

Homeless Watch 2008

A Snapshot Survey of Homelessness in
Derbyshire

29th September to 10th October 2008



Amber Valley Report

HLG Resource Service
March 2009

Copies of this report are available on the Internet at:

www.hlg.org.uk

Background

The Derbyshire Homeless Watch Survey 2008 is the first annual snapshot survey of homelessness in the County. The survey records details of everyone who presented as homeless to participating agencies during the two week period from 29th September to 10th October 2008.

For the purposes of the survey and report, homeless people are defined as those people presenting to agencies who were:

- living in something not normally considered to be housing (such as derelict buildings, sheds, vehicles – i.e. sleeping rough)
- living with the insecurity of not knowing where they would sleep tomorrow or over the next 28 days e.g. sleeping on a friend's floor for a few days or staying temporarily with relatives
- living in a state of dispossession (i.e. not being able to have their belongings in the same place that they are sleeping).

Agencies across the County who regularly come into contact with homeless people were invited to participate by completing survey forms for homeless people presenting to them during the survey period.

500 agencies across Derbyshire were approached and of those, 97 agencies took part in this year's survey by submitting returns. Participating agencies completed a survey form for each individual who presented to them as homeless in the survey period. 34 agencies gave nil returns and the overall response rate was 19.4%. It is important to bear in mind that this is the first time the survey has been carried out in Derbyshire and it can be expected that the response rate will increase should the survey be repeated in future years.

The main report is complemented by a set of district reports which summarise survey findings for each of the boroughs and districts within the County, including Derby City.

This report provides an analysis of survey findings concerning homelessness in the Amber Valley borough. Eight agencies in Amber Valley took part in the survey.

For the purpose of the district reports, figures on the number of presentations by homeless people are calculated using a different methodology than has been used for the area analysis in the main Derbyshire-wide Homeless Watch report. Figures in this report for Amber Valley Borough Council are based on presentations by people who were **either** recorded by the Homeless Watch Survey 2008 as receiving advice about their homelessness whilst in the Amber Valley area **or** recorded as seeking advice whilst in another Derbyshire area but as having a local connection to Amber Valley.

For the purposes of the survey a local connection is 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 is the first annual survey of its kind carried out across Derbyshire and as such the findings drawn from the survey can only be initial and tentative. At this stage, the survey data provides an initial snapshot of levels of homelessness across the County, and in the case of this report in Amber Valley specifically and can provide a baseline for the analysis of trends and changes in homelessness and related issues in future years.

The Homeless Watch Survey 2008 has been undertaken against a background of:

- a worsening national and global economic situation
- an increasing national emphasis on homelessness prevention reflected within priorities for local commissioners
- the recent development of new five year homelessness strategies in each of the districts and boroughs of Derbyshire
- a new emphasis on the role of local strategic partnerships and the delivery of targets through local area agreements
- a new national strategy to tackle rough sleeping.

The Amber Valley Homelessness Strategy Review 2008-11 puts a clear focus on homelessness prevention. The review document highlights some key challenges for the borough in tackling homelessness as:

- access to private rented accommodation
- difficulty faced by first time buyers in obtaining a mortgage
- impact of fewer houses being built
- increasing mortgage repossessions
- potential impact on funding for homelessness services following the implementation of Local Area Agreements.

The review highlights the major causes of homelessness in Amber Valley as:

1. Violent breakdown of relationship with a partner
2. Termination of an Assured Shorthold Tenancy
3. Parents no longer willing to accommodate.

The findings set out within this survey report can be considered alongside the Amber Valley Homelessness Strategy 2008-11.

SURVEY ANALYSIS FOR AMBER VALLEY

Table One: Homeless People in Amber Valley or with a Local Connection to the area

Category	Number
	Adjusted Figure to Take Account of Repeat Presentations
Adults	29
Children	20
Total	49

Table One shows a total of 49 presentations by homeless people in Amber Valley or with a connection to the borough comprising 29 adults (after repeat presentations have been removed) and 20 dependent children.

Please note: there were 30 presentations to the 2008 Homeless Watch Survey by homeless adults in Amber Valley or reporting a connection to the borough including one repeat presentation.¹ Most of the data tables set out below have been adjusted to remove the repeats and use the **29 adults as the total figure** except where it is useful to show the picture for all presentations e.g. to indicate potential changes in the circumstances of those presenting during the survey period.

Table One (a): Presentations and Local Connection

	All in Amber Valley	Amber Valley – Rough Sleepers Only
Actual Presentations in Amber Valley	25	0
Presentations Outside Amber Valley	5	1
Presented in or with a local connection to Amber Valley	30	1

Table One (a) shows that of the 30 total adult presentations made in Amber Valley or by those with a connection to the borough including the single repeat presentation, 25 were made in the borough itself.

¹ Repeat presentations are where individuals presented to more than one agency during the survey fortnight – identified by comparing initials, gender and date of birth information.

The table also provides a breakdown of rough sleepers presenting in or with a connection to Amber Valley. For the purposes of the survey rough sleeping was defined as living in something not normally considered to be housing (such as derelict buildings, sheds, vehicles) or sleeping in the open air.

The total number of rough sleepers recorded for the borough by the 2008 Homeless Watch Survey was one. This person presented to the survey in a different area but reported a connection to Amber Valley. No rough sleepers presented in the borough itself. Amber Valley had the lowest number of rough sleepers of the nine local authorities that participated in the Derbyshire Homeless Watch Survey 2008.

[Please note that in the main Derbyshire Homeless Watch Survey Report 2008 Amber Valley is recorded as having no rough sleepers. This is due to the difference in the way that figures on the number of presentations by homeless people are calculated in the main Derbyshire-wide Homeless Watch report and the district reports as explained above. Figures for Amber Valley in the Derbyshire-wide report are based on presentations by people who were recorded as receiving advice about their homelessness whilst in the Amber Valley area only.

Table Two: Area where presentation made to survey

Local Authority Area	Male		Female		Not Stated		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Amber Valley	9	82	15	88	1	50	25	83
Chesterfield			1	6			1	3
Derby City	1	9	1	6	1	50	3	10
Erewash	1	9					1	3
Total	11	100	17	100	2	100	30	100

Table Two provides a more detailed breakdown of where those presenting as homeless in Amber Valley or with a local connection to the borough actually presented for advice during the survey fortnight. It shows 25 presentations were made in Amber Valley itself and small numbers in other areas including three in Derby City.

Please note that the following tables have been adjusted to remove repeat presentations, using the number of actual homeless adult individuals (29) rather than total presentations unless otherwise stated.

Table Three: Age

Age Range	Male	Female	Gender Not Stated	Total
16 &17 Years Old	1	2		3
18-24 Years Old	4	5	2	11
25-40 Years Old	3	7		10
41-59 Years Old	3	2		5
60 years old and over				
No Date of Birth Supplied				
Total	11	16	2	29

Table Three shows the age of people who presented as homeless during the survey period (not including dependent children). The data indicates that three presentations were made by young homeless people under 18; two of whom were young women. Homeless people under 25 made up over 48% of those presenting to the survey, compared with 39% of the total across the County as a whole. The Amber Valley Homeless Review 2008-11 Action Plan identifies increasing the awareness of young people of homelessness and housing advice as a key action.

Table Four: Gender

Gender	Number	%
Male	11	38
Female	16	55
Not Stated	2	7
Total	29	100

Table Four shows that 55% of those presenting to the survey as homeless in Amber Valley or with a connection to the borough were women and 38% were men (with two presentations for whom no gender was recorded). This is very different from the picture across the County as a whole – where women made up only 38% of the homeless population recorded by the survey. The findings for Amber Valley are consistent with the fact that the major cause of homelessness in the borough is the violent breakdown of the relationship with a partner.

Table Five: Ethnic Origin

Ethnic Origin	Number	%
Gypsy/Traveller	1	3
White: British	27	93
White: Irish	1	3
Total	29	100

The data at Table Five shows that two people of an ethnic origin other than White British presented as homeless in Amber Valley or with a connection to the borough. This represents almost 6% of the 29 adult presentations. The ethnic minority population in Amber Valley is only 2% of the total population and therefore the data at Table Five might suggest an over representation of ethnic minorities amongst the local homeless population. However, the numbers involved are very low and no conclusions can be drawn from the data.

Household types

Table Six: Household Type

Household Type	Number	Percentage - Amber Valley	Percentage - Derbyshire
Single Person (No Children)	15	52	70
Single Parent With Children	9	31	14
Couple With Children	5	17	6
Childless Couple			9
Not Stated			1
Total	29	100	100

Table Seven: Age and number of dependent children

Age of Children	Number of Children in this Age Range
0 - 4 Years Old	11
5 – 10 Years Old	7
11 – 15 Years Old	1
16 & 17 Years Old	
18 Years Old and Over	
Total	20

Tables Six and Seven above provide data on households and dependent children presenting as homeless in or with a connection to Amber Valley.

The data within Table Six shows that 52% of presentations were made by single people and 48% by households with children – a very different breakdown than for the County as a whole where 70% of presentations to the survey were made by single people without children and only 20% by households with dependent children.

Table Seven sets out data on the number of children recorded by the survey according to the age of the child and shows 20 dependent children presented as homeless to the survey. Eleven of the children (55%) were aged four or under.

Homeless Care leavers in Amber Valley

Table Eight: Age of Care Leavers

Age	Number of This Age With Care History
16 & 17 Years Old	
18 – 21 Years Old	2
22 Years Old and Over	
Not stated	
Total	2

Table Nine: Where People Were in Care

	Number of This Age With Care History
Derbyshire	2
Outside Derbyshire	
Total	2

Tables Eight and Nine provide data on homeless people with a history of care presenting in Amber Valley or with a connection to the borough. The data shows that there were two presentations by care leavers. Table Nine indicates that both of the care leavers had been in care in Derbyshire.

Table Ten: Support Needs

Support Needs	Number	Percentage of Presentations- Amber Valley	Percentage - Derbyshire
Drug Problem	5	17	23
Mental Health	4	13	13
Alcohol Problem	4	13	13
Domestic Violence	3	10	6
Other	3	10	10
Ex-Offender	2	7	20
Learning Difficulties	1	3	4
Physically Disabled			3
Total	22	N/A	N/A

Table Ten records the support needs of people who presented during the survey period. It sets out needs reported for Amber Valley alongside the support needs recorded for Derbyshire as a whole. Please note that people could record more than one support need and that 13 presentations were made by homeless people in Amber Valley or with a connection to the borough who reported no support needs.

The data shows that five presentations (17% of the needs reported) were made by people who reported a support need related to a drug problem. This compares with 23% reporting such a need across Derbyshire as a whole. A support need related to a mental health issue was reported by four presentations to the survey, representing 13% of needs identical with the 13% reporting such a need across Derbyshire.

Domestic violence was reported as a support need by three presentations – 10% of the total needs reported. As highlighted above, the Homelessness Strategy Review identifies domestic violence as the main cause of homelessness in the borough and the related Action Plan calls for increased support services for and better contact with women victims of domestic violence.

Table Eleven: Previous Night's Accommodation

Where Person Spent the Previous Night	Number	Percentage - Amber Valley	Percentage - Derbyshire
Parents' Home	9	30	12
Own Home	6	20	15
Friend's Home	5	17	23
Other Relative's Home	4	13	10
Partner's Home	2	7	2
B&B Lodgings	2	7	5
Slept Rough	1	3	18
Grandparents' Home	1	3	2
Hostel			3
Custody			2
Hospital			1
Emergency Bed			0
Childrens Home or Foster care			0
Other			4
Not Stated			2
Total	30	100	100

Table Eleven provides a breakdown of where those presenting as homeless in Amber Valley or with a local connection to the borough (excluding dependent children) spent the previous night. Since the place where a person was staying the previous night could change during the course of the survey period, the figures shown are for all 30 adult presentations including repeats.

The table indicates that 9 (30%) of presentations spent the previous night at the home of their parents compared with only 12% for the County as a whole.

Six presentations were made by people who reported spending the previous night in their own home; five by those who had stayed with a friend the previous night and four by those who had been able to stay with a relative. Two presentations were made by people who had been in B&B accommodation.

Rough Sleeping in Amber valley

As highlighted above, only one person with a local connection to Amber Valley was recorded by the survey as sleeping rough. This individual did not present to the survey in Amber Valley itself.

Table Fourteen: Comparison of previous and 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	Childrens Home or Foster Care	Other	No Data Supplied	Totals	
Where Person Slept The Night Prior To Seeing Agency For Advice	B&B Lodgings	2															2	
	Custody																	
	Emergency Bed																	
	Friend's Home				3			1							1		5	
	Grandparent's					1											1	
	Hospital																	
	Hostel																	
	Other Relative's								4									4
	Own Home	1								5								6
	Parent's Home				3						6							9
	Partner's Home			1								1						2
	Sleeping Rough				1													1
	Childrens Home or Foster Care																	
	Other																	
No Data Supplied																		
Totals	3		1	7	1		1	4	5	6	1			1			30	

Table Fourteen provides data on where the homeless adults who presented to the survey in or with a connection to Amber Valley spent the night before contacting a participating agency and where they expected to spend the following night. The data is for all 30 adult presentations including the one repeat.

The table shows indicates that:

- nine people had spent the night prior to presenting to the survey with their parents and only one expected to be staying at their parents' home the following night
- five people were at the home of a friend the night prior to completing a survey form and seven expected to be staying with friends the following night
- only one person slept rough the night before presenting to the survey and no-one expected to do so the following night
- two people spent the previous night in B&B accommodation and three expected to be in B&B the following night
- no-one had been in a hostel the previous night and one person expected to have hostel accommodation the coming night.