

Homeless Watch 2009

A Snapshot Survey of Homelessness in
Derbyshire

28th September to 11th October



High Peak Report

HLG Resource Service

April 2010

Copies of this report are available on the Internet at:

www.hlg.org.uk

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Executive Summary

1 Introduction

The Homeless Watch Survey 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 High Peak

- adult presentations have fallen by almost 38% since last year – down from 61 in 2008 to 38 this year.
- presentations by homeless dependent children have increased by 8 or 47% - up from 17 last year to 25 in 2009.
- all of the adult presentations made in High Peak were made in the borough itself.

3 Characteristics of homeless people

- 53% of those presenting to the survey as homeless in High Peak were men and 47% women.
- the number of homeless people aged between 25 and 40 presenting as homeless fell by 41% compared to findings in 2008.
- but people in this age group comprise only 6% of the general population of the borough and 34% of those presenting to the survey.
- 37% of presentations by households in High Peak were families with children compared with only 22% of presentations for Derbyshire as a whole.

4 Background and support needs

- four people with a history of care presented to the survey this year compared with only one in 2008.
- recorded support needs amongst homeless people in High Peak were considerably lower than those reported for the County as a whole.

5 Current living situation

- there has been a fall of 60% in the number of rough sleepers in High Peak compared with findings last year – down from 10 rough sleepers last year to four in 2009.

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 High Peak.

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

High Peak and Derbyshire Dales make up the Peak Sub Region. Together the two local authorities have developed a new joint homelessness strategy for the sub-region. The Peak Sub Region (Derbyshire Dales & High Peak) Homelessness Strategy 2009 – 2014 aims to reduce homelessness and ensure the prevention of future homelessness. The strategy highlights six key priorities for tackling homelessness:

1. Reduce and prevent homelessness in the Peak Sub Region
2. Provide suitable temporary accommodation for homeless people
3. Access to independence, settled housing and support
4. Prevent the loss of and provide access to high quality private sector rented accommodation
5. Increase the supply of affordable housing for homeless people
6. Improving monitoring procedures to inform future services and strategies

The findings of this report can be considered alongside the priorities 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.

Five agencies in the borough of High Peak participated in the Homeless Watch Survey 2009 – down from nine 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 High Peak are based on presentations by people who were **either** recorded by the Homeless Watch Survey 2009 as receiving advice about their homelessness whilst in High Peak 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

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

report generally refers to all presentations by homeless people in or with a connection to High Peak as those 'presenting in High Peak'.

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 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 High Peak

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 High Peak

Key findings: Presentations by homeless adults have fallen by 38% compared to last year but presentations by children have increased by 47% – up from 17 in 2008 to 25 this year.

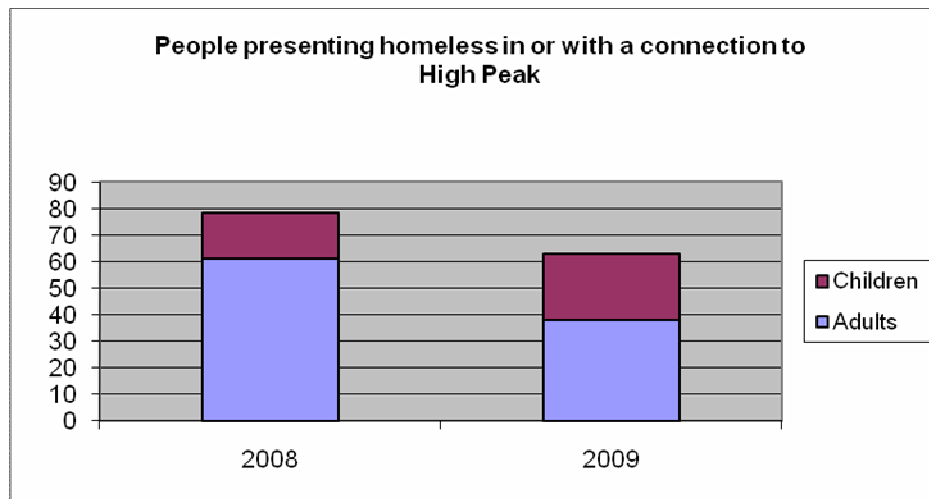
63 homeless people presented to the survey in or with a connection to High Peak – comprising 38 adults (after one repeat presentation was removed)³ and 25 homeless children. These figures compare with 61 adults and 17 children last year. Adult presentations have fallen by almost 38% since last year but presentations by homeless dependent children have increased by 8 or 47%.

Table One: Homeless People in High Peak, or with a Local Connection to the district

Category	Number
	Adjusted Figure to Take Account of Repeat Presentations
Adults	38
Children	25
Total	63

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 High Peak

Key findings: All of the 39 total adult presentations made in High Peak (including the one repeat) were made in the borough itself.

The data below shows that all of the 39 total adult presentations made in High Peak (including the one repeat) were made in the borough itself. It also shows that four rough sleepers presented in the borough. This compares with ten presentations by rough sleepers in 2008 – a fall of 60%. A more detailed analysis of rough sleeping in High peak recorded by the 2009 survey is set out at Section Five of this report below.

Table One (a): Presentations and Local Connection

	All in High Peak	High Peak – Rough Sleepers Only
Actual Presentations in High Peak	39	4
Actual Presentations Outside High Peak	0	0
Presented in or with a local connection to High Peak	39	4

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: 53% of those presenting to the survey as homeless in High Peak were men and 47% women.

Table Two below shows that 53% of those presenting to the survey as homeless in High Peak were men and 47% women. The gender breakdown for High Peak Derby presents a different picture than the County as a whole where 63% of those presenting were men. The findings for High Peak this year are similar to those reported in 2008 when 52% of those presenting to the survey as homeless were men and 44% were women

Table Two: Gender

Gender	Number	%
Male	20	53
Female	18	47
Total	38	100

3.2 Age

Key findings: People aged between 25 and 40 comprise only 6% of the general population of the borough but made up 34% of those presenting to the survey; though the number of people in this age group presenting as homeless fell by 41% compared to findings in 2008.

The data at Table Three below shows that only one presentation was made by a homeless person under 18 – in this case a young woman. This compares with three presentations by young people in this age group last year – two of whom were women. The number of presentations by 18 to 24 year olds has fallen to 13 this year compared with 16 in 2008. Whilst the numbers of young people under 25 presenting to the survey have fallen from 19 last year to 14 this year, homeless people under 25 made up almost 37% of those presenting to the survey this year compared with 31% last year.

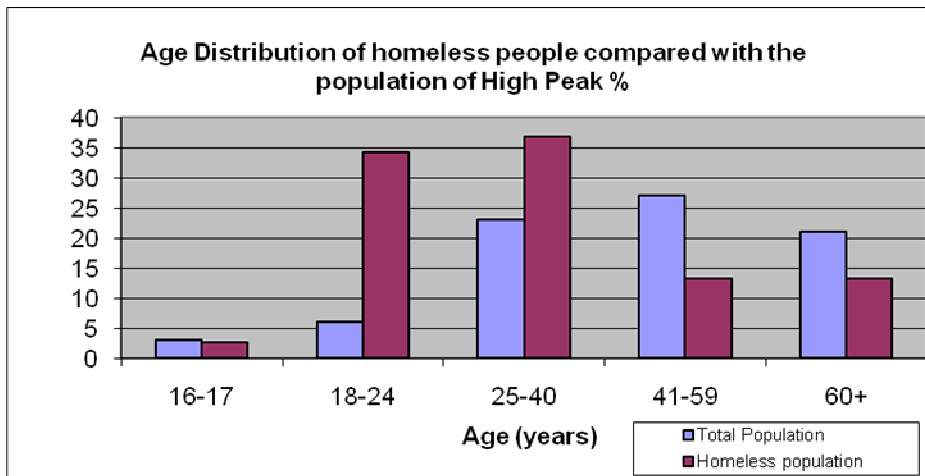
14 people age between 25 and 40 presented to the survey – comprising almost 37% of the homeless population recorded by the survey. 24 people in this age group presented last year – indicating a fall of over 41% in presentations by homeless people in this age group this year.

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 High Peak (using 2001 Census data). People aged between 25 and 40 comprise only 6% of the general population of the borough but made up 34% of those presenting to the survey.

Table Three: Age

Age Range	Male	Female	Total
16 &17 Years Old		1	1
18-24 Years Old	6	7	13
25-40 Years Old	9	5	14
41-59 Years Old	2	3	5
60 years old and over	3	2	5
No Date of Birth Supplied			
Total	20	18	38

Figure 3.2



3.3 Ethnic origin

The data at Table Four shows that only two people of an ethnic origin other than White British presented as homeless in High Peak – representing just over 5% of the survey population. 2001 census data shows that 3% of the total population of the borough are of an ethnic origin other than White British. The numbers involved here are too small to enable any useful statements concerning ethnic minority homelessness in the borough to be made.

Table Four: Ethnic Origin

Ethnic Origin	Number	%
Black/Black British: Other	1	2.5
White: British	36	95
No Data Supplied	1	2.5
Total	38	100

3.4 Household structure

Key findings: 37% of presentations by households in High Peak were families with children compared with only 22% of presentations for Derbyshire as a whole. 25 homeless children presented to the survey this year compared with 17 children in 2008.

Table Five below shows that 20 or 53% of those presenting as homeless in High Peak were single people. 14 households with children and four childless couples presented to the survey. 37% of presentations by households in High Peak were families with children compared with only 22% of presentations for

Derbyshire as a whole. 25 homeless children presented to the survey in High Peak this year compared with 17 children in 2008.

Table Five: Household Type

Household Type	Number	Percentage - High Peak	Percentage - Derbyshire
Single Person (No Kids)	20	53	65
Single Parent With Children	6	16	12
Couple With Children	8	21	10
Childless Couple	4	11	7
No Data Supplied			6
Total	38	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	6
16 & 17 Years Old	2
18 Years Old and Over	4
Total	25

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 use?

4.1 Care leavers

Key finding: Four people with a history of care presented to the survey this year compared with only one in 2008.

Tables Seven and Eight below provide data on homeless people with a history of care presenting in High Peak. Four people with a history of care presented to the survey this year compared with only one in 2008. Three of the care leavers had been in care in Derbyshire and one 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	1
22 Years Old and Over	2
No Data Supplied	1
Total	4

Table Eight: Where People Were in Care

	Number of This Age With Care History
Derbyshire	3
Derby City	
Outside Derbyshire	1
Total	4

4.2 Support Needs

Key findings: Recorded support needs amongst homeless people in High Peak were considerably lower than those reported for the County as a whole.

Levels of support needs amongst homeless people in the district were considerably lower than those reported for the County as a whole. 29 of the 39 total adult presentations – over 74% - reported having no support needs. Across Derbyshire as a whole 46% of people presenting reported no support needs.

The data below shows that three presentations were made by people who reported support needs related to offending and two by those reporting alcohol problems as a support need. Needs relating to a history of offending were the most common support need reported this year.

Only one person reported a support need related to a drug problem in High Peak this year. This compares with 8 presentations (13% of the reported support needs) by people who reported a need related to a drug problem in 2008 and with 12% recording this need across Derbyshire this year.

Domestic violence was reported as a support need by two presentations compared with five last year. As reported last year, the local Homelessness Strategy highlights domestic violence as one of the main causes of homelessness and the Action Plans identify working with partners to develop a County-wide Sanctuary scheme for victims of DV as a priority.

Table Nine: Support Needs

Support Needs	Number	Percentage of Presentations- High Peak	Percentage - Derbyshire
Ex-Offender	3	8	14
Alcohol Problems	2	5	14
Domestic Violence	2	5	7
Drug Problems	1	3	12
Learning Difficulties	1	3	4
Mental Health			10
Physically Disabled			2
Other			11
No Data Supplied			1
Total	9	N/A	N/A

Please note that people could record more than one support need. 29 presentations were made by homeless people in High Peak who reported no support needs and one person did not state if they had support needs or not.

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

The data at Table Ten below shows that nine presentations were made by people who spent the night prior to presenting to the survey at their own home – representing 23% of total presentations; which compares with 18% of people presenting in this situation across the County. Nine presentations were made by people who had spent the previous night at a friend's home and eight by people who had stayed with their parents the previous night.

Four presentations were made by people who had spent the previous night sleeping rough. This compares with ten rough sleepers presenting last year – when High Peak recorded the third highest number of rough sleepers of any area in Derbyshire.

Table Eleven provides a comparison between where people presenting to the survey spent the night prior to completing a survey form with where they expected to be sleeping the coming night. It shows very little change in the circumstances of homeless people in High Peak participating in the Homeless

Watch Survey 2009 between the night after and night before presenting to a participating agency.

Table Ten: Previous Night's Accommodation

Where Person Spent the Previous Night	Number	Percentage - High Peak	Percentage - Derbyshire
Own Home	9	23	18
Friend's Home	9	23	25
Parents' Home	8	21	14
Slept Rough	4	10	16
Other Relative's Home	4	10	7
B&B Lodgings	1	3	2
Grandparents' Home	1	3	1
Partner's Home			2
Hostel			1
Hospital			1
Custody			1
Emergency Bed			1
Other	1	3	3
No Data Supplied	2	5	10
Total	39	100	100

Please note that 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 39 adult presentations including repeats.

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	Totals	
Where Person Slept The Night Prior To Seeing Agency For Advice	B&B Lodgings	1															1	
	Custody																	
	Emergency Bed																	
	Friend's Home				7										1	1	9	
	Grandparent's					1											1	
	Hospital																	
	Hostel																	
	Other Relative's								4									4
	Own Home								1	7						1		9
	Parent's Home										8							8
	Partner's Home																	
	Sleeping Rough								1				3					4
	Childrens Home or Foster Care																	
	Other										1							1
	No Data Supplied									2								2
Totals	1			7	1			6	9	9		3		1	2		39	

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

Key findings: There has been a fall of 60% in the number of rough sleepers in High Peak compared with findings last year.

As indicated above, survey findings show that four people presented as rough sleepers in High Peak. This compares with ten rough sleepers presenting last year. There has been a fall of 60% in the number of rough sleepers in High Peak compared with findings last year – though High Peak again recorded the third highest number of rough sleepers of the nine districts and boroughs across the County. The data at Table Twelve below shows that all of the rough sleepers in High Peak slept in buildings considered unfit for habitation. Table Thirteen indicates that one rough sleeper reported sleeping out for more than 12 months.

Table Twelve: Type of Rough Sleeping

Slept Rough Type	Number	Percentage - High Peak	Percentage - Derbyshire
Building/Structure Not For Habitation	4	100	26
Sleeping In Open Air			45
Squat			4
Don't Know			4
No Data Supplied			21
Grand Total	4	100	100

Table Thirteen: Time Spent Rough Sleeping

Time Rough Sleeping	Number in This Category	Percentage - High Peak	Percentage - Derbyshire
1 night			6
More than a night up to 1 week	1	25	19
More than 1 week and up to 1 month			4
More than 1 mth and up to 3 mths			32
More than 3 mths and up to 6 mths			4
More Than 6 mths and up to 12 mths			9
More than 12 mths	1	25	15
Don't Know	1	25	4
No Data Supplied	1	25	6
Total	4	100	100

6 Conclusions

This report sets out some of the key findings for High Peak 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 highlights some very positive findings this year compared with 2008 – for example, adult presentations have fallen by almost 38% since last year; levels of recorded support needs are lower than last year and considerably lower than those reported for the county as a whole and there has been a fall of 60% in the number of rough sleepers in High Peak.

However, some problems clearly remain and have grown since last year – for example, presentations by homeless dependent children have increased by 8 or 47% - up from 17 last year to 25 in 2009; 37% of presentations by households in High Peak were families with children compared with only 22% of presentations for Derbyshire as a whole and four people with a history of care presented to the survey this year compared with only one in 2008

It is hoped that this report will be used by commissioners and service providers to help understand changing patterns of homelessness in High Peak and make informed and effective responses to the issues highlighted here.

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]