

Homeless Watch 2009

A Snapshot Survey of Homelessness in
Derbyshire

28th September to 11th October



Erewash Borough Report

HLG Resource Service

April 2010

Copies of this report are available on the Internet at:

www.hlg.org.uk

Contents

Executive Summary

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Background to the Homeless Watch survey
- 1.2 Aims of the survey
- 1.3 How the survey was conducted
- 1.4 How the findings have been presented

2 Homeless People in Erewash

- 2.1 People presenting as homeless in Erewash
- 2.2 People with a local connection to Erewash

3 Characteristics of Homeless People

- 3.1 Gender
- 3.2 Age
- 3.3 Ethnic origin
- 3.4 Household structure

4 Background and Support Needs

- 4.1 Care leavers
- 4.2 Support needs

5 Current Living Situation

- 5.1 Previous night's accommodation
- 5.2 Rough sleeping

6 Conclusions

Appendix 1: Definitions used

Homelessness
Age groups
Local connection
Care leavers

Executive Summary

1 Introduction

The Homeless Watch Survey is carried out over a two week period at the end of September/early October. It aims to identify and analyse levels of homelessness and the needs of people currently homeless in Derbyshire. It also seeks to draw comparisons with other data sources as well as build on the previous snapshot survey undertaken last year in order to help identify patterns of homelessness in the County.

A key objective of the survey is to help inform the development of strategies and services designed to:

- prevent homelessness;
- reduce levels of homelessness and rough sleeping;
- improve service provision;
- improve the lives of people who find themselves homeless in Derbyshire.

2 Homeless people in Erewash

- adult presentations have fallen from 36 in 2008 to 28 – a fall of almost 22% since last year
- presentations by homeless dependent children have increased by 4 or 33% - up from 12 last year to 16 in 2009

3 Characteristics of homeless people

- there was a 50:50 gender split with 14 women and 14 men presenting to the survey as homeless in Erewash
- presentations by young homeless people under 18 have fallen from seven last year to only one in 2009
- young people aged between 25 and 40 comprise only 7% of the general population of the borough but made up 46% of those presenting to the survey
- there were no presentations by homeless people from ethnic minority communities in Erewash
- homeless families with children made up 32% of total presentations in the borough – compared with only 22% of presentations across the County

4 Background and support needs

- the number of care leavers presenting as homeless has fallen to two this year compared with five in 2008
- no-one presenting to the survey this year reported Domestic Violence as a support need compared with 10% of those presenting last year reporting DV as a support need

5 Current living situation

- 14 people spent the night prior to presenting to the survey at the home of a friend – comprising 48% of total presentations
- no rough sleepers presented to the survey in Erewash this year compared with six presentations by people who reported sleeping rough in 2008

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Homeless Watch survey

The Derbyshire Homeless Watch Survey 2009 is the second annual survey of homelessness in Derbyshire. It provides a snapshot survey that records details of everyone who presented as homeless to participating agencies in the County, during the two week survey period from 28th September to 11th October 2009. The 2009 survey provides an opportunity to identify and analyse levels of homelessness and the needs of homeless people in Derbyshire at present and to build on the first survey undertaken last year to identify and analyse trends and changes in homelessness in the County.

This report provides an analysis of survey findings concerning homelessness in the borough of Erewash.

The Homeless Watch Survey 2009 has been undertaken against a background of:

- a continued economic recession
- a continued emphasis on homelessness prevention in Government policy
- the recent development of five year homelessness strategies for each of the districts and boroughs of Derbyshire
- the case of 'G vs Southwark' which clarified the legal duty placed on local authorities to support and accommodate homeless teenagers under section 20 of the Children Act 1989
- a growing emphasis on the role of local strategic partnerships, the delivery of targets through local area agreements and the removal of the 'ring fence' around Supporting People funding

The Erewash Borough Council Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2008-13 highlights the following key strategic goals:

- to prevent homelessness where possible
- to tackle unmet homelessness needs
- to ensure adequate and appropriate support is available to support clients through crisis and to prevent the re-occurrence of homelessness
- to end the use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation
- to reduce the use of other forms of temporary accommodation for homeless households
- to ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing
- to work with partners to ensure cohesive partnership working

The findings of this report can be considered alongside the challenges highlighted in the strategy document.

1.2 Aims of the survey

The aims of the Homeless Watch Survey are to:

- identify and analyse levels of homelessness and the needs of homeless people in Derbyshire
- identify patterns and trends in homelessness by comparing current findings with those from the previous Homeless Watch survey
- use other data sources to contextualise findings from the Homeless Watch survey, thereby deepening our understanding of the profile of homeless people in Derbyshire
- provide evidence to inform local policy-making and the development and delivery of services for homeless people

1.3 How the survey was conducted

During the two week snapshot period, agencies across Derbyshire were asked to complete a questionnaire for each person or household who presented to them as homeless. Agencies were asked wherever possible to complete the form with the homeless person actually present, but this was not always possible. 333 agencies were invited to take part in the survey this year and 49 did so. 13 agencies gave nil returns and the overall agency response rate was 14.7%. Both the number of participating agencies and the response rate are down on the previous year.

Seven agencies in the borough of Erewash participated in the Homeless Watch Survey 2009 – down from eleven last year.

1.4 How the findings have been presented

For the purpose of the 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 Derbyshire-wide Homeless Watch report. Figures in this report for **Erewash** are based on presentations by people who were **either** recorded by the Homeless Watch Survey 2009 as receiving advice about their homelessness whilst in Erewash itself **or** recorded as seeking advice whilst in another Derbyshire authority area but as having a local connection¹ to the borough. For the purposes of brevity this report generally refers to all presentations by homeless people in or with a connection to Erewash as those 'presenting in Erewash'.

In addition to presenting the findings from the current survey, the data have been compared with those from the previous year in order to detect trends, and with other data sources where appropriate so as to contextualise the

¹ The definition of *local connection* used by the survey can be found in Appendix 1

findings. For instance, the characteristics of homeless people have been compared with the local demographic profile for the general population as revealed in the 2001 Census² in order to give an indication of the prevalence of homelessness among sub-groups in the population.

Please note that most of the data tables and charts have been adjusted to remove repeat presentations except where it is useful in indicating changes in the circumstances of those presenting during the survey period.

The findings of the survey have been presented in this report as a response to four key questions:

1. How many people are homeless?
2. Who are the homeless?
3. What do homeless people need in addition to housing?
4. Where do homeless people live?

The main report provides detailed information for the entire sample on repeat homelessness, reasons for homelessness, outcomes of contact with agencies and homeless people's aspirations for housing.

² 2001 Census data is available online at: www.statistics.gov.uk

2 Homeless People in Erewash

Key questions: How many people are homeless? How do their numbers compare with last year's? How often are people homeless? Where do homeless people have a local connection?

2.1 People presenting as homeless in Erewash

Key findings: adult presentations have fallen by 8 or almost 22% since last year but presentations by homeless dependent children have increased by 4 or 33%.

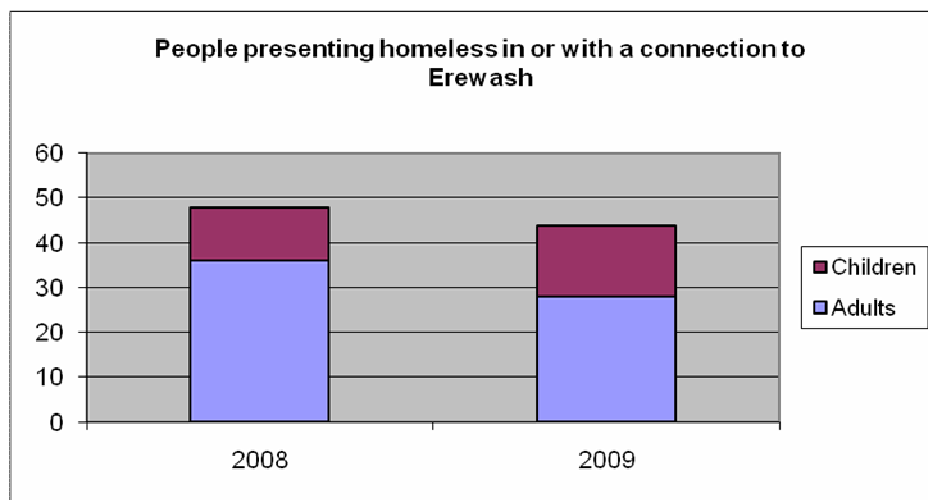
44 homeless people presented to the survey in Erewash – comprising 28 adults (after one repeat presentation was removed)³ and 16 homeless children. These figures compare with 36 adults and 12 children last year. Adult presentations have fallen by 8 or almost 22% since last year but presentations by homeless dependent children have increased by 4 or 33%.

Table One: Homeless People in Erewash, or with a Local Connection to the borough

| Category | Number Adjusted Figure to Take Account of Repeat Presentations |
|--------------|--|
| Adults | 28 |
| Children | 16 |
| Total | 44 |

Figure 2.1 below provides a comparison between this year's figures and those reported last year.

Figure 2.1



³ 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.

2.2 People with a local connection to Erewash

Key findings: No rough sleepers presented to the survey in Erewash this year compared with 6 presentations by rough sleepers in 2008.

The data at Table One (a) below shows that all those who presented to the survey as homeless in Erewash or with a connection to the borough presented in Erewash itself. It also shows that no rough sleepers presented to the survey in Erewash this year. This compares with 6 presentations by rough sleepers last year.

Table One (a): Presentations and Local Connection

| All in Erewash | Erewash – Rough Sleepers Only |
|----------------|-------------------------------|
| 29 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 |
| 29 | 0 |

3 Characteristics of Homeless People

Key questions: Who are the homeless? How are they distributed around population variables, such as gender, age, ethnic origin and household structure?

3.1 Gender

Key finding: The same number of men and women presented to the survey as homeless in Erewash.

The data shows that the same number of men and women presented to the survey as homeless in Erewash. The gender breakdown for Erewash presents a different picture than the County as a whole where 63% of those presenting were men. The findings this year are also quite different from those recorded for Erewash in 2008 when 58% of those presenting to the survey as homeless were men and 36% were women (with two presentations for whom no gender was recorded).

Table Two: Gender

| Gender | Number | % |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Male | 14 | 50 |
| Female | 14 | 50 |
| Total | 28 | 100 |

3.2 Age

Key findings: Presentations by young homeless people under 18 have fallen from seven last year to only one in 2009. Young people aged between 25 and 40 comprise only 7% of the general population of the borough but made up 46% of those presenting to the survey.

The data shows that that one young person under 18 presented as homeless in the borough. This compares with seven young people in this age group who presented to the survey last year. The highest number of presentations was made by young people aged between 18 and 24. There were 13 presentations by young people in this age group – comprising 46% of total presentations.

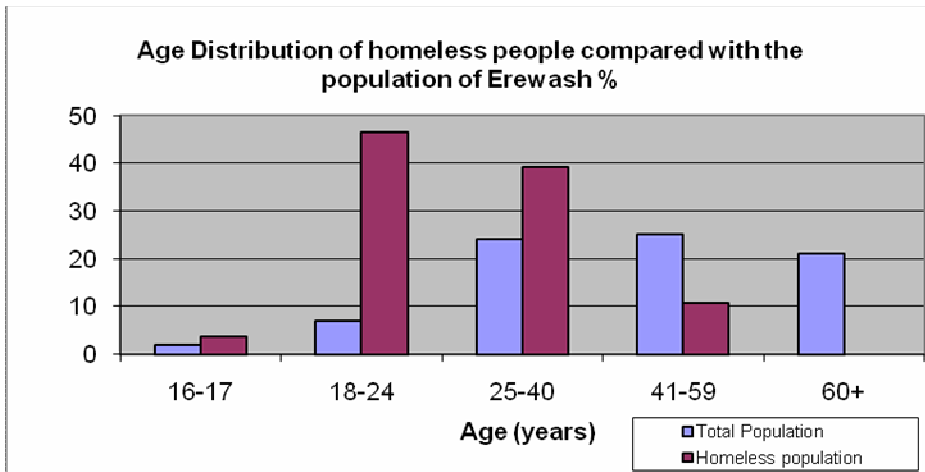
Figure 3.2 shows a distorted age profile amongst homeless people compared with the general population from 2001 census data. It shows a particular over-representation of people aged 25 to 40 in the homeless population when compared to the general population of Erewash (using 2001 Census data). People aged between 25 and 40 comprise only 7% of the general population of the borough but made up 46% of those presenting to the survey.

As reported last year, the Erewash Homelessness Strategy 2008-13 identifies a number of actions to help tackle homelessness amongst young people in the borough including the provision of a Night Stop scheme to provide emergency accommodation.

Table Three: Age

| Age Range | Male | Female | Total |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 16 &17 Years Old | 1 | | 1 |
| 18-24 Years Old | 5 | 8 | 13 |
| 25-40 Years Old | 6 | 5 | 11 |
| 41-59 Years Old | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| 60 years old and over | | | |
| No Date of Birth Supplied | | | |
| Total | 14 | 14 | 28 |

Figure 3.2



3.3 Ethnic origin

Key finding: There were no presentations by homeless people from ethnic minority communities in Erewash.

There were no presentations by homeless people from ethnic minority communities in Erewash. This compares with two presentations last year or almost 6% of the total of presentations after removing invalid data i.e. where no ethnic origin was recorded. The ethnic minority population in Erewash is only 2% of the total population though there are concentrations of B&ME households in some areas of Erewash of between 3% and 4% of the local population.

Table Four: Ethnic Origin

| Ethnic Origin | Number | % |
|----------------|--------|-----|
| White: British | 28 | 100 |
| Total | 28 | 100 |

3.4 Household structure

Key findings: Homeless families with children made up 32% of total presentations in the borough – compared with only 22% of presentations across the County. The number of children presenting as homeless in the borough increased from 12 last year to 16 – an increase of 33%.

17 presentations were made in Erewash by single homeless people – comprising 61% of total presentations. This compares with 65% of single people presenting across Derbyshire as a whole and 67% for Erewash in 2008.

Homeless families with children made up 32% of total presentations in the borough – compared with only 22% of presentations across the County and 37% for Erewash last year. The number of homeless children presenting in the borough increased from 12 last year to 16 – an increase of 33%.

Table Five: Household Type

| Household Type | Number | Percentage - Erewash | Percentage - Derbyshire |
|-----------------------------|-----------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Single Person (No Kids) | 17 | 61 | 65 |
| Single Parent With Children | 7 | 25 | 12 |
| Couple With Children | 2 | 7 | 10 |
| Childless Couple | 2 | 7 | 7 |
| No Data Supplied | | | 6 |
| Total | 28 | 100 | 100 |

Table Six: Age and number of dependent Children

| Age of Children | Number of Children in this Age Range |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 0 - 4 Years Old | 7 |
| 5 – 10 Years Old | 6 |
| 11 – 15 Years Old | 3 |
| 16 & 17 Years Old | |
| 18 Years Old and Over | |
| Total | 16 |

4 Background and Support Needs

Key questions: What do homeless people need in addition to housing? How many spent time in the care of a local authority, and how many have other challenges in their lives that arise from, for instance, mental health problems or substance misuse?

4.1 Care leavers

Key finding: The number of care leavers presenting as homeless has fallen to two this year compared with five in 2008.

There were only two presentations to the survey by homeless people with a care history this year – both of whom were 22 years old or over. This compares with five presentations by care leavers, three of whom were under 18, in 2008. One of the care leavers was in care in Derbyshire and the other outside the County.

Table Seven: Age of Care Leavers

| Age | Number of This Age With Care History |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 16 & 17 Years Old | |
| 18 – 21 Years Old | |
| 22 Years Old and Over | 2 |
| No Data Supplied | |
| Total | 2 |

Table Eight: Where People Were in Care

| | Number of This Age With Care History |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Derbyshire | 1 |
| Derby City | |
| Outside Derbyshire | 1 |
| Total | 2 |

4.2 Support Needs

Key findings: In 2008, Domestic Violence was reported as a support need by four presentations – 10% of the total needs reported, whereas no-one presenting to the survey this year reported DV as a support need.

Table Nine below sets out data on the support needs reported by homeless people presenting to the survey. Please note that people could record more than one support need and 15 presentations were made by homeless people in Erewash who reported no support needs. This represents 53% of total adult presentations – across Derbyshire as a whole 46% of people presenting reported no support needs.

Six people reported a support need related to a drug problem – comprising 21% of presentations which compares with only 12% reporting this need across the County. Eight people or 20% of people presenting in Erewash last year reported a support need related to a drug problem.

In 2008, Domestic violence was reported as a support need by four presentations – 10% of the total needs reported, whereas no-one presenting to the survey this year reported this support need. As highlighted in the report for Erewash last year, the Homelessness Strategy highlights domestic violence as one of the main causes of homelessness and identifies as a priority the development of a Sanctuary scheme for victims of domestic violence in partnership with other districts.

Table Nine: Support Needs

| Support Needs | Number | Percentage of Presentations- Erewash | Percentage - Derbyshire |
|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Drug Problems | 6 | 21 | 12 |
| Ex-Offender | 5 | 17 | 14 |
| Mental Health | 3 | 10 | 10 |
| Alcohol Problems | 3 | 10 | 14 |
| Learning Difficulties | 2 | 7 | 4 |
| Domestic Violence | | | 7 |
| Physically Disabled | | | 2 |
| Other | 2 | 7 | 11 |
| No Data Supplied | | | 1 |
| Total | 21 | N/A | N/A |

5 Current Living Situation

Key questions: Where do homeless people live? Where did they spend the previous night and where did they hope to spend the next night? How many people slept rough the previous night, where did they stay and for how long?

5.1 Previous night's accommodation

Key finding: 14 people spent the night prior to presenting to the survey at the home of a friend – comprising 48% of total presentations.

Table Ten below shows that 14 people spent the night prior to presenting to the survey at the home of a friend – comprising 48% of total presentations - the largest single category by far. This compares with 12 or 29% of presentations last year and 25% across Derbyshire as a whole. No one reported sleeping rough this year compared with six presentations by people who had slept rough the rough before presenting to the survey in 2008.

Five presentations were made by those who reported spending the previous night at the home of a relative – other than parent or grandparent – comprising 17% of presentations compared with only 7% for the County. Four presentations, 14% of the total, were made by homeless people who reported spending the previous night in their own home compared with 18% across the County.

Table Eleven provides data on where the homeless adults who presented to the survey in Erewash spent the night before contacting a participating agency and where they expected to spend the following night. It shows little change in the circumstances of homeless people in the borough between the two nights.

Please note that the data shown is for all presentations including the single repeat presentation since a person's circumstances could change over the course of the survey period.

Table Ten: Previous Night's Accommodation

| Where Person Spent the Previous Night | Number | Percentage - Erewash | Percentage - Derbyshire |
|--|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Friend's Home | 14 | 48 | 25 |
| Grandparents' Home | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| Partner's Home | 1 | 3 | 2 |
| Other Relative's Home | 5 | 17 | 7 |
| Own Home | 4 | 14 | 18 |
| Parents' Home | 3 | 10 | 14 |
| Slept Rough | | | 16 |
| B&B Lodgings | | | 2 |
| Hostel | | | 1 |
| Custody | | | 1 |
| Hospital | | | 1 |
| Emergency Bed | | | 1 |
| Other | | | 3 |
| No Data Supplied | 1 | 3 | 10 |
| Total | 29 | 100 | 100 |

Table Eleven: 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 |
| Where Person Slept The Night Prior To Seeing Agency For Advice | B&B Lodgings | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Custody | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Emergency Bed | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Friend's Home | | | | 10 | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | 2 | 14 |
| | Grandparent's | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| | Hospital | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Hostel | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Other Relative's | | | | | | | 4 | | | | | | | 1 | 5 |
| | Own Home | | | | | | | | 4 | | | | | | | 4 |
| | Parent's Home | | | | | | | | | 3 | | | | | | 3 |
| | Partner's Home | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| | Sleeping Rough | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Childrens Home or Foster Care | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Other | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | No Data Supplied | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Totals | | | | 10 | 1 | | 5 | 4 | 3 | 1 | | | | 1 | 4 | 29 |

Please note that the table includes repeat presentations since a person's circumstances could change over the course of the survey period.

5.2 Rough sleeping

As highlighted above no rough sleepers presented to the survey in Erewash this year compared with six presentations by people reporting sleeping rough in 2008.

6 Conclusions

This report sets out some of the key findings for Erewash borough of the Derbyshire Homeless Watch Survey 2009. The main report for Derbyshire can be used to compare the findings for the borough with other districts and with the County as a whole.

The report presents a more positive picture than last year with encouraging findings in some key areas. Presentations by homeless adults have fallen by 22%; no rough sleepers presented in the borough this year compared with six last year; only one young person under 18 presented to the survey compared with seven last year and presentations by care leavers fell from five last year to two. On the other hand, the report highlights that presentations by homeless dependent children have increased by 33% - up from 12 last year to 16 in 2009 and that young people aged between 25 and 40 are considerably over-represented within the homeless population compared with the general population of the borough.

There is clearly still work to do to tackle homelessness within the borough but survey findings overall suggest that the situation is improving.

Appendix 1: Definitions used

The following definitions were used in this survey.

Homelessness: People were regarded as homeless if they 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).

Local connection: People had a local connection to a locality if

- Members of their immediate family lived there;
- They had lived there for 6 of the past 12 months or 3 of the past 5 years;
- They had formal employment in the area.

Adult: For the purposes of this survey, people were adults if they were aged 16 years or more.

Care leavers: the following definition has been used for care leavers:

“The expression ‘children in care’ refers both to children who are the subject of care orders and to children provided with accommodation by a local authority for more than 24 hours, either under section 20 or section 21 of the Children Act 1989, or who have been placed or authorised to be placed with prospective adopters by a local authority (but not a registered adoption society). Care Leavers are young people who have been in the care system and for whom the local authority has an ongoing responsibility once they have formally left care.” (p.1) [Available at: www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk]