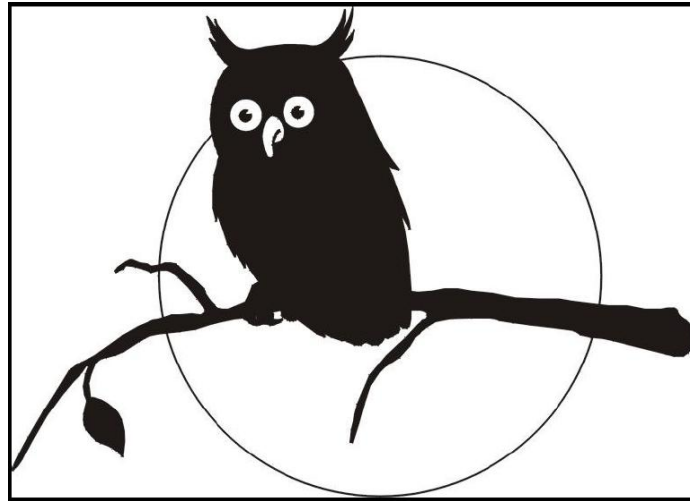


# **Homeless Watch 2006**

## **A Snapshot Survey of Homelessness in Nottinghamshire**

**18th September to 1st October 2006**



### **Ashfield District Council Mini Report**

HLG Resource Service

Mar 2007

Copies of this report are available on the Internet at

[www.hlg.org.uk/homelesswatch.htm](http://www.hlg.org.uk/homelesswatch.htm)

## **Background:**

The local authorities in Nottinghamshire (including Nottingham City) together identified the need for a third annual survey of homelessness in Nottinghamshire; intended to further the knowledge and understanding of homelessness in the county and the housing and support needs of those people who present as homeless.

The Homeless Watch Survey 2006 was commissioned as a result. The survey findings will be used to inform the review of Homelessness Strategies for each of the eight local authority areas in the County. The findings will also be used by other statutory agencies, including for example the Nottinghamshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) to inform complementary strategies.

The Homeless Watch Survey 2006 and the development of this report have been undertaken under the supervision of the Homeless Watch Steering Group, which comprises representatives from each of the local authorities in Nottinghamshire including the unitary authority Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and the voluntary sector. The format of the survey has been developed by the steering group, based on a form used successfully in previous surveys of this type.

The 2006 survey provides an opportunity both to identify, analyse and understand levels of homelessness and the needs of homeless people in Nottinghamshire at present and to build on the surveys undertaken in the two previous years to identify and analyse trends and changes in homelessness in the county in the last three years.

In addition to the main Homeless Watch report, which covers the results from the snapshot survey for the whole of Nottinghamshire, a series of eight mini reports have been produced, summarising the main findings for each of the eight local authority areas in Nottinghamshire. The main report and the district reports are all available for download from the Homeless Watch website at [www.hlg.org.uk/homelesswatch.htm](http://www.hlg.org.uk/homelesswatch.htm).

For the purpose of these mini district reports, figures on the number of presentations and homeless people are calculated using a different methodology than has been used for the area analysis in the main Nottinghamshire-wide Homeless Watch report. Figures in this report for Ashfield District Council are based on presentations by people who were either recorded by the Homeless Watch survey as receiving advice about their homelessness whilst in the Ashfield area **or** recorded as seeking advice whilst in another Nottinghamshire authority area but as having a local connection to Ashfield.

A local connection was defined as:

- family connection
- residence in area for 6 of the last 12 months or 3 of the last 5 years
- employment in the area.

This methodology is consistent with that used in some of the district based homelessness snapshot surveys that have taken place in previous years, notably the regular annual surveys conducted in Ashfield.

## Total numbers of homeless people including children

**Table 1: Homeless people in Ashfield or with a local connection to the district**

Category	Number Adjusted Figure to Take Account of Duplicate Presentations
<b>Adults</b>	84
<b>Children</b>	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>

There were a total of 97 presentations by homeless adults in Ashfield or by those with a local connection to the district as defined above, with 13 duplicate presentations. After removing duplicates, Table One shows a total of 121 presentations by homeless people including 84 adults and 37 dependent children. These figures compare with a total of 189 in 2005, including 135 adults and 54 dependent children; showing a notable reduction compared to the survey findings last year.

Please note that the following tables have been adjusted to remove any duplicate presentations unless otherwise stated.

### Age and gender

**Table 2: Age and gender of presenting adults**

Age Range	Male	Female	Gender Not Stated	Total
<b>16 &amp;17 Years Old</b>	3	2	0	5
<b>18-24 Years Old</b>	15	21	0	36
<b>25-40 Years Old</b>	16	14	0	30
<b>41-59 Years Old</b>	3	6	0	9
<b>60 years old and over</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>No Date of Birth Supplied</b>	1	2	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>84</b>

Table Two shows the age and gender of people who presented as homeless, not including dependent children. Only 45% of those who presented were male compared to 58% for the whole of Nottinghamshire. 49% were aged under 25 years compared with 58% in 2005.

### Ethnic Origin

**Table 3: Ethnic Origin**

Ethnic Origin	Number	Percentage
<b>White: British</b>	80	95.2
<b>White: Other</b>	1	1.2
<b>Other</b>	1	1.2
<b>Not Stated</b>	2	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100</b>

Table Three shows that 2.4% of presentations were by people of an ethnic origin other than White British (representing two individuals), with 2.4% of cases where ethnic origin was not stated. The 2001 UK census shows that 1.9% of the total population of Ashfield were from an ethnic origin other than White British. The percentage of presentations by homeless people of non White British ethnic origin recorded by the 2005 survey was 6.8%

## Household Type

**Table 4: Household Type**

Household Type	Number	Percentage - Ashfield	Percentage - Nottinghamshire
<b>Single Person (No Children)</b>	59	70	76
<b>Single Parent With Children</b>	13	16	12
<b>Couple With Children</b>	8	10	4
<b>Childless Couple</b>	2	2	5
<b>Not Stated</b>	2	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Compared to the household type breakdown for Nottinghamshire the figures for Ashfield show a higher percentage of single parents and a lower percentage of single people. This is consistent with survey findings from 2005.

## Children

**Table 5: Age & number of dependent children**

Age of Children	Number of Children in this Age Range
<b>0 - 4 Years Old</b>	16
<b>5 – 10 Years Old</b>	7
<b>11 – 15 Years Old</b>	12
<b>16 &amp; 17 Years Old</b>	1
<b>18 Years Old and Over</b>	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>

Table Five shows the number of children recorded according to the age of the children. A total of 37 dependent children were recorded within the data for Ashfield compared with 65 in 2005 indicating a notable decrease compared with last year. The majority of children (62%) were under eleven and the largest number under five years old.

The issue of the effect of homelessness on children and families has been highlighted nationally by Shelter in 2006, the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the BBC film 'Cathy Come Home'. Shelter report the fact that across England, almost 130,000 homeless children are having their health, education and future chances seriously damaged by the lack of a safe, permanent home.

## Care leavers

**Table 6: Care Leavers by age**

Age	Number of This Age With Care History
16 & 17 Years Old	1
18 – 21 Years Old	3
22 Years Old and Over	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>

Table Six shows that a total of nine care leavers presented as homeless in Ashfield or with a local connection to the district (11% of people presenting). Four of the care leavers were in care in Nottingham City and five in Nottinghamshire. In 2005, 15 people are recorded as having been in the care of the local authority as a young person.

The issue of homelessness amongst care leavers is highlighted in the main report.

## Support Needs

**Table 7: Support Needs**

Support Needs	Number	Percentage of Presentations- Ashfield	Percentage - Nottinghamshire
Drug Abuse	28	29	29
Ex-Offender	13	13	22
Mental Health	13	13	17
Alcohol Abuse	10	10	18
Domestic Violence	8	8	10
Learning Difficulties	8	8	8
Physically Disabled	7	7	4
Other	8	8	9
Not Stated	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

Table Seven records the support needs of people who presented during the survey period. Please note that people could record more than one support need, which is why the total is greater than the number of individuals presenting.

As indicated by columns three and four, the proportion of people requesting support for most categories is lower than was recorded for Nottinghamshire, with the exceptions of drug abuse (the same), learning difficulties and physical disability. The main report indicates that Ashfield is one of three areas where the misuse of drugs amongst homeless people is most prevalent, highlighting a potential need for the development of services in these areas in particular. The percentage of those identifying learning difficulties as a support need (8%) is notably lower than in 2005 (19%).

27 people (28%) presenting in or with a local connection to Ashfield reported no support needs.

## Where people spent the previous night

**Table 8: Previous Night's Accommodation**

Where Person Spent the Previous Night	Number	Percentage - Ashfield	Percentage - Nottinghamshire
Friend's Home	31	32	25
Slept Rough	17	18	27
Parent's Home	17	18	11
Own Home	12	12	9
Other Relative's Home	8	8	6
Hospital	3	3	2
Custody	1	1	2
Hostel	1	1	5
Grandparent's Home	1	1	1
B&B Lodgings	1	1	2
Partner's Home	1	1	2
Other	2	2	3
Not Stated	2	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Table Eight provides a breakdown of where those presenting as homeless in Ashfield or with a local connection to the district spent the previous night. As the place where a person was staying the previous night could change during the course of the survey period, the figures shown in table eight are for all 97 presentations (excluding dependent children) , rather than the 84 individuals who were homeless.

The percentage of rough sleepers is lower at 18% than the 27% recorded across Nottinghamshire, whereas the percentage that spent the previous night at a friend's home is higher at 32% than the 25% recorded for the County. 18% spent the previous night at their parent's home compared with 11% for the county.

## Rough sleeping in Ashfield

**Table 9: Nature of rough sleeping**

Slept Rough Type	Number	Percentage - Ashfield	Percentage - Nottinghamshire
Sleeping in Open Air	7	41	55
Building/Structure Not For Habitation	5	29	27
Squat	3	18	8
Don't Know/Not Stated	2	12	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 10: Time spent rough sleeping**

<b>Time Rough Sleeping</b>	<b>Number in This Category</b>	<b>Percentage - Ashfield</b>	<b>Percentage - Nottinghamshire</b>
<b>1 Night</b>	0	0	5
<b>More than 1 Night up to 1 Week</b>	3	18	19
<b>More than 1 Week up to 1 Month</b>	2	12	16
<b>More than 1 Month up to 3 Months</b>	8	47	23
<b>More than 3 Months up to 6 Months</b>	2	12	12
<b>More than 6 Months up to 12 Months</b>	0	0	7
<b>More than 12 Months</b>	2	12	14
<b>Don't Know</b>	0	0	3
<b>Not Stated</b>	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Data contained within the main report indicates that of the 17 rough sleepers recorded, ten were recorded as being in Ashfield when they presented for advice.

The total number of rough sleepers at 17 compares with a figure of 31 in 2005. This represents a notable reduction. Tables nine and ten provide more detailed information on the levels and nature of rough sleeping in Ashfield. Table nine indicates that rough sleepers in (or with a connection to) Ashfield are less likely to sleep in the open air and more likely to sleep in a squat than for Nottinghamshire as a whole. Table ten indicates that 47% of rough sleepers compared with 23% overall will sleep rough for more than one month and up to three months.

Table 11: Comparison of previous & coming night's accommodation

		Where Person Is Sleeping the Night Following Contact With An Agency															
		B & B Lodgings	Custody	Emergency Bed	Friend's Home	Grandparents	Hospital	Hostel	Other Relative's	Own Home	Parents Home	Partner's Home	Sleeping Rough	Social Services	Other	No Data Supplied	Totals
Where Person Slept The Night Prior To Seeing Agency For Advice	B&B Lodgings	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Custody	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Emergency Bed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Friend's Home	0	0	1	23	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	31
	Grandparent's	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Hospital	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
	Hostel	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Other Relative's	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	8
	Own Home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	1	12
	Parent's Home	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	17
	Partner's Home	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Sleeping Rough	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	17
	Social Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
	No Data Supplied	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Totals	1	1	3	25	1	2	6	6	11	16	0	17	0	2	6	97	

For the 2005 Survey, a new question was introduced to enable comparison of where a person spent the previous night with data about their expected housing circumstances the coming night and the question was repeated this year. Table eleven summarises these responses. Please note that these figures are for all presentations (excluding dependent children), rather than individuals.

Some interesting points that can be drawn from the data are as follows:

- 17 people slept rough the night before completing the survey and 17 expected to sleep rough the coming night.

- Whilst only one person had been in a hostel the previous night, six people expected to be in hostel the coming night – presumably as a result of contact with an agency. One of those had spent the previous night sleeping rough.
- 31 people had spent the previous night with friends whilst only 25 expected to be at a friend's home the coming night.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

A number of the recommendations in this year's report repeat or restate those from last year. It is clear from the analysis of this year's survey findings, set out below, that many of the issues and problems highlighted reflect or repeat those highlighted in the survey reports for 2004 and 2005. Whilst this is not a surprise, in that it would not be sensible to expect radical change in the profile of homelessness in Nottinghamshire in one year, or even two, it is a cause for concern. The recommendations in this report focus on issues highlighted in previous years but seek to develop new approaches aimed at finding solutions to persistent problems.

### **Recommendation One**

The County Housing and Homeless Network takes responsibility for monitoring the implementation of county-wide recommendations from this year's survey, developing action plans and involving county-wide bodies such as the County Council, Supporting People and the DAAT as necessary. In the City, the Homelessness Strategy Implementation Group (SIG) takes responsibility for implementing the recommendations of the report.

### **Recommendation Two**

The findings of the 2006 Homeless Watch survey are used to inform the review of each local authority's Homelessness Strategy and each Supporting People Administering Authority's Five Year Strategy and Annual Action Plan.

### **Recommendation Three**

Local Authorities utilise the recommendations made in the 'Causes of Homelessness Amongst Ethnic Minority Populations' (ODPM 2005) to assess the extent of ethnic minority homelessness in their district and work with local community organisations to ensure the housing and support needs of homeless people from ethnic minority backgrounds are recognised and addressed in their local homelessness strategies (Districts and City).

### **Recommendation Four**

Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City Children's Services use the following recommendations of the Joseph Rowntree report 'Life after Care' to assess the effectiveness of their leaving care services in preventing care leavers from becoming homeless and make changes to services as needed (County and City):

- Local authorities should create employment opportunities for care leavers, offering trainee/apprenticeship positions within the authority.
- A multi-agency approach must be adopted to develop a strategy that ensures young people receive the support they need to maintain tenancies.
- To enable them to make an informed decision, young people should be provided with user-friendly information detailing post-care housing options.
- Pathway planning should pay equal attention to a young person's capacity to manage independently and leaving care services should invest more time and resources in skill-building programmes. Focused/tailored approaches to budgeting, which take account of different scenarios in which young people

may find themselves, are important. Also, follow-up support to settle young people in their new environment would ensure that young people don't feel abandoned and isolated, and are given practical advice that could be applied to their own situation.

**Recommendation Five**

A county-wide multi-agency approach to meeting the support needs of people with multiple needs is developed, which can be implemented at a local level as part of local homelessness strategies (County Wide Group).

**Recommendation Six**

Supporting People Authorities and DAATs work with local authorities to review the services available to prevent homelessness amongst drug users and to ensure homeless drug users can access and maintain accommodation, support and treatment services and incorporate unmet needs into future plans. (County Wide Group)

**Recommendation Seven**

Local Authorities review the accommodation and support needs of homeless people with substance misuse difficulties as part of the review of the local homelessness strategies (Districts and City)

**Recommendation Eight**

The definition of rough sleeping used in the Homeless Watch survey is broader than that used by the DCLG and so more people will define themselves as rough sleeping in this survey than will be counted in rough sleepers' street counts. Nevertheless the mismatch between local rough sleeper counts and the number of people self defining as rough sleeping is unhelpful particularly in securing resources and planning services. This should be investigated further to enable a more accurate analysis of the problem and an effective strategic response. (Districts and City)

**Recommendation Nine**

Each local authority and Supporting People Authority should include appropriate direct or quick access services for people at the point of homelessness and access to move on accommodation as part of their strategies. (Districts and City and Supporting People Authorities)

**Recommendation Ten**

All local authorities should have access to a mediation service for young people. Authorities should explore opportunities for joint-commissioning of mediation services. (Districts and City).

**Recommendation Eleven**

Local Authorities should review the impact of the new Sanctuary schemes and the effect on the numbers of homelessness presentations on the grounds of domestic violence (Districts and City)

