

Homelessness in Cambridge, 1st April – 30th June 2008

1 Young people and homelessness

1.1 Advice and advocacy for young people

This table provides information about the background of the young people who approach the city council's Housing Advice Centre and also the subjects about which they received advice.

	2006 - 7	2007 - 8	Current period				
	quarterly	quarterly	Age				
	average	average	16-17	18-21	22-25	ALL	
Total	133	123	23	50	30	103	
White British	44%	55%	83%	70%	37%	63%	
Other ethnic origins	17%	15%	0%	12%	33%	16%	
Ethnic origin not stated	39%	30%	17%	18%	30%	21%	
Female	58%	57%	78%	58%	53%	61%	
Male	42%	43%	22%	42%	47%	39%	
Advice area	Benefits	13	4	1	2	0	3
	Debt	1	1	0	0	0	0
	Disrepair	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Domestic violence	5	4	0	2	2	4
	Eviction	7	7	1	2	2	5
	Harassment and illegal eviction	3	1	0	1	1	2
	Homelessness	39	31	7	9	11	27
	Landlord/tenant relations	16	10	2	2	4	8
	Looking for accommodation	93	80	10	32	23	65
	Mortgage arrears	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Parental eviction	26	20	7	7	0	14
	Racial Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Relationship breakdown	10	6	1	1	3	5
	Rent arrears	5	3	0	0	0	0
	Other	6	7	2	2	2	6

1.2 Centre 33

Centre 33 has a dedicated advice and advocacy worker to help young people with housing issues.

Statutory homeless application	2
Access scheme	0
Rent deposit guarantee scheme	0
Referral to accommodation	10
Landlord/tenant advice	0
Debt/money advice	0
Mediation	1
Counselling	0

The table on the left shows the types of referrals made to other agencies.

(The access scheme helps homeless households into the private rented sector by paying one month's rent in advance and a rent deposit OR guarantee. The rent deposit guarantee scheme provides landlords with a deposit guarantee on behalf of new tenants who cannot afford the deposit.)

1.3 Supported housing for young people

The first part of this table provides information about residents who left young people's accommodation during the period covered by this report and the reasons why they left. The second part shows the numbers in this accommodation at the end of the period and the proportion involved in regular education, employment (including voluntary work) or training (EET) as well as the proportion who have been in their accommodation for more than 18 months.

	Cambridge Youth Foyer	Castle Project	Railway House	Whitworth House	YMCA	Total
Departures	3		3	5	29	40
Positive move-ons	67%		67%	100%	28%	43%
Evictions - arrears	0%	Not available	0%	0%	31%	23%
Evictions - behaviour	33%	available	33%	0%	14%	15%
Abandonments	0%		0%	0%	14%	10%
Other	0%		0%	0%	14%	10%
Residents at end of quarter	27		10	13	70	120
Involved in EET at least once per week	74%	Not available	60%	38%	31%	44%
Residents in accommodation for 18 months +	52%		10%	15%	14%	23%

2 General Supported Housing

2.1 Supported housing

The first part of this table provides information about residents who left accommodation during the period covered by this report and the reasons why they left. The second part shows the numbers in this accommodation at the end of the period and the proportion involved in regular education, employment (including voluntary work) or training (EET) as well as the proportion who have been in their accommodation for more than 18 months.

	Cambridge Cyrenians	ECHG dispersed houses	ECHG Victoria Road hostel	ECHG Willow Walk hostel	Jubilee Project	Total
Departures	8	3	35	10	3	59
Positive move-ons	50%	67%	40%	30%	67%	42%
Evictions - arrears	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Evictions - behaviour/other	25%	0%	34%	40%	33%	32%
Abandonments	13%	33%	17%	10%	0%	15%
Other	13%	0%	9%	20%	0%	10%
Residents at end of quarter	37	21	62	21	5	146
Involved in EET at least once per week	46%	71%	40%	33%	100%	47%
Residents in accommodation for 18 months +	49%	19%	11%	10%	20%	22%

A note about supported accommodation providers:

Cambridge Cyrenians provides supported accommodation for 50 people: 16 in two short-stay houses; eight in one long-stay house; 16 in bedsits in two adjoining houses; four in one move-on house; and six in one house for long-term drinkers. (This figure does not include the leased flats where Cambridge Cyrenians offers accommodation and more limited support to ten people.)

English Churches Housing Group (ECHG) houses 123 people as follows:

74 in the hostel on Victoria Road

22 in its Willow Walk hostel

27 in its dispersed move-on accommodation (21 in shared houses and six in flats – residents of the flats have tenancies, so they tend to stay in accommodation for much longer than residents of the shared houses).

2.2 Focus on homeless clients

This section focuses on a different aspect of the needs and experiences of homeless clients each quarter. It sets the current picture against the trends in recent years. It is based on information gathered by Cambridge advice and accommodation providers about their new or departing clients.

Support requirements

Agency staff record the support that their new clients are already receiving:

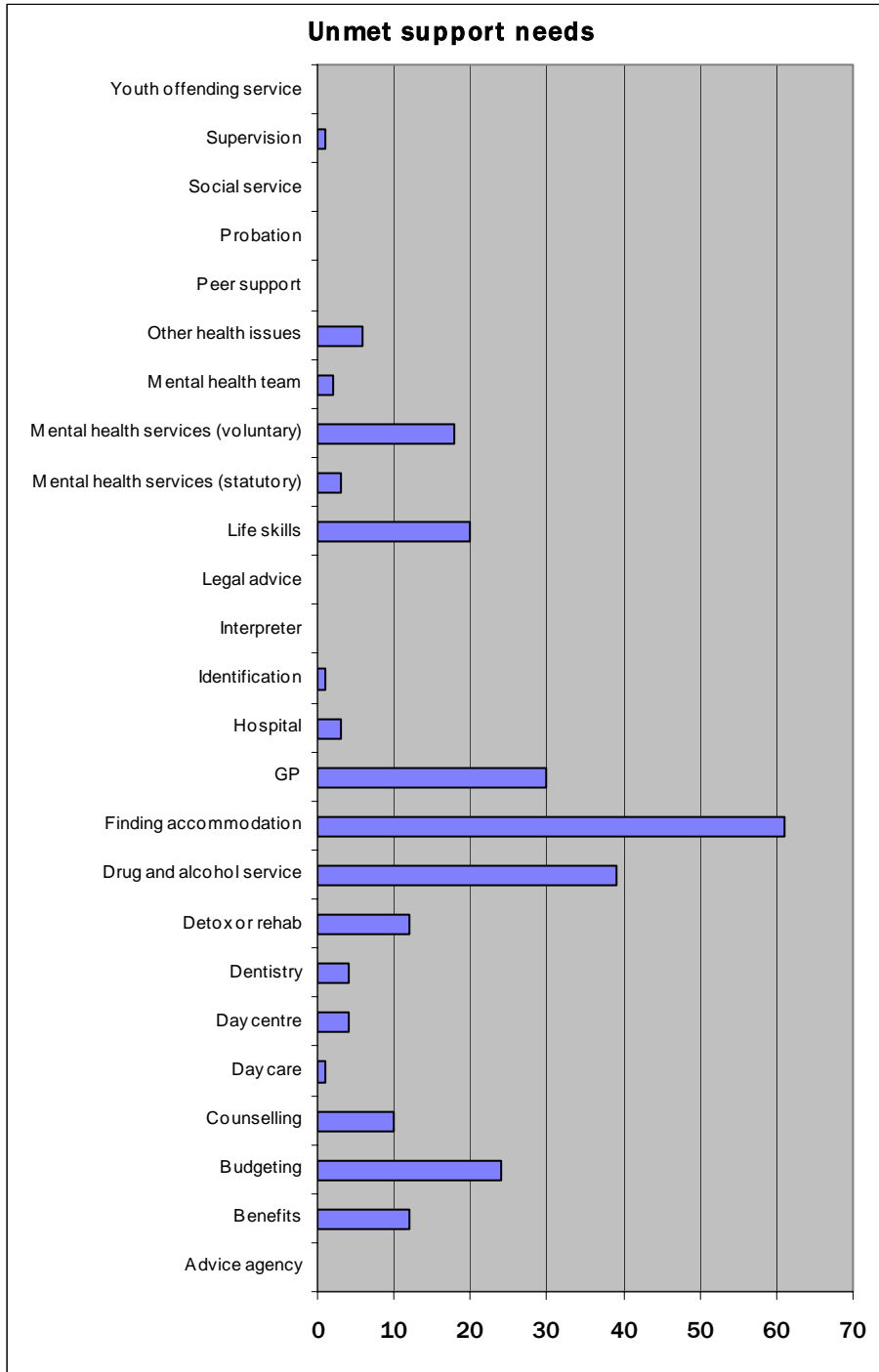
	2004-5 quarterly average	2005-6 quarterly average	2006-7 quarterly average	2007-8 quarterly average	April- June 2008
Advice agency	5	4	5	18	15
Benefits	42	40	61	59	17
Budgeting	9	12	10	17	3
Counselling	8	8	5	7	4
Day care	3	2	3	1	0
Day centre	42	48	41	21	4
Dentist	0	5	7	11	12
Detox or rehab	5	3	3	4	4
Drug and alcohol service	30	23	30	33	15
Finding accommodation	96	51	46	45	39
GP	42	69	68	68	35
Hospital	3	3	2	2	4
Identification	3	3	18	5	2
Interpreter	1	0	0	0	0

Legal advice	2	3	3	4	1
Life skills	7	6	8	11	2
Mental health services (statutory)	1	5	3	3	0
Mental health services (voluntary)	0	3	3	6	1
Mental health team	7	1	0	1	1
Other health issues	0	1	3	3	1
Peer support/befriending scheme	1	1	1	0	0
Probation	17	17	16	18	12
Social services	5	2	4	2	0
Supervision	1	0	1	4	1
Youth offending service	1	4	3	2	0

Agency staff assess the unmet support needs (i.e. support which clients require, but are not yet receiving) of their new clients:

	2004-5 quarterly average	2005-6 quarterly average	2006-7 quarterly average	2007-8 quarterly average	April- June 2008
Advice agency	4	6	9	4	0
Benefits	30	23	40	35	12
Budgeting	30	25	38	36	24
Counselling	29	27	33	19	10
Day care	1	1	2	1	1
Day centre	9	10	1	11	4
Dentistry	13	14	19	12	4
Detox or rehab	22	15	31	13	12
Drug and alcohol service	49	55	13	47	39
Finding accommodation	54	90	124	69	61
GP	18	35	47	27	30
Hospital	2	3	3	2	3
Identification	4	7	7	6	1
Interpreter	1	1	1	1	0
Legal advice	3	3	7	4	0
Life skills	26	22	43	30	20
Mental health services (statutory)	6	4	0	4	3
Mental health services (voluntary)	6	6	17	8	18
Mental health team	0	1	26	3	2
Other health issues	5	5	6	4	6
Peer support	3	3	1	1	0
Probation	3	2	4	2	0
Social service	2	3	5	2	0
Supervision	1	1	0	3	1
Youth offending service	1	0	0	1	0

This chart shows the unmet support needs of new clients.



2.3 Floating support services

ECHG Tenancy Sustainment Team

Tenancy support agencies provide information on the number of people they are supporting and the amount of time they have been in their tenancies (column 1). These figures include all the new clients from the last two years, even if they are no longer in their tenancies (column 2) or if they no longer require support (column 3).

ECHG Tenancy Sustainment Team

	Still in tenancy on 30 th June 2008	Tenancy has broken down by 30 th June 2008	Tenancy Support Team is* still providing support on 30 th June 2008
in accommodation up to 6 months	18	0	18
in accommodation 6-12 months	63	2	58
in accommodation 12-18 months	55	7	18
in accommodation 18-24 months	125	9	7

*or was still providing support at point of tenancy breakdown.

Jimmy's Tenancy Support

Clients supported by Jimmy's Tenancy Support

Up to 1 year	4
Over 1 and up to 2 years	7
Over 2 and up to 5 years	18
Over 5 and up to 10 years	0
Over 10 years	0
Total	29

Clients discharged by Jimmy's Tenancy Support

No longer needed support	3
Failure to engage	2
Tenancy failure	1
Died	0
Total	6

Cambridge City Council Housing Support

This service has provided information on the numbers of clients being supported at the end of the period and the numbers being discharged during this period.

Receiving support on 30 th June 2008	77
Discharged after completing support plan	17
Discharged without completing support plan	3

3 Services to Rough Sleepers

3.1 Rough sleeping

The City Council, with the help of many different agencies, runs a count of rough sleepers twice a year.

Rough sleepers found on counts

	Target	Average over last 2 years	Average over last 12 months	Most recent count
Number of rough sleepers	10 or below	6	2	0



The Street Outreach Team (SOT) provides day-to-day support and advice for rough sleepers.

Outcomes for SOT clients

	Target	2006-7 quarterly average	2007-8 quarterly average	April - June 2008
People helped by SOT into treatment or accommodation who subsequently return to the streets	No more than 20%	5%	5%	6%
New arrivals who return home or engage in other positive diversionary measures to help them leave the streets	90% or above	83%	87%	86%
Number of clients who were seen sleeping rough in at least four separate weeks during this period	No target	unavailable	unavailable	3
Rough sleepers diverted to areas outside Cambridge	No target	15	11	27

3.2 Direct access accommodation

Jimmy's Night Shelter has 31 beds and provides most of the direct access accommodation for rough sleepers in Cambridge.

Occasions on which Jimmy's Night Shelter turns away an individual who is looking for accommodation and the occupancy rate of the beds

	2006-7 quarterly average	2007-8 quarterly average	April - June 2008
Occupancy rate	89%	73%	74%
Men's dorms	97%	82%	89%
Women's dorm	62%	38%	55%
Number of occasions when someone was turned away	124	75	95
Number of individuals turned away in the period	Not known	Not known	68

Duration of stay of all guests who were in Jimmy's Night Shelter at the end of this period

1-7 days	4
8-14 days	7

15-28 days	3
29 days-3 months	13
Over 3 months	0
Total residents at end of period	27

Reasons for stays over 28 days

No accommodation available in Cambridge or other area	10
Has turned down offer of accommodation	1
Not engaging with move-on process	1
Mental health assessment has delayed move-on	1

During this period **13** guest stayed at Jimmy's Night Shelter for one night only.

Reasons why guests left the night shelter during this period.

	2006-7 quarterly average	2007-8 quarterly average	April - June 2008
Planned departures	34	45	32
Evicted	10	17	30
Abandoned	37	37	21

Reasons for turnaways

Has accommodation elsewhere	14
No beds available	35
No housing benefit entitlement (no documentation)	13
Ineligible for housing benefit	6
Ban	23
Reconnections ban	1
No dog spaces	1
Other	2

Departure destinations for guests who left the night shelter during this period

	April - June 2008
To live with friends	5
To live with family	1
Bed and breakfast	2
Supported housing	18
Returned to where they had come from	4
Hospital	5
Not known	48

Reasons for evictions

Verbal aggression	5
Physical aggression	2
Drug related	3
Rent arrears	0
Too complex needs	2
No entry without housing benefits proofs	5
Other	4

3.3 Reconnections Policy

The *reconnections policy* was introduced in June 2007 in response to high demand for homelessness services and the fact that some itinerant individuals never stay in one place for long enough to work with services to address their problems. The policy means that newcomers to Cambridge can access services for a limited time only and that if they are deemed to have no local connection to Cambridge they will have to work towards returning to a place to which they are connected and where they have links with services or there is lower demand for housing.

This section contains information on clients who were subject to the reconnections policy, which can be found on the [Cambridge City Council website](#).

Reconnections cases April – June 2008

New cases	82	with local connection	27
		without local connection	53
		Unknown	2

Rough sleepers found on last street count (25 th April 2008)	0 (see 3.1 for more information)
Repeat cases – individuals discussed by reconnections forum and returning at a later date	16
Cases where reconnection was required but not possible due to lack of services in another local authority area	1 (Forest Heath District Council)

Mental health assessments	
Referred for assessment	10
Completed within 14 day target	7
Completed outside 14 day target	3

This table shows the outcomes of all reconnections cases that were closed during this period.

	Clients with local connection	Clients without local connection
Higher stage accommodation in Cambridge	6	3
Remains in first stage accommodation	6	0
Left accommodation of own accord, stayed in Cambridge	2	1
Evicted from first stage accommodation	1	8
Left Cambridge of own accord	0	11
Returned to previous accommodation	1	4
Gone to prison	0	2
Lost contact	5	5
Successful reconnection	1	11
Found accommodation independently outside Cambridge	1	2
Rough sleeping in Cambridge	2	1
Sectioned or other long-term hospital admission	1	2
Cambridge City Council accepted permanent or temporary duty to house	0	1
Returned to family or friends	0	1

4 Work and Learning

4.1 Update on the *Work and Learning Action Plan*

Key achievements, ongoing developments and issues

- Pushing homelessness up the agenda of the Investing in Communities funding – this revenue and capital money has not previously prioritized homeless people. One proposal is that ECHG’s Missing Links model should be rolled out for the whole homeless community, run by a new full-time worker
- Further work to ensure that those who work with homeless people are made aware of work and learning opportunities, including regular briefings and newsletter
- The conclusion of a tendering process that saw Wintercomfort appointed as provider of the new learning and development service – the work and learning co-ordinator will work closely with Wintercomfort to monitor and develop the service
- Job shadowing opportunities have been set up with Job Centre Plus and housing agency staff
- Job Centre Plus have visited three housing providers to brief staff on changes to benefits – further visits are planned for Advice for Life and Citizens’ Advice Bureau
- The work and learning co-ordinator continues to seek funding for the ‘Homeless Truths’ radio project, broadcast on 209 Radio
- Liaison carried out with SEETEC and Shaw Trust, organizations which support the most disadvantaged groups and those furthest away from the labour market back to work
- A ‘Business Action on Homelessness’ briefing session has been planned raise the scheme’s profile, increase participation and prevent the withdrawal of funding
- Further work required with Papworth Trust on the Pathways to Work project
- Cambridge City Council sports development coordinator has developed a plan for increasing participation in sporting activities within hostels – the intention is to run sporting activities in hostels and then encourage people to move into community based activities
- Cambridge Link Up had stalls at Strawberry Fair and the Folk Festival and raised money with their recycled bags and other goods. They made a successful bid to the Lottery Fund for making CDs of the music of Street Voices, which will be sold to raise money for the group. They are exploring the possibility of becoming a registered charity.
- The project coordinator of ECHG’s Missing Links scheme will be leaving the project in August – Missing Links provides information, advice and guidance about work and learning, as well as activities based in the hostel. The co-ordinator has made a huge contribution and her expertise in this area will be hard to replace. There are concerns for the scheme’s sustainability as its funding beyond March 2009 is under threat

4.2 Wintercomfort

Wintercomfort, Cambridge’s day-centre, supports those who are homeless or at risk of losing their homes by offering them basic amenities, opportunities for educational development and recreation, and a range of services designed to help them achieve greater autonomy.

Average number of visits per week	256
Total number of members at the end of period	114

Appointments made	182
Appointments kept	116
Action plan agreed	10
Hostel placement	1
Tenancy started	3
External training or education started	0
External training or education completed	0
External job or voluntary position started	3
Other positive outcome	4
Positive disengagement	6

The table on the left shows the work carried out and objectives achieved through meetings with key workers.

Literacy	2
Numeracy	0
Computer	11
Skills for life	65
Domestic skills	0
Budgeting	0
Craft activity	49

The table on the left shows the numbers of individual attendances of sessions with the life skills worker.

Wintercomfort runs a course on food and health education. This table on the right shows the involvement and achievement of individuals on this course.

Sessions attended	24
Clients due to take basic food hygiene certificate	Not available
Basic food hygiene certificate completed	Not available
Clients due to finish course and cook at Wintercomfort	Not available
Clients participating in course	3

5 Advice and Support Services

5.1 Housing Advice Centre, Cambridge City Council

The Housing Advice Centre provides free specialist advice and assistance on all matters relating to housing, for residents of Cambridge. It also provides information and general advice to landlords.

The table below shows the areas on which advice has been given during this period.

	2006-7 quarterly average	2007-8 quarterly average	April - June 2008
Total cases	315	319	252
Benefits	33	14	10
Debt	6	3	1
Disrepair	1	1	1
Domestic violence	19	12	23
Eviction	22	19	16
Harassment and illegal eviction	6	2	5
Homelessness	97	74	69
Landlord/ tenant issues	53	36	25
Looking for accommodation	227	200	150

Mortgage arrears	4	2	0
Racial harassment	1	0	0
Relationship breakdown	40	31	21
Rent arrears	13	7	4
Other	26	13	17

The table below shows the outcomes of advice cases that were closed in this period.

	2006-7 quarterly average	2007-8 quarterly average	April - June 2008
Accommodation obtained	31	26	12
Accommodation retained	22	18	13
Advice given	257	197	114
Benefits obtained	4	1	0
Debt repayment plan negotiated	2	2	0
Homelessness prevented	33	20	11
Landlord-tenant dispute resolved	4	2	0

For the cases above where homelessness was prevented the prevention types are listed here.

	April - June 2008
Accommodated at the YMCA	1
Housed through the access or rent deposit guarantee scheme	1
Other	9

(The access scheme helps homeless households into the private rented sector by paying one month's rent in advance and a rent deposit OR guarantee. The rent deposit guarantee scheme provides a deposit guarantee for the landlord.)

5.2 Citizens' Advice Bureau

The CAB declined to provide information for this report. Efforts are continuing to provide data on their work.

5.3 Cambridge Law Centre

CLC offers an independent specialist housing advice casework service. The table on the right shows the primary problems which caused people to visit CLC.

Homelessness	18
Rent or mortgage arrears	31
Other possession issues	8
Disrepair	2
Other tenancy issues	18
Housing benefit	4
Other	28

The table below shows the kind of advice and assistance which people received.

Total number of clients advised	109
Provided with advice or advocacy in relation to City Council homelessness application	17
Assisted with appeals against homelessness decisions	1
Assisted with housing related debts	31

Possession hearings attended	16
Homelessness prevented	38

The table below shows the types of accommodation of those who received help.

Private sector tenancy	26
Housing association tenancy	17
Local authority tenancy	46
Homeless	5
Other	4

5.4 Centre 33

See section 1 for information about Centre 33.

5.5 Cambridge and District Community Mediation Service

The Mediation Service carries out occasional casework for the households of young people who are threatened with homelessness because of the breakdown of relationships. The main aim of the service is to improve communication between young people and their parents or carers, so that they can properly assess and plan their accommodation. It is intended that this process should ultimately decrease the likelihood that young people should be asked to leave by their parents or carers, thereby preventing homelessness.

The mediation process involves initial referrals to the service, telephone calls between the service and the various parties involved in the mediation, visits by independent, impartial mediators to the parties and face-to-face mediations. Cases can be closed by the parties involved at any point if they feel that their problems have been resolved or they are unwilling to proceed with mediation for some other reason.

The Mediation Service received three referrals.

Case 1: face-to-face mediation held and partial agreement reached.

Case 2: telephone conversations with both parties. Communication reopened with father; young person returned to live with mother.

Case 3: parties are due to take part in a face-to-face mediation, case ongoing.

5.6 Cyrenians Mental Health Outreach

The Mental Health Outreach Service provides ongoing support for homeless and vulnerably housed clients who have mental health problems.

This table provides information on the caseloads of the two workers between October and March 2008.

	Outreach worker	Resettlement worker
New referrals	48	13
Clients discharged	27	2
Current caseload	44	7
High needs	61	2
Medium needs	6	3
Low needs	4	2
Still to be assessed	2	0
Male	59	4
Female	12	3
Heroin addiction	8	
Heroin addiction being treated	5	1
Alcohol dependency	20	2
Alcohol dependency being treated	4	2

Mental health issues formally diagnosed (including personality disorder)	55	5
Mental health issues not formally diagnosed	16	2
Mental health and receiving treatment	37	3
Housing issues	68	2

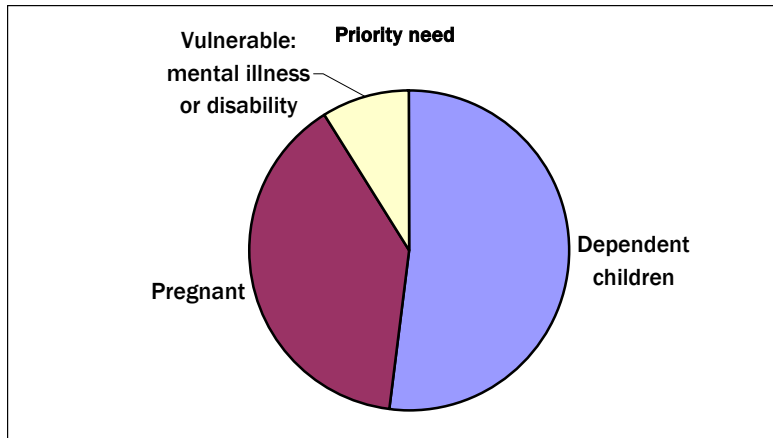
6 Access to social housing

6.1 Homelessness applications

These tables show data on people who made statutory homelessness applications to Cambridge City Council during this period. Information is provided on reasons why successful applicants were considered to have priority need and the reasons why they had become homeless respectively.

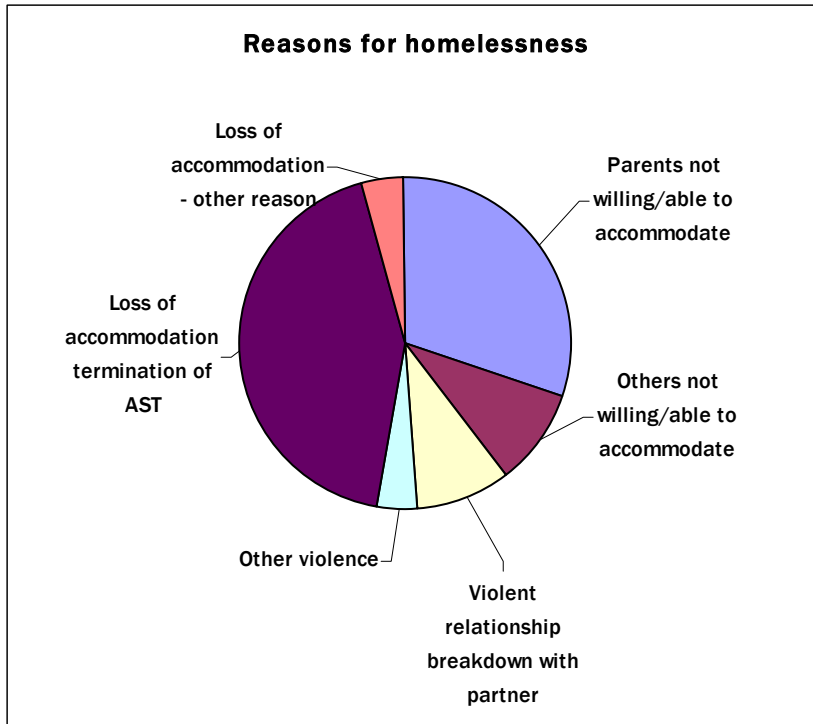
Applications, acceptance and priority need

	2006-2007	2007-2008 (year to date)	April-June 2008
Applications	159	161	35
Acceptances	129	131	23
Emergency	1%	0%	0%
Dependent children	48%	59%	52%
Pregnant	21%	22%	39%
16-17	5%	4%	0%
Formerly in care 18-20	0%	1%	0%
Vulnerable: old age	3%	0%	0%
Vulnerable: physical disability	6%	5%	0%
Vulnerable: mental illness or disability	14%	10%	9%
Drug dependency	0%	0%	0%
Alcohol dependency	0%	0%	0%
Former asylum seeker	0%	0%	0%
Other	1%	0%	0%
Vulnerable: having been in care	0%	0%	0%
Vulnerable: served in forces	0%	0%	0%
Vulnerable: custody or remand	1%	0%	0%
Vulnerable: threat of violence	1%	0%	0%
of which domestic violence	0%	0%	0%



Reasons for homelessness

	2006-2007	2007-2008 (year to date)	April-June 2008
Parents not willing/able to accommodate	22%	26%	30%
Others not willing/able to accommodate	19%	13%	9%
Non-violent relationship breakdown with partner	6%	10%	0%
Violent relationship breakdown with partner	10%	15%	9%
Violent relationship breakdown with other	0%	0%	0%
Racially motivated violence	0%	0%	0%
Other violence	2%	1%	4%
Racially motivated harassment	0%	0%	0%
Other harassment	0%	1%	0%
Mortgage arrears	2%	2%	0%
Rent arrears - public sector	1%	0%	0%
Rent arrears - RSL/HA	0%	2%	0%
Rent arrears - private sector	2%	1%	0%
Loss of accommodation termination of AST	17%	18%	43%
Loss of accommodation - other reason	8%	7%	4%
Required to leave NASS accommodation	0%	1%	0%
Left prison/on remand	2%	2%	0%
Left hospital	2%	0%	0%
Left other institution or LA care	0%	0%	0%
Left HM forces	0%	0%	0%
Other	6%	4%	0%



6.2 Home-Link (choice based lettings) update

Cambridge City Council is moving to a system of choice based lettings to allocate properties to applicants.

Update

Home-Link was launched in the week commencing 18th February 2008.

For more information about Home-Link, see the Home-Link user guide and [Home-Link website](#).

Applicants accepted and put in band A because of statutory homelessness	53
Applicants put in band B as a homelessness prevention measure	38
Other homeless applicants put in band C	7
Homeless applicants in band A who were housed	39
Homeless applicants in band A because of statutory homelessness who are eligible for direct let	1
Move on effected via the Hostels Assessment and Resettlement Panel (HARP)*	0

* HARP met for the first time on 26th June 2008.

7 Streetlife activity and anti-social behaviour

It has been decided to remove information about streetlife activity and anti-social behaviour from this report because of concerns about reliability and consistency of monitoring.