



HOW MANY, HOW MUCH?

Single homelessness and the question of numbers and cost

A report for Crisis by Peter Kenway and Guy Palmer from the New Policy Institute

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PREFACE

The election of the Labour government in 1997 saw the issue of homelessness catapulted to the top of the policy agenda. Within a year of coming to office the newly established Social Exclusion Unit had published its report on Rough Sleeping in which it set out proposals for bringing the numbers of rough sleepers “to as near to zero as possible.” Two years later, following the sustained and co-ordinated efforts of both government and the voluntary sector the numbers of rough sleepers were reduced by two thirds and a new policy direction was announced.

Government promised to take a more holistic view of the problems of homelessness arguing that “the vast majority of homeless people are actually families or single people who are not literally sleeping on the street but living with relatives and friends or in temporary accommodation¹” and that in turn the solution to homelessness was about more than the provision of housing. The Homelessness Act was passed in the same year and set this policy within a clear legal framework – calling upon local authorities to develop strategies aimed at tackling all forms of homelessness and expanding the categories of people who could be deemed to be in priority need and thus eligible for housing.

There remains in practice however, a bias at the heart of homelessness policy, a bias that is reflected in both the legislation and its interpretation. Single homeless people, that is adults or couples without dependent children, are usually not provided with accommodation. Their exclusion means a lack of priority in terms of policy, research and services.

Yet single homeless people are often amongst the most vulnerable people in our society and as the findings of Crisis’ latest report reveal their numbers are considerable and the cost to society significant.

At Crisis we believe that the challenge is to ensure that *all homeless people receive appropriate support to help them to overcome their homelessness* and that to do this requires a fundamental and radical shift in thinking and ultimately in resource allocation.

The first step however is do develop our knowledge and understanding of the problem and the report *How Many, How Much* is one of the first, most important and most ambitious of a series of reports that aim to do just that. The questions that it seeks to answer on the issues of definition, scale and cost of single homelessness are fundamental to the development of policy in this area. It represents an opening shot in what we hope will be genuine and meaningful debate about the future of homelessness policy.

¹ (March 2002) *More than a roof*, a report tackling homelessness, DTLR

SUMMARY

Single homelessness in the UK

1. Homelessness in the United Kingdom has a broad legal definition that is pitched in terms of a person's entitlement to a home that is reasonable for them to continue to occupy. It is a definition that in theory could ensure that assistance and housing are offered to all homeless people. In practice, however, limitations on resources have necessitated the development of what is often described as a rationing system, whereby homeless people are judged on the basis of their perceived vulnerability.
2. Out of this has emerged the problem of single homelessness: strictly speaking, the homelessness suffered by single adults or couples without dependent children, although in practice, overwhelmingly the former. The significance of single homelessness is that these people, unlike homeless adults with dependent children, are usually not owed what is known as the local authority's 'primary duty' towards the homeless, namely to provide them with accommodation.
3. The fact that they have been excluded by the legislation has meant that there has been a lack of priority in terms of both policy and research about their numbers and circumstances. It is this problem that is the focus of this study. More specifically, the study seeks to answer four questions:
 - Is 'single homelessness' any longer a very helpful or even meaningful term?
 - How many single homeless people are there?
 - How much does single homelessness cost – and who bears that cost?
 - What implications for policy arise from the findings on numbers and costs?

Key findings

4. ***Single homelessness remains a significant problem despite recent, welcome changes to the legislation.*** Recent guidance in England has increased the classes of person who can be deemed vulnerable and therefore in priority need. We expect that, as a result, more single homeless people will be classified as being in priority need than is the case now. However, we also expect that single homeless people will continue to make up the great bulk of those who are not deemed to be in priority need. Single homeless people therefore remain a group deserving of special attention and the term 'single homelessness' remains valid and powerful.
5. ***The number of single homeless people at any one time is in the hundreds of thousands: we suggest a range of between 310,000 and 380,000.*** Only a tiny proportion of these – less than 1,000 – are rough sleepers. Around a quarter are single people staying either in hostels, bed and breakfast accommodation or facing imminent threat of eviction on the grounds of debt. The remaining three quarters form what are known as concealed households, residing with friends or family but without any explicit right so to do and in accommodation which is, in some important way, unsatisfactory.

The central technical challenge for this report has been to find a way of interpreting the definition of homelessness to allow it to be applied to the available sources of survey and administrative data. The following is a list of the groups we conclude may be considered as homeless, alongside our estimate of the number of people in Great Britain without dependent children in each group at any particular point in time.	
Rough sleepers	800
Those who have been provided with supported housing (hostels/YMCAs/shelters)	around 25,000
Bed and breakfast and other boarded accommodation:	around 50,000
People at imminent risk of eviction	around 2,000
Squatters	up to 10,000
Concealed households sharing overcrowded accommodation (that is, people who neither own nor rent the property they are living in and are neither the spouse, partner nor dependant child of the owner/renter):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged 25 and over or living with friends ('higher likelihood') • Aged under 25 and living with family ('lower likelihood'): 	around 160,000. around 330,000
Concealed households sharing accommodation which is not overcrowded but where the head of household deems the arrangement unsatisfactory:	around 60,000 around 120,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aged 25 and over or living with friends ('higher likelihood'): • Aged under 25 and living with family ('lower likelihood'): 	
These groups total some 750,000 but not all of them will be homeless. In order to produce an overall estimate of the number of single homeless, it is necessary to make judgements about the proportion of each group likely to be homeless. On the basis of the characteristics of the different groups, we suggest a range for the overall number of single homeless people of between 310,000 and 380,000.	

6. ***The cost of an individual's homelessness can run to many thousands of pounds, suggesting that there may be an economic case for spending money to reduce homelessness.*** We would particularly draw attention to the scale and importance of recurring, time-related costs, such as the costs of temporary accommodation and the economic cost to society as a whole unemployment associated with homelessness.

The report represents the first attempt to quantify the costs that might be saved by reducing homelessness. This is calculated by providing estimates of the unit costs associated with particular episodes or incidents that arise in connection with homelessness. The costs that have been quantified in this report are those that usually fall upon institutions in the public, private and voluntary sectors. The cost categories that have been applied can be seen in the table overleaf which highlights costs associated with one particular case.

The report applied these unit costs to a number of scenarios, each of which (developed on the basis of the research literature and discussed with people working directly with homeless people) represents a particular possible pathway into, and sometimes through homelessness. In each individual case, the total cost of the scenario is sizeable – always thousands of pounds and sometimes tens of thousands. The report develops six case studies and applies six estimates of costs borne to each case. We have chosen Frank's story (see page 33) to highlight this methodology.

THE COSTS OF FRANK'S HOMELESSNESS	
COST CATEGORY	FRANK'S CASE
Failed tenancy Includes: lost rent arrears; re-letting; possession order and eviction warrant; solicitor's fees; landlord's administration.	£3,000
Temporary accommodation Includes: hostel or refuge; bed and breakfast accommodation.	£10,500
Support services Includes: outreach worker; advice at hostel or day centre.	£2,000
Health services Includes: GP visit; services used after minor wounding; services used after serious wounding; treatment for mental ill health; treatment of TB; rehabilitation.	£7,000
Police and criminal justice Includes: in response to theft from a shop; in response to minor wounding; in response to serious wounding; prison.	£1,500
Potential resettlement Includes interview and processing; floating support	£500
Unemployment The value of the output lost (not produced).	nil
Total for 12 months	£24,500

Policy implications

7. The scale of the problem and the costs associated with it demonstrate that policy makers and campaigning organisations need to treat homelessness of adults without dependant children as a serious problem which should have a high priority. We conclude that the overall goal of policy should be to ensure that ***all homeless people should receive appropriate support to help them overcome their homelessness***. This is deliberately wide and flexible to cover both the diverse needs that homeless people have themselves, and potentially the needs of those who help the many homeless people by sharing their accommodation with them.
8. Providing appropriate support to all homeless people requires, we believe, a profound change both of policy and thinking. We have identified a range of challenges that must be addressed in order to bring about, or accelerate, the shift in policy that is needed. They are:
 - In preparing to carry out their duties local authorities must ensure that they are gearing themselves up to operate on a scale that will allow them to tackle the full extent of the homelessness problem.
 - Government and local authorities should review service provision to ensure that it is able to address the problem of hidden homelessness.
 - Government, local authorities and the voluntary sector must improve their understanding of the true nature and extent of the problems facing single homeless people.
 - Government needs to consider what contribution improved employment opportunities could make to reducing the problem of single homelessness.
 - Government, local authorities and the voluntary sector should consider how best to recognise and support those families and friends who are providing accommodation to homeless people.
 - Government needs to examine whether the legislative framework and guidance that creates the distinction between single homeless people and families is compatible with ensuring that all homeless people receive the support that they need.
 - Government needs to ensure that the resources are available to tackle the full extent of the homelessness problem.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. 'SINGLE HOMELESSNESS'

- 1.1.1. The term 'single homelessness' is typically used to refer to single people without dependent children (plus couples without dependent children) who are homeless. Why exactly is there an issue of single homelessness at all? As we suggest at various points in this report, there are parallels between the terms 'homelessness' and 'poverty'. Yet no one speaks of 'single poverty' or suggests that it is a subject of particular importance in its own right, distinct from poverty in general. So why is single homelessness seen in this way? Why is it so significant?
- 1.1.2. The answer lies in past government policy, which has drawn a sharp distinction between homeless people depending on whether or not they have dependent children. Single homelessness is a subject of special concern because single homeless people make up the bulk of those homeless people to whom local authorities do *not* owe what is known as the 'primary duty' to provide accommodation. This arises not out of any vindictiveness directed towards single homeless people but because the primary duty has been confined to those homeless people classified as in 'priority need', who, until recent changes, have overwhelmingly been those with dependent children.¹ Single homelessness has therefore acquired a weight and a significance because single homeless people have usually lacked the same rights as homeless people with dependent children.

1.2. AIM AND SCOPE OF THE REPORT

- 1.2.1. The aim of this report is to help improve understanding of 'single homelessness' in the United Kingdom today, particularly in the light of recent changes in both legislation and associated guidance. To fulfil this aim, the report looks into four specific questions:
- First, in the light of recent changes in the homelessness legislation and guidance, in both England, Wales and Scotland, is 'single homelessness' any longer a very helpful or even meaningful term?
 - Second, how many single homeless people are there?² The Labour government made reducing the number of 'rough sleepers' a high priority during its first term. Does success there mean that the problem of single homelessness is now but a small one?
 - Third, how much does single homelessness cost – and who bears that cost?
 - Fourth, what implications for policy – both for governments, national and local, and the voluntary sector – arise from the findings on numbers and costs?
- 1.2.2. In approaching this report, it is important to remember that it is concerned above all with numbers. This means that it is necessarily constrained by the data that is actually available. Obviously, this has implications for the numbers themselves. But since you cannot start counting until you have decided what it is you are trying to count, arguments about *how many* homeless people there are in this country are really arguments about what homelessness *means*. The question of what should count as homelessness therefore lies at the heart of this report.

2. THE POLICY CONTEXT

2.1. OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

- 2.1.1. In this chapter, we set out the background to the study by reviewing recent changes in the policy framework on homelessness across Britain. Our overall conclusion is that these developments are potentially very positive for single homeless people in a number of ways. Nevertheless, we also conclude that the term 'single homelessness' remains a valid and powerful term since, despite the extensions that the legislation and guidance has brought, people without dependent children – the vast majority of single homeless people – remain at the bottom of the pecking order as far as the official response to their homelessness is concerned.

2.2. THE NEW APPROACH

- 2.2.1. This is a time of radical change in official policy on homelessness. In England and Wales, the creation of the Homelessness Directorate, the 2002 Homelessness Act 2002, the policy programme set out in *More than a Roof* and the introduction of the *Supporting People* initiative, collectively represent a significant new approach to the prevention and tackling of homelessness. During the 1990s, under governments of both parties, the focus was on the more extreme forms of homelessness, namely rough sleeping and households accommodated temporarily in bed-and-breakfast. Now, the attention is turning to tackling all forms of homelessness and the factors leading to them in a more coherent way.
- 2.2.2. In Scotland, the shift in prospect may be even more dramatic, with the 2003 Homelessness Act promising to abolish the 'priority need' test by 2012, at which point all those found to be legally homeless will be entitled to accommodation.³
- 2.2.3. Such changes are nothing to do with the legal definition of homelessness, where definitions laid down in earlier years continue to apply. Recent changes are chiefly concerned with the responses of government and the developed administrations to the situation, in terms of both who should be provided with accommodation and what other actions should be taken with respect to homelessness more generally.

The legislation

- 2.2.4. The 2002 changes in England and Wales aim to improve both the provision for those who are homeless (primarily by extending local authorities' duty to provide housing to a larger group of homeless people) and the quality and coherence of preventative work (through the introduction of a statutory duty on local authorities to conduct homelessness reviews and compile homelessness strategies). More specifically:
- The level of assistance available to homeless people is enhanced through the extension of priority need to include new groups of vulnerable people and through the requirement that all homeless people, even if not in priority need, receive advice and assistance which meets minimum standards.
 - The duty to compile a review of homelessness consists of assessing current and likely future levels of homelessness in the area, current activities contributing to the prevention of homelessness and the provision of accommodation and support, and resources available to the local authority and other relevant organisations for carrying out those activities.
 - The strategies, due to be published in summer 2003 and at least every five years thereafter, will set out how each local authority will tackle and prevent homelessness in its broadest sense looking beyond the 'statutory' definition of unintentionally homeless and in priority need. In practice, this should mean there is likely to be an increased focus on single homelessness.

The new administrative structure and policy focus

- 2.2.5. In March 2002, the Homelessness Directorate was formed, bringing together the Rough Sleepers Unit, the Bed and Breakfast Unit, and a new team responsible for tackling homelessness. The directorate was charged with the aim of promoting new and more strategic approaches to tackle homelessness more effectively, based on an analysis of the underlying causes and trends. While the two key numerical targets remain those of sustaining the two thirds reduction in rough sleeping and of ensuring that no family with dependent children has to live in bed and breakfast accommodation by March 2004, the emphasis of policy making has shifted towards prevention of all forms of homelessness.
- 2.2.6. The shape of the approach is outlined in *More than a Roof*, published in March 2002. The central thesis is that there needs to be as much focus on tackling the personal problems – such as relationship breakdown, domestic violence, debt, and drug abuse – faced by homeless or potentially homeless people as on their need for accommodation. *More than a Roof* was explicit in its acknowledgement that government's understanding of the causes of homelessness and the most effective responses to it were at a reasonably embryonic stage.
- 2.2.7. It therefore emphasised the importance of research to develop evidence-based policy focusing on cost effective measures of prevention. Such approaches include: further development of partnerships (e.g. between local authorities and voluntary organisations involved with homeless people, as well as bodies with wider responsibilities such as schools, colleges and the police); improved access to advice, assistance and information; the development of schemes to help people maintain tenancies; and housing solutions such as encouraging private rented accommodation and wider use of rent deposit schemes.
- 2.2.8. Broadly speaking, the directorate will deliver on the new agenda by providing assistance, guidance and funding to local authorities in the development and implementation of their homelessness strategies. Through researching and developing effective policies for prevention and intervention, disseminating good practice, setting targets and rewarding achievement, the directorate is intended to ensure that the duties under the 2002 Act are carried out as effectively as possible. In 2002/03, it had a budget of £100 million and it will be spending £260 million over the next three years.
- 2.2.9. Finally, *Supporting People*, which came into operation in April 2003, aims to improve housing related support services for vulnerable people including those who might be at risk of homelessness. The key client groups are older people; people with learning difficulties; people with mental health problems or some disabilities; women fleeing domestic violence; young homeless people and vulnerable people struggling with their accommodation. The type of provision offered includes housing management, housing related support (such as independent living skills), home care, meals services and personal care.

2.3. IS 'SINGLE HOMELESSNESS' STILL A USEFUL TERM?

- 2.3.1. The extension of priority need in England, and perhaps even more its prospective abolition in Scotland, may be especially significant for single people.⁴ Until 2002, priority need groups included pregnant women, families with dependent children, victims of emergencies (such as fires and floods) and various categories of people deemed to be vulnerable. The 2002 legislation extends priority need to:
- 16 and 17 year olds other than those who social services are responsible for accommodating; and
 - care leavers under the age of 21 who were looked after by social services when they were 16 or 17; and
 - people who are vulnerable as a result of violence or threats of violence; and
 - people who are vulnerable as a result of experience of prison, the armed forces or statutory care.

- 2.3.2. The first two categories are automatically in priority need, whereas the other two have to be found to be 'vulnerable' as a consequence of their leaving an institution or experiencing a threat of violence.
- 2.3.3. Early signs are that the changes are significant but it remains to be seen what the practical effects turn out to be.⁵ It is possible that the new arrangements could lead to a sustained increase in homeless applications, exerting increased pressure on local authorities to determine certain categories of people as being vulnerable and in 'priority need'. Since institution leavers account for a significant proportion of the 'single homeless' population, the effect could be considerable if local authorities choose to interpret the legislation liberally.
- 2.3.4. Whether they are able to do so, though, is another matter. As ever, there is likely to be a gap between the potential impact of the legislation and its effect in practice, with resources and other constraints on local authorities restricting their room for manoeuvre in interpreting the legislation in a more liberal way.⁶ Without significant increased resources, it is hard to see how an alteration to the priority need categories can do much more than change the mix, but not the total number, of people accepted as being in priority need. The fact that judgement abounds, with vulnerability itself assessed in relation to how an 'ordinary' homeless person is expected to cope, leaves plenty of scope for this to happen.⁷
- 2.3.5. While it is important to recognise how an understanding of single homelessness derived from an interpretation of the legislation and guidance has contracted as a result of recent changes in homelessness legislation and guidance, the people at the bottom of the homelessness pecking order will still for the most part be single people without dependent children. This being the case, single homeless people (to be understood here as including couples without dependent children) remain a group deserving of special attention. The term 'single homelessness' therefore remains valid and powerful.
- 2.3.6. One important qualification must be made to this conclusion. In the past, the degree of overlap between single homeless people and homeless people deemed not to be in priority need led 'single homelessness' to be understood as more or less the same thing as 'non-statutory homelessness'. Although this equation has always carried some dangers, the recent changes mean that it may now be seriously misleading. In particular:
- The extension of priority need means that local authorities will owe more single homeless people the primary duty of providing them with accommodation.
 - The strengthened requirement to offer advice and guidance to all homeless people, irrespective of whether they are in priority need, underlines the point that statutory duties extend beyond the primary duty.⁸
- 2.3.7. As a result, we conclude that the two terms should now no longer be used interchangeably because some single people are now in priority need and all homeless people, whether in priority need or not, have certain statutory rights. 'Single homelessness' remains an important term, but it must not be confused with 'non-statutory homelessness'.

3. OUR INTERPRETATION OF HOMELESSNESS

3.1. OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

- 3.1.1. In this chapter, we explain which groups of people are to be counted as homeless, justifying our selection by showing it to be consistent with the definition of homelessness set out in the legislation. The chapter begins with a discussion of that legal definition, showing both how broad it is and how dependent it is on judgements about both whether someone has a 'right' to occupy the place where they are staying and whether it is 'reasonable' for them to continue to occupy it.
- 3.1.2. The practical challenge the chapter has to deal with is how to interpret the legal definition in a way that allows it to be applied to the various data sets from which the numerical estimates are obtained (in the next chapter). While the discussion here inevitably has to deal with detail, it remains at all times within the legal definition of homelessness.

3.2. THE LEGAL DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS

- 3.2.1. Like poverty, what constitutes homelessness in Britain in the 21st century is bound to be a matter of judgement and disagreement. But unlike poverty, homelessness has a legal definition. In the form in which it appears in the statute itself, this definition is broad – broad enough, we suggest, to contain all reasonable disagreements. What is at issue then, and what the disagreements are likely to be about, is not the definition of homelessness but, rather, the interpretation of that definition.
- 3.2.2. The current, legal definition of homelessness for England and Wales is given in the 1996 Housing Act. There are slight differences in the definitions in Scotland and Northern Ireland and these differences are noted here wherever they are relevant to the discussion. According to the law, a person is homeless if there is no accommodation they are entitled to occupy. Entitlement here means having:
- either an interest in it (i.e. they are the owner or the tenant); or
 - an express or implied licence to occupy (in Scotland, a right or permission, or an implied right or permission to occupy);
 - some other enactment or rule of law giving the right to remain in occupation or restricting the right of another person to recover possession.
- 3.2.3. A person is also considered to be legally homeless if they have accommodation but:
- they cannot secure entry to it; or
 - (in the case of, for example, a caravan) they have nowhere they are entitled both to place it and live in it; or
 - (in Scotland and Northern Ireland) it is probable that occupation will lead to violence, or threats of violence which are likely to be carried out; or
 - (in Scotland), it is overcrowded and may endanger the health of the occupants; or
 - (in England and Wales) it is not reasonable for them to continue to occupy the accommodation.
- 3.2.4. A person is also considered to be threatened with homelessness if it is likely that they will become homeless within 28 days (e.g. they may have rent or mortgage arrears).

- 3.2.5. The breadth of this definition stems from the fact that it is pitched in terms of a person's entitlement, or right, to a home rather than the particular circumstances in which they are living. So the definition is *not* restricted to a list of various situations in which people could be living, such as rough sleeping, or living in a hostel for homeless people. Neither is it restricted to people who have in some way identified themselves as homeless, for example, by seeking help either from a local authority or through contact with homelessness agency, nor to those whom local authorities either judge or record as homeless.⁹ As a result, no particular category of homelessness – for example, certain groups of people living in overcrowded conditions – is automatically excluded by the legal definition.
- 3.2.6. Rather, what matters is the interpretation of the conditions that define homelessness. While some of these conditions are clear if somewhat rare (having a caravan but nowhere to place it), two are not. One of these is the condition of having a 'licence to occupy'. An adult living in their parents' home may enjoy such a licence. However, it will not necessarily be timeless and if relations within the home gradually deteriorate, the licence will gradually disappear. In some cases, this disappearance will be clear-cut but in many cases it will not, as everybody struggles with what are likely to be conflicting feelings.
- 3.2.7. Ambiguity also surrounds the condition that the accommodation must be 'reasonable to continue to occupy', which applies in England and Wales. This is given further definition within the Act as referring specifically to the threat of domestic violence (which is a condition in its own right in Scotland and Northern Ireland). Yet the Act also allows the Secretary of State to specify other circumstances in which it is reasonable, or not, to continue to occupy accommodation, leaving the definition very open. While the Scottish definition is not so open, it does contain an explicit overcrowding condition.
- 3.2.8. In summary, then, the legal definition of homelessness is constructed broadly, with the two most important conditions, namely reasonable to occupy and licence to occupy, being inherently subjective and therefore matters of judgement. In this report, our interpretation of these conditions may well be broader than the interpretation of many local authorities and, as a result, some of those whom we are counting as homeless would probably not be judged as homeless by some local authorities. But any such difference of opinion over *interpretation* is not the same as a difference of opinion over *definition*.
- 3.2.9. Finally, in passing, we note that broad definitions, replete with judgement, are to be found in other countries' official and semi-official definitions, as the following three examples show:
- In the **United States**, a person who is homeless is "an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence, or an individual who has a primary night-time residence that is: a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill); a public or private place that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalised; or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodations for human beings".¹⁰
 - In **Australia**, although there is no Homelessness Act as such, there is an Act covering the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program, the major funding instrument administered jointly by Federal and State Governments. Within this program, a person is homeless "if, and only if, he or she has inadequate access to safe and secure housing". This in turn applies if the only housing to which the person has access: damages, or is likely to damage, their health; threatens their safety; marginalises them through failing to provide access to either adequate personal amenities or the economic and social supports that a home normally affords; or places the person in circumstances which threaten or adversely affect the adequacy, safety, security and affordability of that housing.
 - In the **Netherlands**, "homelessness can be defined as a severe condition of social, personal, and relational vulnerability, whereby functional or compassionate relationships within customary social contexts become virtual or entirely impossible. We define those who live in these circumstances, whether temporarily or permanently, as homeless."¹¹

3.3. OUR APPROACH

- 3.3.1. A workable approach to the measurement of homelessness has to take account data that is actually available. Ideally, the way to proceed would be to identify various groups of people who could be deemed homeless and then find data that would allow them to be counted. In practice, however, things are rarely that straightforward. Sometimes, there is simply no data at all on a group that should, ideally, be included; one example of this is people staying in institutions such as medical and care establishments simply because they have nowhere else to go.
- 3.3.2. More importantly, it is often necessary to filter many of the groups in order to select out those that could be considered to be homeless from the group in general. Since we can only use what is available, these filters are themselves rarely ideal. A good example is people living in bed and breakfast accommodation. In order to measure homelessness, we certainly want to exclude those who are there because they are working away from home. Arguably, too, we should also exclude those who are quite happy with the arrangement (that is, they regard it as reasonable that they should occupy such accommodation). But information that would allow us to directly filter out these two sub-groups is not currently available. Our approach, therefore, is to use receipt of housing benefit as a filter, restricting our count of homelessness in the bed and breakfast group to these people only. The rationale for this is that receipt of housing benefit is a proxy for low income, which in turn is a proxy for a lack of choice about whether to be in bed and breakfast accommodation.

Groups being counted

- 3.3.3. Table 3.1 identifies the various groups of people whom we are counting as homeless, alongside the filters that have been used to restrict the overall population in the group to those whom we judge as homeless. Since we are interested in this report in single homelessness only, it can be taken as given that our final count is restricted to single adults and couples without dependent children only.

TABLE 3.1: THE GROUPS COUNTED AS HOMELESS	
GROUP	FILTERS TO FOCUS ON HOMELESSNESS
Rough sleepers	None
Those who have been provided with supported housing for whatever reason (hostels / YMCAs / shelters)	Include only those not previously in supported housing (to avoid double counting). Include only those for whom the supported housing provided is not classified as a permanent solution to their housing needs.
Bed-and-breakfast and other boarded accommodation	Include only those in receipt of housing benefit (as a proxy for low income) on the grounds that others have enough income to live elsewhere if they want to.
People in owner occupier and rented accommodation at imminent risk of eviction	Include only those for whom rent or mortgage arrears is the main reason for their potential eviction on the grounds that, where debt is not the cause, they have enough month to find alternative accommodation
Squatters	No data available to distinguish between those squatting voluntarily and those squatting because they have no alternative.
Involuntary sharing – multiple family units sharing overcrowded accommodation ^(a)	Include only those living in ‘concealed households’ (on the grounds that these are the people without an explicit licence to occupy). ^(b) For the higher likelihood sub-group, include only those aged 25+ and those under 25 who are living with friends rather than parents or other relatives.
Involuntary sharing – multiple family units sharing accommodation which is not overcrowded	Include only those who meet <i>both</i> the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are living in ‘concealed households’ (on the grounds that these are the people without an explicit licence to occupy);^(b) <i>and</i> • Where the head of the household has expressed some dissatisfaction with the arrangement. For the higher likelihood sub-group, include only those aged 25+ and those under 25 who are living with friends rather than parents or other relatives.
People in institutions because they have nowhere else to go	Not counted as no data is available.
People staying on the floors and sofas of friends and family	No data available – but would in part be included anyway under overcrowding.
People whose personal safety or well-being is at risk	Not counted as no data is available.
Notes	
(a) Overcrowding is defined according to what is known as the ‘bedroom standard’, in which a bedroom is deemed necessary for each single adult or couple in the property who is aged 21 or over, and various fractions of a bedroom to children and young adults who are less than 21. ¹²	
(b) Concealed households are people who do not own or rent the property they are living in and are also not the spouse, partner or dependant child of the owner/tenant. ¹³	

3.3.4. The filters here are critical. In principle, homelessness only requires *either* that there is no licence to occupy, *or* that it is unreasonable to occupy. In interpreting the data and offering an estimate of the number of single homeless people we have required that *both* conditions are met for the situation to be described as one of homelessness. As a consequence we only count someone as homeless if first, they lack a legal licence to occupy (which we take to be the case with any concealed household); and, second, there is something else wrong with the living arrangement (either overcrowding, or an expression of dissatisfaction on the part of the head of household).

- 3.3.5. It is important to recognise that we do not at any point equate overcrowding with homelessness: those in concealed households who are living in overcrowded conditions represent around a fifth of the total number living in overcrowded conditions.¹⁴ Likewise, the filter we apply to those in concealed households who are not overcrowded means that, of that group, we are actually including less than one in twenty in our count.
- 3.3.6. We go further, assigning a different likelihood of being homeless according to age and who the person is living with. Younger adults might well not self-define as homeless or perhaps even be reasonably viewed as homeless if, for example, they are sharing with their parents (potentially on the expectation that it may not be a particularly long-term arrangement). On the other hand, it would be difficult to argue that an older adult who appeared in an overcrowded household (such that it is highly likely someone is sleeping in a living room or on the floor) in which neither they, nor their spouse, were the head of the household, and which they did not own or rent themselves, was anything other than homeless. The cut-off age used to distinguish between these groups is 24-25 on the grounds that the vast majority of those aged 25 and over have reached a more settled living arrangement, whereas those aged 24 and below are often still in the period of transition from dependent to independent living.¹⁵
- 3.3.7. Time is another factor: an adult living in their parents' home may currently enjoy an implicit 'licence to occupy' but this will not necessarily be timeless and if relations within the home gradually deteriorate, the licence will gradually disappear. So, even on a conservative view, these people are, at the very least, at some risk of becoming homeless at some time in the future. And at least arguably, those living with non-relatives are at greater risk of being in an unsatisfactory or unstable housing situation than those living with parents or other relatives.
- 3.3.8. The fact that around a third of households accepted as being homeless and in priority need now arise because parents, relatives or friends are no longer able, or willing, to accommodate them underlines the importance of this category of 'involuntary sharing'.¹⁶

The merits of a broad interpretation

- 3.3.9. Describing some people in concealed households as homeless, either when they are overcrowded or when the head of household deems the arrangement unsatisfactory, represents a broad interpretation of homelessness. In so doing, we are not suggesting that all forms of homelessness are equally severe, nor that they all require the same policy response. This is analogous with poverty where, within an official government threshold that leaves still more than 20 per cent of the population in poverty,¹⁷ attention is paid to a variety of sub-groups and where a range of quite different policy measures have been developed over recent years.
- 3.3.10. But quite apart from the fact that we believe that people in the situations we have listed can quite properly be interpreted as being homeless, we see a number of big advantages in adopting a broad interpretation.
- First, homelessness ceases to be seen simply in relation to the responses to the problem from either government or voluntary sector agencies. This is important because it frees government from the perverse situation in which the more people it decides to help, the worse, by definition, the problem apparently becomes.¹⁸
 - Second, it recognises that a good part of homelessness is 'contained' within civil society, through the help and support that homeless people get from their friends and family. The burden that this can represent, and the fact that it is shouldered by ordinary people, fully deserves to be recognised.

- Third, as a consequence of this, perceptions of homelessness are changed into something that many more people will recognise as belonging to them, or at least to someone they know. This is partly a matter of scale but partly, too, of a subtle change in the perception of the problem itself. By so doing, it reduces the degree to which homelessness is seen as an extreme, even alien problem of 'others', which is helpful for social cohesion and vital for building public and political support for action to address the problem.
- Fourth, it can stimulate changed behaviour from the relevant agencies, for example, the provision of advice and support to a much wider group of people, or encouraging preventative action.
- Finally, it may encourage different kinds of explanation of homelessness, away from the individual homeless person's characteristics; it is bound to lead into questions about how society works. It also throws up the interesting, and perhaps rather positive, issue of why so much homelessness is actually contained within civil society.

4. COUNTING SINGLE HOMELESSNESS

4.1. OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

- 4.1.1. In this chapter, we set out in detail how we have reached our estimates of the numbers of homeless people. If we had been able to do this by analysing just one or two wide-ranging sources of survey data that between them provided a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon, the presentation here would have been both brief and straightforward. Unfortunately, however, no such source exists and we have therefore had to reach our total by using a disparate collection of data sources to estimate the size of each of the individual groups of homeless people that were identified in chapter 3. The bulk of the chapter explains how we have done this. While the detail here does not make for light reading, it is this that provides the essential guarantee that the findings can be replicated by others if desired.
- 4.1.2. In those cases where the numbers are estimates that have been published elsewhere, the chapter summarises the previous findings. In other cases, however, where the estimates are based on our own analysis, the chapter provides more detail, breaking the estimates down by age, region (or sometimes country), and the characteristics of the household in which the homeless person is staying. Besides being of interest in its own right, this extra information plays a vital part in helping us narrow our broad-range estimate of the number of single homeless people – somewhere between 75,000 and 750,000 – down to something more precise, between 310,000 and 380,000.
- 4.1.3. The chapter concludes by discussing how reasonable an estimate of single homelessness in the hundreds of thousands looks from other perspectives. The most important of these is the poverty perspective, where the official data show more than three quarters of a million single, working age people without dependent children, living in shared accommodation and in poverty, with over half a million of them being unemployed or economically inactive.

4.2. THE NUMBERS IN DETAIL: PRE-EXISTING ESTIMATES

- 4.2.1. The presentation of estimates in this chapter is divided into two parts, according to whether they are the result of new analyses of datasets that we ourselves have carried out (the next section), or whether they are existing pre-estimates, originally produced by others (this section). Building on the conclusions of chapter 3, table 4.1 lists the groups whose numbers are presented in this chapter, divided between pre-existing and new analyses.
- 4.2.2. Throughout, the estimates are on the following basis:
- The estimates are for adults aged 16 and over without dependent children. Although this does include a few couples, they are overwhelmingly single people.
 - The estimates are ‘point in time’ estimates – in other words, they are estimates of the numbers who might be considered homeless at any one time.
 - Because of very limited data availability in the province, the estimates are for Great Britain rather than Northern Ireland. Where possible, estimates have been presented separately for England, Scotland and Wales.

TABLE 4.1: GROUPS OF HOMELESS PEOPLE FOR WHOM ESTIMATES ARE PROVIDED		
GROUP	FILTERS TO FOCUS ON HOMELESSNESS	DATA SOURCE AND YEAR
Pre-existing estimates		
Rough sleepers	None	Various surveys
Those who have been provided with supported housing for whatever reason (hostels / YMCAs / shelters)	Include only those not previously in supported housing (to avoid double counting).	CORE database (2001/2) and the 2001 Census
	Include only those for whom the supported housing provided is not classified as a	

	permanent solution to their housing needs.	
Bed and breakfast and other boarded accommodation	Include only those in receipt of housing benefit (as a proxy for low income) on the grounds that others have enough income to live elsewhere if they want to.	DWP Housing Benefit Statistics (2002)
People at imminent risk of eviction	Include only those for whom rent or mortgage arrears is the main reason for their potential eviction on the grounds that, where debt is not the cause, they have enough money to find alternative accommodation.	The Court Service (2002)
Squatters	None (no data available to distinguish between those squatting voluntarily and those squatting because they have no alternative).	No authoritative data sources
New analyses		
Involuntary sharing – multiple family units sharing overcrowded accommodation	Include only those living in ‘concealed households’. For the higher likelihood sub-group, include only those aged 25+ and those under 25 who are living with friends rather than parents or other relatives.	Survey of English Housing (GB estimates derived by factoring up the English estimates): 2000/01, 2001/02, 2002/03
Involuntary sharing – multiple family units sharing accommodation which is not overcrowded	Include only those who meet <i>both</i> the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are living in ‘concealed households’ (on the grounds that these are the people without an explicit licence to occupy); <i>and</i> • Where the head of the household has expressed some dissatisfaction with the arrangement. For the higher likelihood sub-group, include only those aged 25+ and those under 25 who are living with friends rather than parents or other relatives.	Survey of English Housing (GB estimates derived by factoring up the English estimates): 2000/01, 2001/02, 2002/03

Rough sleepers

4.2.3. We stress that we are not providing a new estimate of the number of rough sleepers. There are currently no national records of the flow of rough sleepers and most areas do not have such local records. Rather, estimates for the numbers of rough sleepers are only available on a somewhat ad hoc basis via particular once-off data collections which are typically made on a ‘snapshot’ basis (i.e. the number of rough sleepers on a given night). On this basis, the best estimates are:

- England: 550.¹⁹
- Wales: 150.²⁰
- Scotland: 100.²¹

4.2.4. It is inevitable that any daily ‘snapshot’ count will be smaller than the total number of people who sleep rough at *some* point in any year, with some evidence suggesting a factor of 10.²² Using this scaling factor would give a total estimate of around 8,000 people sleeping rough at some time during a given year. Some of these people, however, will be the same as those in other categories discussed below; for example, someone who sometimes sleeps rough may well also sometimes be staying in a hostel or on a temporary basis with friends or relatives.

Hostels/YMCAs/shelters

- 4.2.5. The sources vary by home country. For England and Wales, the obvious source is the relevant countries' Supported Housing CORE 'lettings' database (2001/02). There is no equivalent to the support housing part of CORE for Scotland, but there are estimates of the number of bed spaces in hostels. The 2001 Census also provides estimates for the numbers of people either living in hostels or sleeping rough.
- 4.2.6. For **England**, the CORE 'lettings' database is data collected annually for almost all housing association and voluntary sector supported housing lettings (both to statutory and non-statutory homeless and other households) over the year. The dataset can classify lettings according to whether individuals are statutory or non-statutory homeless, their last settled base (including geographical region as well as e.g. rough sleeping, squatting etc.), their current geographical location (postcode), the intended length of stay in the accommodation, their problems (e.g. alcohol abuse, drug abuse etc.), age, marital status, presence of dependent children, ethnicity, economic status and income. Note that, although it is a 100 per cent sample, there are some uncertainties about the estimates because it does not include local authority hostel accommodation, nor smaller, non-RSL accommodation, nor people in such accommodation who moved in previous years.
- 4.2.7. In 2001/02, 45,000 adults aged 16+ were provided with supported housing on a non-permanent basis in the RSL/voluntary sector (after removing re-lets from hostel accommodation during the year on grounds of double counting and removing those accommodated on a permanent basis on the grounds that they clearly cease to be homeless, if they ever were). Note that this figure only includes registered social landlord (RSL) accommodation and levels of non-RSL accommodation are not known but clearly not negligible²³.
- 4.2.8. Of these, 11,000 were classified by the relevant housing association as 'statutorily homeless', 22,000 as 'non-statutorily homeless', 11,000 as 'not homeless' and 1,000 as 'other'.²⁴ Among the 33,000 here who were classified as homeless, 29,000 were people without dependent children.²⁵ Table 4.2 below analyses these people by age group. Note here and elsewhere that totals may not be the sum of the parts shown due to rounding figures.

TABLE 4.2: NON STATUTORY HOMELESS PEOPLE IN THE CORE DATABASE: BY AGE				
Age (000s)				
16-17	18-24	25-59	60+	Total
4	10	14	0	29

- 4.2.9. The next table provides a regional analysis of the 29,000.

TABLE 4.3: NON STATUTORY HOMELESS PEOPLE IN THE CORE DATABASE: BY REGION		
Region	Numbers in non-permanent supported housing (000s)	As a % of total adults
London	6½	0.11%
Rest of the South	7½	0.05%
Midlands	5½	0.07%
North	9½	0.08%
Total	29	0.07%

- 4.2.10. How many of these 29,000 are being provided with non-permanent supported housing at any particular point in time? Given that around three quarters of them have an intended stay of less than a year and a quarter of them have an intended stay of more than a year, a reasonable estimate for the average length of stay would be around nine months.²⁶ This, in turn, implies a figure of around 21,000 (9/12^{ths} of 29,000) being provided with non-permanent supported housing at any particular point in time.
- 4.2.11. In **Scotland**, there were some 1,300 people without dependent children in hostels at any one time during 2002.²⁷ Data for **Wales** is apparently available on a similar basis to that for England. Despite repeated requests, however, no estimates have been provided.
- 4.2.12. Adding up the estimates above for England and Scotland, and scaling up the figures for Wales, gives a total estimate of 24,000 people without dependent children provided with hostel accommodation or equivalent on a non-permanent basis at any particular point in time.
- 4.2.13. According to the 2001 Census, there were around 28,000 people aged 16 and over either living in hostels or sleeping rough in Great Britain on the day of the Census.²⁸ This is a similar order of magnitude to the 24,000 figure above, particularly given the estimate of 800 rough sleepers discussed earlier.

Bed and breakfast and other boarded accommodation

- 4.2.14. The source here is the DWP's Housing Benefit database which is for Great Britain and for which the latest available data is for 2002. This database is the best source of data on homeless people in bed and breakfast and other boarded accommodation since it identifies those people who, broadly speaking, do not have accommodation of their own *and* are on low incomes. The dataset can classify individuals by whether they are local authority or private boarders, self-placed or placed by the local authority, in receipt of housing benefit or not, singles/couples, with or without children, and by region.²⁹
- 4.2.15. In 2002, at any one time, there were around 53,000 benefit unit boarders across Great Britain in bed and breakfast and other boarded accommodation who were on low incomes (i.e. claiming housing benefit).³⁰ Of these, an estimated 49,000 were people without dependent children.³¹

Facing eviction

- 4.2.16. There is no regularly available data on the actual number of evictions, but research conducted by the National Housing Federation suggests that the number of evictions roughly corresponds to the number of outright possession orders.³² The estimated number of people facing outright possession orders in 2002 was about 50,000 in England and 3,000 in Wales.³³ Research indicates that around four fifths of such cases are because of rent arrears – which clearly makes such cases at direct risk of homelessness – with arrears being an additional factor in many of the others. It also indicates that around half are households without dependent children.³⁴ Applying these ratios to the numbers above gives a total estimate of around 22,000 people without dependent children were evicted because of rent arrears in 2002.
- 4.2.17. What proportion of these 22,000 people should be considered to be at *imminent* risk of eviction at any particular point in time? There are two reasons for saying that the answer is around 1,700 (28/365^{ths} of 25,000): first, from a legal standpoint, a person is considered to be threatened with homelessness if it is likely that they will become homeless within 28 days; and, second, possession orders typically take effect 28 days from the day of the Court judgement.³⁵

4.2.18. In Scotland, there were just over 650 evictions (including abandonments following court action) among local authority tenants during the last quarter of 2002. Only 15 of these were for anti-social behaviour. Assuming similar rates of eviction both for RSL tenants, private tenants and occupiers buying with a mortgage produces a figure of 2,100 evictions over the three-month period.³⁶ Assuming (in line with England) that about half of these are without dependent children, this implies (again following the logic of the English argument) some 350 at imminent risk of eviction at any one point in time. Since their derivation is utterly different, it should be stressed that England and Scotland cannot be compared here.

Squatting

4.2.19. There is no obvious data source. Data is available from local authorities on the extent of illegal occupation of their properties, but this can give only an inadequate indication of the extent of the issue. Research studies have previously indicated that there may be around 10,000 squatters at any one time.³⁷

4.2.20. No data is available to distinguish between those who are squatting because of the lack of an alternative versus those who are voluntary and, similarly, no data is available on what proportion do not have dependent children. And the numbers may well have changed since the research in question (1996). In summary, therefore, the numbers of people without dependent children who are squatting because of the lack of any alternative is likely to be somewhat less than the 10,000 figure above.

4.3. THE NUMBERS IN DETAIL: NEW ANALYSES

4.3.1. The source here is our own analysis of the Survey of English Housing.³⁸ To improve statistical reliability, all the figures presented below are averages for the three years 2000/01, 2001/02 and 2002/03. Note that the figures are not vastly different in the three different years (i.e. there is no strong short-term time trend) and thus averaging them does not distort the estimated current numbers in each category. The 2001 Census has been used to gross up the figures to the total English population. All estimates are rounded to the nearest 10,000.

4.3.2. The Survey of English Housing is an annual survey of around 30,000 households (50,000 individuals). Households can be classified according to whether they are overcrowded and how the head of the household feels about the adequacy of the accommodation, as well as a range of other household-level factors. Details of the composition of each household are also known and thus, for example, individual adults within the households can be classified according to their relationship with both the head of the household and their partner/spouse³⁹ and the landlord as well as their family composition. From the viewpoint of this study, the data has two main limitations: it contains no personal details about the individual adults and views of the adequacy of the accommodation etc. are only sought from the head of the household and not from the other adults.

Involuntary sharing in overcrowded conditions

4.3.3. According to this survey, there are an estimated 4.3 million adults aged 16 and over in England living in 'concealed households' – people who do not own or rent a property, do not belong to a tenancy group, are neither the head of the household nor the spouse/partner of the head of the household, and are not considered to be dependent children.⁴⁰ Of these, an estimated 480,000 in England live in overcrowded conditions (i.e. the housing is below the bedroom standard). Note that, in principle, boyfriends/girlfriends are excluded from these figures as they would be considered to be partners of the relevant head of household.

4.3.4. In this context, table 4.4 analyses the estimated 480,000 people in England in concealed households according to their age group and who they are living with. It also incorporates our judgement about the relative risk of the people being in an unsatisfactory or unstable housing situation (L=lower risk, M=middling and H=highest). Those aged 25 and over, or those living with friends rather than family are assigned an 'M' as opposed to an 'L'. Those aged 25 and over and living with friends are assigned an 'H'. Table 4.4 shows that an estimated 10,000 people in England in concealed households can be considered to be at the 'highest risk' of being homeless because of their overcrowded conditions, with 160,000 at 'middling risk' and 300,000 at 'lower risk'.

TABLE 4.4: PEOPLE IN CONCEALED HOUSEHOLDS IN OVERCROWDED CONDITIONS: BY AGE AND WHO THEY ARE LIVING WITH						
Living with	Age (000s)					
	16-17	18-24	25-59	60+	Total	
Parents	40 L	240 L	110 M	- M	380	
Other relatives	- L	20 L	30 M	20 M	70	
Friends etc	- M	10 M	10 H	- H	30	
Total	40	260	150	20	480	

4.3.5. The next table analyses the numbers in each of these risk groups according to whether or not they have dependent children. As can be seen from the table, the vast majority (420,000 out of 480,000) of people in England in concealed households who are living in overcrowded conditions do not have dependent children. Of this 420,000, an estimated 140,000 of these people can be considered to be at 'highest' or 'middling' risk of being in an unsatisfactory or unstable housing situation, with 270,000 being at 'lower' risk.

TABLE 4.5: PEOPLE IN CONCEALED HOUSEHOLDS IN OVERCROWDED CONDITIONS: BY RISK AND FAMILY TYPE				
Family type	Level of risk (000s)			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Without dependent children	270	130	10	420
With dependent children	20	40	-	60
Total	290	170	10	480

4.3.6. Note that, because many of the people without dependent children are living with their parents, who often also have other children who are still dependent, there is a substantial overlap between the families living in overcrowded conditions and single adults living in overcrowded conditions.⁴¹

4.3.7. Finally, table 4.6 provides a regional analysis.

TABLE 4.6: PEOPLE WITHOUT DEPENDENT CHILDREN IN CONCEALED HOUSEHOLDS IN OVERCROWDED CONDITIONS: BY REGION				
Region	Adults in concealed households without dependant children			As a % of total adults
	Numbers in overcrowded conditions (000s)	Numbers total (000s)	% in overcrowded conditions	
London	130	730	18%	2.3%
Rest of the South	100	1,440	7%	0.7%
Midlands	80	820	10%	1.1%
North	110	1,200	9%	1.0%
Total	420	4,200	10%	1.1%

4.3.8. In summary, up to 480,000 adults in England in concealed households could be considered to be homeless because of the overcrowded conditions in which they are living. An estimated 420,000 of these people do not have dependent children. At the very least, all of these people are at some risk of becoming homeless at some time in the future, with 140,000 of them being at particular risk because of their age and/or who they are living with. The 420,000 figure for England is equivalent to 490,000 for Britain as a whole, with the 140,000 at particular risk in England scaling up to 160,000.⁴²

Involuntary sharing in non-overcrowded conditions

4.3.9. Of the estimated 4.3 million adults aged 16 and over in England living in 'concealed households', an estimated 3.8 million are in accommodation which is not overcrowded. The adequacy of the living arrangements for these people clearly depends on how satisfied both they and the head of the household are about the current living arrangements. Whilst data on the individuals' views are not available from the survey, data on the views of the head of the household are available and it would seem to be a realistic assumption that, if the head of the household is dissatisfied, then there is a potential problem.⁴³ Using this information, we find that some 160,000 of the 3.85 million live in homes where the head of the household is dissatisfied with the current living arrangements.⁴⁴

4.3.10. As with overcrowding, the likelihood of homelessness may depend on their age and who they are living with. Table 4.7 therefore analyses the numbers according to these two factors and incorporates our assessment of the relative risk of their being in an unsatisfactory or unstable housing situation (L=lower risk, M=middling and H=highest). It shows an estimated 50,000 people in concealed households could be considered to be at the 'middling risk' of being homeless either now or in the future because of the dissatisfaction of the head of the household, and 100,000 at 'lower risk'.

Living with	Age (000s)						Total		
	16-17		18-24		25-59			60+	
Parents	20	L	70	L	40	M	-	M	140
Other relatives	-	L	-	L	-	M	-	M	10
Friends etc	-	M	-	M	-	H	-	H	10
Total	20		80		50		10		150

4.3.11. The next table below analyses the numbers in each of these risk groups according to their family type. As can be seen from the table, just about all of the 160,000 people in concealed households who are living in homes where the head of the household is dissatisfied with the current living arrangements do not have dependent children.

Family type	Level of risk (000s)			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Without dependent children	100	50	-	150
With dependent children	-	-	-	-
Total	100	50	-	150

4.3.12. Finally, table 4.9 provides a regional analysis.

TABLE 4.9: PEOPLE IN CONCEALED HOUSEHOLDS IN NON-OVERCROWDED CONDITIONS WHERE THE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD EXPRESSES DISSATISFACTION: BY REGION				
Region	Adults without dependent children in concealed households which are not overcrowded			As a % of total adults
	Numbers dissatisfied (000s)	Numbers total (000s)	% dissatisfied	
London	50	600	6%	0.7%
Rest of the South	40	1,340	3%	0.3%
Midlands	30	740	4%	0.3% %
North	40	1,100	4%	0.4%
Total	150	3,7804,200	4%	0.4%

4.3.13. In summary, up to 150,000 adults in concealed, non-overcrowded households could be considered to be homeless because the head of the household is dissatisfied with the current living arrangements. Just about all of these do not have dependent children. At the very least, all of these people are at some risk of becoming homeless at some time in the future, with 50,000 of them being at particular risk because of their age and/or who they are living with. The 150,000 figure for England is equivalent to 180,000 for Britain as a whole, with the 50,000 at particular risk in England scaling up to 60,000.⁴⁵

Other possible categories where no estimates are possible

4.3.14. For completeness, we note three other categories where no estimates were possible.

- ***In institutions because nowhere else to go.*** The 2001 Census does count the number of people in medical and care establishments but does not distinguish between those who are there for medical and care reasons (presumably the vast majority of the 450,000 people in such establishments) and those who are there because they have nowhere else to go.
- ***Temporary guests.*** The Survey of English Housing does classify some people as temporary but its focus is on lodgers who are staying temporarily and paying rent who have alternative accommodation elsewhere. There is no obvious direct connection between these people and those who we would ideally like to count, namely those people who are 'sofa surfers' and move from one household to another staying with each for a relatively short space of time, perhaps interspersed with periods of rough sleeping and staying in other temporary accommodation.
- ***Those whose personal safety or well-being is at risk.*** Although clearly a potentially important category, no source has been found for estimating numbers.

4.4. SUMMARY AND REFLECTION

The overall numbers

4.4.1. Table 4.10 summarises our estimates of the number of single homeless people at any point in time in the different groups considered. Although the estimates are drawn from a variety of data sources that were compiled at different times, there is no evidence that the size of any of these categories has changed over short periods of time by an amount that would make a substantial difference to the overall totals.

TABLE 4.10: ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENT CHILDREN WHO COULD BE CONSIDERED TO BE HOMELESS AT ANY POINT IN TIME	
GROUP	NUMBER
Rough sleepers	800
Those who have been provided with supported housing for whatever reason (hostels/YMCAs/shelters)	Around 25,000
Bed and breakfast and other boarded accommodation	Around 50,000
People at imminent risk of eviction	Say, 2,000

Squatters	Up to 10,000
Involuntary sharing – concealed households sharing overcrowded accommodation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either aged 25 and over or living with friends • Or aged under 25 and living with family 	Around 160,000 (higher likelihood) Around 330,000 (lower likelihood)
Involuntary sharing – concealed households sharing accommodation which is not overcrowded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either aged 25 and over or living with friends • Or aged under 25 and living with family 	Around 60,000 (higher likelihood) Around 120,000 (lower likelihood)

4.4.2. How can this be summed up? One way to do this is to look for the absolute minimum that we assume anyone would recognise as homeless, as well as the absolute maximum that could possibly be supported by the table. Taking the first three groups as constituting the former implies an absolute minimum of some 75,000 single homeless people, while the total for the whole table gives an absolute maximum of 750,000.

4.4.3. Two points about these figures are particularly noteworthy. First, they imply that there are between 100 and (almost) 1,000 times as many homeless adults without dependent children as there are rough sleepers, illustrating the scale of the potential problem.

4.4.4. Second, the total estimated numbers across all the groups above for adults with dependent children is about 70,000, which is barely more than one tenth of the equivalent estimate (750,000) for adults without dependent children.⁴⁶ The significance of this point is that it shows how the forms of homelessness that we are measuring here are overwhelmingly associated with single people. We concluded earlier, on the basis of the recent legislative changes, that single homelessness remains a powerful and valid term. Our analysis here is independent of the reasoning that led to that earlier conclusion, but it backs it up completely.

4.4.5. However, neither of the ‘absolutes’ is really realistic, the former since it excludes anyone living with other people, and latter because it includes everyone of them. A better way to proceed is to assign a probability to each of the groups to reflect the proportion of the group who are homeless. Although these probabilities are themselves a matter of judgement, the way we have constructed the groups, and in particular the way we have divided the two groups of involuntary sharers into a higher and lower likelihood sub-groups, allows us to suggest some probabilities. Table 4.11 presents our suggestions and the associated numbers of single homeless people they imply, for both a ‘low end’ and a ‘high end’ estimate. It suggests that the overall number of single homeless people lies between 310,000 and 380,000 if:

- all of those in the first four groups are homeless;
- most (90 per cent) squatters are homeless;
- almost all (95 to 99 per cent) of people in concealed households who are in overcrowded accommodation and either aged 25 and over or living with friends are homeless;
- a few (5 to 20 per cent) of people in concealed households who are in overcrowded accommodation and aged under 25 and living with family are homeless;
- almost all (90 to 95 per cent) of people in concealed households who are in non-overcrowded accommodation where the head of household expresses some dissatisfaction and who are either aged 25 and over or living with friends, are homeless;
- a few (1 to 10 per cent) of people in concealed households who are in non-overcrowded accommodation where the head of household expresses some dissatisfaction and who are aged under 25 and living with family, are homeless.

TABLE 4.11: SUGGESTED 'LOW END' AND 'HIGH END' ESTIMATES OF THE NUMBER OF HOMELESS ADULTS WITHOUT DEPENDENT CHILDREN					
Group	Total number in group (per table 4.10)	Low end		High end	
		% age	No.	% age	No.
Rough sleepers	800	100%	800	100%	800
Those who have been provided with supported housing for whatever reason (hostels/YMCAs/shelters)	25,000	100%	25,000	100%	25,000
Bed and breakfast and other boarded accommodation	50,000	100%	50,000	100%	50,000
People at imminent risk of eviction	2,000	100%	2,000	100%	2,000
Squatters	10,000	90%	9,000	90%	9,000
Involuntary sharing – concealed households sharing overcrowded accommodation:					
• Either aged 25 and over or living with friends	160,000	95%	152,000	99%	158,000
• Or aged under 25 and living with family	330,000	5%	17,000	20%	66,000
Involuntary sharing – concealed households sharing accommodation which is not overcrowded					
• Either aged 25 and over or living with friends	60,000	90%	54,000	95%	57,000
• Or aged under 25 and living with family	120,000	1%	1,200	10%	12,000
Total (rounded)			310,000		380,000

Reflections on these numbers

- 4.4.6. How reasonable are the overall estimates of the number of single homeless people, and in particular, our suggested range of somewhere between 310,000 and 380,000? First, people sleeping rough, or staying in hostels, or bed and breakfast, do not spring out of thin air. The idea that perhaps four times as many homeless people are being accommodated by their friends and family as are sleeping rough or being helped by agencies hardly seems implausible given how much more preferable the former must almost always be.
- 4.4.7. Second, the numbers can be judged against the number of people in poverty. In practice, public attention is usually focused on two groups, namely children in poverty and pensioners in poverty. But the source from which these numbers come also provides estimates for other groups, including single adults and couples aged under 60 and without dependent children. Measured in relation to the most commonly used threshold for counting the numbers in poverty,⁴⁷ this shows some 3½ million such people in poverty in 2000/01, of whom 2¼ million were single people and 1¼ million were people in couples.
- 4.4.8. Of these, around 840,000 single people were effectively in concealed households⁴⁸, two thirds of whom (560,000) were either unemployed or economically inactive. The numbers here for couples are negligible.⁴⁹
- 4.4.9. Since the survey from which these numbers are drawn is a household survey, it is only picking up people who are housed. Clearly what is needed is a source of information that allows housing status to be cross-tabulated against the income statistics. That does not exist at the moment. Nevertheless, the fact that there are so many single people in poverty, without dependent children, sharing a home with other people, suggests that our somewhat lower estimate of single homelessness is not unreasonable.

4.4.10. What gives this comparison added poignancy is that, until the introduction of the Working Tax Credit in April 2003 (which is available to low paid people without dependent children) this 3.4 million is the very group of people who have gained nothing from the major reforms of the tax and benefit system introduced by this Government since 1999. In other words, single homeless people are part of a larger population who, to borrow a phrase, have been decidedly 'non-priority' as far as the great reforms of the past few years have been concerned, these having been focused instead on pensioners, children and adults with children in work.

Observations on the national and regional variations

4.4.11. Although separate figures are available for England, Scotland and Wales for a number of the categories, we do not believe that these can realistically be used to draw any conclusion about differing levels of incidence between the countries because of the somewhat different definitions that are typically used.

4.4.12. Where regional comparisons are possible within England, the typical pattern is one where the levels of incidence are somewhat higher in London than in the rest of the country, and somewhat lower in the rest of the South. This is illustrated in table 4.12 which shows the size of various categories of homelessness expressed as a percentage of the total number of adults in the region.

Region (grouped)	In non-permanent supported housing	In concealed households in overcrowded conditions	In concealed households where the head of the household is dissatisfied
London	0.11%	2.3% %	0.7%
Rest of the South	0.05%	0.7%	0.3%
Midlands	0.07%	1.1%	0.3%
North	0.08%	1.0%	0.4%
Total	0.07%	1.1%	0.4%

5. COSTS OF SINGLE HOMELESSNESS

5.1. OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

5.1.1. This chapter turns from the question of how many single homeless people they are to how much single homelessness costs. The chapter's specific task is to prepare the ground for the actual costings, which are presented in the next chapter. It does so by identifying the types of situations and incidents experienced by homeless people that actually give rise to costs, through the development of different scenarios which, between them, contain many of the experiences that people becoming and remaining homeless have.

5.2. THE BASIC APPROACH: SCENARIOS AND UNIT COSTS

5.2.1. Any initiative to tackle homelessness, whoever undertakes it, is bound to cost money. Calculating how much money is an essential step in the process of deciding finally whether the initiative should go ahead or not. But not undertaking the initiative may also cost money. Although these latter costs are typically not borne by the organisation or part of government that is planning the initiative, they still ought to be taken account of, as a saving to offset against the direct cost of the initiative.

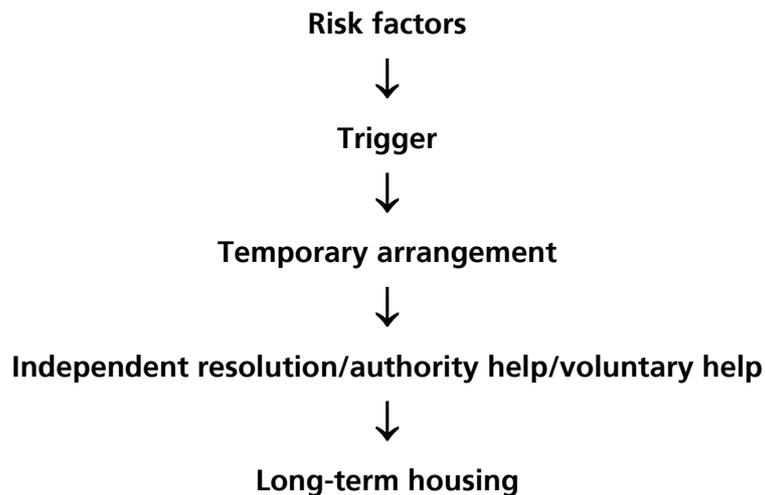
5.2.2. This chapter and the next make a start at the task of estimating what these cost savings might be. What is important here is not the total cost of homelessness – we are definitely not looking to make a statement like “single homelessness costs Britain £X billion pounds a year!”. Statements like this get the headlines, but they are not much use in working out how much might be saved if, say, the amount of time that homeless people have to wait in temporary accommodation could be reduced by, say, two weeks. In order to do that, what is needed are the unit costs associated with particular cost episodes or incidents that arise in connection with homelessness.

5.2.3. But what are these episodes? In practice, the range of costly things associated with homelessness is probably endless. To restrict the exercise to something manageable, we begin (in this chapter) by presenting a series of scenarios that represent pathways through and sometimes out of homelessness for single people. These scenarios then provide a framework for the subsequent analysis (presented in the next chapter) directed at identifying and then quantifying the costs that occur.

5.2.4. In taking a scenario approach, everything really depends on the strength of the scenarios. While they are certainly artificial, we have striven to try to make sure they are representative. We have done three things to try to ensure that this is so:

- first, by ‘seeding’ each of the scenarios by what research shows to be one of the main triggers for homelessness;
- second by assembling the episodes within each scenario in the light of what the research literature shows are typical or common experiences suffered by homeless people;
- third, by checking the scenarios with people working with homeless people, and in places altered them so as to try to achieve a greater affinity with actual experience.

5.2.5. There has been quite a lot of research focused on pathways into homelessness. Much less has been done on pathways out of homelessness, and very few studies have focused on pathways through homelessness. This is hardly surprising since the countless possible permutations make it difficult to link routes in and out of homelessness. Nonetheless, the stages of a homelessness ‘career’ can be identified to provide a framework for the scenarios. The stages are depicted below. It should be stressed that a person’s experience of homelessness is likely to be much more chaotic than the stages suggest. In particular, there is no reason to suppose either that the pathway will just be a simple step by step progression through the stages: looping back to an earlier stage, perhaps a number of times, will happen in some cases, perhaps even most.



5.3. SIX SCENARIOS

5.3.1. Identified by the trigger event, the scenarios are:

- **Andy:** Leaving the parental home (breakdown of relationship with mother).
- **Beth:** Leaving a partner's home (family breakdown due to domestic violence).
- **Charlie:** Leaving an institution.
- **Denise:** Financial problems e.g. loss of a job, indebtedness
- **Evan:** Deterioration in mental/physical health.
- **Frank:** Family bereavement and subsequent increase in alcohol use.

Scenario A: Leaving home (relationship breakdown with parent)

5.3.2. Andy is a 22 year-old single man, living in central London. He left home after problems with his family, and became homeless as he was unable to secure alternative accommodation.

Andy and his mother did not get on, and their relationship got worse when his mother's new partner moved in to live with them. After a big argument with his mother's partner one weekend, Andy felt that he was no longer able to stay at home, and left even though he did not know where to go, and what to do in the long term.

A friend living nearby said it would be OK for him to stay for a few weeks until he managed to sort something else out. Andy took him up on the offer – that meant he could at least continue his job at the local garage which was within walking distance of his friend's. After a few weeks, he moved into another friend's flat, where he was able to stay for a couple of weeks.

While this meant he did have somewhere to sleep, this friend lived some way from the garage, and he struggled to afford a travel card – some weeks having to walk about an hour to work. Living far away meant that Andy started being late for work and after about two months he lost his job. He carried on staying at his friend's but since there was hardly any room he had nowhere to put his stuff and was sleeping on the sofa. While Andy had a job this wasn't too bad as he was out a lot but after he lost his work he got bored and fed up and started arguing with his friend. After two weeks of this he left his friend's before they fell out completely.

With nowhere else to go, and unaware of where to get help, he was forced to sleep rough. After one week of sleeping rough, he met an outreach worker who suggested he move into a hostel. Andy was reluctant at first as he had heard stories about hostels being unsafe and full of people using drugs. After talking to the outreach worker he was persuaded that it would be safer than sleeping rough and one week later moved in. To start with, he was just glad to have his own room again, but the hostel was big and he did feel intimidated by some of the others staying there. He was very unhappy and after he was attacked by someone living there felt he had no other option than to go back onto the streets. He had been in the hostel for six weeks.

After a month sleeping rough, an outreach worker told him about another smaller hostel. He moved in and found the staff friendly. He had a worker who he met with each week who helped him think about what he wanted to do and where he could live in the long term. After two weeks in the hostel, he managed to get a job. He discovered that although there were long waiting lists for housing it was worth applying to the council for housing. The hostel had contacts with private landlords and ran a rent deposit scheme. This meant that if Andy could find a house to rent then he would not have to find the money for a deposit. After three months in the hostel he found a room in a shared house.

Andy now lives in the shared house. He has his own room, but has to share all other facilities with three other young people. Sharing is not easy and the house is not very well maintained. Some nights he can't sleep because people's friends come round and make a lot of noise. For the moment, though, he is trying to stick it out – after months of sleeping on friends' sofas, on the streets, and in various hostels, he was desperate for anything more permanent and stable.

5.3.3. Some points from research which have influenced the scenario are:

- Family breakdown is both a risk factor and trigger in making a young person homeless. Over half of referrals to Centrepoin, for example, report having left their family home because of arguments, violence and relationship breakdown. This is backed up by other surveys, some of which have recorded an even greater proportion of young people leaving home because of family related problems.⁵⁰
- Rough sleeping for a month or more was experienced by over 80 per cent of referrals to Centrepoin.⁵¹
- Few people move directly from permanent accommodation onto the streets. The first stop is likely to be friends or relatives for a period of time, followed by a period of rough sleeping, usually as a result of a lack of availability/knowledge about temporary options.⁵²
- Almost 80 per cent of rough sleepers have been victims of crime at least once during their last period of rough sleeping, almost half of rough sleepers have been assaulted, and more than a third are victims of wounding.⁵³

5.3.4. A point to note when considering these costs is that living with friends and family in cramped, overcrowded conditions can add to stress and create health problems.⁵⁴ This in turn increases the potential cost for service providers. One particular source of friction or stress lies between the occupier and the homeless person – in a council property, the occupier may be concerned the council will find out that an additional person is living there, and may fear what action the council might take, particularly if the property is overcrowded. Friction may occur over housing benefit – if the main tenant is on benefit and the homeless person has a job, then the tenant may be concerned that his amount of benefit will decrease. Anecdotal evidence suggests that fear of the implications of both situations mean that the homeless person is dissuaded by their friend or relative from seeking help.

Scenario B: Leaving home (relationship breakdown due to violent partner)

5.3.5. Beth is a 24-year-old woman, who left her partner due to domestic violence. She is on the waiting list for local authority accommodation.

Beth and her partner lived together for five years in a privately rented flat. Beth's partner had always been violent, but over the years, his behaviour got much worse. Beth always feared for her safety, and for a long time considered moving out. However, the alternatives were not appealing – the flat had been Beth's home for five years, she knew the area well, worked nearby, and had friends living locally.

After a particularly violent outbreak, Beth was forced out. She stayed with a couple of friends for a week at a time, then with her mother. The distress caused by her partner's abuse, combined with unsettling living conditions, meant she had to stop her job. The conditions were cramped, and she was always sleeping either on the floor or on sofas. She found it very unsettling and, after a couple of months of moving round, had to find somewhere else. She contacted the local refuge, only to learn that there was no room there – although she could go to another one in the outskirts of the city.

Although reluctant to move away, Beth had no other option, so she took the place. At the refuge, Beth was able to see a key worker every week. She also saw a housing advice worker who came to the refuge to discuss her application for council housing. To begin with, while they were processing her claim, she stayed in the hostel. She had no idea how long she would be staying there – the council said that if she were found to be eligible for assistance, she would have to wait at least six months, possibly a year, since there was a shortage of stock. After a month, unable to see an end to her situation, and finding life in the hostel too traumatic, she decided to go back to her partner who had been urging her to go back ever since she left. When she returned to him, her application for council housing was cancelled.

Initially, Beth's partner seemed to have got a lot better. But before long, his violence towards her returned, and a month later, she was forced to leave after being seriously assaulted. She went to a friend's flat who went with her to the hospital. She called the refuge for help. She was offered a place in a safe house, again, not in an area she knew, but she thought it would be better than nothing. Beth did not like the place – although she had her own room, she shared facilities and bathroom with others whom she did not trust. However, the support was good – she saw her key worker once a week, and saw a psychotherapist on a weekly basis for the first three months she was there.

After Beth had settled down in the hostel, she was helped to process an application with the local authority for a flat of her own. The claim took three months to process, but she was told that the authority did have a responsibility to house her. She was told that she would have to wait six months to a year to be housed. Beth is desperate to leave – her hostel room is far from being a home, and she dreads the prospect of being there for another year.

5.3.6. Some points from research which have influenced the scenario are:

- Recent research reported that 40 per cent of homeless women stated that domestic violence was a contributor to their homelessness. Domestic violence was “the single most quoted reason for becoming homeless”.⁵⁵
- Domestic violence accounts for at least 16 per cent of homelessness acceptances each year.⁵⁶ Individual, small scale surveys suggest that the overall relationship between homelessness and domestic violence is much closer than this: in a supported housing project in Bradford, about 50 per cent of women were fleeing domestic violence. This includes both single women and women with children.⁵⁷
- A study of repeat homelessness in Scotland found that relationship breakdown involving domestic violence was seen as a key cause of repeat homelessness.⁵⁸ Single people and childless couples account for half the repeat applications.
- The most common destinations after leaving the abuser are: refuge (15 per cent), temporary accommodation including family and friends (25 per cent); temporary council accommodation and/or housing association properties (30 per cent); hostels (13 per cent) and bed and breakfast (6 per cent).⁵⁹
- Under the new priority need order, authorities must accept people as being in priority need if they are satisfied that they are vulnerable as a result of fleeing their home because of violence (or threat of violence likely to be carried out). If the applicant is also eligible for assistance and unintentionally homeless, the authority must ensure the applicant has suitable accommodation available. However, local authorities reported problems in meeting the permanent accommodation needs of those experiencing domestic violence even before the category of priority need was widened, and so it is likely that these problems will be increased. This means that victims are forced to wait in unsettled housing or with their abuser for long periods of time before being re-housed, worsening their already poor physical and psychological state. 82 per cent of housing authorities in London reported problems in dealing with domestic violence victims.⁶⁰

- Accommodation between repeat applications is likely to be unsettled. Only 20 per cent lived in one place between applications. About 30 per cent lived in five or more places between applications; over 30 per cent lived in three or more places, and the remainder lived in two places. The duration of stay in each of the places was likely to be short, with a quarter spending under a month in each place, 20 per cent spending two to three months in each place, and 14 per cent staying four to six months in each place.⁶¹
- Research commissioned by the DTI's Women and Equality Unit is currently underway on the economic and social costs of domestic violence. It is the first detailed, national report on the subject, with previous estimates existing only on a very small scale⁶².
- The cost of the serious assault cannot always be directly classified as a cost of homelessness. The assault happens in this case, for example, when Beth was back at 'home' with her partner. However, it could also be argued that long waiting lists and difficult temporary living conditions increase the likelihood of victims returning to their partners, and thus domestic violence can be said to be at least an associated cost of homelessness.

Scenario C: Leaving an institution

- 5.3.7. Charlie is 25 years old and single. He suffers from learning difficulties and mild personality disorder. He has a history of offending which has been linked to his poor mental health. He is awaiting a sentence for shoplifting.

Charlie was given a 28-week sentence for assault. He had been living alone in his council flat ever since his partner had left with their child. He also had problems holding down a job. When he was sentenced, he had rent arrears totalling over £500, but had already come to an agreement to pay it back bit by bit. When he went to prison, he did not realise that he had to sort out tenancy arrangements with housing management.

Since he was expected to serve longer than 13 weeks, his housing benefit was stopped automatically on the day he was sentenced. On arrival in prison, Charlie was given a leaflet telling him where he could go for help if he had housing problems, but Charlie was too distressed to think about it and in any case, he was unaware that he needed help with his tenancy. His rent arrears continued to build up and while he was in prison, the council issued a warrant for eviction.

The housing officer in prison did not give much advice, but did tell Charlie to apply on release for local authority housing. However, on discharge, Charlie did not go to the local authority, but went instead to a relative. His relative told him that his flat had been boarded up and that the locks had been changed. This caused Charlie even more distress, and he became harder to live with. After a couple of weeks, Charlie was forced to move out. For the following month, he lived between friends' flats, sleeping on the floor or sofa. After they told him to leave, he went to a local housing advice centre which gave him a list of hostels to call. A hostel was the last place Charlie wanted to go as it would remind him of prison, and after calling over ten hostels, he gave up, feeling discouraged and pessimistic about his chances of getting a place anywhere.

Charlie went to a friend's house to stay, but again, was only able to for a week before being asked to leave. There was no room, and his friend could not cope with his unstable behaviour. Charlie then had to sleep rough for a couple of weeks. He went back to the housing advice centre and they told him about a day centre where he could get food, medical help, and have an appointment with a GP. The advice centre also made an appointment with the Homeless Person's Unit for him. The appointment was booked for two weeks' time.

Charlie was fortunate that although he missed his appointment, the HPU were able to fit him in when he turned up. However, he had no proof of identity. The housing worker told him they could start to investigate his housing claim and in the meantime, that he should get hold of identification, and could stay in a B&B. After a week in the B&B, Charlie left because he felt isolated and depressed. He was receiving no support for his mental health problems, and had no money as he did not know where to go for access to support with benefit claims. The HPU did not know where to contact him to try and get more information about his claim, so further delays were experienced in the process of assessing his eligibility for long-term housing.

Two weeks later, having gone back to living on the streets, Charlie was reported to the police for aggressive behaviour and shoplifting. Without settled accommodation, he was unable to claim benefits, had no money to live off, and so had to resort to shoplifting to survive. He spent six weeks in prison on remand.

5.3.8. Some points from research which have influenced the scenario are:

- A third of people leaving prison leave with nowhere to go. Many more will have a first destination, but will not necessarily know how long that accommodation is available to them, and will be uncertain of what will follow. The proportion of people leaving prison with nowhere to go, and who also suffer a mental illness is even higher – one recent research project found almost 50 per cent of prisoners with a mental illness had nowhere to go.⁶³
- 40 per cent of people entering prison with a tenancy lose it.⁶⁴ One of the main reasons for this is the 13-week rule, which stops housing benefit for those expected to spend longer than 13 weeks in prison.
- Those with short-term sentences are most vulnerable in terms of housing on release. Many hostels for prison leavers have beds that are allocated through probation officers. Since those serving under 12 months are not supervised by a probation officer, they do not have access to these beds.
- Studies show that the mental health of prisoners is likely to decline while in prison.⁶⁵ 70 per cent of prisoners suffer from at least two mental disorders, and 57 per cent of prisoners with mental health needs interviewed leave with no future secure tenancy.⁶⁶
- Research suggests that provision of stable accommodation can make a difference of over 20 per cent in terms of reconviction.⁶⁷

Scenario D: Loss of a job/increased indebtedness

5.3.9. Denise is a 21-year-old single person. She was in care until she was 16 years old. She was evicted for rent arrears and is currently moving between friends as she has nowhere to live.

Denise lived in a housing association flat in a village outside Abingdon in Oxfordshire. The rent on the flat was £56.20 rent per week. She was in care until she was 16, was living independently in housing association accommodation for five years. Denise did not have a car and so finding work that she could get to easily was a problem. However, Denise had been lucky in finding work locally although she had to change jobs a lot because much of the work was seasonal. Denise was paid just over the minimum wage and she usually worked about 35 hours a week. These low wages meant that she was entitled to some housing benefit, but her constant changes in jobs meant that there were often delays in assessing her claim and housing benefit was owed to her. This meant that Denise accumulated rent arrears. In addition, she got behind on paying her bills and built up an overdraft. The housing association employed a floating support worker, and had suggested that Denise arrange an appointment, but she was at work during the day, and could not fit this in.

The housing association got in contact with Denise about her arrears and she agreed a plan to repay them at £3.00 per week on top of her rent. They told her that if she did not keep to this agreement then she would be evicted. Denise was just about able to get by until she lost her job and was not able to find another one. She stopped paying her rent and reapplied for housing benefit. While her claim was being processed her rent arrears built up, as did her other debts. Denise received a letter informing her that the housing association had taken out a possession order against her because she owed them more than ten weeks' rent. They would be going to court to get possession of her flat.

Ten weeks later, at the court hearing, Denise explained her situation to the judge. He was sympathetic and gave the housing association suspended possession of her flat. To avoid eviction, Denise had to contact the housing benefit office to get her claim sorted out and pay £3.00 on top of the housing benefit each week to reduce her arrears. For the three months, Denise stuck to this agreement, but when Christmas came round she stopped paying the housing association and got a letter from them saying they were going back to court to get possession of her flat. This time they got immediate possession.

Denise left the flat, and went to stay with a friend. From there, she tried to sort out what she should do next. She went to the housing authority and they told her they could help her because she was not in priority need and had made herself intentionally homeless by not paying her rent. All she could do was to apply to go on the waiting list, but she would be low down on the list and it was unlikely she would get re-housed while she still owes a housing association rent arrears or in the village she has been living in.

She looked into private rented housing but she had no job, and even if she had found one, she would still not have been able to pay the required deposit of £600. She went to the job centre – there were no jobs going. Having been at her friend's for three weeks already, she was told she could only stay for one week more. She now has no job and does not know where she will go....

5.3.10. Some points from research which have influenced the scenario are:

- Rent arrears is the main reason for eviction, accounting for as much as 95 per cent of all evictions in England and Wales. Similar proportions are recorded in Scotland. Citizens Advice reports that the main reasons for the build up of rent arrears include a drop in income e.g. as a result of job loss, delays and failures in housing benefit administration, and problems associated with managing on a low income. These problems become exacerbated when the tenant is vulnerable in some way e.g. suffers from stress, has learning disabilities etc.⁶⁸
- There is evidence to suggest that homelessness is growing faster in rural areas than in urban areas. The problem is harder to address in rural areas: awareness of services that do exist are low; distance between service users and providers make accessibility a problem; there is a small social rented sector compared to a very large private rented sector – this means young people on a low wage are at greater risk of homelessness (Countryside Agency Report).⁶⁹
- A high proportion of homeless applicants are unemployed or otherwise economically inactive. Over 80 per cent of Centrepoint referrals are without a job.⁷⁰
- Projects working with young people note that rent arrears are particularly common among young people who leave home at an early age since they are less likely to have acquired necessary skills such as budgeting. This, if combined with other risk factors such as poor qualifications/education, will result in a much higher chance of tenancy failure.⁷¹

Scenario E: Increased drug use and deterioration of mental health

5.3.11. Evan, aged 22, has a partner and child who have left him. He has a history of drug abuse, and mental ill-health.

Evan had a difficult childhood – his parents separated and his mother could not cope looking after both him and his sister. When he was 11, he was taken into care of the Social Services, and lived in various foster homes until he was 17. He went back to stay with his mother for a while, but living there was too difficult – his mother said he should find a job or leave the flat.

Evan was planning on moving anyway – he moved between various friends, but then his partner had a baby and they were given a council flat. For two years, Evan was unable to find a job. He became increasingly depressed and became more involved in drugs. Evan was using heroin and this forced his partner to leave as she could no longer cope in the same flat. She went to stay with her mother, but things were cramped, and she applied to the local authority for a flat of her own.

Evan became increasingly drug dependent, and his depression got worse. To add to his problems, his debts from a loan shark built up and he started arguing a lot with his neighbours. They complained that his friends were always round dealing drugs in his flat. They accused Evan of dealing drugs too, and threatened to call the police. The estate management office had been round to warn him about 'anti-social behaviour'. Fearful of being caught, and unable to see a way of paying back his debts, Evan felt that the best option would be to abandon his flat altogether, although he did not know where to go.

After a few days at a friend's house, he was asked to leave. For a couple of months, he was living on the streets. An outreach worker visited Evan regularly and also put him in touch with other services, including a nearby day centre. Whilst he was able to get food and basic provisions, he had no money to fund his habit, so had to steal in order to get it. Living on the streets, his mental health deteriorated, especially after he was attacked and had to go to hospital as a result.

The outreach worker persuaded Evan that it would be safer to live in a hostel. However, when he discovered that the only place available was in a hostel full of other drug users, he did not want to go, despite the fact he was desperate to get better, and to start sorting things out with his partner. After another month sleeping rough, and with winter weather coming on, Evan decided to ask for hostel accommodation of whatever type. The outreach worker referred him to a hostel, and Evan was lucky enough to get a place within a week.

In the hostel, Evan was able to see a key worker on a weekly basis. However, he was not able to get help for his drug problem as there were no facilities on site, and his poor mental health went unnoticed due to his drug habit. He stayed in the hostel for 12 months – waiting for detox and his place at a rehabilitation centre.

After Evan's two weeks' detox and 6 months in rehab, he was offered accommodation. However, the support package was minimal, and his mental health needs had not been met. It is unlikely that Evan will be able to sustain the tenancy for long....

5.3.12. Some points from research which have influenced the scenario are:

- Drug and alcohol abuse, especially when combined with a mental illness are linked to homelessness, as predictors (risk factors), as triggers e.g. a sharp deterioration in mental health or increase in alcohol drug misuse, and as a consequence of being homeless. If people lose their accommodation, drug and alcohol problems are likely to be exacerbated.
- Homeless Link conducted a survey of homeless agencies' experience with multiple need presenters. The findings suggest that homeless people with multiple needs account for over 50 per cent of the total number. However, only 11 per cent of bed spaces were targeted at people with multiple needs, and while many had the facilities and staff to carry out drug and alcohol assessments, only a minority of organisations provide specialist care (e.g. detox and rehabilitation) internally. External care is estimated to take twice as long as internal care, and access times vary from one week to a year.⁷²
- Between 50-75 per cent of homeless⁷³ single people have had drug misuse problems at some stage, any of which are combined with wider problems such as a mental health illness, unemployment etc.⁷⁴ 70 per cent of homeless people are estimated to have some sort of mental health problem, according to a recent report to the drugs and alcohol research unit at the Home Office. The combination of both mental health problem and drug misuse is therefore very high.
- Hostels and night shelters are often the first stage accommodation for drug users. However, it is largely acknowledged that staff are insufficiently trained to deal with drug related issues, and mental illness.⁷⁵
- There are known to be exceptionally low rates for resettlement among young people with drug and alcohol problems.⁷⁶
- Drug use is not a 'vulnerable' category, and so it is unlikely that Evan would be given eligible for long-term housing.

Scenario F: Older man, increase in alcohol dependency

5.3.13. Frank, aged 55, is a widower. He did own his home, with the help of a mortgage. He is alcohol dependent, and now sleeps rough.

Frank had been married for 30 years and lived in London with his wife until she died unexpectedly. After her death, he found it difficult to cope, and with family living a long way from him, he felt very isolated. Frank was always a heavy drinker, but the pressure of the new circumstances made him drink even more. He was made redundant shortly after his wife's death, and became very depressed.

Frank did not want to stay in the flat because the place was full of memories. He had also started receiving letters from his building society asking about mortgage repayments. Although Frank did not have much left to pay, he had no income at all, and did not know how to handle the problem. He abandoned it and travelled to stay with his son in Sheffield. His son let him stay for a week, but after that, told him to leave – he did not intervene to help Frank with his problems, as Frank was drinking heavily and did not communicate. Frank also told his son he still had the flat, so his son did not know that he had nowhere to go.

Frank did not want to go back to his flat, as he thought he might get arrested and did not know where else to go. For no particular reason, he ended up travelling to Manchester, where he slept rough. He continued drinking heavily, and was depressed. The only people he knew were others living on the street. They told him about a day centre where he could go for food and advice. He was also told about a night shelter which he started to visit from time to time.

Frank lived between the streets, night shelter and day centre for six weeks. His rough sleeping came to an end when a worker at the day centre noticed Frank was extremely ill – and arranged for him to see a doctor. Frank had contracted TB, and was sent to hospital. The hospital also put him in touch with a social worker to help with his depression. They also put him in touch with a hostel which he went to when he was discharged.

In the hostel, Frank was given minimal level of support. The hostel was large and had few resources. Despite meeting with his key worker once a week, Frank's drinking problem and depression continued to get worse – he had nothing to do during the day, and drinking was a way of forgetting about everything. The hostel told him he would not be entitled to local authority housing as he was intentionally homeless, but helped him to get a place in a shared flat, which, although not ideal, would have to do since there were no other options available. Frank moved in after six months.

However, he only lasted three months in his new tenancy. His basic living skills were poor, and he found coping with cooking, cleaning, and bills again very difficult. Another problem was that he did not get on with the other people living in the flat, who were always complaining about his drinking. The support he received was minimal – a weekly visit from his key worker, and although they put him in touch with the local authority substance misuse team, Frank did not use it. Embarrassed about returning to the hostel after leaving his flat, Frank went back to the streets again.

5.3.14. Some points from research which have influenced the scenario are:

- Studies of older homeless people show that it is rare for a single factor to be the cause of homelessness. For those made homeless for the first time in later life, relationship breakdown, death of a spouse, and discharge from the armed forces were the most common triggers, with mental illness, retirement, and poor coping skills as contributory factors.⁷⁷ Interview-based research on older homeless people suggests that some 40 per cent experience homelessness for the first time when they are aged 50 or over.⁷⁸
- Research showed that older homeless people are mostly single – although a large proportion of those had been married at some stage, and were divorced, separated or widowed. Those who become homeless when aged over 50 are likely to have been living alone immediately prior to becoming homeless.⁷⁹
- Most homeless older people had been employed – 40 per cent employed consistently until aged 50, mostly in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs; 50 per cent had been working in the armed forces until their middle ages.
- Older people use direct access hostels and cold weather shelters as their first port of call – many stay there until they are resettled. However, temporary accommodation does not often cater specifically for older people, even though they make up the majority of hostel residents.
- Over 50 per cent of older people who are resettled for the first time become homeless again, mainly because they cannot cope at home. Roughly 50 per cent of those resettled for the second time again become homeless.⁸⁰ Studies show that older homeless people, especially men, are likely to stay homeless for long periods of time.⁸¹

- Older men with alcohol problems were identified as a distinct group of homeless presenters according to Scottish Homes research. A variation on this scenario would be one they described: “typically. men with an alcohol problem, rather than a drug problem. Their relationship breaks down as a result and they are re-housed. Unable to manage independent living and a tenancy, they lose the tenancy through rent arrears or anti-social behaviour and move in with an acquaintance until that arrangement breaks down and the return to the homelessness services”.⁸²
- Old age is not sufficient for someone to be deemed vulnerable. It is only when as a result of old age that applicants would be less able to fend for themselves than someone else. Applications from those over 60 are to be “considered carefully”, but this does not mean that 60 is the fixed age at which people are automatically assessed as vulnerable. Statutory help is also available under the NHS and Community Care Act 1990, but the implementation of this only works for those who are housed and in contact with local services.

6. QUANTIFYING THE COSTS

6.1. OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

- 6.1.1. Building on the scenarios developed in the last chapter, this chapter presents the results of the exercise to attach costs to the experiences those scenarios contain, drawing on a disparate range of sources for this information. The conclusion is salutary: homelessness and the problems and experiences that are typically associated with it can cost a lot of money, sometimes many thousands of pounds a year. Especially significant are the costs that persist over a period of time, which not only include temporary accommodation, but also the cost to society of prolonged unemployment and the lost output that such economic inactivity represents. The implication of this for policy makers is that while action to end homelessness usually costs money, the **net** costs of that action can be much smaller since the costs of remaining homeless count as a saving.
- 6.1.2. Equally importantly, the chapter also presents a series of unit costs that can be applied to the various different incidents that arise with homelessness, to help with the benefits of any suggested initiative to reduce homelessness. What we call 'soft' costs – namely those borne by the homeless person themselves, such as injury, or illness, or indeed the stress or pressure borne by friends and family who help the homeless person by providing them with accommodation – have been excluded here because information on them is too scarce. We hope that in future, as more research into these effects is carried out, such costs can be included in other exercises like this. The effect would, undoubtedly, be to increase further the overall costs of homelessness, and strengthen yet further the economic case for action.

6.2. UNIT COSTS

Hard costs and soft costs

- 6.2.1. The scenarios from the previous chapter are full of all sorts of costs, not just to the local authority, the health service or the voluntary agencies providing help and support, but also to both homeless people themselves (for example, the injuries suffered by Beth and Evan or the income that Andy lost as result of losing his job) and to those who helped them (for example, their friends who put them up in their homes for a while).
- 6.2.2. We have decided, however, that it is not possible to quantify all these costs. Instead, we have restricted ourselves to quantifying what could be called 'hard' costs, leaving the 'soft' costs to another occasion. 'Hard' costs in our terminology are the ones that mean that resources are spent or lost, and which have a direct monetary effect. They usually fall upon institutions in the public, private and voluntary sectors. 'Soft' costs, by contrast, are the ones that typically reflect the impact upon the people involved.
- 6.2.3. The minor assault that Charlie suffers can help explain the difference here. Research for the Home Office indicates that the cost of treating a minor assault within the NHS is about £200. Assuming he presents for treatment, this cost would be included in our calculations, that is, it is treated as 'hard'. But that same research also indicates the physical and emotional impact on the victim themselves is worth £120. This we would treat as 'soft', and therefore exclude. Of course, the soft costs themselves can give rise to further hard costs, for example, if the stress the friends and families who share their accommodation with the homeless person causes them in turn to place demands on the NHS. Our scenarios, however, do not go that far.

6.2.4. There are two reasons for including hard costs and excluding soft ones. First, as the research lying behind these and similar figures makes clear, the basis for the soft figures is much less secure than those for the hard ones. Second, while the soft costs can sometimes be considerable, it is unclear whether a large soft cost would be all that helpful in persuading the state to spend what would be 'hard' money on an initiative aimed at preventing such costs from actually arising.⁸³ We stress that the judgement we have made here to exclude soft costs is not an absolute rejection: as research into them proceeds, so the moment may well come when they can reasonably be included. But an exercise such as this, which is still a very early attempt to cost homelessness, is surely not that moment.

Unit cost estimates

6.2.5. A list of the costs that are quantified here, arranged under various headings, is as follows:

- **Failed tenancy**, including: lost rent arrears; re-letting; possession order and eviction warrant; solicitor's fees; landlord's administration.
- **Temporary accommodation** including: hostel or refuge; bed and breakfast accommodation.
- **Support services** including: outreach worker; advice at hostel or day centre; day centre.
- **Health services** including: GP visit; services used after minor wounding; services used after serious wounding; treatment for mental ill-health; treatment of TB; rehabilitation.
- **Police and criminal justice** including: in response to theft from a shop; in response to minor wounding; in response to serious wounding; prison.
- **Potential resettlement** including: interview and processing; floating support.
- **Unemployment**: lost output.⁸⁴

6.2.6. Table 6.1 presents the estimates of each of these unit costs, showing where possible both a 'best' value and the lower and upper limits of the likely range of values. This is supported by footnotes which record the source for the estimates and discuss any important issues.

TABLE 6.1: ESTIMATED UNIT COSTS BY CATEGORY OF COST ASSOCIATED WITH HOMELESSNESS				
COST CATEGORY	COST BORNE BY	UNIT COST		
		LOW	BEST	HIGH
FAILED TENANCY				
Lost rent arrears (per episode)	Landlord	£240 ⁸⁵	£500 ⁸⁶	£790 ⁸⁷
Re-letting (per episode) ⁸⁸	Landlord	£1,000 ⁸⁹	£1,500 ⁹⁰	£2,100 ⁹¹
Possession order and eviction warrant (per episode)	Landlord		£200 ⁹²	
Solicitor's fees (per episode)	Landlord	£120 ⁹³	£400 ⁹⁴	£620 ⁹⁵
Landlord's administration (per episode)	Landlord	£50 ⁹⁶	£200 ⁹⁷	£500 ⁹⁸
TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION				
Hostel (per week) ⁹⁹	Local Authority	£300 ¹⁰⁰	£400	£450 ¹⁰¹
Refuge (per week)			£400 ¹⁰²	
Bed and breakfast (per week)	Local Authority		£150 ¹⁰³	
SUPPORT SERVICES				
Outreach worker, specialised in multiple needs (per week)	Various ¹⁰⁴	£30 ¹⁰⁵	£60 ¹⁰⁶	
Advice/support services at hostel or day centre (per session) ¹⁰⁷	Various ¹⁰⁸	£20 ¹⁰⁹	£30 ¹¹⁰	
Day centre (per day)			£60 ¹¹¹	
HEALTH SERVICES				
GP visit or referral (per visit)	NHS		£20 ¹¹²	
Services used after minor wounding – proxy for A&E visit (per incident)	NHS	£150 ¹¹³	£200 ¹¹⁴	£250
Services used after serious wounding – proxy for hospitalisation (per incident)	NHS	£6,400 ¹¹⁵	£9,500 ¹¹⁶	£11,000 ¹¹⁷
Treatment for mental ill-health (per episode)	NHS		£6,000 ¹¹⁸	
Treatment of TB (per case)	NHS		£7,000 ¹¹⁹	
CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AND PRISONS				
In response to theft from a shop	Police/Courts		£20 ¹²⁰	
In response to minor wounding (per incident)	Police/Courts		£1,450 ¹²¹	
In response to serious wounding (per incident)	Police/Courts		£14,500 ¹²²	
Local prison (per week)	Prison Service		£500 ¹²³	
POTENTIAL RESETTLEMENT				
Interview and processing (per application)	Local Authority	£450 ¹²⁴	£650	£850 ¹²⁵
Floating support to help maintain tenancy (per week) ¹²⁶	Various	£30 ¹²⁷	£60 ¹²⁸	
Rehabilitation – proxy for detox (per week)	NHS	£650 ¹²⁹	£1,100 ¹³⁰	
UNEMPLOYMENT				
Lost output (per week)	Economy		£230 ¹³¹	

6.3. COSTING THE SCENARIOS

- 6.3.1. With due caution, the figures above could potentially be used by others to build up the costs of real-life scenarios. However, although the role of the scenarios presented here is really no more than that of providing a framework to help identify the costs that need to be quantified, it is still interesting to see what total costs emerge when they themselves are costed using the figures above.
- 6.3.2. In order to do this, a further set of figures relating to the duration (and sometimes the frequency) of the various cost episodes is required. The attempt to identify representative figures, however, confirms a problem that others have already noted, namely, that there is a lack of reliable information on the duration of homelessness and the frequency of particular episodes associated with it. What is needed here are studies that take place over time.¹³² Subject then to this caveat, table 6.2 presents those duration/frequency figures for each of the six scenarios, along (for reference) with the 'best' unit cost from table 6.1.

TABLE 6.2: FREQUENCY OR DURATION BY CATEGORY OF COST FOR THE SIX SCENARIOS							
COST CATEGORY	UNIT COST	FREQUENCY/DURATION BY SCENARIO					
		Andy	Beth	Charlie	Denise	Evan	Frank
FAILED TENANCY							
Total (per episode)	£2,800			1	1	1	1 ¹³³
TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION							
Hostel or refuge(per week)	£400	6 ¹³⁴ + 12 ¹³⁵	4 + 52 ¹³⁶			52 ¹³⁷	26 ¹³⁸
Bed & breakfast (per week)	£150			1			
SUPPORT SERVICES							
Outreach worker (per session)	£60	2 + 4 ¹³⁹				8+ 4 ¹⁴⁰	26 ¹⁴¹
Advice at hostel or day centre (per session)	£30	6 ¹⁴² + 21 ¹⁴³ ? + 20 ¹⁴⁴	?4 ¹⁴⁵ + 52 ¹⁴⁶			52 ¹⁴⁷	
Day centre (per day)	£60	12 ¹⁴⁸		18 ¹⁴⁹		36 ¹⁵⁰	9 ¹⁵¹
Health services							
GP visit (per visit)	£20			1		1	1
Services used after minor wounding (per incident)	£200	1		1			1
Services used after serious wounding (per incident)	£9,500		1			1	
Treatment for mental ill-health (per episode)	£6,000		1 ¹⁵²				
Treatment of TB (per case)	£7,000						1
POLICE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE							
In response to theft from a shop	£20			1		1	
In response to minor wounding (per incident) ¹⁵³	£1,450	1					1
In response to serious wounding (per incident)	£14,500		1 ¹⁵⁴			1	
Prison (per week)	£500			6 ¹⁵⁵			
POTENTIAL RESETTLEMENT¹⁵⁶							
Interview and processing (per application)	£650		2	1	1		
Floating support (per resettlement ¹⁵⁷)	£60	1		1	1	1	12 ¹⁵⁸
Detox and rehabilitation (per week)	£1,100 ¹⁵⁹					2 ¹⁶⁰ +26 ¹⁶¹	
UNEMPLOYMENT							
Lost output (per week)	£230	18 ¹⁶²	70 ¹⁶³	- ¹⁶⁴	4 ¹⁶⁵	- ¹⁶⁶	- ¹⁶⁷

6.3.3. Combining the frequencies with the corresponding unit costs produces the following estimates of the total costs for each scenario. The double asterisk indicates a value below £500.

TABLE 6.3: TOTAL COST BY CATEGORY OF COST FOR THE SIX SCENARIOS							
COST CATEGORY	Costs borne by	TOTAL COST OF SCENARIO					
		Andy	Beth	Charlie	Denise	Evan	Frank
Failed tenancy	Landlord				£3,000	£3,000	£3,000
Temporary accommodation	Local authority	£7,000	£22,000	£3,000		£21,000	£10,500
Support services	Local authority	£2,500	£1,500	**		£4,500	£2,000
Health services	NHS	**	£16,000	£1,000		£40,000	£7,000
Police and criminal justice	Police/courts	£1,500	£15,000	**		£14,500	£1,500
Potential resettlement	Various	**	£1,500	£3,000	£500	**	£500
Unemployment	Economy	£4,000	£16,000	£500	£1,000		
Total		£15,000	£72,000	£7,500	£4,500	£83,000	£24,500
Approximate overall duration of the scenario		1 year	1½ years	½ year	½ year	2 years	1 year
Is homelessness over by end of scenario?		Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No

6.4. CONCLUSIONS

6.4.1. What conclusions can be drawn from this exercise? If we look at the last three rows of table 6.3 (the total cost and duration of the scenario as well as whether homelessness is over by the end of the scenario), two things stand out. First, all the figures are sizeable – and some of them are very large indeed. It is notable that this is so even though only two of the six scenarios are actually complete, in the sense that homelessness has ended by their end. The size of these figures suggests that there is a strong economic case for reducing homelessness: policies to reduce or contain homelessness do not just cost money – they also save money, and those savings may be substantial.

6.4.2. Second, there is great variation in the total cost from one case to another. One consequence is that it would be quite wrong simply to multiply the annualised average of these costs by an estimate of the total number of (acute) single homeless people from earlier chapters in order to produce a ‘total’ cost of single homelessness. The numbers above cannot be added up and averaged without knowing how many single homeless people follow a relatively low cost path like scenario A, and how many a high cost one like scenario E, and how many follow ones in between.

6.4.3. Looking behind these totals, it would seem as if there are really four significant groups of costs, namely:

- time-related costs, principally the cost of temporary accommodation and the output that is lost by the person being unemployed;
- the cost of eviction;
- costs to both the health service and police and criminal justice system of a serious personal attack;
- costs to the health service of treating serious illness, both physical and mental, and including the cost of drug rehabilitation.

6.4.4. Each of these in turn begs a question. In the case of the time-related costs, the question is one of duration, of how *long* people remain homeless. In the other cases, the question is rather one of the risk, or chance, of such episodes happening (or in the case of eviction, having already happened) to a homeless person. As far as eviction is concerned, this should be relatively straightforward. But in the case of the health-related and criminal justice-related costs it is far more tricky, chiefly because one is forced to make judgements about how far homelessness is a contributory factor, and how far a consequence of the other problem.

- 6.4.5. For this reason, we feel that attempts to cost homelessness in order to measure the savings to be had from reducing it should start with the most certain costs, namely eviction and the time-related costs, especially the cost of hostel or other temporary accommodation. The direction of causality here is clear. And on the face of it, the cost of temporary accommodation is markedly higher than the cost of permanent accommodation, with the costs of bed and breakfast accommodation around twice the cost of a one-bedroom flat rented from a social landlord, and hostel accommodation perhaps four times as much.
- 6.4.6. The situation with the other time-related cost, namely the economic cost of unemployment, is harder to deal because of the question of causality. But again, we feel that much attention should be given to it. The first scenario illustrates one of the possibilities, with the person in the end losing their job because their enforced re-location (to a friend's house) means they can no longer reliably get to work on time. Depending on how common this kind of experience is for those single people whose homelessness is contained with the help of friends and family, unemployment and the lost output foregone may be a very important element in the overall cost of homelessness, simply because there are, in the light of the earlier estimates, so many people in this position.

7. IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

7.1. OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

- 7.1.1. This final chapter considers the policy implications of the results of the research presented in the rest of the report. For the purposes of policy, these findings are that, first, there is a very considerable number – hundreds of thousands – of single homeless people; second, that maintaining homelessness can be very expensive; and, third, that most single homeless people are being provided with accommodation by friends or family. The first two of these raise serious questions about the scale of the action that Government, both national and local, as well as the voluntary agencies, foresee themselves taking to address the problems of homelessness. The first and the third, on the other hand, raise serious questions about both the style of such action – in particular will it be sufficiently proactive in seeking out homeless people and will it address both their needs and the needs of the people who are currently helping them? – and where responsibility for such action lies. In particular, bodies responsible for employment, both national, regional and local, may have a role to play since some homelessness reflects unemployment and the barrier that the associated low income represents to being able to afford somewhere secure to live.
- 7.1.2. The fact that the connections between homelessness and other problems that homeless people experience are so intermingled, leads us to conclude that the proper overall goal for policy is that all homeless people should receive the appropriate support to help them overcome their homelessness. The old division, between those the state will help (families and those with vulnerabilities) and those it will not is beginning to break down. What the proposed policy goal means is that the division should be broken down completely – while recognising that the solution will not always be the provision of accommodation.
- 7.1.3. The chapter concludes with a series of recommendations for policy makers which flow from the research and the overall goal. Between them, these recommendations and the overall policy goal define a new agenda for single homelessness. The challenge ahead is to make sure this new agenda becomes a reality.

7.2. A GOAL FOR POLICY

- 7.2.1. The 2002 Homelessness Act in England and Wales, the subsequent Priority Need Order in England and the recent Acts in Scotland all mark this as a period when policies on homelessness are being re-thought. It should go without saying that this is welcome. The challenge that this report poses to this new activity, however, is whether the consequent set of government policies and actions is yet sufficient to fully address the problem of homelessness. There are two parts to this challenge:
- First, in view of the estimates of the number of single homeless people presented in this report, will the attempts to address homelessness be on a large enough scale?
 - Second, in view of the fact that the majority of those whom this reports counts as single homeless do *not*, at any particular point in time, lack a roof, will the attempts to address homelessness be sufficiently flexible and sensitive to meet the wide range of needs that homeless people have?
- 7.2.2. It is hard to see why the answer to the second question should not, in principle, be yes. Voluntary sector organisations concerned with homelessness are firmly committed to a holistic approach. So too, following the publication of *More than a Roof*, is Government. The approach taken in this report, of counting some people as homeless who nevertheless have somewhere to live, would be impossible if the consensus view were still that being roofless was an essential part of being homeless. The counterpart to taking a broad interpretation of homelessness is that one must also be prepared to pursue a broad range of solutions to what will be diverse problems.

- 7.2.3. In some cases, indeed, there is no reason why the provision of accommodation will be necessary at all. When economic causes lie at the roots of a lot of homelessness, then the remedies that are central to the alleviation of income poverty – training, a job, a better job, higher pay, support from the tax credit system – will, for some homeless people, be enough.
- 7.2.4. For those in government responsible for homelessness, whether they are in London, Edinburgh, Cardiff or Belfast, and for those in local government too, the idea that the remedy to homelessness will sometimes not include the provision of accommodation is a mixed blessing. On the one hand, it means there is less pressure on their budget than the raw number of single homeless people might suggest. On the other, however, they will have to persuade their colleagues across government to take their share of responsibility for addressing homelessness, at least indirectly.
- 7.2.5. In this context, we think it is noteworthy that single homeless people are drawn from that part of the population – single adults and couples without dependent children – for whom least has been done over the past six years to address the problems of low income. Of course, this group does include many households with high disposable incomes but, even so, for the more than 3 million people in this group who do fall below the government’s preferred measure of income poverty, little has been done: being neither children nor pensioners, they fall into neither of the groups seen as most deserving; and, closely allied with this, they lack powerful charities advocating their cause. Single homelessness, even on our broad interpretation, therefore represents the more extreme problems of a generally neglected group.
- 7.2.6. Given the nature of single homelessness as discussed above, what would an appropriate overall goal for policy in this area be? It is tempting to think that it should be nothing less than ‘ending single homelessness’. On reflection, however, the complex nature of the phenomenon suggests that this may not be appropriate. The fact that much single homelessness is contained within society itself, through the help and support afforded by friends and family, gives it a dual character: on the one hand it is bad that there is a need for this support to be given; but, on the other, the fact that such support is given is good.
- 7.2.7. We therefore suggest that the proper overall goal of policy for single homelessness (and other homelessness as well) is that ***all homeless people should receive appropriate support to help them overcome their homelessness***. The main argument for such a goal is that it is sufficiently wide and flexible to cover the diverse needs that homeless people – and some of those who help them – have. Although these needs obviously include the provision of accommodation, they will not do so in some, perhaps even many, cases. But this last observation does not make the goal a soft option, since appropriate support for homeless people includes addressing the needs of the many people who help them directly by sharing their accommodation. These people can face problems so providing them with appropriate support (and recognition) for what they do is in line with the overall goal.

7.3. SPECIFIC CHALLENGES FOR POLICY MAKERS

- 7.3.1. Obviously, the overall question is what package of policies would be needed in order to fashion a strategy aimed at providing appropriate support to all homeless people. Making specific policy proposals in this regard would have required us to have undertaken a detailed review of current policy and provision, something which is clearly outside the remit of this study. We have, however, identified a series of challenges which need to be met if the overall shift in policy that is needed is to be made. They could also be used by voluntary organisations or other outside bodies as a yardstick against which to assess government policy. The challenges are discussed below under the following headings:
- Successfully implementing the new direction in England and Wales.
 - Understanding the situations experienced by single homeless people.
 - Supporting those who share their accommodation with homeless people.
 - Ending the discriminatory approach based on ‘priority need’.

- Providing sufficient resources.

Successfully implementing the new direction in England and Wales

- 7.3.2. As a proportion of the total adult population, the findings of this report about the rough order of magnitude of single homelessness are (within England): 2½ per cent in London, 1 per cent in the rest of the South and 1½ per cent across the Midlands and the North. Even in small authorities, this implies a significant number of single homeless people, for example, in the low hundreds even in small rural districts. ***In preparing to carry out their duties, local authorities must ensure that they are gearing themselves up to operate on a scale that will allow them to tackle the full extent of the homelessness problem.***
- 7.3.3. Second, the finding that much, if not most, single homelessness is ‘contained’ – in the sense that homeless people live with their friends or family – has implications for the ‘style’ and ‘reach’ of the services offered to homeless people. It implies that a shift is needed:
- from an essentially emergency service for homeless people, to one that is much more geared towards advice, while retaining its emergency role;
 - from a service which people turn to almost as a matter of last resort, to one which they could or should use at an earlier stage;
 - and from a service that waits for people to come to it, to one that is much more active in seeking those whom it is there to help.
- 7.3.4. The second challenge is, therefore, that government and local authorities should review service provision to ensure that it is able to address the problem of hidden homelessness.

Understanding the situations experienced by single homeless people

- 7.3.5. The balance of the problems faced by most of the single homeless people identified in this report is likely to be different from that for those people experiencing the most extreme forms of homelessness like rough sleeping. Gearing up the services required to respond to these problems will require a clear and accurate understanding of precisely what the needs are. ***Government, local authorities and the voluntary sector must improve their understanding of the true nature and extent of the problems facing single homeless people.***
- 7.3.6. Besides a general need for a better appreciation of the pathways in and through homelessness, understanding the relationship between homelessness and employment is particularly important. ***Government needs to consider what contribution improved employment opportunities could make to reducing the problem of single homelessness.***
- 7.3.7. As with poverty, the issue here is not simply whether the person is in a job or not but also the conditions associated with that job, including the rate of pay, whether the job is part time or full time, whether employment is casual, temporary or permanent, and the prospects for moving to better paid work some time in the future.

Supporting those who share their accommodation with homeless people

- 7.3.8. A broad interpretation of homelessness focuses attention on the people who support their homeless friends and relatives by sharing their own accommodation with them. Such people are providing a vital service, at no cost to the state, yet in helping this way, they may face additional pressures and stresses at home, and encounter added costs and complications, for example, regarding housing benefit or council tax. ***Government, local authorities and the voluntary sector should consider how best to recognise and support those families and friends who are providing accommodation to homeless people.***

7.3.9. The issue here is analogous to the situation faced by the Department of Health when it was developing its plans for helping carers to look after their relatives in the community. Some of the possibilities include: advice services tailored to their needs; a mediation service to help try to resolve difficulties between the different people involved; and the introduction of a system of grants or tax credits to provide financial support.

Ending the discriminatory approach based on 'priority need'

7.3.10. For those deemed single homeless and not in priority need, support can currently be withheld or restricted, not because they lack certain needs, but because of their personal circumstances and history – in other words, of who they are. This is quite different from an approach that treats two people differently because they have been assessed as having different needs. ***Government needs to examine whether the legislative framework and guidance that creates the distinction between single homeless people and families, is compatible with ensuring that all homeless people receive the support that they need.***

7.3.11. The lead that Scotland has taken in abolishing the distinction between priority and non-priority need by 2012 (in the Homelessness etc. (Scotland) Act 2003) demonstrates that such an approach can be judged as practical. This follows the introduction of an obligation to provide at least temporary accommodation housing for all households accepted as homeless (under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001).

Providing sufficient resources

7.3.12. Providing appropriate support for all homeless people would certainly cost more than the money devoted to homelessness now. Yet some of the current budgets seem surprisingly small: for example, the ODPM Homelessness Unit's 2002/03 budget of £100m. ***Government needs to ensure that the resources are available to tackle the full extent of the homelessness problem.***

Summary and conclusion

7.3.13. Providing appropriate support to all homeless people requires, we believe, a profound change both of policy and thinking. Scotland, perhaps in part because of its open commitment to social justice, seems to be further ahead than the rest of the United Kingdom in this respect. We have identified a range of challenges that must be addressed in order to bring about, or accelerate, the shift in policy that is needed. These are:

- In preparing to carry out their duties local authorities must ensure that they are gearing themselves up to operate on a scale that will allow them to tackle the full extent of the homelessness problem.
- Government and local authorities should review service provision to ensure that it is able to address the problem of hidden homelessness.
- Government, local authorities and the voluntary sector must improve their understanding of the true nature and extent of the problems facing single homeless people.
- Government needs to consider what contribution improved employment opportunities could make to reducing the problem of single homelessness.
- Government, local authorities and the voluntary sector should consider how best to recognise and support those families and friends who are providing accommodation to homeless people.
- Government needs to examine whether the legislative framework and guidance that creates the distinction between single homeless people and families, is compatible with ensuring that all homeless people receive the support that they need.
- Government needs to ensure that the resources are available to tackle the full extent of the homelessness problem.

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- ¹ This is subject to two basic conditions: that the person has not become intentionally homeless and that the person does not fall in the category of those deemed ineligible for support.
- ² There has certainly been a longstanding need for research directed at obtaining a credible estimate of the number of single homeless people in the UK. Such a need was, for example, one of the key findings of a wide-ranging review of the literature on single homelessness published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in 2000 (Fitzpatrick, S., Kemp, P., and Klinker, S., *Single homelessness: An overview of research in Britain*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2000). The government's recent report on tackling homelessness makes it clear that this gap has not yet been filled. See for example, *More than a roof: a report into tackling homelessness*, ODPM, June 2002, p8.
- ³ The Homelessness (etc.) Act 2003 will abolish the 'priority need' test by 31 December 2012, so that the right to permanent accommodation is extended to all people who are deemed homeless on application to local authorities, rather than just those who are in 'priority need'.
- ⁴ The definitions are slightly different, but broadly similar in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. For example, priority need is given to a broader group of care leavers in Wales (the age at which someone was in care is irrelevant), but a narrower group of former prisoners (prisoners must have been homeless continually since leaving custody in Wales, but not in England).
- ⁵ The first two sets of quarterly statutory homeless statistics published in the wake of the legislation (that is, the last two quarters of 2002) show a 60 per cent increase (equivalent to about 1,800 individuals per quarter) in the number of people accepted as homeless and priority need in the 'young person' and 'other' categories – which are those which would be affected by the extension of priority need.
- ⁶ Shelter's response to priority need extension expresses concern that the Code of Guidance as currently drafted "will encourage authorities to adopt a very restrictive approach to accepting applicants under the new priority need categories. This will undermine the Government's intention of strengthening the safety net specifically for these groups that have been over-represented amongst those people that end up being homeless on the street". Shelter's concern regarding the guidance for 16 and 17 year olds and ex-offenders and ex-service personnel. 16/17 year olds: there may be some cases where it is uncertain that a child is 'in need' under the Children's Act 1989. Clarification is needed as to who will provide accommodation for these children whilst a decision is reached by social services. Ex-offenders/ex-prisoners: the code overstates the responsibility of armed forces to help at the point of discharge, and of the probation service. Situation and circumstances before entry into the forces/prison should be taken into account when considering 'vulnerability'.
- ⁷ The test of vulnerability is that they are less able to fend for themselves than an 'ordinary' homeless person, meaning that they would be likely to suffer injury or detriment in circumstances where a less vulnerable person would be able to cope without harmful effects.
- ⁸ The equation is further undermined, at least in principle, in that the legislation also allows local authorities to house people not in priority need – although the likelihood of this happening may be slim given resource constraints.
- ⁹ In England and Wales, data records decisions taken; Scottish data records all applicants.
- ¹⁰ The Stewart B. McKinney, Homeless Act, 1987.
- ¹¹ *Roofless and homeless*, Health Council of the Netherlands: Committee on Roofless and Homeless 1995.
- ¹² As set out in 2003 Housing (Overcrowded) Bill:
"A dwelling will be overcrowded where the number of bedrooms available to the occupiers is less than the number of bedrooms allocated to them in accordance with a simple formula. Very small rooms (less than 50 square feet in floor area) do not count at all. Rooms available as living rooms or kitchens do not count either."

“For the purposes of the bedroom standard a bedroom is allocated to persons in accordance with a formula. A person living with another as husband and wife (including same-sex couples) is allocated a bedroom, as is a person aged 21 years or more. For younger persons the formula recognises that sharing may be required. However, the sex of the person will be relevant in determining whether a bedroom is allocated to him or her, together with another person. For example, two young people aged between 10 years and 20 years are allocated a bedroom together, but only if they are of the same sex. A similar allocation is made where one person is aged between 10 years and 20 years and the other is aged less than 10 years, again only where they are of the same sex. Where two young persons are of different sexes they may be paired with another (of the same sex) but if no other person is available for this purpose amongst the occupiers, each is allocated their own bedroom.”

- ¹³ Also excludes people who are part of a tenancy group.
- ¹⁴ From the Survey of English Housing: 20 per cent of those living in overcrowded conditions were concealed households in 2002/03, 19 per cent in 2001/02 and 21 per cent in 2000/01.
- ¹⁵ Sidelined: Young Adults’ Access to Services, New Policy Institute, 2000.
- ¹⁶ ODPM, Statistical Release SH-Q2, September 2002 (<http://www.odpm.gov.uk/news/0209/shq2.htm>).
- ¹⁷ As set out in the technical notes to the government’s 2002 Public Service Agreements, the income level that the government poverty targets are set for is 60 per cent of median disposable income after deducting housing costs.
- ¹⁸ A parallel here is with the drug problem. Without a separate measure of the extent of the problem of drug dependency, it is impossible to tell whether an increase in the number of people receiving treatment is a good thing (‘more people are getting the treatment’), a bad thing (‘more people are needing the treatment’) or a mixture of both.
- ¹⁹ November 2001. The source is Randall and Brown, *Helping rough sleepers off the streets* (ODPM, 2002). It may well be that numbers have reduced since then, given that estimates changed from 1,850 people in June 1998 to 550 people in November 2001.
- ²⁰ May 1999. This source is work carried out by *Rough Sleepers Cymru*, an alliance of Welsh homelessness organisations. It is their assessment of the number of people sleeping rough in the areas in which they work on the night of the 6th May 1999. There are no official, updated estimates of rough sleeping carried by the Welsh Assembly Government, but there are numerous other small scale, independent assessments carried out by voluntary organisations and, occasionally, councils, which are cited in *Rough sleeping in Wales* (Welsh Assembly, 2000), pp.13-15.
- ²¹ May 2002. This source is research to monitor the impact of the Rough Sleepers’ Initiative. Numbers and trends are discussed in the *Social justice annual report, indicators of progress: definitions, data, baseline and trends information*, indicator 12. In future, the Scottish Executive will publish figures using the new H1 survey of applicants, for the number of households applying as homeless which contain an individual who has slept rough on the previous night and/or in the previous three month period.
- ²² In London, a record of people contacted by CATs is kept in the CHAIN database, which identified 3031 individuals contacted on the streets in 2000/01, compared to a single night count of 319 in May 2001. The benefits and limitations of assessing the numbers of people sleeping rough through counts on a single night were discussed in detail in the evaluation of RSI (Randall and Brown, 1999).
- ²³ One method for attempting to determine what the actual national population might be is to take the CORE figure for lettings in area where we have reasonable good knowledge about the total number of available hostel places and determine a ratio by which to multiply up to generate a national figure. Research in 2001 by the RSU suggested that there were approximately 15-16,000 secondary (non direct access) hostel places in London. The CORE dataset identifies approximately 6,000 lettings in non-direct access hostels in London, suggesting any estimates from CORE could arguably be multiplied up by a factor of around 2½ to give a total estimate.

- ²⁴ It may be that some of the 11,000 classified by the housing associations as 'not homeless' are still at some risk of homelessness based on the broad definition of the term used in this report, which is arguably somewhat broader than the definition used in CORE. The guidelines for completing CORE records state that the 'statutorily homeless' are those "that are homeless and in priority need that have been accepted by the local authority for permanent re-housing", the 'other homeless' are "households which are literally homeless, or are living in insecure temporary accommodation and are threatened with homelessness, but have not been accepted by the local authority as statutorily homeless" and that the 'not homeless' are those who do not fit in either of the other two categories.
- ²⁵ 20,000 of the 22,000 'non-statutorily homeless' and 9,000 of the 11,000 'statutorily homeless'.
- ²⁶ Of the 29,000 figure, 1,000 were classified as having an intended stay of less than a month, 17,500 as having an intended stay of between a month and a year, 6,500 as having an intended stay of more than a year (but still non-permanent, and 4,000 with no defined intended stay. If the average lengths of stay were 2 weeks for the 1,000, 6½ months for the 17,500 and 1½ years for the 6,500 then the overall average length of stay would be around nine months.
- ²⁷ *Operation Of The Homeless Persons Legislation In Scotland: Households In Temporary Accommodation: Quarter Ending 31 December 2002*, table 2. Scottish Executive, Development Department Analytical Services division, May 2002
- ²⁸ 24,451 in hostels in England and Wales plus 1,357 in bail hostels (table S126) and 2,215 in Scotland (table 232).
- ²⁹ Note that, although the total numbers are based on a 100 per cent sample, the family type classification is based on a small sample only.
- ³⁰ The precise source is the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Quarterly 100 per cent caseload stock-count for August 2002.
Of the 53,000, 40,000 were private boarders and 13,000 were local authority boarders.
- ³¹ The precise source here is the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Annual 1 per cent sample for May 2000 and 2001 which estimated that 92 per cent of boarders (private and local authority combined) were single people without dependant children, 5 per cent were single people with dependant children and 3 per cent were couples with dependant children.
- ³² See *House keeping, Shelter, 2003*.
- ³³ For England in 2002, 28,215 social tenants faced outright possession orders, 7,974 private tenants faced outright possession orders and 14,709 mortgaged properties faced outright possession orders. Outright possession orders mean that the landlord or mortgage lender is entitled to reclaim the property, but does not necessarily imply that the property was taken into possession. For Wales, 1,711 social tenants faced possession orders, 223 private tenants faced possession orders and 1,232 mortgaged properties faced possession orders. The data source is the Court Service.
- ³⁴ The relevant research in both cases is *Possession action – the last resort?* NACAB, 2003. The proportion of those without dependant children is that for the clients that they assisted at County Courts.
- ³⁵ <http://www.southhams.gov.uk/housing/mortgage.htm>.
- ³⁶ The source for evictions and abandonments is *Housing Trends in Scotland: Quarter Ending 31 December 2002*, table 19, Scottish Executive, April 2003. The source for data to gross up to all tenures comes from table 2. Shelter is reported as describing the eviction rate among local authority tenants as being the same as that among mortgage holders.
- ³⁷ No data is available for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The London Research Centre's publication, 'Estimates of Young Single Homelessness' (1996) gave an estimate of 9,600 for England in 1995 (equivalent to 11,500 for the UK as a whole). The research also suggests that approximately 80 per cent of squatting takes place in London.

Both the Survey of English Housing and the Family Resources Survey include 'squatting' amongst the tenure types they identify, but then include no one in this category. The Supported CORE database identifies people's previous tenure, and includes squatting amongst the possibilities. 258 lettings were made over the course of the year 2001/02 to people who had previously been squatting. This represents 0.4 per cent of the lettings made over the period.

³⁸ The 2001 Census also included a question on overcrowding. However, the definition used is less sophisticated than the usual definition (i.e. comparison with the bedroom standards and, anyway, the data on this question has not yet been made available by the government.

³⁹ The 2001/02 dataset records 'household reference person' rather than 'head of household' where the difference is that, for joint householders, the 'household reference person' is the person with the highest income rather than the male. In the great majority of cases, these are the same person and, anyway, because we are excluding both head of household and their partner/spouse from our analysis, his change in definition has no material impact on our analysis.

⁴⁰ Note that, because only 'concealed households' are considered in this analysis, there is little or not overlap between the estimates here and those facing eviction.

⁴¹ The table below provides an analysis of the types of people in overcrowded households (from the 2002/03 Survey of English Housing)

Household type	Number of households (thousands)	People in the households (thousands)						Total people	Average household size
		Heads of household	Spouses	Dependant children	Non-dependant children	Other relatives	Other non-relatives		
Families with both dependent and non-dependant children	110	110	80	250	190	20	0	650	5.9
Families with dependent children only	250	250	140	690	0	60	10	1,150	4.6
Families with non-dependent children only	70	70	40	0	170	30	10	320	4.6
Families without children	70	70	10	0	0	50	100	230	3.3
Total	500	500	270	940	360	160	120	2350	4.7

⁴² England represents about 85 per cent of the population of Britain as a whole.

No data appears to be available for either Scotland or Northern Ireland. The latest data for Wales is for 1997, when the Welsh House Conditions Survey suggested that 38,000 households failed to meet the bedroom standard. This appears to be a slightly higher proportion of households who are overcrowded than in England (2.2 per cent compared with 1.7 per cent) but are similar orders of magnitude.

⁴³ Some data on the proportion of people in shared accommodation who express a need for separate accommodation and should be considered to be potentially homeless should become available in autumn 2003 when the second stage of the London Household Survey is completed.

⁴⁴ Around a third of these stated that they were 'very dissatisfied' and the other two thirds stated that they were 'slightly dissatisfied'.

⁴⁵ No data appears to be available for Scotland. The latest data for Wales is for 1997, when the Welsh Household Interview Survey estimated that 32,000 households reported that at least one person needed separate accommodation, with a total of 45,000 people expressing a need for separate accommodation. This appears to be a much lower proportion of households than in England (2 per cent compared with 4 per cent) but the questions are not the same and thus are not directly comparable.

⁴⁶ This 80,000 (for adults with dependent children) emerges as a counterpart to the estimate of single homelessness, since the data sets we have analysed usually include all adults irrespective of their exact family status.

⁴⁷ This threshold is 60 per cent of net income after the deduction of housing costs, equalised for family size. For a single person household in the year in question (2000/01) this represented about £85 a week, to pay for everything bar housing costs (principally rent or mortgage).

⁴⁸ In the terminology of this data set, that means looking at those who are counted as being the second or subsequent 'benefit unit' in the household.

⁴⁹ The estimate is 14,000 people, a statistically insignificant number in the context of this survey.

- ⁵⁰ Centrepoint factsheet 2000/01. Randall and Brown (2001) carried out a survey of 150 homeless young people in East Anglia, the Midlands, London and Shropshire. They found that 66 per cent left home during an argument, with 38 per cent reporting physical violence and 48 per cent verbal abuse. Smith and Bruegel (1999): produced an index of homelessness risk among young people. They showed that those who did not get on with their mother were at highest risk – on average they were 13 times more likely to be in the homeless sample as in the non-homeless group interviewed.
- ⁵¹ Centrepoint factsheet 2001/2002.
- ⁵² Homelessness Factfile 2003 (unpublished), CRISIS.
- ⁵³ *Unsafe streets*, IPPR 1999.
- ⁵⁴ See, for example, Ambrose, P., *Some way short of holism*, Queensland Government Department of Housing, Occasional Paper 8, 2001.
- ⁵⁵ *Repeat homelessness and domestic abuse*, Shelter, 2002.
- ⁵⁶ *The provision of accommodation and support for households experiencing domestic violence in England* ODPM 2002.
- ⁵⁷ Although the nature of the project means that the accommodation is more likely to be used by women who have been through traumatic experiences, it none the less reveals the extent to which domestic violence is linked to homelessness. *The provision of accommodation and support for households experiencing domestic violence in England*, ODPM 2002
- ⁵⁸ *Repeat homelessness in Scotland*, Homelessness Task Force Research Series, Scottish homes 2001.
- ⁵⁹ *Repeat homelessness in Scotland*, Homelessness Task Force Research Series, Scottish homes 2001.
- ⁶⁰ *The provision of accommodation and support for households experiencing domestic violence in England*, ODPM 2002.
- ⁶¹ *The provision of accommodation and support for households experiencing domestic violence in England*, ODPM 2002.
- ⁶² See for example, *Estimating the impact of domestic violence in the London Borough of Hackney*, Crime Concern 1997. The economic impact of domestic violence is felt in many areas widespread – health services, the civil justice system, criminal justice system, social services, housing, domestic violence support services, advocacy and advice, employment and benefits, and friends and family. The DTI research, which will attempt to put a price on the impact in these areas, is expected to be published in late 2003.
- ⁶³ The Revolving Doors Agency, *Where do they go? Mental health, housing and leaving prison*, 2002.
- ⁶⁴ *Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners*, Social Exclusion Unit 2002 page 94.
- ⁶⁵ *Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners*, Social Exclusion Unit 2002 page 127.
- ⁶⁶ The Revolving Doors Agency, *Where do they go? Mental health, housing and leaving prison*, 2002.
- ⁶⁷ *Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners*, Social Exclusion Unit 2002 page 94.
- ⁶⁸ *Possession action – the last resort? CAB evidence on court action by social landlords to recover rent arrears*, February 2003.
- ⁶⁹ *Preventing homelessness in the countryside... what works?*, Countryside Agency 2002.
- ⁷⁰ Centrepoint factsheet 2000/01.
- ⁷¹ *Safe in the city: a practical approach to preventing youth homelessness*, Safe in the City 2002.
- ⁷² *Supporting people with multiple needs*, Homeless Link 2003.
- ⁷³ *Drug services for homeless people – a good practice handbook*, Homelessness Directorate 2002.
- ⁷⁴ *Drug services for homeless people – a good practice handbook*, Homelessness Directorate 2002.
- ⁷⁵ *Supporting people with multiple needs, homeless link 2003 and drug services for homeless people – a good practice handbook*, Homelessness Directorate 2002.
- ⁷⁶ Homelessness Factfile 2003 (unpublished) CRISIS document.
- ⁷⁷ *Homeless truths*, Help the Aged 1998.

- ⁷⁸ *Homeless truths*, Help the Aged 1998.
- ⁷⁹ *Homeless truths*, Help the Aged 1998.
- ⁸⁰ *Homeless truths*, Help the Aged 1998.
- ⁸¹ Half those involved in the *Homeless truths* Survey conducted by Help the Aged had been homeless for more than 15 years.
- ⁸² *Repeat homelessness in Scotland 2001*, Homelessness Task Force Research Series, Scottish Homes, 2001.
- ⁸³ Where estimates of 'soft' costs do exist, for example the emotional and physical impact of crime upon the victim, they can dwarf the hard costs (in the case of crime, to the health service and the police and criminal justice system). So for example, Home Office figures suggest that in the case of serious offences – sexual assault, serious wounding and homicide – the former accounts for some two thirds of the total cost associated with the crime, a total which also includes the lost economic output resulting from the victim's absence from work. (Brand, S. and Price, R., table 2).
- ⁸⁴ The treatment of unemployment, whereby the cost that is included is value of the output that is lost as a result of the person not working, is the standard one for studies like this. It may seem more obvious to include the social security benefits that are paid but that is not what is done because benefits and the like are only transfer payments, from one person to another (via the tax and benefit system) and they do not (apart from the administration of the system) cause resources to be used up
- ⁸⁵ Based on 4 weeks rent. 4 weeks is the lowest suggestion of lost rent arrears made by the Audit Commission (1998) Average cost of a local authority tenancy in London in 2002 is £65; England average £50. (ODPM) Private rent (in non regulated AST) is £165 for London and £106 for England.
- ⁸⁶ Middle estimate between likely minimum and maximum lost rent arrears suggested by the Audit Commission (1998), uprated to 2003 . Shelter quotes £558 as former tenant arrears, based on CIPFA 2001. This is considered a likely figure since both understates the amount owes, but does not take into account rent recovered. Note that the Shelter figure takes into account that not all rent arrears are repaid, by underestimating the number of weeks in practice that will be lost in rent.
- ⁸⁷ Maximum estimate of lost rent arrears incurred in eviction (Audit Commission 1998), uprated to 2003.
- ⁸⁸ Includes repairs, redecoration, cleaning, changing locks etc, and lost rent while this takes place.
- ⁸⁹ Audit Commission 1998, uprated to 2003: (minimum damage and minimum rent loss while damaged repair) £500 repairs, four weeks lost rent during repair work £220, cleaning, fumigating and changing locks £135,) not including redecoration allowance, but that could be up to £100.
- ⁹⁰ As previously, but £750 for repair costs, eight weeks lost rent for repairs £440, and cleaning costs £135.
- ⁹¹ As previously, but £1000 for repair costs, 12 weeks (maximum length of time suggested by Audit Commission 1998) lost for rent arrears £660, plus cleaning etc costs £135.
- ⁹² £130 for a possession order and £90 for an eviction warrant (Court Service, 2003).
- ⁹³ Shelter estimate for legal costs of a 'standard' eviction. See *House Keeping* Shelter 2003 page 15.
- ⁹⁴ Centrepont estimate 2003.
- ⁹⁵ Shelter estimate for legal costs of a 'complex' eviction. See *House Keeping* Shelter 2003 page 15.
- ⁹⁶ Shelter estimate for housing management time in a 'standard' case; Shelter complex estimate: £167 (i.e. roughly the same as Centrepont).
- ⁹⁷ Centrepont estimate 2003, Shelter estimate for a 'complex case' is £167.
- ⁹⁸ Audit Commission estimate (see *House Keeping*, Shelter 2003 page 15).
- ⁹⁹ Figures for a voluntary sector hostel, accommodating 50 to 100 people. This includes cost of keeping a person in a hostel, and include capital costs and revenue costs. Note that the size of hostel, and level of service provision can make a big difference to the unit cost.
- ¹⁰⁰ Information (for 2000, uprated to 2003) from St Mungo's, based on a building accommodating 90 people (See Revolving Doors Agency 2000). St Giles/ODPM estimate of emergency accommodation in London (Social Exclusion Unit 2002) page 128 is £1,300 per month.

- ¹⁰¹ CIPFA publish average rent charges per unit. For London, the average is approximately £110 per week, with little variation between inner and outer London. For metropolitan districts, the average rent is £180 per week. When average capital costs are included, the total are £400 and £500 respectively.
- ¹⁰² Assumed to be equivalent to the hostel cost
- ¹⁰³ Greater London Authority estimate 2003 for single room B&B is £20.30/night.
- ¹⁰⁴ Outreach workers may be funded by a variety of different sources simultaneously. Contact Assessment teams, for example, get funding from the Homelessness Directorate, Drug Action Teams and charities e.g. Help the Aged.
- ¹⁰⁵ Thamesreach Bondway quote £32 a week as the average cost of support per client per week (see appendix 2 http://www.thamesreach.org.uk/archive_job/jobAboutTSWteamsPIS.pdf). This is based on a generic outreach worker, on a salary of about £23,000.
- ¹⁰⁶ A community mental health worker, which might be expected to incur the same costs as an mental health outreach worker/have the same qualifications, costs approximately £60 per hour with client, excluding travel costs. (*PSSRU Unit costs of health and social care 2002* page 112). I think the way explained in footnote 42 is better, since then it avoids the problem, when it comes to frequency of contact etc, of saying exactly how frequent that contact To inflate the price a bit (not unjustifiably) you could include salary on-costs, qualifications, overheads and capital overheads (see page 91 of University of Kent health and social care costs 2002). This would almost double the annual cost. The salary of a community psychiatric nurse is approx £25,000, but with all the additional costs, it comes to £41,000 (and this still excludes travel). If we did this in the outreach worker case, we would reach approximately £60 per client per week. So in short, as it stands, the low estimate or outreach service is just based on salary of worker, but the best estimate is based on salary plus on costs etc.
- ¹⁰⁷ Costs beyond the normal running costs of the hostel or centre. Estimates based on information on session costs for old people at day care centres.
- ¹⁰⁸ Like outreach workers, day centres and housing advice centres may receiving funding from a variety of different sources.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Health and social care costs 2002*, PSSRU, University of Kent at Canterbury. Voluntary day centre prices for older people: the average cost per client session estimated at £15. The cost of a session at a voluntary sector day centre providing help for mental health problems is £20.
- ¹¹⁰ *Health and social care costs 2002*, PSSRU, University of Kent at Canterbury. Cost of session at a day care facility for older people funded by the local authority is £27. Cost of a session at local authority day centre providing help for mental health problems is £29.
- ¹¹¹ Assumed to be equivalent to the hostel cost.
- ¹¹² *Health and social care costs 2002*, PSSRU, University of Kent at Canterbury.
- ¹¹³ *The economic and social costs of crime*, Brand, S. and Price, R., Table A1.6 page 70.
- ¹¹⁴ *The economic and social costs of crime*, Brand, S. and Price, R., Table Brand, S. and Price, R.2 (no uplift because lost in rounding).
- ¹¹⁵ *The economic and social costs of crime*, Brand, S. and Price, R., Table A1.6 page 70.
- ¹¹⁶ *The economic and social costs of crime*, Brand, S. and Price, R., Brand, S. and Price, R. Table 2, uplifted.
- ¹¹⁷ *The economic and social costs of crime*, Brand, S. and Price, R., Table A1.6 page 70.
- ¹¹⁸ This figure is to be treated with the greatest of caution. Its derivation is as follows. The prevalence of mental health problems is estimated at around 23 per cent (from Health Survey for England and corroborated by *Psychiatric morbidity among adults living in private households*, 2000 (ONS)). Of those 23 per cent, nearly all are reckoned to at least see their GP. Of those, it is estimated that 10 per cent have severe mental health problems requiring treatment, i.e. 2.3 per cent of the population (according to SCMH). This means some 9 million people with some mental health problem, and some 0.9m with a sever problem. ii) The total cost of mental health treatment for the NHS is calculated by the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health as some £6.5bn, made up of GP costs (£0.9bn), drug costs (£0.7bn)and NHS hospital and community health costs (£4.9bn). iii) The question then is which costs to allocate to which people. The quoted figure of £6,000 per severe episode is based on the assumption that GP costs are divided equally among all those with some mental health problem, while half the drug cost and all the hospital and community care costs are allocated to the between all those with a severe problem.

- ¹¹⁹ Based a figure of £6,000 in 1999.
- ¹²⁰ *The economic and social costs of crime*, Brand, S. and Price, R., Table 2.
- ¹²¹ *The economic and social costs of crime* Brand, S. and Price, R., Table 2, uplifted.
- ¹²² *The economic and social costs of crime* Brand, S. and Price, R., Table 2, uplifted.
- ¹²³ The average cost of keeping someone in a local prison in 2001 was £23,700 p.a.. (*Reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners*, Social Exclusion Unit 2002 page 31).
- ¹²⁴ Audit Commission (quoted in Shelter's House Keeping report).
- ¹²⁵ CIPFA, (quoted in Shelter's House Keeping report).
- ¹²⁶ Excludes rent. Such support is assumed to last 18 months, this being the time associated with successful 'resettlement' in one tenancy : Alexander, K. and Ruggieri, S., *Changing Lives* Crisis 1998.
- ¹²⁷ Thamesreach Bondway quote £32 a week as the average cost of support per client per week (see appendix 2 http://www.thamesreach.org.uk/archive_job/jobAboutTSWteamsPIS.pdf). This is based on a generic outreach worker, on a salary of about £23,000.
- ¹²⁸ A community mental health worker, which might be expected to incur the same costs as an mental health outreach worker/have the same qualifications, costs approximately £60 per hour with client, excluding travel costs. (*PSSRU Unit costs of health and social care 2002* page 112). I think the way explained in footnote 42 is better, since then it avoids the problem, when it comes to frequency of contact etc, of saying exactly how much that contact is) To inflate the price a bit (not unjustifiably) you could include salary on-costs, qualifications, overheads and capital overheads (see page 91 of University of Kent health and social care costs 2002). This would almost double the annual cost. The salary of a community psychiatric nurse is approx £25,000, but with all the additional costs, it comes to £41,000 (and this still excludes travel). If we did this in the outreach worker case, we would reach approximately £60 per client per week. So in short, as it stand, the low estimate or outreach service is just based on salary of worker, but the best estimate is based on salary plus on costs etc.
- ¹²⁹ *Health and social care costs 2002*, PSSRU, University of Kent at Canterbury page 57 gives *voluntary sector* rehabilitation cost of £638 per week for residential care.
- ¹³⁰ *Health and social care costs 2002*, PSSRU, University of Kent at Canterbury, page 57 gives NHS rehabilitation centre £158/day (approx 1100/week).
- ¹³¹ Obviously there are various ways of rationalising this, but conceptually, it needs to be the value of both the worker's wage and their contribution to profit. So one way of looking at £230 is that it is as £6 an hour for 25 hours a week plus a 10 per cent profit margin.
- ¹³² *Tracking homelessness: a feasibility study*, Scottish Executive 2003. See also *Routes out of homelessness* Scottish Office Central Research Unit 2001.
- ¹³³ Frank's failure to keep up mortgage repayments are costed here as a failed tenancy.
- ¹³⁴ There is little information on duration of stay in hostels. A study of hostel use in Glasgow and London showed that over half of the residents had been there for less than three months, and people under 25 were the majority within this group (Kershaw et al 2001). Individual studies seem to back this up, see for example, Profile of single homeless people in London Crane and Warnes 2000. There is no further data to clarify whether this is representative of all hostels, but there is certainly wider research that points to more transient, unstable accommodation use among younger homeless people.
- ¹³⁵ 12 weeks in the hostel is based on an estimation of the length of wait to establish a rent deposit scheme in London according to some service providers. In some areas, the wait will be shorter, and in other areas, longer, depending on a number of factors. In areas of high housing demand, for example, there will be limited participation from landlords, as they will have other means of securing tenants. The chances of young people securing a rent deposit scheme in a popular area are made even more remote by the fact that many schemes prioritise families rather than single young people. A scheme may also take longer to set up if an applicant is without help – often the applicants themselves have to hunt out the landlord from an address list, arrange visiting times, and collect relevant information and return it to the scheme operator. If running smoothly, this could be done within a minimum of three weeks, but in practice the process takes much longer, especially when combined with a shortage of participating landlords.

- ¹³⁶ Likely length of time she is in a refuge for the second time, waiting for a offer of permanent housing from the council, based on 52 weeks being the quoted average for one central London refuge (Camden). Note, though, that all refuges are different, and some place restrictions on the length of time someone can stay in a hostel.
- ¹³⁷ This is the approximate length of time people have to wait for a place in rehabilitation (according to Elmore Team – specialists in Oxford that work with homeless people who have multiple needs). In this case, Evan stays in the hostel. In other cases, a wait of this length may well affect a person’s motivation, and they may abandon the idea of undergoing treatment. This might be particularly true in cases where people are uncomfortable/unhappy living in the hostel.
- ¹³⁸ Again, the length of time someone could wait in a hostel is as long a piece of string. This estimate comes from a field worker at the Sheffield Institute for Studies on Ageing. It allows one month to get to know Frank, one month for the application process and interview that Frank would have to have with the housing provider, and then four months for a place to come up. This last estimate is obviously very dependent on availability in the area. The scenario is in Manchester, where waiting lengths are less than they would have been if he had returned to London. Other aspects of the scenario can be explained by its setting in Manchester e.g. the reason why he was not picked up by an outreach worker is because there is limited RSI/CAT funding there compared with London, Bristol etc.
- ¹³⁹ 2 weeks worth of contact assessment for his first episode of rough sleeping, and 4 weeks worth for his second bout of rough sleeping.
- ¹⁴⁰ Two months rough sleeping the first time, and one month the second time.
- ¹⁴¹ One session a week for the six months that he is in the hostel.
- ¹⁴² One session each week for the duration of his stay in the first hostel. According to Centrepoint, this level of support is average for a large hostel with a low staff to resident ratio and few resources. Again, it is stressed that this is not a hard and fast rule – most hostels should provide this, but still there are some that do not offer a weekly session for residents.
- ¹⁴³ Assumes daily contact with outreach worker or day centre.
- ¹⁴⁴ This assumes three sessions a week for the month during which Andy lives at the hostel, but does not have a job, and one session a week for the remaining two months in the hostel while he is working, before moving into an AST. Three sessions a week is a high level of support. One session a week with an advice worker is average for a large hostel with a low staff to resident ratio and few resources. However, this second hostel is smaller, and has a higher staff ratio to resident ratio. This results in more frequent contact with residents, and will mean that the resident is likely to be referred to a wider variety of support services. It is fair to assume that Andy’s support needs would have increased after another, longer period of rough sleeping. This is shown simply by adding another support session per week, since there is no exact information to show how the level of need rises as the episode of homelessness lengthens.
- ¹⁴⁵ One session per week with key worker (minimum that any refuge is likely to supply).
- ¹⁴⁶ One session per week with key worker (minimum that any refuge is likely to supply).
- ¹⁴⁷ Based on one appointment per week with a key worker throughout his stay in the hostel (this is the likely minimum level of support – Elmore Team, Centrepoint, NACRO).
- ¹⁴⁸ This covers three visits a week to the day centre for the four weeks that he sleeps rough in between hostels. The first time he sleeps rough he does not use the services, but the second time he sleeps rough, he is more likely to hear about/use homeless services. Three times a week is admittedly an arbitrary figure, but one with Centrepoint and NACRO seem to think likely. They do stress, however, that much depends on levels of provision in the area, and on motivation and inclination of the homeless person to utilise services that are they do know are there.
- ¹⁴⁹ This is based on Charlie using the day centre recommended to him by the housing advice centre three times a week for the six weeks that he is sleeping rough (one month the first time, and then two weeks after his week in the B&B). The intensity of use of day centres by rough sleepers is variable – it depends on the state of mind and motivation of the homeless person, on the availability of such a service, and on the provision of alternative services in the area. In this case, it is assumed that Charlie has few alternative service providers in the area, and that he able and willing enough to turn up on a regular basis. For someone in this situation, three times a week was a unofficial estimate by field workers at NACRO, although it must be pointed out that such a frequency is an estimate rather than an average.

- ¹⁵⁰ Three visits a week for the three months that he is rough sleeping. See previous footnotes. Elmore Team agree that this is about right. – although this may be an underestimate since Evan would be likely to carry on using the day centre while he is in the hostel as an additional system of social support.
- ¹⁵¹ Assuming three times a week for the three weeks that he is sleeping rough. The three-week rough sleeping (again, suggested by Sheffield ISA) is an estimate, not an average. Someone sleeping rough for the first time at Frank’s age is likely to have a short episode. People sleeping rough for the first time spend anything from a night to three months (0-3 months is the smallest category when people are interviewed about their experience of rough sleeping).
- ¹⁵² By the time Beth stays at the refuge for the second time, her mental health has worsened. She undergoes a series of 12 sessions with the psychotherapist (as per recommended by Camden) and then a weekly session with the community psychiatric nurse for the remainder of her time. For purposes of ease, cost for both services are the same. According to the Survey of English Housing 2001/02, the average time waited for social housing in England was 370 days in an urban area, and 426 in a rural area.
- ¹⁵³ Rough sleepers are less likely to report crimes to the police for fear of not being taken seriously (*Unsafe Streets* 1999). Only 20 per cent of rough sleepers who have crimes committed against them go to the police.
- ¹⁵⁴ The involvement of the police and criminal justice system cannot always be directly classified as a cost of homelessness. In this case, it is included since a solution to her homeless problem did not come soon enough, and she returned ‘home’, where she was seriously assaulted. Of course, there may a variety of different reasons why a victim might return to their partner, and some do so even after they have been given independent accommodation. This particular cost of homelessness should therefore be used with caution, and is by no means applicable in all cases of domestic violence.
- ¹⁵⁵ There is no official data on the length of time people can expect to spent on remand. Six weeks is an estimate (provided, again unofficially, by NACRO) of the length of time it might take to get a court hearing for a minor crime such as shop lifting. Obviously, the amount of time it takes increases with severity of crime. The scenario ends here with Charlie completing his period on remand. It might be worth mentioning that for shoplifting, he would only have been given a short sentence, which may well have been covered by his period on remand. This would mean he immediately finds himself back to where he was the first time he was released from prison. Having already stayed with friends and relatives before, he could well have exhausted that option, and therefore go directly, or certainly more quickly, onto the streets.
- ¹⁵⁶ Resettlement is one of the most expensive areas – and also where funding is less likely to be available– crisis aversion rather than crisis intervention where money clearly has a visible result. With resettlement, the case is less clear. This is not helped by the fact that little research has been done on resettlement: only one study has looked into homeless peoples’ lives two years after resettlement (Crane 2003). The categories that exist in this “potential resettlement” are therefore a minimum level – a floating support worker. The endless variations in resettlement services make including additional services used beyond a visiting floating support worker an impossibility, and the scenarios themselves do not attempt to describe their path out of resettlement. Some may resettle quickly and support may be unnecessary/withdrawn after a while. Others may require the help of different service, and may need that help for an indefinite period of time.
- ¹⁵⁷ I.e. one visit per week for 18 months, bearing in mind that many will require more intensive support, such as two or three visit a week, and many will be put in touch via their floating support worker with other services to help them resettle.
- ¹⁵⁸ A visit per week from floating support at his shared tenancy.
- ¹⁵⁹ £158/week for alcohol misuse treatment. Calculated in *Unit costs of Health and Social Care 2002*, Personal and Social Services Research Unit (University of Kent, 2002), p.68.
- ¹⁶⁰ Elmore Team – detox takes two weeks.
- ¹⁶¹ Elmore Team – rehab is usually 6 months (should ideally be longer, but shortage of funding has forced treatment to be shorter).
- ¹⁶² 18 weeks – the estimated time in this scenario, that Andy has been unemployed as a result of being homeless (4 weeks while at staying with his friend, 2 weeks sleeping rough for the first time; 6 weeks in the hostel for the first time; 4 weeks sleeping rough, and 2 weeks in the second hostel, until he finds a job).

- ¹⁶³ This unemployment cost is based on a series of assumptions. Beth is unable to continue her job primarily because of domestic violence. However, it can be assumed that her experience of homelessness will exacerbate the situation: she feels uncomfortable in her temporary accommodation, and knows she has to wait along time before she has her own housing. It can be assumed that this impacts negatively on her mental health, and it will be even longer before she is able to start work again. The estimate of the number of weeks is built up as follows: 8 weeks moving round having left home, 4 weeks in refuge (first time) + 4 weeks at home again, plus 52 weeks in refuge the second time (not sure about this last one – she would have probably tried to return to work, but not sure after what period of time).
- ¹⁶⁴ 'Zero' because Charlie is not actually claiming benefits because he has had no access to help with filling his forms, and has no settled abode.
- ¹⁶⁵ The timescale is not tightly defined in the scenario. Unemployment as a result of homelessness in this scenario starts from when she lives in her friend's flat – in the context of the scenario, it is for four weeks.
- ¹⁶⁶ No benefits and administration included here because was jobless before he became homeless. Same as Charlie's situation – but costs included there.
- ¹⁶⁷ Not attributable to homelessness.

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Neither these people nor the organisations they belong to are responsible for this report and none of the views in should be attributed to them. Responsibility for errors rests with the authors.

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Tony Warnes, Maureen Crane, Naomi Whitehead, Ruby Fu

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Gerard Lemos with Gill Goodby ISBN 1 899257 35 7 1999 48pp £7.50

This influential report states that homelessness is the symptom of a multitude of life problems rather than people not having anywhere to live. The author argues that, although homelessness is not a new phenomenon, its causes, characteristics and consequences change frequently and that work done by the Government, and voluntary agencies needs to reflect this changing landscape. The authors argue that multiple causes can make homelessness a future foretold for some people. It makes recommendations to address the barriers currently facing single people in housing need.

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The problem of single homelessness is not new and has its roots in the *Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977*. At its simplest it is about homeless single adults or couples without dependent children and how difficult it is to meet their needs.

Over the years Crisis has worked with, campaigned and lobbied on behalf of this group of people. However as is often the case with excluded populations, there has always been a lack of knowledge about the true scale and cost of single homelessness; in addition to this the introduction of new policy and legislation has created a degree of confusion over the status and rights of single homeless people.

How Many, How Much? sets out to close that knowledge gap. The original brief was ambitious, complex and challenging and the final report does not disappoint.

Based on an analysis of existing literature and data the New Policy Institute are able to provide an estimate of the scale of single homelessness in Great Britain as well as a detailed and unprecedented analysis of some of the costs involved with homelessness.

The report concludes with a series of radical and challenging recommendations & is essential reading for all those involved in formulating and implementing homelessness policy.



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