

Homelessness in Cambridge, 1st July – 30th September 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	17	47	35	99	
White British	44%	55%	71%	70%	63%	68%	
Other ethnic origins	17%	15%	18%	4%	20%	12%	
Ethnic origin not stated	39%	30%	12%	26%	17%	20%	
Female	58%	57%	47%	55%	69%	59%	
Male	42%	43%	53%	45%	31%	41%	
Advice area	Benefits	13	4	1	8	2	11
	Debt	1	1	0	0	0	0
	Disrepair	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Domestic violence	5	4	0	2	0	2
	Eviction	7	7	0	5	1	6
	Harassment and illegal eviction	3	1	1	1	0	2
	Homelessness	39	31	7	23	12	42
	Landlord/tenant relations	16	10	1	2	2	5
	Looking for accommodation	93	80	7	31	25	63
	Mortgage arrears	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Parental eviction	26	20	1	8	2	11
	Racial Harassment	0	0	0	1	0	1
	Relationship breakdown	10	6	1	2	2	5
	Rent arrears	5	3	0	0	0	0
	Other	6	7	0	3	3	6

1.2 Centre 33

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

Centre 33's information systems failed during this period and they were unable to provide the statistics that they usually provide, although their work continued during the period.

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		1	4	4	10	19
Positive move-ons	Data	0%	50%	25%	30%	32%
Evictions - arrears	not	0%	0%	50%	30%	26%
Evictions - behaviour	available	0%	50%	25%	40%	37%
Abandonments		100%	0%	0%	0%	5%
Other		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Residents at end of quarter						
Residents at end of quarter	Data	16	12	13	72	113
Involved in EET at least once per week	not	31%	75%	92%	31%	42%
Residents in accommodation for 18 months +	available	19%	8%	8%	8%	10%

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	9	2	25	9	2	47
Positive move-ons	44%	50%	64%	44%	50%	55%
Evictions - arrears	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%
Evictions - behaviour/other	0%	0%	20%	56%	0%	21%
Abandonments	11%	0%	12%	0%	50%	11%
Other	11%	50%	4%	0%	0%	6%
Residents at end of quarter						
Residents at end of quarter	39	21	68	22	5	155
Involved in EET at least once per week	26%	76%	46%	32%	100%	45%
Residents in accommodation for 18 months +	49%	19%	10%	14%	0%	21%

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 offer 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).

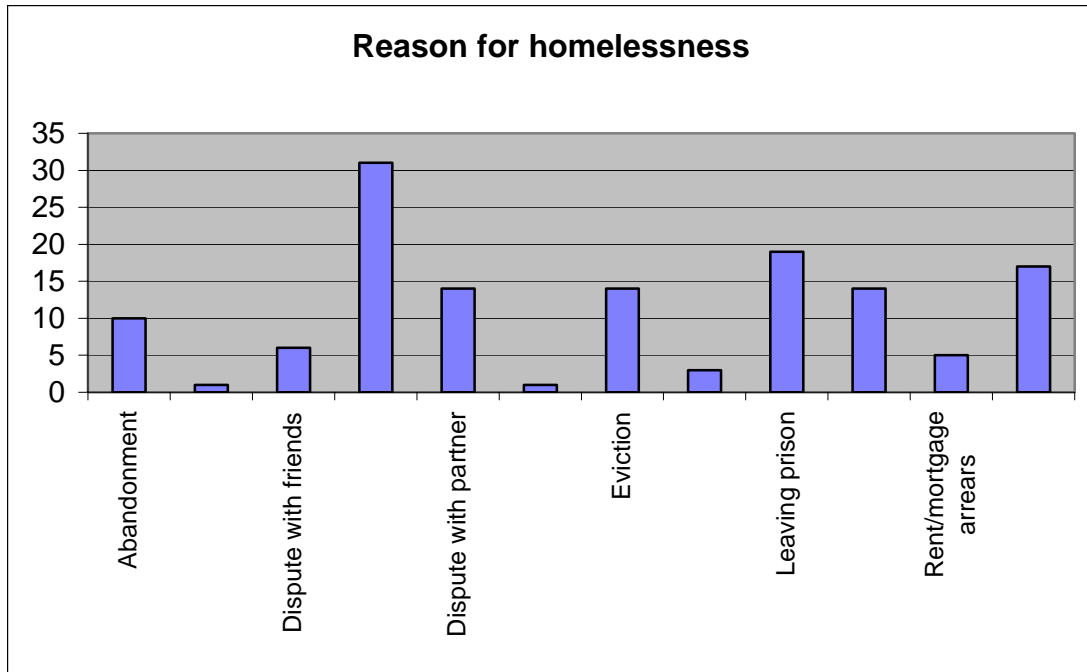
2.2 Focus on homeless clients

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.

Reason for homelessness

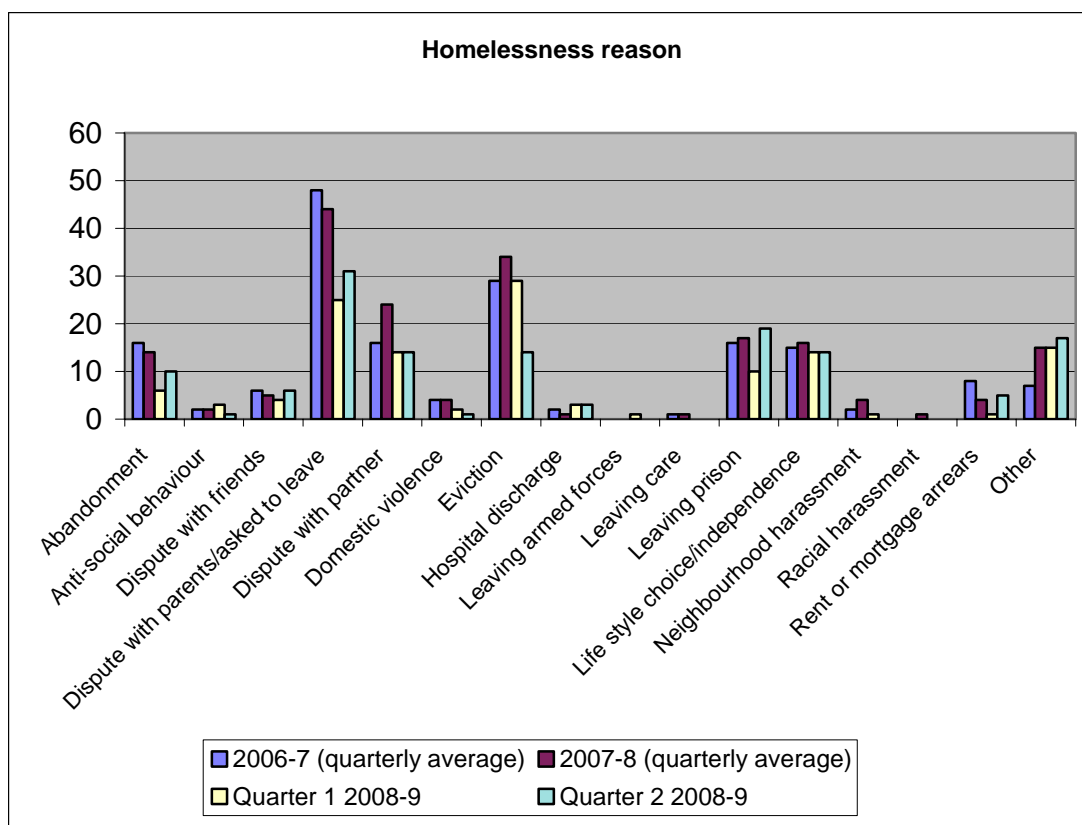
Reasons for homelessness broken down by agency:

	Centre 33	Cyrenians	ECHG CYF	ECHG DH	ECHG VR	ECHG WW	SOT	YMCA	TOTAL
Abandonment	2				2		6		10
Anti social behaviour					1				1
Dispute with friends		3			1		2		6
Dispute with parents/asked to leave	14		7		1		8	1	31
Dispute with partner	1	2		1	3		7		14
Domestic violence			1						1
Eviction	1	2			3		8		14
Hospital discharge						1	2		3
Leaving prison		2			6		11		19
Life style choice/independence	1	1		1	2	3	6		14
Rent/mortgage arrears	1					1	3		5
Other	1	2			8		6		17



Changes in reason for homelessness over the past 2½ years:

	2006-7 (quarterly average)	2007-8 (quarterly average)	Quarter 1 2008-9	Quarter 2 2008-9
Abandonment	16	14	6	10
Anti-social behaviour	2	2	3	1
Dispute with friends	6	5	4	6
Dispute with parents/asked to leave	48	44	25	31
Dispute with partner	16	24	14	14
Domestic violence	4	4	2	1
Eviction	29	34	29	14
Hospital discharge	2	1	3	3
Leaving armed forces	0	0	1	0
Leaving care	1	1	0	0
Leaving prison	16	17	10	19
Life style choice/independence	15	16	14	14
Neighbourhood harassment	2	4	1	0
Racial harassment	0	1	0	0
Rent or mortgage arrears	8	4	1	5
Other	7	15	15	17



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 September 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	15	0	15
in accommodation 6-12 months	63	1	31
in accommodation 12-18 months	58	6	10
in accommodation 18-24 months	128	11	4

*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	2
Over 1 and up to 2 years	6
Over 2 and up to 5 years	8
Over 5 and up to 10 years	12
Over 10 years	1
Total	29

Clients discharged by Jimmy's Tenancy Support

No longer needed support	0
Failure to engage	0
Tenancy failure	0

Died	0
Total	0

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	84
Discharged after completing support plan	12
Discharged without completing support plan	2

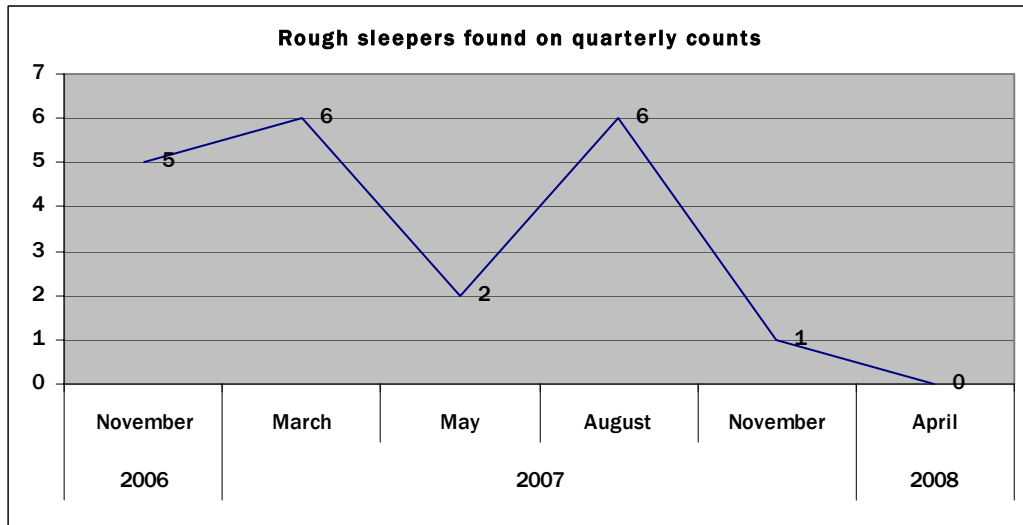
3 Services to Rough Sleepers

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	3	1	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	July - September 2008
Percentage of people helped by SOT into treatment or accommodation who subsequently return to the streets	No more than 20%	5%	5%	7%

New arrivals who return home or engage in other positive diversionary measures to help them leave the streets	90% or above	83%	87%	91%
Number of clients who were seen sleeping rough in at least four separate weeks during this period	No target	unavailable	unavailable	2
Rough sleepers diverted to areas outside Cambridge	No target	15	11	19

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%	80%
Men's dorms	97%	82%	89%
Women's dorm	62%	38%	51%
Number of occasions when someone was turned away	124	75	106
Number of known* individuals turned away in the period	Not known	Not known	63*

*This does not include individuals who were turned away and whose name was not recorded by staff.

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

1-7 days	9
8-14 days	1
15-28 days	3
29 days-3 months	9
Over 3 months	4
Total residents at end of period	25

Reasons for stays over 28 days

Waiting for offer of accommodation in Cambridge or other area	7
Has turned down offer of accommodation	1
Not engaging with move-on process	1
Mental health assessment has delayed move-on	1
Local authority outside Cambridge unwilling to accept duty of care	1
Waiting for a script	1

During this period 2 guests 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	July - September 2008
Planned departures	34	45	27
Evicted	10	17	14

Abandoned	37	37	35
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Reasons for turnaways

Has accommodation elsewhere	5
No beds available	59
No housing benefit entitlement (no documentation)	11
Ineligible for housing benefit	2
Ban	13
Reconnections ban	8
No dog spaces	0
Other	8

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

	April – June 2008
To live with friends	9
To live with family	0
Bed and breakfast	0
Supported housing	23
Returned to where they had come from	3
Hospital	0
Custody	3
Not known	38

Reasons for evictions

Verbal aggression	3
Physical aggression	3
Drug related	4
Rent arrears	0
Too complex needs	1
No entry without housing benefits proofs	0
Other	3

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 receive support 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 July – September 2008

New cases	65	with local connection	20
		without local connection	44
		Unknown	1

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	13
Cases where reconnection was required but not possible due to lack of services in another local authority area	2 (North Hertfordshire and South Cambridgeshire District Councils)

Mental health assessments	
Referred for assessment	7
Completed within 14 day target	4
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	4	4
Remains in first stage accommodation	8	2
Left accommodation of own accord, stayed in Cambridge	3	5
Evicted from first stage accommodation	0	1
Left Cambridge of own accord	1	12
Returned to previous accommodation	0	1
Gone to prison	0	1
Lost contact	3	3
Successful reconnection	1	9
Found accommodation independently outside Cambridge	0	1
Rough sleeping in Cambridge	0	1
Other accommodation in Cambridge	0	1

4 Work and Learning

4.1 Update on the *Work and Learning Action Plan*

Key achievements, ongoing developments and issues

- The bid to Investing in Communities for a full-time project worker to supplement the work of the learning and development centre (Wintercomfort) was unsuccessful.
- The work and learning co-ordinator continues to work closely with Wintercomfort to monitor and develop the service. Staff have attended training on the use of a client evaluation tool called SOUL (Soft Outcomes Universal Learning). This allows service users and staff to measure progress and development with regard to learning, training, skills for life, and personal development.
- There is some restructuring at the learning and development centre: breakfast, instead of lunch, is served, so that activities can take place in the afternoon. Service users are involved

with cooking and food preparation and a general improvement in engagement and behaviour has been observed.

- The work and learning co-ordinator continues to build relationships and develop services with adult education, advice and guidance and welfare to work organizations, including: Business Action on Skills, Seetec, Shaw Trust, Connexions, A4e. Outreach and training sessions have taken place at Wintercomfort and some clients have had two-week work placements. Job shadowing opportunities have been set up with Job Centre Plus and housing agency staff.
- Corrugation Street: a group of homeless people worked with an artist to create their ideal homes in 3D sculpture from recycled cardboard and other materials. The models were made into an exhibition which aroused a lot of local interest including coverage in the Cambridge Evening News and local radio.
- Addaction, the new drug service, is operating on a regular basis at Wintercomfort, offering advice and courses.
- Job Centre Plus and the Department for Work and Pensions have been running briefings and training sessions on benefits and work for housing providers.
- A bid has been submitted for funding for 209 Radio's 'Homeless Truths' programme.
- As a result of an awareness raising session by Business Action on Homelessness, referrals for work placements are increasing
- A strategy has been put together to develop more sporting activities within the homeless community.
- Cambridge Link-Up has been successful with funding applications and sponsorship for the production of a CD of music and poetry and a memorial garden at ECHG's hostel at 222 Victoria Road
- ECHG's Missing Links scheme has appointed a new co-ordinator who will start work early 2009
- The work and learning co-ordinator continues to use regular briefings and newsletters to keep people informed of work and learning opportunities
- Funding was secured to pay for the role of work and learning co-ordinator up to 20011-12

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.

Wintercomfort began to operate the work and development service this quarter and was unable to provide data for the period.

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	July - September 2008
Total cases	315	319	241
Benefits	33	14	21
Debt	6	3	1
Disrepair	1	1	0
Domestic violence	19	12	9
Eviction	22	19	20
Harassment and illegal eviction	6	2	5
Homelessness	97	74	89
Landlord/ tenant issues	53	36	17
Looking for accommodation	227	200	139
Mortgage arrears	4	2	2
Parental eviction	29	22	14
Racial harassment	1	0	3
Relationship breakdown	40	31	17
Rent arrears	13	7	4
Other	26	13	16

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

	2006-7 quarterly average	2007-8 quarterly average	July - September 2008
Accommodation obtained	31	26	23
Accommodation retained	22	18	14
Advice given	257	197	103
Benefits obtained	4	1	2
Debt repayment plan negotiated	2	2	0
Homelessness prevented	33	20	18
Landlord-tenant dispute resolved	4	2	2

5.2 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	25
Rent or mortgage arrears	23
Other possession issues	3
Disrepair	6
Other tenancy issues	20
Housing benefit	2
Other	43

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

Total number of clients advised	122
Provided with advice or advocacy in relation to City Council homelessness application	10
Assisted with appeals against homelessness decisions	0

Assisted with housing related debts	23
Possession hearings attended	6
Homelessness prevented	21

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

Private sector tenancy	44
Housing association tenancy	15
Local authority tenancy	42
Homeless	6
Other	15

5.3 Centre 33

See section 1 for information about Centre 33.

5.4 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 dealt with three cases. Extensive telephone conversations took place in one case, visits in another and in the third the service was unable to contact the clients.

5.5 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 between July and September 2008.

	Outreach worker	Resettlement worker	Team leader
New referrals	68	7	3
Clients discharged	100	0	7
Current caseload	12	7	4
High needs	112	4	6
Medium needs	0	2	2
Low needs	0	1	3
Still to be assessed	0	0	0
Male	89	6	5
Female	23	1	6
Heroin addiction	2	0	2
Heroin addiction being treated	1	0	2
Alcohol dependency	36	1	0
Alcohol dependency being treated	1	0	0
Mental health issues formally diagnosed	26	4	

(including personality disorder)			4
Mental health issues not formally diagnosed	74	3	4
Mental health and receiving treatment	31	4	4
Housing issues	100	5	5

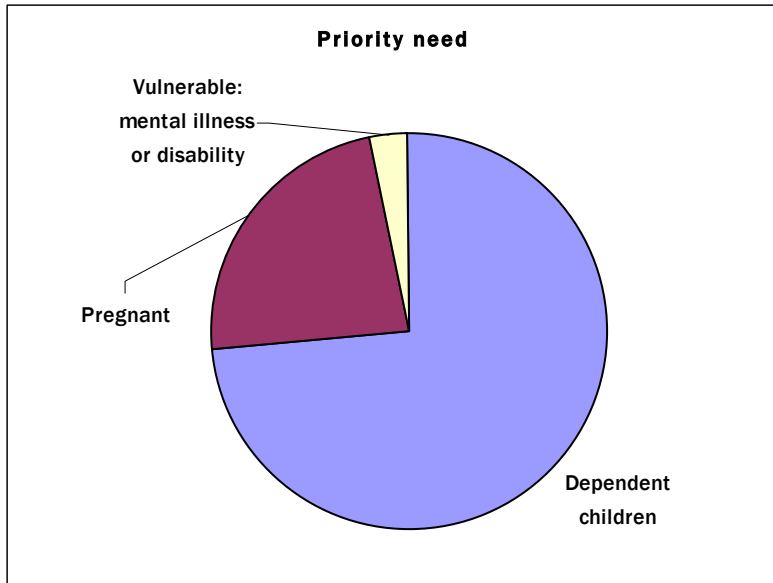
6 Access to social housing

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.

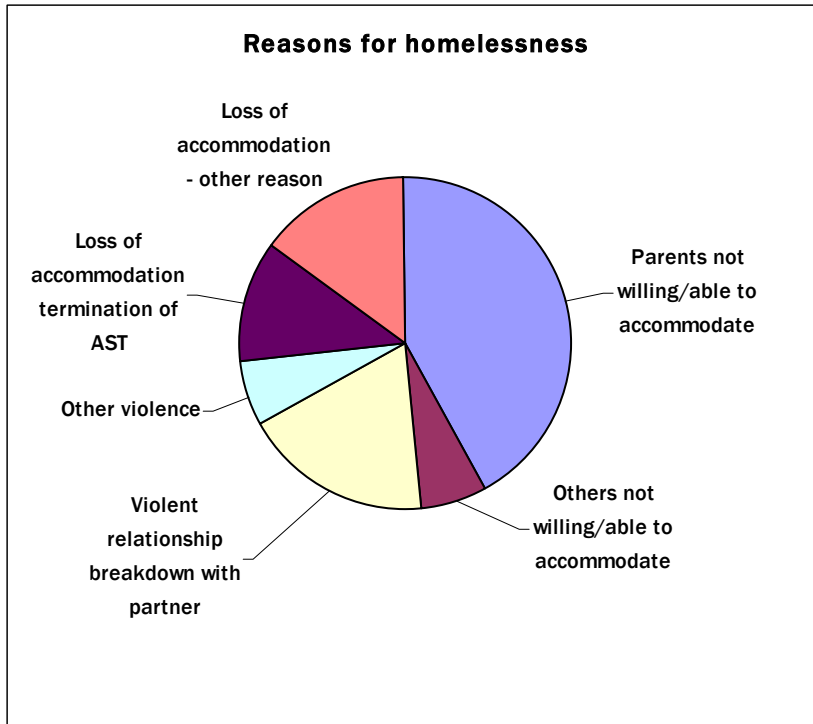
Applications, acceptance and priority need

	2007-2008	2008-2009 (year to date)	July - September 2008
Applications	161	78	43
Acceptances	131	59	36
Emergency	0%	2%	3%
Dependent children	59%	63%	69%
Pregnant	22%	29%	22%
16-17	4%	0%	0%
Formerly in care 18-20	1%	0%	0%
Vulnerable: old age	0%	0%	0%
Vulnerable: physical disability	5%	2%	3%
Vulnerable: mental illness or disability	10%	5%	3%
Drug dependency	0%	0%	0%
Alcohol dependency	0%	0%	0%
Former asylum seeker	0%	0%	0%
Other	0%	0%	0%
Vulnerable: having been in care	0%	0%	0%
Vulnerable: served in forces	0%	0%	0%
Vulnerable: custody or remand	0%	0%	0%
Vulnerable: threat of violence	0%	0%	0%
of which domestic violence	0%	0%	0%



Reasons for homelessness

	2007-2008	2008-2009 (year to date)	July - September 2008
Parents not willing/able to accommodate	26%	36%	39%
Others not willing/able to accommodate	13%	7%	6%
Non-violent relationship breakdown with partner	10%	3%	6%
Violent relationship breakdown with partner	15%	14%	17%
Violent relationship breakdown with other	0%	0%	0%
Racially motivated violence	0%	0%	0%
Other violence	1%	5%	6%
Racially motivated harassment	0%	0%	0%
Other harassment	1%	0%	0%
Mortgage arrears	2%	0%	0%
Rent arrears - public sector	0%	0%	0%
Rent arrears - RSL/HA	2%	0%	0%
Rent arrears - private sector	1%	0%	0%
Loss of accommodation termination of AST	18%	24%	11%
Loss of accommodation - other reason	7%	10%	14%
Required to leave NASS accommodation	1%	0%	0%
Left prison/on remand	2%	0%	0%
Left hospital	0%	0%	0%
Left other institution or LA care	0%	0%	0%
Left HM forces	0%	0%	0%
Other	4%	0%	0%



6.2 Home-Link (choice based lettings) 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](#).

Information for July to September 2008

Applicants accepted and put in band A because of statutory homelessness	56
Applicants put in band B as a homelessness prevention measure	18
Other homeless applicants put in band C	6
Homeless applicants in band A who were housed	51
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)*	4

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

7 Streetlife activity and anti-social behaviour

The *Task and Target Group* is working on establishing meaningful categories of information about streetlife activity and anti-social behaviour that can be reported in future.