, I was pregnant so I wasn't getting any jobs, I know they are not allowed to discriminate but when they have someone turning up to the interview with a massive bump I think it's obvious someone has better skills than you. So I found that humiliating you are applying for jobs, doing your best but you know

	<p>someone else is going to get the job. I was also 17 when I was pregnant so there is a huge judgement that comes with that and also I was really young I suffered from something called hyperemesis but the job centre deemed me fit to work so I wasn't entitled to sickness allowance, I had to actively apply for jobs right up until I had my son."</p> <p>"I think more so being asked to look not presentable, you know you are asked to detail everything, like why you are not in employment and I think for me I was quite private at the time and I didn't want to tell them my home circumstances and putting that out there for someone to scrutinise, I found that really degrading and I just don't think you were supported to get money, it was the case of, there's other things out there other than benefits which was true but at the time I was just trying to survive and didn't need the lecture from anyone about what other options I had.</p> <p>Debbie "Is this confidential?"</p>
<p>Finding your place within a Neoliberal Labour Market</p>	<p>Zara "In retail I was on a zero hour contract, not manager role but in store. I was in the job for 2 years but come december you would work every hour there was because you needed it but then January it was cut right down so you would struggle, others had parental support but I didn't and even a limited social life was a massive struggle. At Christmas you would have a big wage then the next month they would have absolutely nothing. So you would get a big wage then get cut and have nothing, so that was insecure. Also office temping was a temping role but long term and came down to the least 2 for permanent positions but almost got them then didn't. Then I decided to go back and do legal secretary then in the meantime while applying I did office temping so admin temping when I fell pregnant, there always seems to be work but it was just insecure, you didn't know and when doing temping roles you are quite tired to do applications in the evening too. And you are not even on anything big but you have guilt for the next month of oh I shouldn't have bought that or done that because I have no money now. There was no opportunity to make it permanent because they liked me but I was covering for a permanent person."</p> <p>Sharon "I got this job 2 years ago in April as a temp for a few weeks then got kept on, it just kept getting extended. They then decided they wanted to keep</p>

me on but I had to go through the whole interview process. Because it's a government job and I'm a civil servant now it's a scoring thing, so I did have to jump through all the hoops to get there"

"Well actually last year I got made redundant but I didn't think it was insecure, I was working in an accounts office. I really felt, especially my age, I was 68 LAUGHS, and they said, he had always said, when I first went to work for Bradley I thought he was one of the nicest guys you could ever meet he was always nice to people. I was going out the door and he said can I have a word with you and I thought I've done something, have I missed something, have I forgot something and he said I'm really sorry to tell you but we are making you redundant and I nearly fell off the chair I said what! And he said yeah with this new system what I'm going to do it, the accounts people, the accountants, the four of them they are going to take on the admin for their clients and if I give them a new client they'll just put them onto the system, the system will send them a letter. And I said, okay that's fine, but I felt like the feet had been taken away from me and I thought what am I going to do. I needed a job I needed the money."

" I'm now going part time on January 4th and Im going to do a wee bit longer hours but instead of working 35 hours I will be working 21 hours a week and 3 days one week and 2 days the next so I can spend time with my Dad and look after my Grandson, so Ill be a bit skint but lives to short and I want to look after my Grandson. So actually when I look back on it now , he did me the best favour ever, I don't think Bradley would have let me did that. And its secure, as long as I want to be there, they will keep me there, not that I do want to work until I am 90, but if I do want to work until I am 90 then there will be a job there. And I do think you should have thought of this years ago!"

Kelly

"And I just think it would be good for me to be able to approach people who were in a situation and try and set them on a different trajectory. I don't know if your experience would be similar in the sense, I have tried to secure employment in homeless agencies and the income is actually quite appalling and I think you know you want people that can actually make a difference but you don't want to pay them anywhere near as much as the effort that it takes to work in they services. Moneys not everything but I've got a family to feed so for me the job that I am doing pays a lot more, essentially its a call centre but it pays a lot more than any jobs associated with my degree or homelessness. As much as I would love to help people, financially, the organisations that want to employ people to

	<p>help don't pay enough and I think thats also a massive barrier to helping and these people are just getting by themselves and , I don't know.”</p> <p>Rosie</p> <p>“The hospitality industry everything is zero hour unless you are a manager. Personally, I prefer to be paid for the hours I work, I don't want to be a manager with salary because you end up working for free and you live and breathe where you are, you just don't sleep or see anyone. I was nightclubs for a long time, anti social hours, its expensive, you don't see anyone and sleep all day. So it is a lot zero hours so one week you can do 60-70 hours, crazy amounts then the next week through the summer when I'm doing festivals I would do all day and then the night clubs at night I only got about 4 hours sleep but it helped me out I could bank my money and have a security net. But this year, everything was obviously cancelled, it can be quite, it is quite scary times for our industry, nobody knows what is going to happen, so many place shave closed. So yeah there issues with zero hour which most people in hospitality are on and everyones pretty much are zero hour, there is no job security, its not like when our parents are younger and you need something to buy a house. It is so much harder now but when my Mum and Dad were my age they were settled with two babies, a house, contracted employment.”</p>
Blame From Others, Acceptance from Self	<p>Zara</p> <p>“ I would be looked at very negatively, there is an assumption that you should never let yourself get into this situation,there is a lack of understanding of how this happens, I never thought it would happen to me it just happens to other people. But even though I had been close to it previously when I had lost jobs and financially insecure I have been very close but I was always able to with not being a mother being able to scrape by. But when I had my daughter, you can't struggle with what you had before. I had been close to the edge for years but you couldn't pick yourself up like you would otherwise. They would also say you shouldn't have a child if you can't afford it, if you're on benefits you shouldn't have a child is a massive thing people say but that wasn't my case when I had my daughter but things happen.”</p> <p>Sharon</p> <p>“ I should have done it years ago leaving my partner, we have had a turbulent relationship, it has been very up and down and I have had my family on the phone in tears and said I need to leave even when my son was a baby but I didn't have the courage to do it and I am being penalized</p>

for it but I didn't do it years ago I have done it now. It's good to talk about it though even though it's not easy it can help."

"It's mixed really, some would say "oh God what have you done to get yourself into that position" others would say "what happened, what would have happened for you to get here?". A lot of people that knew me and my ex would have just seen us as a happy couple as you put that facade on but behind closed doors its a different story. A lot of people see it as a shock, one minute I live with him and we are pretending to be a happy family and the other I am in a women's refuge. I had his Mum on the phone who said "what did he do, did he even lift his hands to you?" and I said "it doesn't have to be physical abuse". But she will never understand that. Just because they had seen the happy side, thinking everything is fine then I am in a women's refuge and they would think how did that happen, not understanding the process I had gone through and that it was my only option."

Anna

"My key worker has helped me get counselling that I wasn't ready to get. She helps me with that. Em just been like his side of the family like his Mum and his Gran and stuff. Em, his Mum's helped because she's my sons grandmother so she's helped go through the process of the whole situation that he's going through so she's helped with that as well but obviously some of his family has went through what I've went through with my Stepdad and they've helped me overcome that and obviously not blame myself for what's happened in the past"

"you can get people that look at it differently like some people think they're suffering from domestic violence or some people feel like they just need a bit more support. But all in, you don't know anyone's background so you can't judge it until you know that person when they open up to you and you can understand it from their point of view. People look at it from a negative. Everyone has their own story to tell but it's quite good seeing how many different agencies there is to help women like women with children or women on their own and there is a lot of support out there for women."

Kelly

"I've got to a stage as well where I don't care what people think of me anymore to then being extremely self aware and anxious but then again I can think I don't care anymore if someone wants to judge me then they can. So that has been it, a case of you can go through what I have been through and come out the other end. And up until this year I hadn't really

	<p>fully accepted that everything that had happened had happened, I'd held myself responsible for so long. I've got to a stage now where I want to hold other people responsible and that's never ever going to happen but it would be incredibly helpful for me if like my Mum for example had said do you know what I should have never done that to you growing up and if my Dad was to acknowledge that he should never have left when I was sleeping on streets. When I look back now they were all saying I was a bad teenager but I wasn't I was a broken child. And I do want to eventually go to social work and school for the lack of support they gave me and how often they turned me away. And through my own experience I have been reading up about different research topics and I think massively I slipped through the net, I think I've been incredibly lucky as I say to be in the position I am now."</p> <p>Debbie</p> <p>"As an addict, you're frowned upon as a woman and an addict, you're supposed to be maternal and people think it is a choice. It can be, maybe violence and you don't have an option and you have to leave. But generally, people don't have the tolerance, they don't tolerate it, I think people are scared, if you think of the normal people on the street begging, I would go up and check if they are alright but normal people wouldn't go up.</p> <p>People expect you to be in the house, be the mother of the kids, if you are using kids people would say why don't you look after kids. It's not as simple as that, no one wants to be. There is a lot of judgement put on women."</p> <p>"When I was homeless I was allocated and I had no problem. But when I was suffering with addiction, usually your voice, you know, this is my experience, you don't have a voice. Even if they do listen to you, you're being judged, you have given all your power to these people, you give them all that power, they take your power and it's used against you."</p>
Avoiding Big Hostels	<p>Zara</p> <p>"They said there would have been the option for temporary accommodation but I just wasn't sure and I didn't have money to take public transport so the best thing for my daughter for no upheaval was as awkward as it was sleeping in her room and taking her to classes. So it seemed like that was best for her even though it was a horrible situation looking back even though for me it would have been the best to take a temporary flat anywhere and not in the same environment. Keeping her in</p>

a routine and being able to stay with her friends was her best. It was really really horrible though, really horrible, when home stops being that place of security, are they going to be in, can you relax, are they not in, when you here the key in the door and they are back you cant relax. It was a really hard time. When friends went away they let me stay with them which was breathing space, I didn't realise how stressful that house was until I was away and realised I can sit down and not worry about the door opening."

Sharon

"It was good in the refuge, we were in two different refuges, first one was quite far from my son and my friends, not miles but 45 minutes to an hour with transport so hard for school and things, took a lot of time out of the day and time together quality and to relax but the facilities were fantastic. The people were amazing to my son and continue to be amazing. It was a nice place to live but my ex found out what area we were living and we had to move so we then moved to one a bit closer to here I was a bit apprehensive but reasonably comfortable for my son to travel by himself. I was happy with him doing that but his Dad found out and went a bit ballistic but again the team were amazing, really helpful, there if you needed anything, I could ring them if there were any issues or if I needed to talk to anybody. So I felt I had a support network."

Anna

"Eh, the now I stay in the XProject in XXX. It is a shared flat and you share it with another flatmate but you've got your own bedroom and toilet so it's just really your kitchen and sitting area. The staff are lovely, they help, they participate in activities and the people that stay there are really quite nice as well. Some of them keep themselves to themselves. But it's that sense of security again. Obviously there are people there you can talk to like the staff are there 247 and you can go down and have tea with staff and have a general conversation. They're there and they will support you in any sort of you. Yeah it's important. I find it hard to be around boys that I don't really know or like to share because in a group situation then I feel a bit more safer and stuff. Yeah, em, the flat is just like a normal house just with a flat mate or your best friend staying over. You've got like your kitchen with everything you need, your livingroom has a tv and stuff and your bedroom is your own so you can have whatever you want in your bedroom, like I've got lots of pictures up with my kids and stuff so it makes it feel a bit more homely."

Betty

"Not really, my name is still on the council list, I still have no points, maybe I will get an old age pensioners house when I am like 100. I did put my

name on the council, I got offered one house in this horrible horrible street which is terrible to say but it was, that's just the way it was and I knew eventually I would have to buy somewhere but at the time, it wasn't really that I was thinking of homelessness when I went into women's aid but that he had to know I was serious this time and that I wasn't coming back. My aunt Deana stayed near she was in XX and a didn't want to go over southside because my kids were here, I had to be close by. So really, I went to women's aid because, and I didn't actually know anything about going to a homeless unit. Whereas I know about it now, not even through women's aid but just through family talking about things, so you can just phone somebody and tell them you're homeless, if you're young but I can't do that. But I felt women's aid was a step in the right direction for me because I did feel that Seamus was verbally abusive, controlling, he was horrible to me, horrible horrible things he was saying to me. And it starts so slowly that you don't realise it and all of a sudden you realise "I'm not thinking about myself".

"I was a lot stronger but they helped me through that, they gave me support and looked after me, em but always there you know they would come and visit you nearly every day and then they could phone me any time 24 hours a day."

Kelly

"There has been so many, sofa surfing, stayed with my friends mum in an area called XX which is one of the areas I didn't feel safe in after the sexual assault that had happened. Then my aunt that I stayed with was in XX. Looking back now the conditions were actually quite dire, she was an alcoholic and I didn't realise at the time how disgusting the house was or I probably did to an extent but the cleaning facilities like her shower was cold so I couldn't take a hot shower it was just, the conditions actually were just filthy, she had cats that peed everywhere so the bed that I slept in was covered in cat be but I was you know constantly reminded that that was their house and not mine. I mean there were the odd days where my partners parents did allow me to stay, they stayed in a two bedroom house in XX with 2 siblings so it was very very crammed when I could stay. I can't even remember now, I remember travelling to Edinburgh one day to stay with a friend that then when we got there his mum had realised that I still wasn't 16 at the time so I had to get the train back and then Buchanan Street obviously they had got the wee chairs so it was just a case of taking turns to try and sleep on the chairs, and it was scary, it was really scary. The same with Govanhill Park that was quite scary and then there's an ASDA in XX and there was a night they had a bench in the foye and we had used that as well but were asked to move on.

It was difficult, I think it was just about survival really. I had all of my things that were important to me, I was really self conscious so my straighteners I would have had then with me regardless and my make up, my access to a phone, but it was just, it felt unclean and then when I stayed with my Aunt there was the cats urinating on everything so anything I did have was ruined by that. I recycled what I did have. I lost a lot of my possessions throughout that time until I finally got the flat I stayed in from the age of 16 so I don't actually really remember, when I did stay in that flat I think I became a bit of a hoarder like anything I did have I got a lot of , I had excess amount of clothes and I couldn't even tell you where I got them but I think it was that fear of not having anything again."

Rosie

"Yes, so in hostels, I was just out of care and I obviously it was an emergency so you would phone and it would be about a breakdown in relationship, breakdown in family, as well I was quite young the last time I was in the homeless hostel, it put me off, that's why I was sofa surfing and my friends experienced homelessness as well and you know if you can help a friend that's why I would rather do that than them being in one of those places especially if they are younger. The prettier you are in these places all the more feminine you are makes you at risk and puts you at risk, I mean you can try and dum that down and not wear make up and not do your hair but you will still be singled out because you are young and female. You are a target for so many bad things to happen to you. In the hostels I got a lot of unwanted male attention from people I would not speak to, i've never been a judgemental person but it is scary"

"Yeah sofa surfing was more secure and more familiar, you are with a friend but also you would get into relationships, when I was younger and rush them and move in and not have anywhere else to go and then you feel you are a project for people, especially men for my instance and you don't want to live with them and you are not ready but you are somehow living with them because you don't have anyone else. Living with someone is different, it is very intimate and it is never your house so you are constantly on egg shells and you over compensate; you will either put more money in than the other person or get used and it gets flung in your face constantly like "I let you stay there". It isn't all rosy and its not secure, you are constantly living in this fear like they could kick me out at any time you know. Especially when they realise that things don't work as quickly as they should and you are not getting the house you were supposed to and houses fall through and you are stuck there."

Debbie

	<p>“What happened with me was I had my partner, my wee boys Dad, I never had my own tenancy until 14-15 years ago but I never had a tenancy because I was with my partner, my ex partner for 11 years and but in that time that was in his house. If we fell out I could go back to my mum’s at times or other times I would stay with friends. When you don’t have your own tendency you feel quite vulnerable, because you are relying on somebody else, do you know what I mean?</p> <p>And shit happens and then you are asked to leave. I was dependent on my boyfriend and thinking back you accept the unacceptable just to have somewhere to stay that night, like the way they were talking to you or maybe the way that they were treating you.”</p>
A Selective Support System	<p>Zara</p> <p>“I was granted a section 5 which meant I was homeless then they gave me this flat in the Calton, I can walk up to Dennistoun in 15 minutes, obviously COVID means baby groups are not on but we can meet in parks. And all the women who were in my baby groups when I explained this happened they came here and were amazing and my Mum friends helped me paint the walls, it was lovely getting all of that help from them. It was the thing that made me so happy and when I went to the interview, my worker was absolutely amazing, and asked me to explain and I told her everything and she was absolutely amazing, I think having the right person in that situation helps so much. I think she knew I needed somewhere in that area and when this came up it was perfect.”</p> <p>“A lot of emotional support but also practical they had cars so could help me move, also help me with painting then when lockdown rules kicked in we were planning on having a painting partner, but we just took it in turn, one of my friends came and took my keys and wallpapered a wall for me. We anti bateriad the keys and things. It was an amazing support system, everyone really helped out me and picked up my shopping too. They were good friends before but everyone really went above and beyond, you don’t know how people will react but it was amazing how much they went out of their way. They said they would look after milly too.”</p> <p>“One of my friends had experienced something similar, she had gone through the homeless process and she was quite amazing when I said to her. She said I had to go to Easterhouse and text me the phone number</p>

and at the time was a massive thing, at that point the thought of having to google things to find out. She had been through it before and got a flat from Readvale, they were fantastic. I didn't get a flat with him. They've got a low turnover because it's so close to dennistoun. But they cant do anything if they don't have anything available. I feel like if I had to find all that information out myself I would have definitely found it a struggle. There was something about having a team for North and a team for South. Looking back it was simple but at that time everything was really stressful so for my friend to be able to give me the information was great. And she came along with me to my meeting was amazing to have someone there, and they asked me if I had applied before and I was like no this is all totally new to me."

Sharon

"my new partner gave me money to pay off my debt and when my Mum's house sells I will get inheritance and can pay him back and he knows that but without him I would be struggling to make ends meet. There was no way I could afford private rent at all."

"He got in touch when he knew things weren't right and I put a post up on facebook- he has been my main support through all of this. If I need to vent, if I have had a bad day, he lets me get it off of my chest until we are ready to talk about something else."

Anna

"Eh, no. I don't stress about money and if I do I have my partner to help and his side of the family that would help as well."

"Just going back to what I have been through he was the one that actually, that was the first one I told about my childhood. He was the one that got me to open up and basically get him sent to prison and get him out of my life and move on. Em and obviously he has been there for the two kids and he has helped with that situation as well and if I'm feeling down he knows the signs to look for like so obviously if I shut myself he knows there is something wrong and he'll help try and get me to open up and see what it is that he can help or do to make me feel better so he's quite good with that."

"He is staying with family members right now but the place I am in are looking to get us a house together cause he is my biggest support. He was allowed to visit and stay overnights but because of the global pandemic he's not been allowed lately but they are more lenient in letting you go out because obviously he is my biggest support so when I stau in

it does affect my mood and stuff. So they do let you go out and stay out as long as I'm keeping safe and stuff they do let me go out and spend some time with him just to keep my mood as best as possible."

Betty

"And that unhappiness is horrible and some people say to me do you not want a man in your life and I say "no I don't need a man in my life to be happy". I am happy, I get up in the morning and sometimes think ugh I need to go to work but I don't have that same feeling. I don't get up in the morning with that horrible feeling in my gut, like you don't know what will happen that day or at night"

"That was definitely the hardest thing leaving my permanent home, the rest is all bricks and water, I missed them so so much. When I used to meet them for a coffee in the beginning I used to scream all the way back holding onto the steering wheel and I don't know how I did it but that's where it all came out and I got back to the house and it was fine- I couldn't scream in their but I could scream in the car. But that doesn't last, it got easier, I could have them over night, could watch the telly together and do the normal things, cook them dinner."

"Mark and Gail were definitely in my side and they had seen it and were older at the time that I left so I mean mark was 17 and Gail was probably coming up for 22 em so they were really supportive like when they were coming and saying "Mum Dad has been doing this and saying oh are you going to see your Mum again" and I said "do you want me to come back?" "When he was saying that he didn't want them coming to see me. And the house wasn't selling and that was quite long for the kids but then I got back in the house so that was fine. But they were right at my back, I saw them every single night really until they could come and stay with me so it wasn't so bad then, because I was meeting them every night it was only for a coffee or something at tea time. But once they could come and stay with me that was easier. I stayed at my sisters nearly every weekend too em and then Mark would come with me if he wasn't doing anything with his friends he would come and he always came on a sunday for sunday dinner"

Kelly

"I had met my husband when I was 15 and the prospects of having that, the only stable thing in my life taken away terrified me so I went through a period of just lying to social work, I continued to rough sleep and my partner was the same age but he was in part time employment, he was a year older sorry. So he supported me a lot financially and then when I was

staying with my aunt or when I was allowed to stay there rather, my mind was finding her with I think child benefit money for me.”

“There was absolutely no one else that was consistent, I will take that back, when I did eventually engage with say women I ended up receiving support from them for 7 years, it was the only service that I found and completely by chance that I found them, I still can’t get over that. And don’t get me wrong I did go awall quite a lot but they were always there to go back to. I had a key worker called Lauren. There was nobody that was consistent. With my family members, the relationships were all very estranged or broken, while I might receive support from my Mum one week, the following week she didn’t talk to me. Up until I got the flat in Motherwell and restarted the relationship with my grandparents I didn’t have them either. There wasn’t anything consistent, I didn’t have any friends from school or growing up. Other than my husband and say women that was all I had, the social workers, when I turned 16 didn’t engage with me anymore, I don’t know I think because they didn’t have to so I didn’t get any support you know from them either.”

“Fortunately, when I was 15 going through the most difficult point of my life, I was made homeless but I was told by social work that I didn’t really fit the criteria for a children’s home so they wouldn’t place me in one and also there was a kind of threat that if I chose to sofa surf and rough sleep that they would place me in a homeless unit but it was be emergency accomodation and could have been as far away as Aberdeen. I had met my husband when I was 15 and the prospects of having that, the only stable thing in my life taken away terrified me so I went through a period of just lying to social work, I continued to rough sleep and my partner was the same age but he was in part time employment, he was a year older sorry. So he supported me a lot financially and then when I was staying with my aunt or when I was allowed to stay there rather, my mind was finding her with I think child benefit money for me. That’s kind of all I got, I got help from family members until I could apply for JSA when I was about 16 so up until then it was relying on other people and then it was beneficial when I turned 16....

A lot of the time, when we sofa surfed we did it together but when it did come down to rough sleeping he ended up rough sleeping with me so he kind of left his family home in order to do that.”

Rosie

“We (family) can’t live together so that causes massive issues which is why I relied on friends. I still don’t have that relationship with my family and we just get on better when we don’t live in the same house so it is, it’s

	<p>difficult but it's just one of those things really, so yeah I have been quite lucky but most of my female friends have experienced some level with this when they have become intentionally homeless when they had issues with partners and had to flee and then again moved and became intentionally homeless if the partners found out where they are.”</p> <p>“Yeah, when you are fleeing stuff, when I was running away from my parents I had an abusive parent when I was younger then had an abusive boyfriend and it is a cycle of abuse because that is all you know and somehow unknowingly to you you like for that person and until you deal with it you will end up in the same situation time and time again until you deal with it, change yourself and get some boundaries and realise it's not healthy and not normal and when you do get something healthy it's difficult because you don't know how to behave. You've not had a relationship that's normal, I was surrounded by a lot of alcohol and a lot of drugs and men who just wanted one thing. You either go two ways, I always ended up pulling out of that through friends but a lot of women don't have that luxury but they don't have friends like I have or family. You end up with problems because you are surrounded by people that have a really bleak existence.”</p> <p>Debbie “The only person I was consistent with was my partner, the relationship with family had broken down so I didn't have support to be honest at all. My saving grace was that I had fallen pregnant and then I got priority for a house, honestly, and I had been housed quickly, although the area was an area I didn't want to put in I did quite quick.”</p>
<p>Importance of Workers in Mitigating System</p>	<p>Betty “Actually, it wasn't even that bad I don't think, like the girls were great, they do everything and go with you and all you're doing is you're going in and signing on. It wasn't actually that long until I got that job. I was in women's aid for about, maybe nearly, not quite a year and then they had outreach for a while, just to make sure I was okay. They were great, I went to the first meeting and I saw a young girl, maybe your age now maybe and she was lovely and she was the one that took me to the flat and got there and got settled and gave me a big bag of shopping (laughs). But the next day Linda and Shona came, Linda was my worker but her and Shona went around together and they came and visited me and told me everything and em just sort of said what you doing</p>

what we did, they were lucky in women's aid, Jackie was a lawyer and they said we will take you to the housing, to sign on, to see the lawyer but it won't all happen at once because it will be too overwhelming. They were great, so it was like first go sign on, then go to the housing then I went to the lawyer."

"To add, I think women's aid should be more advertised in places because I don't know if doctors suggest it. They didn't even say to me "do you want to stay there" and it was one of the first questions women's aid asked me "would you like to leave and stay with us" and I said "yes, of course I would!" that was the first time someone asked me that. It took me by surprise, I didn't expect them to ask me that, I didn't know what they were going to do, I knew I needed help, she asked me a few things and then she said "would you like to stay with us" and I said "yeah! That would be great".

No one else considered me leaving, you have got to do that, you have got to make the move I think and em, Seamus would never have left, never, he would have just kept going and going and going definitely that is what I got to know that he was never. I said why don't we split up and he would say what is wrong with you why do you want to split up. I said none of us are happy, you're drinking too much. He would say I am fine everything's fine I don't know what you are moaning about.

But yeah I think they should have big posters advertised about women's aid because I never see it."

Kelly

" Yeah, and that's another thing to mention. When I was finally 16 and able to apply to the emergency council flat, they wanted all of the information so again I had to give them absolutely everything, they wanted confirmation from Say Women. I was supported by them at the time and they wanted a letter from the key worker that supported me to say how horrific things were and what I had been through and why they thought I should get emergency accommodation so again I felt quite degraded that they wanted a sob story of how bad things were for me before they were prepared to offer me anything. And the case didn't go to court, so essentially without that letter confirming that I was engaging with support services they didn't believe anything that I had been through so I felt that in order for them to believe that I needed a letter detailing the level of support I was receiving and for what reason before I was then offered accommodation."

"Like I had said, when I finally got the council flat I wasn't really meeting any of the criteria because I didn't have children, because I had been sofa

	<p>surfing so they seen it as essentially well you do have somewhere to sleep. The only thing that got me that flat was the letter from Say Women because without that my application wasn't going anywhere so if I had other things that made me worthy of a flat then yes I would have got one easier and having a child would have filled that criteria but because I was on my own I wasn't hitting any of the points scoring system I think so without the letter, because it basically said she's extremely vulnerable, shes engaging with this service leaving her to sofa surf puts her at risk of further harm so without that element of risk or vulnerability there wouldn't have been anything.”</p> <p>Rosie “ But no women’s aid did help me with food and stuff, my worker got me vouchers for food but until I got my white goods I couldn’t live her, my women’s aid worker helped me get those as quickly as they could. Obviously having someone on your team helps push things forward a bit, having someone with a title helps definitely, unless you do you’re just another number, you are faceless. But you have your own story and there is a need but there are so many people in need. It’s difficult and you feel you are competing with people in other situations which it shouldn’t really be like that.”</p> <p>Debbie (counter) “When I was homeless, I just had contact with the council, there was nothing then, no support just on the council list. But I never had any social work when I was homeless but a lot of dealing with social work through addiction. I was homeless during my addiction, then when I had my children I had a lot of dealing with social work because of my kids, When I look back they did try and keep my family together, they did everything they could, I didn’t think that at the time I hated her, but now when I look back she was brilliant. When I was using I hated social work I was totally against them, trying to take my kids and all that shite. Now that I am clean, I have to prove that I am not using, they test everything and I have to prove to them, and today I have a really good relationship with them.”</p>
Frightening and Fleeing	<p>Zara “It has made me a lot more scared, with temporary accommodation I think if I was a man I would be able to go anywhere in a temporary flat but you don't know if you will be in danger and who will be there. And also the system seems to be geared more towards men and the people I spoke to were fantastic but I felt they had to go above and beyond to help me to</p>

make sure I was okay. My housing officer said I matched initially at a different flat and she swapped me for this one and said it would be better and safer, which is great but she shouldn't have to do that.

I think it is easier for men to go through, not an easier situation it would still be horrific but less of a fear element than a woman when there is another layer is there going to be a predator, there is an added level of anxiety for women."

"if I wasn't a mum it would have been far easier, just thinking about yourself you are like right that's fine and if I hadn't been working I could have got work again easier but all of these doors were closed to me because I was a mother and had to rely on no funds as I made the choice to be a stay at home Mum. And having Milly was the first and foremost important thing to do."

"I didn't know how difficult the system was to navigate and having a child is terrifying in terms of being in emergency accommodation which is why I stayed living with my ex even though that was horrific. The safety element and the fear involved in being a woman in the system, who are the neighbours. I loved where I ended up but the idea of not knowing where you will end up there is a massive fear element."

Sharon

"Knowing that the other women in the refuge, you didn't know what levels of abuse they had been through, you feel protective over your own child and you don't know what to expect. And while I was there we had one woman kicked out because she had a fella over. Where we are now, they're all older people and pensioners. They are lovely, so warm and welcoming and friendly. It's just a nice atmosphere and really makes a difference. Just bumping into people, it's a nice feeling that you can just be relaxed.

I mean I was told I didn't have to move in straight away but because of where we were placed in women's aid compared to where my sons school was, the flat was a 2 min walk from school I thought I just wanted to move so it was better for my son. He's got his friends, his Dad. For the first 2 weeks we didn't have a cooker or freezer I borrowed a microwave and coolbox."

"With guys, men being homeless, they're expected to be able to deal with it better, left to get on with it. With women, you need to be doing this, that and right for your child. In terms of women that don't have kids, I couldn't comment if it would be easier for them than it would be for guys. I just think guys would find somewhere to stay easier than women. As a Mum, you've got that bit of extra support from the government, so there is a little bit more security knowing you will get something and there is more

chance because the government know you've got a child. But if you are a single woman I don't think it would be as easy and I think they would have the same kind of struggles as a guy would, maybe more so. I think more because they are not the primary carer of a child so they don't get the same kind of rights as a woman does being a parent. So in that respect, everything goes against them, and for a lot of guys their pride would get in the way a bit and wouldn't seek the help. But women would bury their pride and do whatever they need to do to support their child."

Anna

"It's alright because you're allowed to have overnights so sometimes she's out and I am in and it's fine or sometimes we're both in together. But as I said some of them keep themselves to themselves and some of them do come out and talk to you. And it's two girls and two boys that share- it's never mixed. But the activities are mixed and different age ranges too because it's 16 to 25 year olds that they deal with."

How important is it for you for it to be mixed or not?

"Yeah it's important. I find it hard to be around boys that I don't really know or like to share because in a group situation then I feel a bit more safer and stuff."

"No, I think it's the same but some of the stuff women go through, men don't talk about it because some men are more, they've got more pride and they don't want to show what's wrong with them so they shield themselves and make it as if its different reasons so they don't get judged. I think men go to the streets more and they feel like they can't go to someone but a lassie would feel not safe on the street, God knows what would happen, but it could happen to a man as well. I think a man would just deal with it differently."

Kelly

" Like I say I had my important possessions always with me and again that terrified me some nights like the night in Buchanan street bus station I remember three youths going about looking like they were up to no good and I was terrified of being the victim of a theft or a robbery. Thankfully I wasn't but it was scary."

"I think they said they didn't accommodate women anyway at that time so they were associated with another place that would accommodate women but I was often reminded that I was likely to be a victim of further crimes if I stayed in them because the people that were there were undesirable, that's not an opinion of mine but it was what they said to me. There was a

lot of men and I think given my experience, and where I think even though I lacked the support, I was terrified by men and intimidated by them given what I had been through but that never taken into consideration because I had a partner, they said well you've got a partner and he's male."

"when I was 15 going through the most difficult point of my life, I was made homeless but I was told by social work that I didn't really fit the criteria for a children's home so they wouldn't place me in one and also there was a kind of threat that if I chose to sofa surf and rough sleep that they would place me in a homeless unit but it was be emergency accomodation and could have been as far away as Aberdeen. I had met my husband when I was 15 and the prospects of having that, the only stable thing in my life taken away terrified me so I went through a period of just lying to social work, I continued to rough sleep and my partner was the same age but he was in part time employment, he was a year older sorry. So he supported me a lot financially and then when I was staying with my aunt or when I was allowed to stay there rather, my mind was finding her with I think child benefit money for me. That's kind of all I got, I got help from family members until I could apply for JSA when I was about 16 so up until then it was relying on other people and then it was beneficial when I turned 16."

"I think it's more accessible in terms of services as a lot of services out there are for men or utilised more by men, I don't think it's the same, and this is just all my opinion but I just feel like there's not the same element of judgement towards men as there is to women. The impression I got when I attended (service) and my partner was there was that these aren't places that are safe for women and my response to that would be well make them safe then. I think they should just be made to be safe for anyone, however on that note, my husband was encouraged away from it because of his ethnicity and it did appear to be predominantly white males that were accessing the services. I just think they are more accessible to males and there is not the same criteria applied to men as there is to women but that's just how I felt about the situation."

Rosie

" So I ended up in hostels and hamish allen, it was really scary, I don't have an alcohol or drug problem but I could have easily ended up with one because it was in my face all the time and other adults wanting to share the cost and I am quite strong willed but many are not. I see it on the streets, young people nothing and then weeks later on valium

because they are not happy, on the streets and reality is not what they want. I just think you know, there needs to be more of a system in Glasgow and anywhere really, these young women are vulnerable and they shouldn't be put in the places I was put. They are not safe for women, you will either have people propositioning you for sex, people trying to make you work for them for sex, people sell you drugs. I have seen it with young girls too who have sat on the street begging and being propositioned continually whilst I am sitting with her and having a cup of tea with her for just 30 minutes and I see that. It is scary that people think they can approach you and ask these things, they wouldn't do it in a normal situation, so why do they think they can when you are homeless, it bothers me, just trying to get money together to get what you need. It's scary when you see the young ones come in, some of them are really out of their face and you think something is going to happen to you, and you do care about them, it is just one of those things unfortunately and you can get totally lost in the system as well."

"I think men are obviously, people would like to say we are equal but we are not. Certainly, I have never seen a man propositioned for sex in the town when he has been begging and I have always been cat called, women are seen as objects by men and that is just the way it is and people can disagree with that but it's true. We are at risk for the simple fact that we are women, they are bigger than us, you can be so overpowered by men and if you do try and keep yourself safe you are then worse you are called mouthy, cheeky. Men are harder, young girls shouldn't be on the street, it's not safe, there is too many people that want bad things like that and one lures you when you're desperate they'll lure you to do things you don't want to do, not because you are weak but you're stuck and you don't have a way out not another option. That's why some girls end up in prostitution or an abusive relationship when the person will say I will take you away from this and of course you go running, that's the best option you have."

"Yeah, when you are fleeing stuff, when I was running away from my parents I had an abusive parent when I was younger then had an abusive boyfriend and it is a cycle of abuse because that is all you know and somehow unknowingly to you you like for that person and until you deal with it you will end up in the same situation time and time again until you deal with it, change yourself and get some boundaries and realise it's not healthy and not normal and when you do get something healthy it's difficult because you don't know how to behave. You've not had a relationship that's normal, I was surrounded by a lot of alcohol and a lot of drugs and men who just wanted one thing. You either go two ways, I

	<p>always ended up pulling out of that through friends but a lot of women don't have that luxury but they don't have friends like I have or family. You end up with problems because you are surrounded by people that have a really bleak existence."</p> <p>"I think men are obviously, people would like to say we are equal but we are not. Certainly, I have never seen a man propositioned for sex in the town when he has been begging and I have always been cat called, women are seen as objects by men and that is just the way it is and people can disagree with that but it's true. We are at risk for the simple fact that we are women, they are bigger than us, you can be so overpowered by men and if you do try and keep yourself safe you are then worse you are called mouthy, cheeky. Men are hardier, young girls shouldn't be on the street, it's not safe, there is too many people that want bad things like that and one luer you when you're desperate they'll lure you to do things you don't want to do, not because you are weak but you're stuck and you don't have a way out not another option. That's why some girls end up in prostitution or an abusive relationship when the person will say I will take you away from this and of course you go running, that's the best option you have."</p> <p>Debbie</p> <p>"I think, in my experience, it was easier for me to be housed than if I was a man, my opinion is it is harder for a man to be housed because I see men, young guys being missed in the system and it's worrying. I don't think for me it was as bad, men seem to get it worse than women. Nowadays you are waiting years and years because no council houses with cuts and see all the young guys that are addicts and they have nowhere to go. It's generally younger guys, it's not older people. You don't get old junkies, people don't survive it, they don't survive it."</p>
Not looking "Broken Enough"	<p>Sharon</p> <p>"A lot of people that knew me and my ex would have just seen us as a happy couple as you put that facade on but behind closed doors its a different story. A lot of people see it as a shock, one minute I live with him and we are pretending to be a happy family and the other I am in a women's refuge. I had his Mum on the phone who said "what did he do, did he even lift his hands to you?" and I said "it doesn't have to be physical abuse". But she will never understand that."</p> <p>Betty</p>

“ And a lot of women are a lot worse off for me, like physically abused, I was never physically abused, sometimes I used to think just hit me and I will get the police. But never, it was all that picking away at your confidence and telling you you don't look nice. I think I used to think if there was physical I would have proof but he was always nice in front of everyone to a certain point.”

“I think a lot of people can't believe it. They can't believe that you've used women's aid. What they think who use women's aid is somebody that doesn't have any money, doesn't have anything, doesn't have anybody on back up. And that's not true, we have had different women from different sectors of life.”

“I think some women look down on it and they shouldn't. I talk about it all the time saying how great it is and how much they look after women. But I don't think, I don't think certain women, if they're more better off or something but they don't really, they think its people that come from like no money, a council estate and its not, anybody can use it and I think sometimes you don't know what goes on behind closed doors.”

Kelly

“The home we stayed in with Mum was in a new build area, not a kind of wealthy area but social work became involved and it was a case of that you should appreciate what you have, you don't belong in a children's home. Because I was doing well in school, that's where I feel I slipped through the net, my home life was horrendous, most times I didn't have anywhere to stay yet social work were saying you should be grateful for this.”

“Honestly I think it was quite degrading. I remember attending at the job centre, I have always, like I am very self conscious so I am always conscious about my appearance and I always put make up on. They said I didn't look like someone who was struggling, I was told to come back having not washed my hair and look a bit scruffy.

So you were to look worse to get money?

Yeah, I had to look like I needed it and apparently being presentable didn't fit the remit of getting it (money).”

“I think more so being asked to look not presentable, you know you are asked to detail everything, like why you are not in employment and I think for me I was quite private at the time and I didn't want to tell them my home circumstances and putting that out there for someone to scrutinise, I found that really degrading and I just don't think you were supported to

get money, it was the case of, there's other things out there other than benefits which was true but at the time I was just trying to survive and didn't need the lecture from anyone about what other options I had.

You were young, did that have any impact on that experience?

Massive, yeah. Massive, I think my age, the fact that I was a female and add that to the fact that I did appear presentable, I hadn't been involved in like any crime at that point, for them, there was no reason why I should need any additional support from anywhere."

"I remember going there when I had just turned 16 to try and get, just to give you context: I had applied to the council for housing for a council house but because I hadn't registered homeless they couldn't put me on emergency accommodation list so I presented at hamish allen centre. I always had my belongings with me and I remember quite well, I had a pair of GHD straighteners and I had a wee rucksack with everything and I suppose they were luxury items but they were mines and I remember going there and they refused to accommodate me because I didn't fit the clientele. She said if I stayed there that night my possessions would be stolen because nobody had luxury items like that and I was almost laughed out of the place, like I can't believe you have come here with a paid of GHDs in your bag but to me that's all I had. I appreciate now looking back how it might have looked but I was a very naive 16 year old so and then my husband was with me at the time as well and he had elected to make himself homeless because he didn't want me sleeping on the streets myself and then the housing officer who was meeting with us phoned his parents to clarify he was homeless and didn't have anywhere to stay. So it was barbaric really, his parents said he could return but not with me so that again was being rejected, the two of us for the emergency accommodation and I think it was that night that we slept in either govanhill park or buchanan street bus station I can't remember, it was one of the two."

"Yeah, school for one, I approached the school and it was the same response I got from each of these organisations that I should be grateful for having a house and a family that worked and they had cars, there was a lot of families out there that didn't have anything and they seemed to neglect to take on board that I was saying my life was horrific regardless of these things I had. I couldn't be grateful for something when there was so much emotional abuse, physical abuse, it was and kind of mental abuse, I know I said emotional but so it was a case of well just forget about they things because you've got a home and a family and nice things. Again with the organisations, I wish that they would look beyond

the appearance I had at the time or where I was coming from because there is always more than meets the eye. I don't know if that is just through my experiences with things that I do look beyond that. But I think if you're working in these services you need to believe what someone is saying for a start and dig a bit deeper. And I wish people had asked more questions, maybe I wasn't as fourth coming as I am now because I felt this urge to protect the people that were hurting me. For example, I used to get grounded all the time but that essentially meant being locked in my room without food and without anything and to me that's torture and I just can't imagine doing that to my kids. There was a period it was three months the only time I could go out was when I was at school and I was scared to tell school because one I didn't want my parents to get in trouble and 2 the school wouldn't believe me anyway. It's taken me in becoming a parent to realise that was abuse. I wish they had all spoke to each other, if the school spoke to social work maybe something would be identified. Also after school when I was a young adult if services spoke to each other I might have been better supported throughout."

"I don't know what the word is, I think you are very judged and it is only this year that I started using the terminology that I was homeless because I think it's associated with like drug addicts, people that have been involved in crime because a few times I have said it this year and people have had the response "you dont look like you've ever been homeless" and I don't know what that means, what does someone that has been homeless look like or act like. I don't know what the word is I'm trying to find but there is a huge element of judgement especially for women it is that bit worse, women are supposed to be home makers, be able to sustain things, going on the reaction that I had from people when I decided this year to stop hiding from my past is almost like they expect people that are the lower class of society to have been the people that are homeless and because I don't fit that, I have a job and stability now, it's almost like you don't look like that, you don't look broken enough."

"Through my own experience I do look beyond somebody's presentation and beyond the bigger picture. One thing I was going to mention was disguise compliance, where families, social work, there is often an element of disguise compliance where social work try to engage with someone and the families appear to be engaging so then the person actually needs help goes unnoticed because of disguise compliance and it looks like the families are supporting and engaging but they are not in reality. I think thats what happened to me like my Mum and Dad were quite happy to have social work and come to meetings so social work listened to them, I was bad, I was doing all these things wrong but social

	<p>work should have asked what's going on here and why is she doing all these things. And I think that's something I am trying to feedback to the advisory board now and they are approaching a number of housing associations and that should be incorporated into it, these people aren't just got themselves into this situation, what has happened that has led to this and what can be done to help them move on from it, not a case where they've got this they've got that, we have given them a house and they should just accept that it's their house. There are so much more things that need to be considered.”</p> <p>Rosie “Domestic abuse is such a traumatic thing, you don't want to wear it like a badge but you feel like you almost have to to get what you need and to be okay. It is not nice, no one wants to be classed as a victim, no one wants to have that stigma.”</p> <p>“I struggled for years I either had a job and couldn't afford a flat or find one then I got the flat and I didn't have a job, you are stuck between a rock and a hard place and you are trying everything and you work all these casual jobs and they are cash in hand and not reliable and you are trying to get a house but you don't have money or contracts to prove. There is no help until you go through something traumatic, you won't get any help otherwise.”</p>
<p>The Hard Work Begins After Homelessness</p>	<p>Betty “ Mainly because of where it was, I didn't feel safe in it. It was all these closes when you went in the close it was like garbage all over the place and bits of stuff lying in the garden. You could walk 5 minutes down the road and it was okay but there wasn't. When we went into the flat the flat stunk and it was just like up this close that didn't feel nice to me, I didn't feel nice, I didn't feel that I wanted to be there and when you came out I walked round after it, and I had the dog with me. The first thing she said to me was “you can't bring the dog here, you're not allowed” and I thought “why are you so horrible to me”. And I saw other dogs in people's balconies. So then I took a walk around and there was so much rubbish and it was depressing, it didn't look nice. And down the bottom of the road some of the closes were beautiful, the gardens were beautiful. So it just didn't feel nice, really, to me. If it had been down the road with a nice garden with no rubbish it would have been fine and probably near nice people. And that was all the ever offered me. But I suppose I didn't push it, I did sign the letter and said keep my name on the list but they won't offer me because they know I have this but I keep my name on the list.”</p>

Kelly

“It was a mess I remember viewing it and saying I didn’t want it because I had never stayed somewhere that was in such bad condition it looked like people had ripped wallpaper off the walls, there was no flooring or anything I think flooring has to be removed from council flats for health and safety reasons but it was horrible and although I was desperate at the same time I tend to compare a lot of things to my life growing up and I say we stayed in a new build house, I had never really experienced conditions like that and I do recall saying I didn’t want it but because it was emergency accommodation you come off the list so I did accept it but I wasn’t entitled to any funding to help get it to a nice condition so I wouldn’t even call it liveable, I wouldn’t put someone in it. It had water it had the necessities but the appearance of it, it wasn’t a home and I don’t think anything I could have done within my own remit could have made it a home.”

Rosie

“It is kind of scary, you just get no help, and if you can’t make the deposit and if you can’t make the deposit and you have to fill a house. I mean I got keys for this property in september and I didn’t move in until the middle of october, I was paying rent whilst sofa surfing until I could get money to get things in it so that it is liveable for me. It is liveable now. A lot of people think once you get keys for a house you are not homeless anymore, you have then got to find the money for gas and electrics then your white goods, then money for food, then have the money to heat your house, especially at this time of year, buy the things to cook with, buy the things to sleep in, it is, it takes time. I am really lucky I get a lot of help from the charity I used to be with, without them I wouldn’t have got my bed or the van to take things to. I couldn’t have lived here, I am still at college, still working, then because of COVID I lost my job, I am on furlough but its not my wage I would be getting and I am zero hour. It is really difficult and people think when you get your house all your problems are solved but its not its a whole new chapter, it is difficult.”

“ I could pay full rent, I can pay my full way, it's not like I am on benefits but nobody would help me and its quite sad that it took a domestic violence situation for me to get help. My worker fought my corner and said she deserved her own tenancy and her own home. Keeping the tenancy is just as hard work as getting it really!”

“And for me, I normally eat work, so being off, that’s kind of, I’ve kind of had to be a bit more sensible and thrifty with money, it is, it is difficult having your own and living on your own, you are responsible for

	<p>everything. At least I don't have to pay council tax which helps massively, makes a massive difference but it can be quite scary like you have to choose between paying my rent and not getting into arrears or not eating this week”</p>
<p>Safety. Security. Family. Autonomy</p>	<p>Zara “Security, before I was in a relationship with my partner I rented a lot of places and moved around loads and loads. But even that is security as when you sign the lease you have it, my home, I can have stuff, somewhere to relax. I found when he ended the relationship and put my homeless application in it was a strange period of being in a home that was a home but now wasn't. I had no idea about anything, it was a new situation, lack of security and lack of autonomy in a way and the ball was not in my court when he ended the relationship.”</p> <p>Sharon “Stability, I can't even put it into words really. It means a lot, I feel more secure, I feel that my son is a lot happier because when we were in the refuge obviously given the type of the accommodation he couldn't see his friends there but now he has the freedom to bring his friends home from school, go out and meet up with them, go to his dads if he feels like it. I can't even put into words how amazing it feels for me. Don't get me wrong my friends are important to me as well but my focus has always been my son and his happiness, I'm a grown up, I can make due. And we have been through all of the changes this year and losing his Gran as well, its not been easy for him and I've just tried to get things as normal as possible for him and have this and say look this is your home.”</p> <p>“Secure in the fact that I know I'm far enough away from his Dad, he knows where we live, wasn't my choice to tell him but he didnt leave me much choice, he used my son against me to get the address out of me but its a secure entry downstairs, I've got a spyhole in my door, a lock, a chain, all of that adds to my wellbeing and makes me feel relaxed. And also to be able to say you can't come in. I know at a point he can still get in if someone comes out downstairs but I still won't let him in fully. To have that and be that far away and not worry about bumping into him, even when I've went to the shops I've not bumped into him, so I am a lot more relaxed than I used to be at the beginning of the year.”</p> <p>“Where we are now, they're all older people and pensioners. They are lovely, so warm and welcoming and friendly. It's just a nice atmosphere and really makes a difference. Just bumping into people, it's a nice feeling that you can just be relaxed. Even when I was living with my ex, I had got</p>

to the point when I was dreading going home but to know I can come back here and not have to worry about that. It's nice to come home and I'm not on edge and I can just be me, the first time I've gotten to be me for years (cries)."

Betty

"Family, really, having the kids round and things like that, and that's what I missed. I used to meet the kids every night somewhere first at WA. They weren't allowed to come to the house at first, WA have got to get to know you. They eventually did come to the house and stay over. They came and met Mark and then said that they had meetings and he could come and stay over night so that was great. Because at the beginning that was awful, really awful. And they went through a really hard time, I said do you want me to come back. They said "don't come back Mum, we will get through this". So they were a great support as well, so yeah I really think home is your family and love, and your family."

"That was definitely the hardest thing leaving my permanent home, the rest is all bricks and water, I missed them so so much. When I used to meet them for a coffee in the beginning I used to scream all the way back holding onto the steering wheel and I don't know how I did it but that's where it all came out and I got back to the house and it was fine- I couldn't scream in their but I could scream in the car. But that doesn't last, it got easier, I could have them over night, could watch the telly together and do the normal things, cook them dinner."

Kelly

"For me, somewhere you are safe, comfortable and somewhere where you have got necessities or access to necessities and for me now, previously it wouldn't have been family but now with my own family it would be somewhere where you have got family support around you."

"Growing up I was never was able to walk to school so I can't believe that my sons will always be able to walk to school they've got friends in the area they stay in. My son is going to be 9 next week, apart from we moved out the flat since he was 6 months old but this has been his home since birth and it feels really surreal that he has got somewhere that is home to him, even if there is things that still bother me. I have given him place that has security and stability."

Rosie

Rosie

	<p>“Just that it is mine, its safe place, it's my house, my name that is on it, my safe place, especially after what has just happened I mean for me to lock my door and feel secure and safe in my home with my things and the way I want it to look nobody can tell me I don't like that, nobody can tell me to not do something, I can listen to music, I can watch tv. It's not the biggest of houses but it's mine. It is just security that nobody can take it from me, it's my responsibility to keep it and have it the way I want. I think it will be a constant working process to get it the way I want it to look it's just a bit of security. As a young woman as well to just shut your door and not be bothered by anyone and have somewhere safe where I could go that is just me and people can only come here if they are invited whereas if you stay with friends there are maybe people that you don't like that are still being brought around you because it is not your home but here I don't want anyone over. I am a little bit of a loner now these days, I like my own company and I don't feel the need to be with someone the whole time, after the domestic violence I just wanted some time to be myself. Domestic violence destroys your idea of yourself and your self esteem someone has told you you are bad or this or that. My ex was narcissistic and a bad person and gas lighty. It is my time, my home, time for me to build and be who I want and be what I am doing, it is huge for me I cried when I got the keys for here. Everything that is in it I got through friends or help I have been really lucky, I have painted it all myself. It is, it is the first time I have felt secure to have all my things in the one place that is not my parents. Because even in care I was always worried about things getting stolen and taken, and hostels and people's houses I didn't take anything valuable with me. But there, it is mine, it is just nice.”</p>
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Themes & Sub Themes	Coded Data
<p>Theme Socioeconomic Survival within Neoliberal Capitalism</p> <p>Sub Theme Challenges in getting the best fit of</p>	<p>Rosie</p> <p>This is the first time I am thinking I have to put the effort in and do the course but it is difficult when you have other outside things going on, grown up problems, everyone has things that they need to deal with, being from where I am from, the kind of friends I have, especially just now people are going through a lot of stuff. Me going through DV and having to explain that to college was embarrassing, I had to take time off while my face healed because I didn't want to go to college with black eyes. I am fine now and its in court, Its kind of hard though if you lose</p>

Education	<p>attendance, you lost your bursary and its difficult and I said I wish I did this when I was younger when I didn't have this going on and obviously online study is difficult, its difficult to concentrate in your own house with all the distractions.</p> <p>Anna I did college 3 times. I did childcare, I didn't get to finish it due to circumstances. Again, I did hairdressing and I didn't get to finish that due to the same kind of circumstances but I just finished a course in anatomy and physiology, so I've got that.</p> <p>Kelly School became quite difficult for me around the age of 13, I had moved primary school twice and then secondary school I was at three different school throughout then finally I quit school at the age of 15, I would have been a summer leaver anyway so I think I left with 5 qualifications in total and I didnt go back to school after that. A number of years later, before that, I started an apprenticeship in business and administration when I was 16 and when that ended I went to college and then fell pregnant with my first son, it's difficult to try and piece together all of the different times. Then I took a break from studying and work while my oldest son was an infant and then I started an access to university course in 2012 and that then gave me the qualifications I needed to start my degree so I started university in 2013 and graduated in 2017.</p> <p>Debbie I went back to college, I did my access to nursing course in 1999 down in Falkirk and I set a higher in human biology and a higher English, in that year because I needed the 2 highers to train to be a nurse but like a say my addiction then came in. But I did pass that course, I got two higher and accepted into two different universities, I got accepted into Stirling and Mayfair Uni, I chose to go to Mayfair. I only did that for the first year, then my drug use got really bad.</p> <p>Betty I went to college and learned how to do that. I went back to college and learned all about computing and everything as well- just because it needed to be done. Because when I first started there was no computers, I did a bit of computing when I worked at the primary school but then I went to college at night in Glasgow in town and did book keeping, typing and everything LAUGHS. Microsoft office, excel and those things, I re trained myself .</p>
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<p>Theme <i>Survival within Neoliberal Capitalism</i></p> <p>Sub Theme <i>Unsupportive and Degrading Welfare</i></p>	<p>Zara</p> <p>“It wasn’t too difficult to put in the claim but the wait was really difficult, I had 6 weeks before any decision was made. For me, my partner ended the relationship on 27th of December and said I need you out of here and I knew then I would have to declare as homeless. So he was going to be away or there and I would be at my daughters. So he would be asking me to buy food, I couldn’t just go buy anything. He would say give me a list of what Milly needs but not me, I ended up borrowing money from friends, it was a massive struggle, because I don’t have family either I found it really hard. So I don’t think there’s enough in place for that situation. I know there has to be checks in place for handing money out but even when the amount came through it wasn’t the biggest amount but it was something I could buy food.”</p> <p>Kelly</p> <p>“Honestly I think it was quite degrading. I remember attending the job centre, I have always, like I am very self conscious so I am always conscious about my appearance and I always put makeup on. They said I didn’t look like someone who was struggling, I was told to come back having not washed my hair and look a bit scruffy. I had to look like I needed it and apparently being presentable didn’t fit the remit of getting it (money).”</p> <p>“So there was quite extensive job applications and then courses where they would say I had to do them in order to get the money, but I think it was eventually stopped because I ended up, there was quite a period of time I was going back to my aunts house who was an alcoholic and it was difficult getting from one place to the next unless I had that bus ticket, so it was difficult securing employment and any courses and sustaining it until I got the SVQ role.”</p> <p>“Later on down the line when I fell pregnant with my son, I had to quit college, I was no longer earning, I was on JSA, I was pregnant so I wasn’t getting any jobs, I know they are not allowed to discriminate but when they have someone turning up to the interview with a massive bump I think it’s obvious someone has better skills than you. So I found that humiliating you are applying for jobs, doing your best but you know someone else is going to get the job. I was also 17 when I was pregnant so there is a huge judgement that comes with that and also I was really young I suffered from something called hyperemesis but the job centre deemed me fit to work so I wasn’t entitled to sickness allowance, I had to actively apply for jobs right up until I had my son.”</p> <p>“I think more so being asked to look not presentable, you know you are asked to detail everything, like why you are not in employment and I think for me I was quite private at the time and I didn’t want to tell them my home circumstances and putting that out there for someone to scrutinise, I found that really degrading and I</p>
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	<p>just don't think you were supported to get money, it was the case of, there's other things out there other than benefits which was true but at the time I was just trying to survive and didn't need the lecture from anyone about what other options I had."</p> <p>Rosie "I could pay my full way, It's not like I'm on benefits"</p> <p>Debbie "Is this confidential?"</p>
<p>Theme <i>Survival within Neoliberal Capitalism</i></p> <p>Sub Theme <i>Struggling within the Neoliberal Labour Market</i></p>	<p>Betty "Well actually last year I got made redundant but I didn't think it was insecure, I was working in an accounts office. I really felt, especially my age, I was 68 (laughs), and they said, he had always said, when I first went to work for Bradley I thought he was one of the nicest guys you could ever meet he was always nice to people. I was going out the door and he said can I have a word with you and I thought I've done something, have I missed something, have I forgot something and he said I'm really sorry to tell you but we are making you redundant and I nearly fell of the chair I said what! And he said yeah with this new system what I'm going to do it, the accounts people, the accountants, the four of them they are going to take on the admin for their clients and if I give them a new client they'll just put them onto the system, the system will send them a letter. And I said, okay that's fine, but I felt like the feet had been taken away from me and I thought what am I going to do. I needed a job I needed the money."</p> <p>Kelly "And I just think it would be good for me to be able to approach people who were in a situation and try and set them on a different trajectory. I don't know if your experience would be similar in the sense, I have tried to secure employment in homeless agencies and the income is actually quite appalling and I think you know you want people that can actually make a difference but you don't want to pay them anywhere near as much as the effort that it takes to work in they services. Moneys not everything but I've got a family to feed so for me the job that I am doing pays a lot more, essentially its a call centre but it pays a lot more than any jobs associated with my degree or homelessness. As much as I would love to help people, financially, the organisations that want to employ people to help don't pay enough and I think thats also a massive barrier to helping and these people are just getting by themselves and , I don't know."</p> <p>Rosie "The hospitality industry everything is zero hour unless you are a manager. Personally, I prefer to be paid for the hours I work, I don't want to be a manager with salary because you end up working for free and you live and breathe where</p>

you are, you just don't sleep or see anyone. I was nightclubs for a long time, anti social hours, its expensive, you don't see anyone and sleep all day. So it is a lot zero hours so one week you can do 60-70 hours, crazy amounts then the next week through the summer when I'm doing festivals I would do all day and then the night clubs at night I only got about 4 hours sleep but it helped me out I could bank my money and have a security net. But this year, everything was obviously cancelled, it can be quite, it is quite scary times for our industry, nobody knows what is going to happen, so many place shave closed. So yeah there issues with zero hour which most people in hospitality are on and everyones pretty much are zero hour, there is no job security, its not like when our parents are younger and you need something to buy a house. It is so much harder now but when my Mum and Dad were my age they were settled with two babies, a house, contracted employment."

I do bits of art work for people on the side to try and earn a bit of cash that way and I've just started to do body shop I signed up a week ago, it's slow but we are getting there. I am trying to earn as much as I can because I think it's important to try and do more with my son. He's never really experienced family holidays. I know we won't have a whole family unit again but myself and my ex have new partners so at some point I'm hoping to afford to take him on holiday by earning more cash for funds for that, for memories for him to look back on.

one of my first temp job was working in XX and that was a temp job for a year and got redundant then a few weeks out of work and got my next job, that was a permanent role, that was 4 years for a planning consultancy, I covered the two Scotland offices. That's the one that started redundancies while I was pregnant. I then went to work for an architect and in XX as a PA to a director, worked there for 6 months and they couldn't afford to keep me on. Then another company for 2 years, they got out of paying me any redundancy and I was out of work for 6 months which was extremely difficult, Caleb was at nursery and I was trying to cover the private nursery fees which was really expensive, I had to call my parents to help me out with that one. After them I went to work as a temp for XX a mat cover for 6 months.

Zara

English degree and I actually went back, sorry it is all over the place and I started an accelerated law degree so I did that and graduated in 2015 but didn't do the traineeship after that, so I have the law degree but nothing after, so I worked as a legal secretary and did office temp and used it too when I worked for an MP. But then after that we decided to have a child so I focused on that.

Karen

	<p>I have GSCEs in school, wasn't very academic, I got my basics. I excelled in art and textiles and went to college and did two diplomas in art and design. Struggled to find any job related to it, I could never pinpoint what I wanted to do from it because it was a general art course, most people know what they want from it but I didn't. I took a year out before anything then got into work and never looked back. I had a few training courses on computers but not many, I had to learn different programmes to train other staff. A lot of my work is assistant manager so I had to help staff and train them too.</p>
<p>Theme <i>Survival within Neoliberal Capitalism</i></p> <p>Sub Theme <i>Individualistic Blame</i></p>	<p>Zara “ I would be looked at very negatively, there is an assumption that you should never let yourself get into this situation,there is a lack of understanding of how this happens, I never thought it would happen to me it just happens to other people. But even though I had been close to it previously when I had lost jobs and financially insecure I have been very close but I was always able to with not being a mother being able to scrape by. But when I had my daughter, you can't struggle with what you had before. I had been close to the edge for years but you couldn't pick yourself up like you would otherwise. They would also say you shouldn't have a child if you can't afford it, if you're on benefits you shouldn't have a child is a massive thing people say but that wasn't my case when I had my daughter but things happen.”</p> <p>Debbie “As an addict, you're frowned upon as a woman and an addict, you're supposed to be maternal and people think it is a choice. It can be , maybe violence and you don't have an option and you have to leave. But generally, people don't have the tolerance, they don't tolerate it, I think people are scared, if you think of the normal people on the street begging, I would go up and check if they are alright but normal people wouldn't go up. People expect you to be in the house, be the mother of the kids, if you are using kids people would say why don't you look after kids. It's not as simple as that, no one wants to be. There is a lot of judgement put on women.”</p> <p>“When I was homeless I was allocated and I had no problem. But when I was suffering with addiction, usually your voice, you know, this is my experience, you don't have a voice. Even if they do listen to you, you're being judged, you have gave all your power to these people, you give them all that power, they take your power and it's used against you.”</p> <p>Rosie</p>

	<p>“Domestic abuse is such a traumatic thing, you don’t want to wear it like a badge but you feel like you almost have to to get what you need and to be okay. It is not nice, no one wants to be classed as a victim, no one wants to have that stigma...I struggled for years I either had a job and couldn’t afford a flat or find one then I got the flat and I didn’t have a job, you are stuck between a rock and a hard place and you are trying everything and you work all these casual jobs and they are cash in hand and not reliable and you are trying to get a house but you don’t have money or contracts to prove. There is no help until you go through something traumatic, you won’t get any help otherwise.”</p>
<p>Theme <i>Navigating your pathway out of homelessness as a Woman</i></p> <p>Sub Theme <i>Staying Safe and Supported</i></p>	<p>Zara</p> <p>“It has made me a lot more scared, with temporary accommodation I think if I was a man I would be able to go anywhere in a temporary flat but you don’t know if you will be in danger and who will be there. And also the system seems to be geared more towards men and the people I spoke to were fantastic but I felt they had to go above and beyond to help me to make sure I was okay. My housing officer said I matched initially at a different flat and she swapped me for this one and said it would be better and safer, which is great but she shouldn’t have to do that. I think it is easier for men to go through, not an easier situation it would still be horrific but less of a fear element than a woman when there is another layer is there going to be a predator, there is an added level of anxiety for women.”</p> <p>“if I wasn’t a mum it would have been far easier, just thinking about yourself you are like right that’s fine and if I hadn’t been working I could have got work again easier but all of these doors were closed to me because I was a mother and had to rely on no funds as I made the choice to be a stay at home Mum. And having Milly was the first and foremost important thing to do.”</p> <p>“I didn’t know how difficult the system was to navigate and having a child is terrifying in terms of being in emergency accommodation which is why I stayed living with my ex even though that was horrific. The safety element and the fear involved in being a woman in the system, who are the neighbours. I loved where I ended up but the idea of not knowing where you will end up there is a massive fear element.”</p> <p>Anna</p> <p>It’s that sense of security again. Obviously there are people there you can talk to like the staff are there 247 and you can go down and have tea with staff and have a general conversation. They’re there and they will support you in any sort of you.</p> <p><i>And you share it with another person. How is that for you?</i></p> <p>It’s alright because you’re allowed to have overnights so sometimes she’s out and I am in and it’s fine or sometimes we’re both in together. But as I said some of</p>

them keep themselves to themselves and some of them do come out and talk to you. And it's two girls and two boys that share- it's never mixed. But the activities are mixed and different age ranges too because it's 16 to 25 year olds that they deal with.

How important is it for you for it to be mixed or not?

I find it hard to be around boys that I don't really know or like to share because in a group situation then I feel a bit more safer and stuff.

Betty

"Not really, my name is still on the council list, I still have no points, maybe I will get an old age pensioners house when I am like 100. I did put my name on the council, I got offered one house in this horrible horrible street which is terrible to say but it was, that's just the way it was and I knew eventually I would have to buy somewhere but at the time, it wasn't really that I was thinking of homelessness when I went into women's aid but that he had to know I was serious this time and that I wasn't coming back. My aunt Deana stayed near she was in XX and a didn't want to go over southside because my kids were here, I had to be close by. So really, I went to women's aid because, and I didn't actually know anything about going to a homeless unit. Whereas I know about it now, not even through women's aid but just through family talking about things, so you can just phone somebody and tell them you're homeless, if you're young but I can't do that. But I felt women's aid was a step in the right direction for me because I did feel that Seamus was verbally abusive, controlling, he was horrible to me, horrible horrible things he was saying to me. And it starts so slowly that you don't realise it and all of a sudden you realise "I'm not thinking about myself".

"I was a lot stronger but they helped me through that, they gave me support and looked after me, em but always there you know they would come and visit you nearly every day and then they could phone me any time 24 hours a day."

Kelly

"There has been so many, sofa surfing, stayed with my friends mum in an area called XX which is one of the areas I didn't feel safe in after the sexual assault that had happened. Then my aunt that I stayed with was in XX. Looking back now the conditions were actually quite dire, she was an alcoholic and I didn't realise at the time how disgusting the house was or I probably did to an extent but the cleaning facilities like her shower was cold so I couldn't take a hot shower it was just, the conditions actually were just filthy, she had cats that peed everywhere so the bed that I slept in was covered in cat be but I was you know constantly reminded that that was their house and not mine. I mean there were the odd days where my partners parents did allow me to stay, they stayed in a two bedroom house in XX with 2 siblings so it was very very crammed when I could stay. I can't even remember now, I remember travelling to Edinburgh one day to stay with a

friend that then when we got there his mum had realised that I still wasn't 16 at the time so I had to get the train back and then Buchanan Street obviously they had got the wee chairs so it was just a case of taking turns to try and sleep on the chairs, and it was scary, it was really scary. The same with Govanhill Park that was quite scary and then there's an ASDA in XX and there was a night they had a bench in the foye and we had used that as well but were asked to move on. It was difficult, I think it was just about survival really. I had all of my things that were important to me, I was really self conscious so my straighteners I would have had then with me regardless and my make up, my access to a phone, but it was just, it felt unclean and then when I stayed with my Aunt there was the cats urinating on everything so anything I did have was ruined by that. I recycled what I did have. I lost a lot of my possessions throughout that time until I finally got the flat I stayed in from the age of 16 so I don't actually really remember, when I did stay in that flat I think I became a bit of a hoarder like anything I did have I got a lot of , I had excess amount of clothes and I couldn't even tell you where I got them but I think it was that fear of not having anything again."

Rosie

"Yes, so in hostels, I was just out of care and I obviously it was an emergency so you would phone and it would be about a breakdown in relationship, breakdown in family, as well I was quite young the last time I was in the homeless hostel, it put me off, that's why I was sofa surfing and my friends experienced homelessness as well and you know if you can help a friend that's why I would rather do that than them being in one of those places especially if they are younger. The prettier you are in these places all the more feminine you are makes you at risk and puts you at risk, I mean you can try and dum that down and not wear make up and not do your hair but you will still be singled out because you are young and female. You are a target for so many bad things to happen to you. In the hostels I got a lot of unwanted male attention from people I would not speak to, i've never been a judgemental person but it is scary"

Debbie

"What happened with me was I had my partner, my wee boys Dad, I never had my own tenancy until 14-15 years ago but I never had a tenancy because I was with my partner, my ex partner for 11 years and but in that time that was in his house. If we fell out I could go back to my mum's at times or other times I would stay with friends. When you don't have your own tendency you feel quite vulnerable, because you are relying on somebody else, do you know what I mean?

And shit happens and then you are asked to leave. I was dependent on my boyfriend and thinking back you accept the unacceptable just to have somewhere to stay that night, like the way they were talking to you or maybe the way that they were treating you."

<p>Theme <i>Navigating your pathway out of homelessness as a woman</i></p> <p>Sub Theme Support System</p>	<p>Zara “amazing support system”</p> <p>“One of my friends had experienced something similar, she had gone through the homeless process and she was quite amazing when I said to her. She said I had to go to Easterhouse and text me the phone number and at the time was a massive thing, at that point the thought of having to google things to find out. She had been through it before and got a flat from XX, they were fantastic. I didn't get a flat with him. They've got a low turnover because it's so close to dennistoun. But they can't do anything if they don't have anything available. I feel like if I had to find all that information out myself I would have definitely found it a struggle. There was something about having a team for North and a team for South. Looking back it was simple but at that time everything was really stressful so for my friend to be able to give me the information was great. And she came along with me to my meeting was amazing to have someone there, and they asked me if I had applied before and I was like no this is all totally new to me.”</p> <p>Betty</p> <p>“That was definitely the hardest thing leaving my permanent home, the rest is all bricks and water, I missed them so so much. When I used to meet them for a coffee in the beginning I used to scream all the way back holding onto the steering wheel and I don't know how I did it but that's where it all came out and I got back to the house and it was fine- I couldn't scream in their but I could scream in the car. But that doesn't last, it got easier, I could have them over night, could watch the telly together and do the normal things, cook them dinner.”</p> <p>Kelly</p> <p>“ Yeah, and that's another thing to mention. When I was finally 16 and able to apply to the emergency council flat, they wanted all of the information so again I had to give them absolutely everything, they wanted confirmation from Say Women. I was supported by them at the time and they wanted a letter from the key worker that supported me to say how horrific things were and what I had been through and why they thought I should get emergency accommodation so again I felt quite degraded that they wanted a sob story of how bad things were for me before they were prepared to offer me anything. And the case didn't go to court, so essentially without that letter confirming that I was engaging with support services they didn't believe anything that I had been through so I felt that in order for them to believe that I needed a letter detailing the level of support I was receiving and for what reason before I was then offered accommodation.”</p>

	<p>“Like I had said, when I finally got the council flat I wasn't really meeting any of the criteria because I didn't have children, because I had been sofa surfing so they seen it as essentially well you do have somewhere to sleep. The only thing that got me that flat was the letter from Say Women because without that my application wasn't going anywhere so if I had other things that made me worthy of a flat then yes I would have got one easier and having a child would have filled that criteria but because I was on my own I wasn't hitting any of the points scoring system I think so without the letter, because it basically said she's extremely vulnerable, shes engaging with this service leaving her to sofa surf puts her at risk of further harm so without that element of risk or vulnerability there wouldn't have been anything.”</p> <p>Rosie</p> <p>“ But no women's aid did help me with food and stuff, my worker got me vouchers for food but until I got my white goods I couldn't live her, my women's aid worker helped me get those as quickly as they could. Obviously having someone on your team helps push things forward a bit, having someone with a title helps definitely, unless you do you're just another number, you are faceless. But you have your own story and there is a need but there are so many people in need. It's difficult and you feel you are competing with people in other situations which it shouldn't really be like that.”</p>
<p>Theme <i>Navigating your way out of Homelessness as a Woman</i></p> <p>Sub Theme <i>Maybe it's different for men?</i></p>	<p>Rosie</p> <p>“I think men are obviously, people would like to say we are equal but we are not. Certainly, I have never seen a man propositioned for sex in the town when he has been begging and I have always been cat called, women are seen as objects by men and that is just the way it is and people can disagree with that but it's true. We are at risk for the simple fact that we are women, they are bigger than us, you can be so overpowered by men and if you do try and keep yourself safe you are then worse you are called mouthy, cheeky. Men are hardier, young girls shouldn't be on the street, it's not safe, there is too many people that want bad things like that and one luer you when you're desperate they'll lure you to do things you don't want to do, not because you are weak but you're stuck and you don't have a way out not another option. That's why some girls end up in prostitution or an abusive relationship when the person will say I will take you away from this and of course you go running, that's the best option you have.”</p> <p>Anna</p> <p>“No, I think it's the same but some of the stuff women go through, men don't talk about it because some men are more, they've got more pride and they don't want to show what's wrong with them so they shield themselves and make it as if its different reasons so they don't get judged. I think men go to the streets more and</p>

	<p>they feel like they can't go to someone but a lassie would feel not safe on the street, God knows what would happen, but it could happen to a man as well. I think a man would just deal with it differently."</p> <p>Sharon "With guys, men being homeless, they're expected to be able to deal with it better, left to get on with it. With women, you need to be doing this, that and right for your child. In terms of women that don't have kids, I couldn't comment if it would be easier for them than it would be for guys. I just think guys would find somewhere to stay easier than women. As a Mum, you've got that bit of extra support from the government, so there is a little bit more security knowing you will get something and there is more chance because the government know you've got a child. But if you are a single woman I don't think it would be as easy and I think they would have the same kind of struggles as a guy would, maybe more so. I think more because they are not the primary carer of a child so they don't get the same kind of rights as a woman does being a parent. So in that respect, everything goes against them, and for a lot of guys their pride would get in the way a bit and wouldn't seek the help. But women would bury their pride and do whatever they need to do to support their child."</p>
<p>Theme <i>A Home is more than "bricks and water"</i></p> <p>Sub Theme <i>The true meaning of a home</i></p>	<p>Sharon "Secure in the fact that I know I'm far enough away from his Dad, he knows where we live, wasn't my choice to tell him but he didnt leave me much choice, he used my son against me to get the address out of me but its a secure entry downstairs, I've got a spyhole in my door, a lock, a chain, all of that adds to my wellbeing and makes me feel relaxed. And also to be able to say you can't come in. I know at a point he can still get in if someone comes out downstairs but I still won't let him in fully. To have that and be that far away and not worry about bumping into him, even when I've went to the shops I've not bumped into him, so I am a lot more relaxed than I used to be at the beginning of the year."</p> <p>"Where we are now, they're all older people and pensioners. They are lovely, so warm and welcoming and friendly. It's just a nice atmosphere and really makes a difference. Just bumping into people, it's a nice feeling that you can just be relaxed. Even when I was living with my ex, I had got to the point when I was dreading going home but to know I can come back here and not have to worry about that. It's nice to come home and I'm not on edge and I can just be me, the first time I've gotten to be me for years (cries)."</p> <p>Betty "Family, really, having the kids round and things like that, and that's what I missed. I used to meet the kids every night somewhere first at WA. They weren't</p>

allowed to come to the house at first, WA have got to get to know you. They eventually did come to the house and stay over. They came and met Mark and then said that they had meetings and he could come and stay over night so that was great. Because at the beginning that was awful, really awful. And they went through a really hard time, I said do you want me to come back. They said "don't come back Mum, we will get through this". So they were a great support as well, so yeah I really think home is your family and love, and your family."

"That was definitely the hardest thing leaving my permanent home, the rest is all bricks and water, I missed them so so much. When I used to meet them for a coffee in the beginning I used to scream all the way back holding onto the steering wheel and I don't know how I did it but that's where it all came out and I got back to the house and it was fine- I couldn't scream in their but I could scream in the car. But that doesn't last, it got easier, I could have them over night, could watch the telly together and do the normal things, cook them dinner."

Rosie

"Just that it is mine, its safe place, it's my house, my name that is on it, my safe place, especially after what has just happened I mean for me to lock my door and feel secure and safe in my home with my things and the way I want it to look nobody can tell me I don't like that, nobody can tell me to not do something, I can listen to music, I can watch tv. It's not the biggest of houses but it's mine. It is just security that nobody can take it from me, it's my responsibility to keep it and have it the way I want. I think it will be a constant working process to get it the way I want it to look it's just a bit of security. As a young woman as well to just shut your door and not be bothered by anyone and have somewhere safe where I could go that is just me and people can only come here if they are invited whereas if you stay with friends there are maybe people that you don't like that are still being brought around you because it is not your home but here I don't want anyone over. I am a little bit of a loner now these days, I like my own company and I don't feel the need to be with someone the whole time, after the domestic violence I just wanted some time to be myself. Domestic violence destroys your idea of yourself and your self esteem someone has told you you are bad or this or that. My ex was narcissistic and a bad person and gas lighty. It is my time, my home, time for me to build and be who I want and be what I am doing, it is huge for me I cried when I got the keys for here. Everything that is in it I got through friends or help I have been really lucky, I have painted it all myself. It is, it is the first time I have felt secure to have all my things in the one place that is not my parents. Because even in care I was always worried about things getting stolen and taken, and hostels and people's houses I didn't take anything valuable with me. But there, it is mine, it is just nice."

<p>Theme <i>A Home is More than Bricks and Water</i> Sub Theme <i>The Hard Work Beings After Homelessness</i></p>	<p>Anna “My key worker has helped me get counselling that I wasn’t ready to get. She helps me with that. Em just been like his side of the family like his Mum and his Gran and stuff. Em, his Mum’s helped because she’s my sons grandmother so she’s helped go through the process of the whole situation that he’s going through so she’s helped with that as well but obviously some of his family has went through what I’ve went through with my Stepdad and they’ve helped me overcome that and obviously not blame myself for what’s happened in the past”...you can get people that look at it differently like some people think they’re suffering from domestic violence or some people feel like they just need a bit more support. But all in, you don’t know anyone’s background so you can’t judge it until you know that person when they open up to you and you can understand it from their point of view.”</p> <p>Kelly “I don’t know what the word is, I think you are very judged and it is only this year that I started using the terminology that I was homeless because I think it’s associated with like drug addicts, people that have been involved in crime because a few times I have said it this year and people have had the response “you dont look like you’ve ever been homeless” and I don’t know what that means, what does someone that has been homeless look like or act like. I don’t know what the word is I’m trying to find but there is a huge element of judgement especially for women it is that bit worse, women are supposed to be home makers, be able to sustain things, going on the reaction that I had from people when I decided this year to stop hiding from my past is almost like they expect people that are the lower class of society to have been the people that are homeless and because I don’t fit that, I have a job and stability now, it’s almost like you don’t look like that, you don’t look broken enough.”</p> <p>Rosie “It is kind of scary, you just get no help, and if you can’t make the deposit and if you can’t make the deposit and you have to fill a house. I mean I got keys for this property in september and I didn’t move in until the middle of october, I was paying rent whilst sofa surfing until I could get money to get things in it so that it is liveable for me. It is liveable now. A lot of people think once you get keys for a house you are not homeless anymore, you have then got to find the money for gas and electrics then your white goods, then money for food, then have the money to heat your house, especially at this time of year, buy the things to cook with, buy the things to sleep in, it is, it takes time. I am really lucky I get a lot of</p>

help from the charity I used to be with, without them I wouldn't have got my bed or the van to take things to. I couldn't have lived here, I am still at college, still working, then because of COVID I lost my job, I am on furlough but its not my wage I would be getting and I am zero hour. It is really difficult and people think when you get your house all your problems are solved but its not its a whole new chapter, it is difficult.”

Betty

“ Mainly because of where it was, I didn't feel safe in it. It was all these closes when you went in the close it was like garbage all over the place and bits of stuff lying in the garden. You could walk 5 minutes down the road and it was okay but there wasn't. When we went into the flat the flat stunk and it was just like up this close that didn't feel nice to me, I didn't feel nice, I didn't feel that I wanted to be there and when you came out I walked round after it, and I had the dog with me. The first thing she said to me was “you can't bring the dog here, you're not allowed” and I thought “why are you so horrible to me”. And I saw other dogs in people's balconies. So then I took a walk around and there was so much rubbish and it was depressing, it didn't look nice. And down the bottom of the road some of the closes were beautiful, the gardens were beautiful. So it just didn't feel nice, really, to me. If it had been down the road with a nice garden with no rubbish it would have been fine and probably near nice people. And that was all the ever offered me. But I suppose I didn't push it, I did sign the letter and said keep my name on the list but they won't offer me because they know I have this but I keep my name on the list.”