

CATHY COME HOME at 60

**60
YEARS**
1966 - 2026

**A practice guide to hosting
a screening and discussion**

**Watch.
Discuss.
Reflect.
COMMIT TO ACTION.**



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A Practical Guide to Hosting a Screening and Discussion

Using the 60th anniversary of *Cathy Come Home* to bring people together, encourage reflection and inspire practical action on homelessness and housing insecurity.

Introduction

Sixty years after its original broadcast, *Cathy Come Home* remains one of the most influential British television dramas ever made. It helped transform public understanding of homelessness and housing insecurity and prompted a national conversation about how society responds when people lose their homes.

While much has changed since 1966, many of the issues raised by the film continue to affect individuals and families today.

The 60th anniversary provides an opportunity for organisations, partnerships and communities to come together to:

- Reflect on what the film still tells us today
- Explore local experiences of homelessness and housing insecurity
- Bring new voices into the conversation
- Identify practical actions that can make a difference

This guide is designed to help organisations organise a simple, effective and accessible event.

The objective is to enable more people to watch, discuss, reflect and commit to practical action.

What Success Looks Like

A successful event doesn't need hundreds of attendees or extensive media coverage. Success might simply mean:

- More people understanding the realities of homelessness today
- New conversations taking place
- People making connections across sectors
- Greater awareness of local support and services
- Practical commitments being identified
- New partnerships being formed

The aim is to use the film as a starting point for meaningful discussion and practical action.

Three Simple Ways to Take Part

Option 1: Staff Discussion Session

Ask participants to watch the film individually in advance.

Hold a 60-90 minute discussion session focused on:

- Reflections on the film.
- What has changed since 1966.
- What remains familiar today.
- What action your organisation could take.

This is often the simplest and lowest-cost option.

Option 2: Screening and Discussion Event

Arrange a licensed screening of the film followed by a facilitated discussion.

This format works well for:

- Residents
- Staff
- Board members
- Community organisations
- Volunteers
- Partners

A discussion immediately after the screening enables participants to explore themes while the film remains fresh in their minds.

Option 3: Partnership Event

Bring together local organisations including:

- Housing providers
- Local authorities
- Charities
- Health partners
- Education providers
- Community organisations
- Faith groups
- Businesses

Use the film as a shared starting point for a discussion about what is the Cathy story in our community today?

Accessing the Film and Screening Requirements

Before organising an event, decide whether people will watch the film individually or whether you intend to screen it to a group.

Option 1: Individual Viewing

If participants are watching independently before attending a discussion, they should access the film through lawful personal viewing routes available at the time of your event. These may include broadcast, streaming or DVD formats.

This is often the simplest option for:

- Staff discussions
- Board sessions
- Partnership meetings
- Online conversations

No public screening licence is required if everyone watches independently.

At the time of writing, the film can be viewed through Amazon Prime Video.

The BBC Archive has indicated that a digitally remastered version of the film is expected to be broadcast on BBC Four and subsequently made available on BBC iPlayer for up to 12 months. Organisations should check availability before planning their event.

Option 2: Public or Group Screening

If you want to show the film to a group in a meeting room, community venue, cinema, office, church hall or other public setting, you should secure the appropriate screening permission before advertising the event.

Personal access through BBC iPlayer, Amazon Prime Video or a personally owned DVD does not automatically provide the right to screen the film publicly.

For most organisations, the recommended route is to obtain a public screening licence directly from Concord Media.

Concord Media

Website: www.concordmedia.org.uk

Email: sales@concordmedia.org.uk

Concord Media is the UK distributor of *Cathy Come Home* and can issue the required public screening licence together with written confirmation of screening rights.

Concord Media has advised that licences for public screenings are available through them, with a guide price of approximately £50. Organisations should confirm the current fee and arrangements directly with Concord Media before making bookings or publicising an event.

Option 3: Schools, Colleges and Universities

Educational institutions may be able to access the film through educational licensing arrangements.

Possible routes include:

- ERA Licensed Services
- BFI educational resources
- Existing college or university licences

Where possible, work with your institution's library, media or learning resources team to confirm what licences are already in place.

Before You Advertise

Please don't advertise a screening until you have:

- ☒ Confirmed how people will watch the film
- ☒ Checked screening permissions
- ☒ Confirmed any licence fees
- ☒ Arranged access to the film itself
- ☒ Confirmed venue requirements
- ☒ Checked accessibility arrangements
- ☒ Ensured captions or subtitles are available where possible
- ☒ Retained written confirmation of licences and permissions

Simple Recommendation

For most organisations there are four practical options:

Easiest

Ask people to watch the film individually and bring them together for discussion.

Shortest

Use approved clips and discussion resources rather than the full film.

Partnership Approach

Work with a school, college or university that already has an appropriate educational licence.

Public Event

Obtain a public screening licence through Concord Media or the relevant rights holder before promoting the event.

Planning Your Event

Step 1: Choose Your Audience

Decide who you want to reach. Possible audiences include:

- Staff
- Residents
- Board members
- Community leaders
- Students
- Businesses
- Partners
- The wider public

Be clear about your purpose from the outset.

Step 2: Choose a Format

Select an approach that matches your audience and available resources.
You do not need a large event.

A small discussion involving ten people can be just as valuable as a public screening involving hundreds.

Step 3: Confirm Viewing Arrangements

Before promoting your event, confirm how participants will access the film.
Different arrangements apply depending on whether people are watching individually or attending a public screening.

Step 4: Prepare Discussion Questions

Keep discussion focused on learning and action.
Avoid trying to solve every housing challenge in a single session.

Step 5: Capture Commitments

Finish with practical next steps. Ask participants “What will you do for Cathy?”

Key Roles

For most events, allocate responsibility for:

- Event lead
- Facilitator
- Licensing and film access
- Accessibility and attendee support
- Communications and invitations
- Follow-up and pledge tracking

For smaller events, one person may carry out several of these roles.

Event Checklist

Before the event:

- ☒ Confirm viewing rights and permissions
- ☒ Book venue or online platform
- ☒ Check accessibility arrangements
- ☒ Appoint a facilitator
- ☒ Prepare discussion questions
- ☒ Arrange support information
- ☒ Prepare pledge cards or commitment forms
- ☒ Confirm follow-up arrangements

Accessibility and Support

The film contains themes including:

- Homelessness
- Poverty
- Housing insecurity
- Family separation
- Bureaucratic and institutional challenges

Some attendees may find these themes difficult or distressing.

Where possible:

- Provide clear advance information
- Ensure accessible venues
- Offer subtitles or captions where available
- Provide a quiet space if appropriate
- Signpost support services
- Encourage participants to step out if needed

Working with Lived Experience

People with lived experience can bring valuable insight to discussions. However, participation should always be:

- Voluntary
- Safe
- Supported
- Trauma-informed
- Properly recognised

People should never be expected to share personal experiences simply to make an event more impactful.

In many cases, existing stories, films, podcasts or published experiences may be the most appropriate way to include lived experience perspectives. With resources often already available within your own organisation or via local partners.

How the Crisis Experts by Experience Panel can Support

If you'd like someone with lived experience of homelessness to participate at your event, the charity Crisis has a panel of Experts by Experience, who may be able to send someone to speak at the event and join panel discussions.

They can provide an invaluable insight into the variety of homelessness that exists today, the challenges they faced and how people like them could be better supported in the future.

Their time is charged at £15 per hour, per expert.

To enquire, please contact memberinvolvement@crisis.org.uk.

Facilitating the Discussion

Suggested Opening

Welcome and thank you for joining us. Today is about far more than remembering an important television programme.

It's an opportunity to think about what the film tells us about homelessness and housing insecurity today, what has changed, what has not changed, and what practical action we can take.

We encourage everyone to contribute respectfully, listen openly and focus on solutions as well as challenges.

Core Discussion Questions

Choose the questions most relevant to your audience.

Reflection

- What stayed with you most strongly from the film?
- What surprised you?
- What would surprise audiences today?

Relevance

- What felt familiar?
- What has changed since 1966?
- What has not changed?

Local Perspective

- What is the Cathy story in our community today?
- Where are the earliest warning signs of housing insecurity?
- What support already exists locally?

Action

- What could prevent someone reaching crisis point?
- Who should be part of this conversation?
- What practical action could we take within the next 60 days?

Sample Event Agenda

Screening and Discussion Event

Welcome and introduction - 10 minutes

Screening - 90 minutes

Break - 10 minutes

Facilitated discussion - 40 minutes

Commitments and next steps - 20 minutes

Close - 10 minutes

Total time: Approximately 3 hours

Optional Discussion Exercise

What Would Cathy Face Today?

If time allows, invite participants to compare themes in the film with experiences today.

Themes in the Film	Possible Themes Today
Insecure housing	High housing costs
Housing shortages	Limited social housing supply
Poverty	Cost of living pressures
Social stigma	Continuing stigma
Bureaucracy	Complex service systems
Isolation	Mental health pressures
Family instability	Multiple and interconnected challenges

This is an opportunity to explore how housing insecurity may be experienced today.

What Will You Do for Cathy?

Every event should finish with a practical commitment. Encourage participants to identify:

One Action

What will be done?

One Owner

Who will take responsibility?

One Timescale

When will it happen?

Good commitments are:

- Specific – Realistic – Measurable - Time-limited

Examples of Commitments

Individuals

- **Support a homelessness charity** - volunteer, fundraise or donate to help people build their lives beyond homelessness
- **Follow a homelessness charity** or an organisation within the housing sector on social media to learn more about the work they do, the challenges they face, the solutions available
- **Raise awareness** in your networks on social media and in real life by talking to friends, family and colleagues about what you've learned today

Housing Organisations

- **Review prevention services** to identify where people at risk of homelessness can be reached earlier, and what could be improved in referral routes, advice or tenancy support
- **Strengthen partnership working** with local authorities, charities, health services and community groups so people facing housing insecurity receive more joined-up support
- **Host follow-up discussions** with residents, staff, board members and partners to explore what housing insecurity looks like locally and what practical action should follow

Businesses

- **Offer work placements or employment support** for people affected by homelessness, working with local charities or housing organisations to make opportunities accessible and supported
- **Provide mentoring or skills support** by sharing practical expertise like CV writing, interview preparation, budgeting, digital skills or workplace confidence
- **Support local homelessness initiatives** through fundraising, donations, staff volunteering or practical help that responds to what local organisations say they need

Community Organisations

- **Provide meeting space** for advice sessions, community conversations, partner meetings or follow-up activity linked to homelessness and housing insecurity
- **Recruit volunteers** by encouraging members, supporters or residents to give time to organisations supporting people experiencing homelessness
- **Connect people to support services** by making sure staff and volunteers know where to signpost people for housing advice, emergency support and local help

Following Up

A discussion only matters if something happens afterwards.

Within Two Weeks

- Thank attendees
- Share key messages
- Circulate commitments

After Thirty Days

- Contact participants
- Check progress

After Sixty Days

- Request updates
- Share examples of action taken
- Consider next steps

What you can do if you see someone rough sleeping: <https://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/how-to-help-someone-experiencing-homelessness/>

Simple Invitation Template

Subject: Cathy Come Home at 60: Screening and Discussion

We're inviting you to join us for an event marking the 60th anniversary of *Cathy Come Home*.

Together we'll reflect on the film's continuing relevance, explore homelessness and housing insecurity today, and discuss practical actions that can make a difference in our community.

Date: [Insert]

Time: [Insert]

Venue: [Insert]

We hope you can join us.

Simple Pledge Card

What Will You Do for Cathy?

I / We commit to:

Owner:

By:

First Step:

Closing Message

The 60th anniversary of *Cathy Come Home* shouldn't be a moment of nostalgia. Its value lies in the conversations it starts and the actions that follow.

Whether your event involves ten people or two hundred, the most important outcome is that participants leave with a clearer understanding of homelessness and housing insecurity and a practical commitment to do something about it.

What began as a single LinkedIn post became a collaborative effort involving people from across the housing sector and beyond. Many started as strangers, connected through a shared belief that the 60th anniversary of *Cathy Come Home* should be more than a moment of reflection. Together, they helped create something intended to inspire conversation, understanding and practical action.

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With gratitude,

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