

Homelessness in Cambridge, 1st October – 31st December 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	14	49	15	78	
White British	44%	55%	64%	73%	73%	72%	
Other ethnic origins	17%	15%	14%	8%	13%	10%	
Ethnic origin not stated	39%	30%	21%	18%	13%	18%	
Female	58%	57%	71%	65%	47%	63%	
Male	42%	43%	29%	35%	53%	37%	
Advice area	Benefits	13	4	0	6	1	7
	Debt	1	1	0	1	0	1
	Disrepair	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Domestic violence	5	4	0	1	1	2
	Eviction	7	7	2	2	0	4
	Harassment and illegal eviction	3	1	0	0	0	0
	Homelessness	39	31	4	19	5	28
	Landlord/tenant relations	16	10	0	1	1	2
	Looking for accommodation	93	80	5	24	5	34
	Mortgage arrears	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Parental eviction	26	20	3	6	2	11
	Racial Harassment	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Relationship breakdown	10	6	0	1	0	1
	Rent arrears	5	3	0	4	0	4
	Other	6	7	0	0	3	3

1.2 Centre 33

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

Statutory homeless application	1
Access scheme	0
Rent deposit guarantee scheme	0
Referral to accommodation	13
Landlord/tenant advice	0
Debt/money advice	5
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	7	4	1	0	28	33
Positive move-ons	29%	75%	100%	n.a.	64%	67%
Evictions - arrears	0%	0%	0%	n.a.	14%	12%
Evictions - behaviour	57%	0%	0%	n.a.	21%	18%
Abandonments	14%	0%	0%	n.a.	0%	0%
Other	0%	25%	0%	n.a.	0%	3%
Residents at end of quarter	27	17	12	13	73	142
Involved in EET at least once per week	70%	71%	67%	69%	38%	54%
Residents in accommodation for 18 months +	Not known	12%	8%	8%	12%	9%

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	4	9	36	10	1	60
Positive move-ons	25%	56%	64%	50%	0%	57%
Evictions - arrears	25%	22%	0%	0%	0%	5%

Evictions - behaviour/other	25%	11%	19%	30%	0%	20%
Abandonments	0%	0%	8%	10%	0%	7%
Other	25%	11%	8%	10%	100%	12%
Residents at end of quarter	42	21	68	20	6	157
Involved in EET at least once per week	21%	52%	34%	Not known	100%	36%
Residents in accommodation for 18 months +	40%	48%	9%	15%	0%	23%

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.

Ethnic origin

Ethnic origin of new clients broken down by agency:

	Centre 33	Cyrenians	ECHG CYF	ECHG DH	ECHG VR	ECHG WW	SOT	TOTAL
Asian or Asian British - Other	1							1
Black or Black British - African							1	1
Black or Black British - Caribbean							1	1
Mixed - White & Black Caribbean							1	1
White - British	22	1	7	8	27	8	113	186
White - Irish					1		2	3
White - Other				1			7	8

Ethnic origin of new clients in recent years:

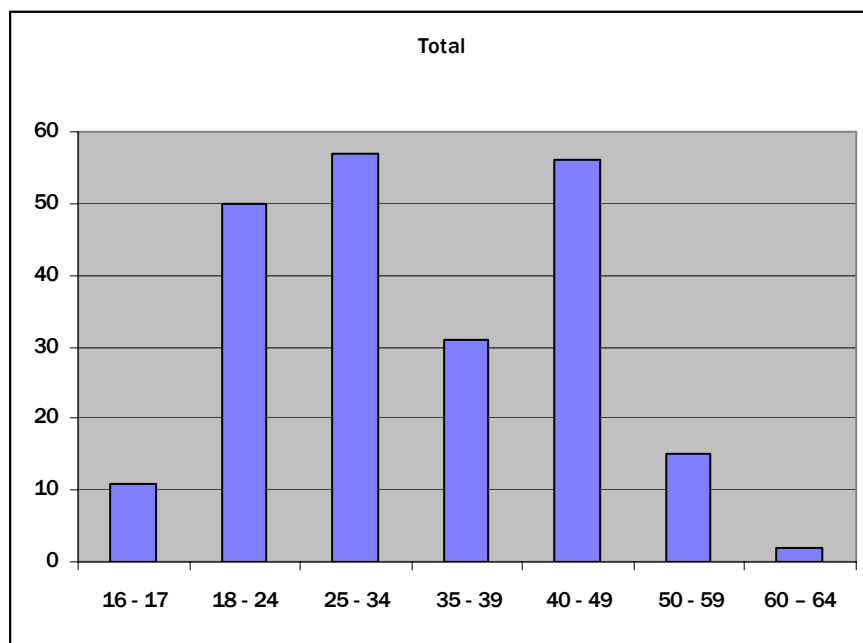
	2005-6 (Quarterly average)	2006-7 (Quarterly average)	2007-8 (Quarterly average)	Quarter 1 2008-9	Quarter 2 2008-9	Quarter 3 2008-9

Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi			1			
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	1	1			
Asian or Asian British - Other	1	0	1	1		1
Black or Black British - African	3	2	3	2	1	1
Black or Black British - Caribbean	1	1	3	2	4	1
Black or Black British - Other	2	2	4	1		
Mixed – Other	1	1	1	1	1	
Mixed - White & Asian	0	0		1		
Mixed - White & Black African	1	1	1			
Mixed - White & Black Caribbean	1	2	2		2	1
Other – Chinese	0	1				
Other - Other Ethnic Group	1	0	1	1		
White – British	163	169	176	133	133	186
White – Irish	3	7	4		1	3
White – Other	3	5	6	4	6	8

Age

Age of new clients broken down by agency

	Centre 33	Cyrenians	ECHG CYF	ECHG DH	ECHG VR	ECHG WW	SOT	Total
16 - 17	4	0	3	0	1	1	2	11
18 - 24	19	1	4	3	2	1	20	50
25 - 34	0	0	0	2	7	2	46	57
35 - 39	0	0	0	2	8	2	19	31
40 - 49	0	2	0	1	10	1	42	56
50 - 59	0	0	0	1	0	2	12	15
60 - 64	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2



Age of new clients in recent years:

	2005-6 quarterly average	2006-7 quarterly average	2007-8 quarterly average	Quarter 1 2008-9	Quarter 2 2008-9	Quarter 3 2008-9
16 - 17	14	22	16	13	19	11
18 - 24	43	51	62	44	53	50
25 - 34	56	47	53	41	39	57
35 - 39	25	26	28	23	12	31
40 - 49	33	31	37	21	36	56
50 - 59	14	16	13	12	8	15
60 - 64	2	2	2	2	1	2
Over 64	1		0	0	1	0

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 31 st December 2008	Tenancy has broken down by 31 st December 2008	Tenancy Support Team is* still providing support on 31 st December 2008
in accommodation up to 6 months	16	0	13
in accommodation 6-12 months	63	3	33
in accommodation 12-18 months	58	8	11
in accommodation 18-24 months	135	7	3

*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	1
Over 1 and up to 2 years	5
Over 2 and up to 5 years	7
Over 5 and up to 10 years	15
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 31 st December 2008	90
Discharged after completing support plan	6
Discharged without completing support plan	0
Died	1

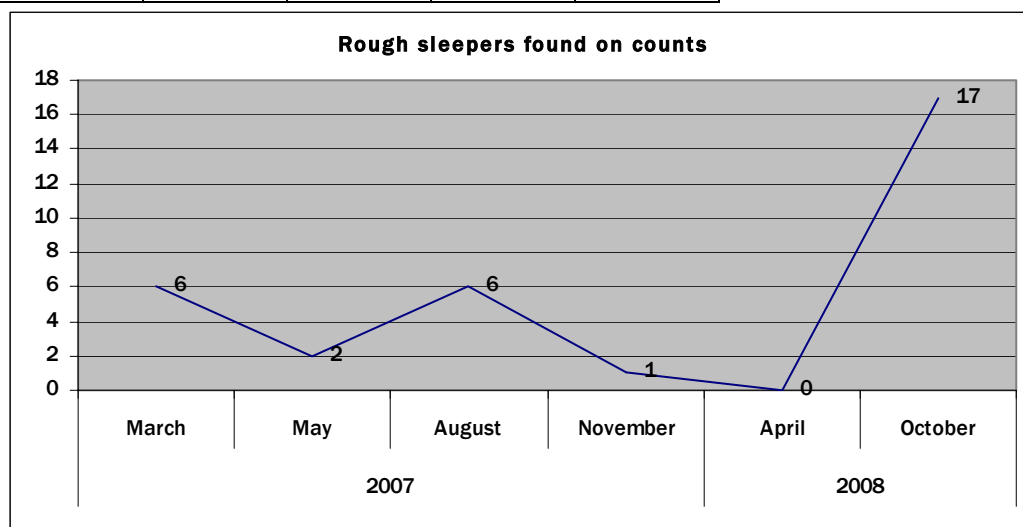
3 Services to Rough Sleepers

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	5	9	17



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	October - December 2008
Percentage of people helped by SOT into treatment or accommodation who subsequently return to the streets	No more than 20%	5%	5%	9%
New arrivals who return home or engage in other positive diversionary measures to help them leave the streets	90% or above	83%	87%	92%

Number of clients who were seen sleeping rough in at least four separate weeks during this period	No target	unavailable	unavailable	6
Rough sleepers diverted to areas outside Cambridge	No target	15	11	13

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	October - December 2008
Occupancy rate	89%	73%	77%
Men's dorms	97%	82%	78%
Women's dorm	62%	38%	74%
Number of occasions when someone was turned away	124	75	80
Number of known* individuals turned away in the period	Not known	Not known	52*

*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	7
8-14 days	3
15-28 days	5
29 days-3 months	10
Over 3 months	1
Total residents at end of period	25

Reasons for stays over 28 days

Unable to find appropriate accommodation	7
Mental health assessment has delayed move-on	3
Unknown	1

During this period **3** 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	October - December 2008
Planned departures	34	45	51
Evicted	10	17	14
Abandoned	37	37	33

Reasons for turnaways

Has accommodation elsewhere	10
No beds available	20
No housing benefit entitlement (no documentation)	21
Ineligible for housing benefit	4
Ban	10

Reconnections ban	2
Needs too complex	4
Missed curfew	8
Other	1

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

	October – December 2008
To live with friends	2
To live with family	7
Bed and breakfast	0
Supported housing	31
Returned to where they had come from	1
Hospital	1
Custody	4
Local authority housing	1
Private rented accommodation	4
Rough sleeping	3
Not known	44

Reasons for evictions

Verbal aggression	5
Physical aggression	6
Drug related	5
Rent arrears	0
Too complex needs	0
No entry without housing benefits proofs	0
Other	0

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 http://www.cambridge.gov.uk/public/docs/Reconnections_policy.pdf.

Reconnections cases October – December 2008

New cases	88	with local connection	32
		without local connection	53
		Unknown	3

Rough sleepers found on last street count (3 rd October 2008)	17 (see 3.1 for more information)
Repeat cases – individuals discussed by reconnections forum and returning at a later date	31
Cases where reconnection was required but not possible due to lack of services in another local authority area	4 (all South Cambridgeshire District Councils)

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	17	7
Remains in first stage accommodation	4	0
Left accommodation of own accord, stayed in Cambridge	0	1
Evicted from first stage accommodation	1	0
Left Cambridge of own accord	1	8
Gone to prison	2	5
Lost contact	7	12
Successful reconnection	2	12
Found accommodation independently in Cambridge	1	3
Found accommodation independently outside Cambridge	0	3
Rough sleeping in Cambridge	1	1

4 Work and Learning

4.1 Update on the *Work and Learning Action Plan*

Key achievements, ongoing developments and issues

- Two more successful bids have been made to the Development fund. One will fund the Homeless Truths radio project for another year. It provides training and learning opportunities and has been successful at motivating people, diverting people from street activity and drinking and improving mental health.
- Funding for informal learning opportunities is being significantly reduced in favour of back-to-work schemes.
- The learning and development service at Wintercomfort continues to provide a wide variety of services that act as stepping stones to education, lifelong learning, pre-employment training, social skills development and employment. Long-term staff sickness and the need for staff to be at the overnight emergency cold weather accommodation have made it difficult to provide a full service, but 247 individuals have accessed the service since October, with an average daily attendance of 53. Sixteen different types of activity are currently taking place.
- Peer mentoring has been very successful and engagement with the cooking workshop has been very high – this has included elements around healthy lifestyles and nutrition and cooking on a budget. An IT suite has been installed and is proving to be hugely popular for both formal and informal learning.

- Business Action on Skills have facilitated three successful work placements, one of which was at the city council's Mill Road depot. One placement resulted in an offer of permanent work with accommodation.
- The Cambridge Link-Up community group of homeless and ex-homeless people has been recognized by IT4Communities, the national IT volunteering programme. Webmaster Scott McCabe, who has no formal training in website design, [was runner-up in the Best Volunteer category](#).

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.

During this period Wintercomfort had 247 members and there were 93 clients who participated in at least one activity. This table shows the number of contacts made for each activity. A 'contact' is defined as one client attending one session of the activity.

Appointment with other agency	4
Art activity	1
Assessment - substance misuse	2
Assessment with Shaw Trust	1
Big Issue	13
Cambridge Link-Up activity	33
Comments	3
Community event	14
Cooking activity	119
Critics Club	26
Employment	2
Gardening activity	3
Kitchen activity	230
Literacy activity	10
Meeting with external agency	2
Music activity	75
Other meaningful activity	11
Peer mentoring	11
Quiz	35
Referral to external agency	2
Skills for life activity	20
Sport activity	28
Work placement	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	October - December 2008
Total cases	315	319	213
Benefits	33	14	18
Debt	6	3	4
Disrepair	1	1	0
Domestic violence	19	12	9
Eviction	22	19	11
Harassment and illegal eviction	6	2	6
Homelessness	97	74	71
Landlord/ tenant issues	53	36	22
Looking for accommodation	227	200	90
Mortgage arrears	4	2	5
Parental eviction	29	22	14
Racial harassment	1	0	0
Relationship breakdown	40	31	19
Rent arrears	13	7	7
Other	26	13	11

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

	2006-7 quarterly average	2007-8 quarterly average	October - December 2008
Accommodation obtained	31	26	13
Accommodation retained	22	18	10
Advice given	257	197	67
Benefits obtained	4	1	4
Debt repayment plan negotiated	2	2	0
Homelessness prevented	33	20	12
Landlord-tenant dispute resolved	4	2	1

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	9
Rent or mortgage arrears	20
Other possession issues	5
Disrepair	6
Other tenancy issues	11
Housing benefit	1
Other	78

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

Total number of clients advised	130
Provided with advice or advocacy in relation to City Council homelessness application	30
Assisted with appeals against homelessness decisions	0

Assisted with housing related debts	26
Possession hearings attended	11
Homelessness prevented	25

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

Private sector tenancy	22
Housing association tenancy	8
Local authority tenancy	25
Homeless	2
Other	7

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 received one referral during this period.

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 April 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 (including personality disorder)	26	4	4

Mental health issues not formally diagnosed	74	3	4
Mental health and receiving treatment	31	4	4
Housing issues	100	5	5

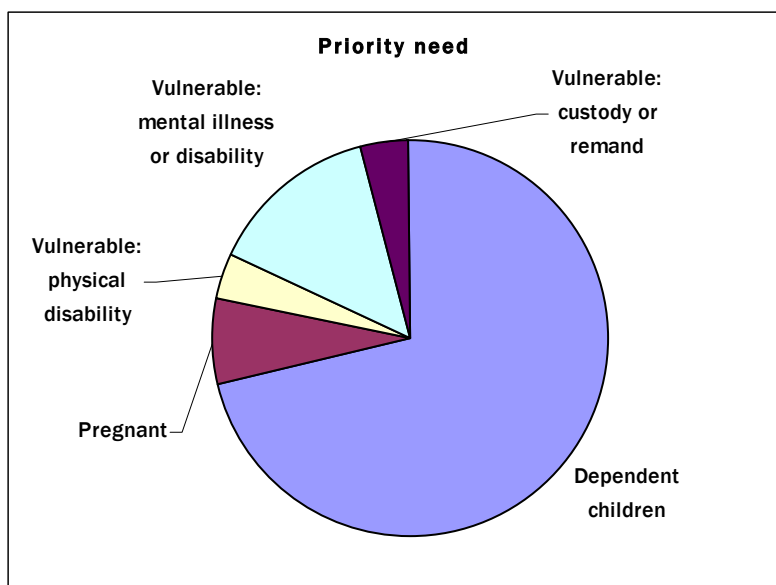
6 Access to social housing

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.

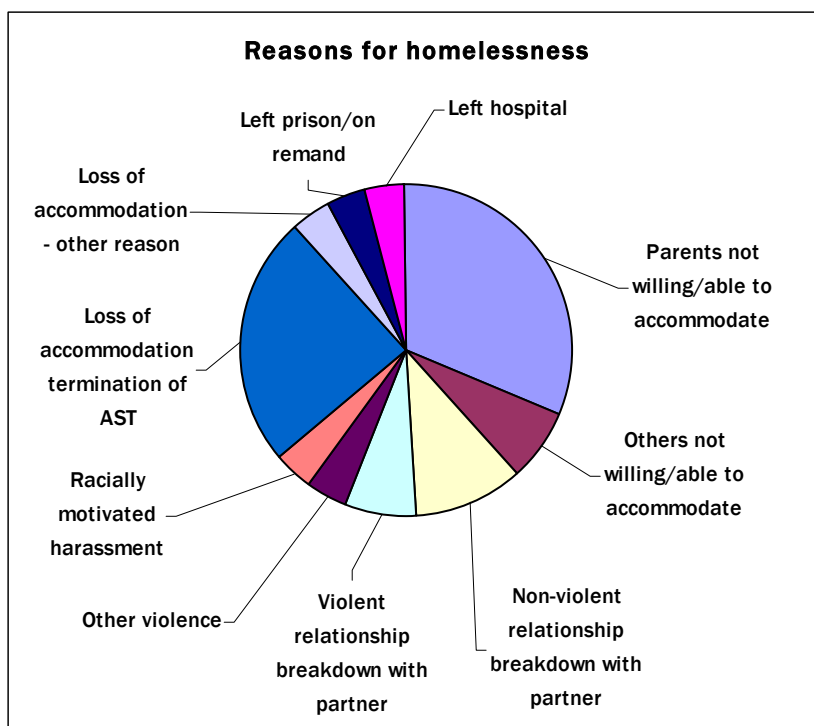
Applications, acceptance and priority need

	2007-2008	2008-2009 (year to date)	October-December 2008
Applications	161	112	34
Acceptances	131	87	28
Emergency	0%	1%	0%
Dependent children	59%	66%	71%
Pregnant	22%	22%	7%
16-17	4%	0%	0%
Formerly in care 18-20	1%	0%	0%
Vulnerable: old age	0%	0%	0%
Vulnerable: physical disability	5%	2%	4%
Vulnerable: mental illness or disability	10%	8%	14%
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%	1%	4%
Vulnerable: threat of violence	0%	0%	0%
of which domestic violence	0%	0%	0%



Reasons for homelessness

	2007-2008	2008-2009 (year to date)	October-December 2008
Parents not willing/able to accommodate	26%	34%	32%
Others not willing/able to accommodate	13%	7%	7%
Non-violent relationship breakdown with partner	10%	6%	11%
Violent relationship breakdown with partner	15%	11%	7%
Violent relationship breakdown with other	0%	0%	0%
Racially motivated violence	0%	0%	0%
Other violence	1%	5%	4%
Racially motivated harassment	0%	1%	4%
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%	25%
Loss of accommodation - other reason	7%	8%	4%
Required to leave NASS accommodation	1%	0%	0%
Left prison/on remand	2%	1%	4%
Left hospital	0%	1%	4%
Left other institution or LA care	0%	0%	0%
Left HM forces	0%	0%	0%
Other	4%	1%	0%



6.2 Home-Link (choice based lettings) update

[Home-Link](#) was launched in the week commencing 18th February 2008.

Information for October to December 2008

Applicants accepted and put in band A because of statutory homelessness	44
Applicants put in band B as a homelessness prevention measure	17
Other homeless applicants put in band C	3
Homeless applicants in band A who were housed	40
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)*	9

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

7 Streetlife activity and anti-social behaviour

The *Task and Target Group* keeps data on numbers of verified incidents of street drinking, begging and rough sleeping. Street drinking information is gathered by city council and outreach team staff on formal weekly counts. Begging information is gathered by the police on their regular patrols. Rough sleeping information is gathered by the outreach team on their regular early morning and evening shifts.

	October	November	December	Monthly average

Street drinking	Not available	56	70	42
Begging	Not available	2	7	3
Rough sleeping	Not available	Not available	26	26

All numbers refer to **occasions when one person was verified** drinking in a public space, begging or sleeping rough, not to the total number of people. Therefore it is likely that within the total numbers some individuals will have been verified on more than one occasion and will therefore be counted more than once.