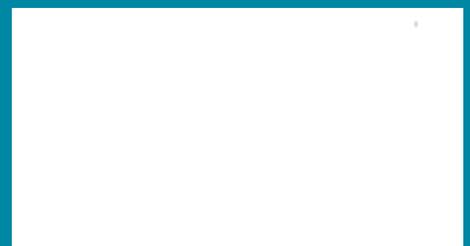


# Rough Sleeping in Wales

The National Assembly for Wales





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## Foreword

There is no more extreme manifestation of social exclusion than having no roof over your head when night falls. None of the basic standards of comfort and personal security that most of us take for granted every day of our lives are available to those who have to sleep rough. Furthermore, sleeping rough brings exposure to health risks unknown to the rest of the population.

In our advanced and relatively wealthy society no-one should have to live like this. For this reason the National Assembly for Wales is committed to eliminating the need for anyone in Wales to sleep rough. This report will help us to respond to the considerable challenge that rough sleeping represents. It was commissioned by the Welsh Office late in 1998 to inform the National Assembly for Wales and local authorities on the incidence and causes of rough sleeping in Wales and to advise on effective strategies for assisting rough sleepers. The author, Paul Bevan, came on secondment from a voluntary organisation dedicated to helping homeless people, Newport Action for the Single Homeless. Over the course of a year he visited all Welsh local authorities and around fifty organisations to get a detailed picture of the scale and nature of rough sleeping in Wales and what is being done to address the problem. We are extremely grateful to him for the time and energy that he devoted to his task. This is the report of what he found. It will be of interest to all concerned with this most serious of social problems.



**PETER LAW A.M.**

Assembly Secretary for Environment and  
Local Government



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I would like to thank all those people who have very kindly allowed me to spend time with them to discuss rough sleeping and single homelessness in their areas of work. I have had the privilege of seeing the work of many voluntary organisations at first hand through, for example, joining soup runs and outreach walks, and visiting drop-in day centres, night shelters, direct access schemes and other supported housing schemes. Similarly, I am very grateful to the people I have visited in offices of all Welsh local authorities who have discussed the issues with me and provided information related to this report.

Thanks also are due to Richard Frame and the management committee of Newport Action for the Single Homeless, and to the National

Assembly for Wales for giving me the opportunity to undertake this work. Particular thanks are due to Mike Harmer who gave patient and invaluable advice on editing the report, and to Yvonne Washer for proof reading it.

Also thanks, as always, to Eileen and the rest of my family for their continual support and interest in the work.

**Paul Bevan**

(Secondee to the National Assembly for Wales  
from Newport Action for the Single Homeless)

October 1999

## Executive Summary

This report was written by a secondee from the voluntary single homeless sector to the Welsh Office. The purpose of the secondment was to:

"inform the Welsh Office/National Assembly for Wales and local authorities on the incidence of rough sleeping in Wales and its causes; and to advise on effective strategies for assisting rough sleepers and securing the objective of eliminating the need for anyone in Wales to sleep rough."

The report is based on discussions about rough sleeping with the housing sections of all local authorities and over fifty other organisations working to meet the needs of single homeless people in Wales.

### The incidence of rough sleeping

Information on rough sleeping is available in some areas (mainly the larger urban centres), but unavailable in many others. Surveys have been undertaken in some areas but different survey methods, the timing of surveys, their incomplete coverage and inherent difficulties in collecting accurate figures makes it difficult to establish how many people sleep rough on any one night in Wales, or over the course of a year.

### The causes of rough sleeping

Each person sleeping rough has their own reasons for doing so. Amongst the most common contributory factors are:

- Relationship breakdowns;
- Poverty;
- Unemployment;
- Mental health problems;
- Drug or alcohol misuse;
- An inability to manage without support in independent housing;

- Eviction;
- Leaving local authority care, prison or psychiatric hospital without adequate preparation and support;
- Domestic violence;
- Sexual or physical abuse;
- The lack of suitable, affordable accommodation (including the lack of emergency accommodation);
- Young people running away from home or care;
- Some people being banned, or excluded, from using some hostels.

For many people who sleep rough this can be part of a wider experience of homelessness, which can include staying in various forms of insecure temporary accommodation (such as on friends' or relatives' floors, Bed and Breakfasts, hostels and insecure poor standard housing). Some people sleep rough for a night or a few nights and never again; some sleep rough on a number of occasions when they temporarily exhaust their access to various types of insecure housing. There are other people who have slept rough for longer periods of time, and for whom sleeping rough has evolved into their normal way of life.

### Existing services

The accommodation and support services with most intensive contact with people sleeping rough are in Cardiff, Swansea, Newport, Wrexham and Bangor. The variety of services differs in each area with Cardiff and Swansea having the widest range of provision. There is some provision in other towns such as a direct access scheme in Carmarthen, and soup runs in Caernarfon, Colwyn Bay, Llandudno and Rhyl. Night shelters were open in Abergavenny,

Bangor, Cardiff and Rhyl during the winter of 1998/99. Over the winter in Pembrokeshire the local authority will accommodate people sleeping rough in its hostels for "statutorily homeless people." There is a noticeable lack of provision for rough sleepers in, for example, Blaenau Gwent, Ceredigion, Flintshire, Powys and Torfaen.

### Single homelessness strategies

Four local authorities have a written single homelessness strategy. These are Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Cardiff and Swansea. However, many areas have forums or groups which would be suitable arenas in which to develop single homelessness and rough sleeping strategies.

### Gaps in provision

Despite the absence of a strategy in most local authorities, homelessness organisations and local authorities generally find it easy to say which additional services are needed in their areas. Some would be new to the area, and others would add to existing provision of the same type. The main needs identified are:

#### Accommodation:

Emergency accommodation (of various types) in all authorities, and more affordable, good quality accommodation for single people in eighteen.

#### Support:

Resettlement services to help homeless people to move into more appropriate accommodation in ten local authority areas, and support services to help people to maintain their accommodation in seventeen areas. Housing advice services were identified as needed by respondents in twelve authorities, day centres or drop-in centres for homeless people in seven, new bond schemes to help people access private rented accommodation in five, and expansion of existing schemes in three authorities. In five local authorities a need for outreach services was identified, and in four authorities supported accommodation for people displaying behavioural problems or a chaotic

lifestyle. More services (including supported accommodation) were identified for people experiencing a drugs related problem in ten authorities and for people experiencing an alcohol related problem in eight.

#### Various:

More research into rough sleeping and single homelessness was felt to be needed by respondents in eight authorities, and homelessness prevention work in schools in four. Various other services were identified as being needed in only one or two local authority areas, such as supported lodgings, mediation services, befriending services, more long-term shared housing, lockers in which people sleeping rough can store belongings, and the provision of clinics for homeless people.

### Other issues

As well as deficiencies in the level of services available to single homeless people the research also highlighted the particular difficulties that many face in accessing those services that do exist. The main problems uncovered were:

#### Health and support:

Difficulties in registering with GPs and in accessing health care were identified by respondents in twelve authorities, and four authorities pointed to difficulties in accessing a dentist who will undertake NHS work. Obtaining help for people who are experiencing problems in relation to two or more areas of mental health, drug and alcohol misuse was evident in eleven local authority areas, and obtaining help for people with a personality disorder or behavioural problem was felt to be particularly difficult in seven. Various concerns were expressed relating to the low priority given by social services departments to single homeless people in eight authorities, and the need for more planning, preparation and support for young people who are leaving care was identified by respondents in three authorities. Access to drug rehabilitation services can be very slow in four local authority



areas, and a need was highlighted for better preparation for people being released from prison in four authorities. Similarly, one area maintained that some people were being discharged from psychiatric hospitals without adequate support arrangements being in place.

#### Accommodation and benefits:

Access to social housing was felt to be difficult for single homeless people in five authorities, and various difficulties related to housing and DSS benefits for single homeless people were identified by respondents in ten authorities. Difficulties for people with dogs accessing emergency accommodation was of concern in two authorities, and in one authority issues around accommodating Schedule One offenders in hostels was highlighted.

#### Various:

Other more general issues were also identified. Respondents in six authorities without a specific single homelessness strategy felt it important that they should develop one. Respondents in three authorities believed that legislative changes are needed to widen the categories of homeless people regarded as 'priority cases', and to introduce support assessments for homeless people approaching local authority housing departments.

## Conclusions

### The nature of rough sleeping

There are difficulties in addressing rough sleeping in isolation from single homelessness generally as, for example, many people who sleep rough do so for only short periods during a much longer period of homelessness.

In some areas it is possible to identify people who have been sleeping rough continually, or on-and-off, for long periods. This applies to some smaller towns as well as the larger urban areas. Appropriate contact and offers of assistance could enable them to stop sleeping rough. However, it should be acknowledged that some people may

not be ready to move quickly out of a situation of long-term rough sleeping, and that prolonged contact and trust may need to be established before they feel ready to do so. Indeed, the development of trust between agencies and people sleeping rough is crucial in the provision of effective support and services.

Contact and mutual support between people sleeping rough in the larger towns is often more developed than in smaller towns where rough sleeping can be more of a solitary way of life.

### The scale of rough sleeping

The determination of exact numbers of people sleeping rough is very difficult, and even outreach work and surveys can, at best, only provide an estimate. The evidence indicates a higher number of people sleeping rough in the larger Welsh cities and towns than in smaller towns. However, rough sleeping does occur in some rural areas and small towns.

### Strategies to assist people sleeping rough

Rough sleeping and single homelessness often involves factors much wider than housing issues alone. The provision of forms of support tailored to individual need is crucial. Additional services are needed to more effectively respond to single homelessness and rough sleeping in Wales. These services include outreach work, emergency 24-hour accessible accommodation, resettlement and support services, day centres, bond schemes, housing advice services, and more good quality, secure, affordable single person accommodation in the right areas.

Assistance to people sleeping rough can include immediate emergency services such as outreach work and emergency accommodation, but this needs to be complemented by sufficient move-on accommodation with support if necessary. In the longer term, work to address the underlying causes of homelessness and rough sleeping is also needed to help counteract the problems.

The development of well informed multi-agency, multi-disciplinary strategies to address single



homelessness can play a very important role in ensuring the most effective use of resources and provision of appropriate services.

## Recommendations

### To the National Assembly for Wales

1. A national homelessness strategy for all homeless people should be written and developed by a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency group. This could be led by the National Consultative Forum on Housing in Wales and should cover issues wider than merely accommodation. This should link in with other strategies, both at a national and local level.
2. The time limited nature of the funding of voluntary organisations under Section 180 of the Housing Act 1996 should be reviewed, as it places services in jeopardy of closing at the end of the funding period.
3. The Assembly should invite a larger number of voluntary organisations working to address homelessness to apply for funding under Section 180 of the Housing Act 1996.
4. Consideration should be given to the funding implications for schemes addressing single homelessness arising out of the "Supporting People" proposals.
5. A grant, equivalent to Supported Housing Revenue Grant, should be made available to support those tenants of local authorities and private landlords needing help to sustain their accommodation.
6. Through consultation with appropriate organisations a consistent format and method of keeping records of rough sleeping and single homelessness should be established.
7. Through the powers available to it under Section 189 of the Housing Act 1996 the National Assembly for Wales should widen the categories of homeless people who are

regarded as being in priority need of accommodation to include people who are sleeping rough.

### To the National Assembly for Wales and Central Government

8. Legislative changes should be made to entitlement to housing benefit payments to 16 – 25 year olds so that payments are raised to the level available to over 25 year olds.
9. Legislative changes should be considered requiring local authorities to ensure that support assessments of all homeless applicants are undertaken, and that appropriate support is provided for people in applicable cases.

### To local authorities, housing associations and other voluntary organisations

10. All local authorities should develop a written homelessness strategy in collaboration with appropriate agencies, and there should be a 'champion' in each authority to ensure its development, implementation and monitoring. Local authority strategies should complement a national homelessness strategy.
11. Regular reviews of provision for single homeless people should be undertaken to ensure that the most appropriate services are being provided.
12. More outreach work should be undertaken in some areas.
13. More emergency 24-hour accessible accommodation of various types for men and women who are 'non statutorily homeless' should be provided throughout Wales.
14. Appropriate support services should be provided in conjunction with emergency accommodation to help people to prepare for, and settle into, suitable longer term accommodation.
15. Day centres should be provided in some areas.



16. Local authorities should ensure that an assessment of the support needs of all people whom they find to be homeless is undertaken, and that appropriate arrangements for support services are made.
  17. More good quality, secure, affordable single person accommodation should be provided in most parts of Wales in the areas in which people want to live.
  18. More housing advice services should be provided in some areas.
  19. Some new bond schemes should be developed, and some existing schemes should be expanded, in order to help people to access private rented accommodation.
  20. Bond schemes should consider providing, or having arrangements with other agencies to provide, support to some of their clients in moving into and sustaining accommodation.
  21. More services should be provided for people who are experiencing drug and/or alcohol related difficulties.
  22. Improved preparation, and follow up support work, should be undertaken with people moving out of local authority care.
  23. Improved help should be provided for people who have two or more difficulties of a mental health problem, drug and alcohol misuse.
  24. More assistance should be provided for people who display behavioural problems or personality disorders.
  25. Access to drug rehabilitation services should be speeded up.
  26. Social services should give a higher priority than at present to helping single homeless people.
  27. All local authorities and housing associations should ensure that they are not imposing unjustified restrictions on access to their housing registers or waiting lists for people without an address.
  28. More mediation services should be provided to try to reduce the number of relationship breakdowns which are a significant cause of homelessness.
  29. More information about housing and homelessness should be provided to schoolchildren.
  30. Providers of hostel and night shelter accommodation should regularly review that they are only banning people from their schemes for clearly justifiable reasons and lengths of time.
  31. A member representative body should be established for voluntary organisations working with homeless people in Wales.
- [To the National Health Service](#)
32. The issue of difficulty in accessing GPs for some single homeless people and rough sleepers in Wales should be investigated further.
  33. Dental health care should be more accessible to homeless people.
  34. Consideration should be given to establishing static or mobile clinics for single homeless people in Cardiff and Swansea.
  35. Improved preparation and follow up support arrangements should be made for homeless people being discharged from hospital.
- [To the Department of Social Security](#)
36. There should be more consistency in the types of payments, and the amounts of money given, to homeless people through the DSS Social Fund to furnish accommodation when moving from supported housing schemes.
- [To the Home Office](#)
37. Improved preparation regarding accommodation and follow up support should be undertaken with people being released from prison.





# 1. Introduction

**1.1** In October 1998 the author was seconded to the Housing Division of the Welsh Office from Newport Action for the Single Homeless, which is a voluntary organisation providing accommodation and support services for single homeless people in Newport. The secondee was to:

"inform the Welsh Office/National Assembly for Wales and local authorities on the incidence of rough sleeping in Wales and its causes; and to advise on effective strategies for assisting rough sleepers and securing the objective of eliminating the need for anyone in Wales to sleep rough."

**1.2** This report was written following visits to all Welsh local authorities and many voluntary organisations working to help single homeless people and people sleeping rough (as recorded in Annex B). The voluntary organisations were those providing support services or accommodation. These included organisations providing one or more of the following services: outreach work, a soup run or breakfast run, night shelters, direct access hostels, day centre or drop-in facilities, resettlement and support services, housing advice services, bond schemes, and supported accommodation. In each area the aim was to visit one or more of the main organisations. In local authority areas such as Cardiff and Swansea many organisations were identified and visited. In others, such as Torfaen, it was difficult to identify any organisation which had knowledge of rough sleeping in the area. The visits took place between November 1998 and July 1999, and involved discussions based on a pre-defined list of questions related to rough sleeping (as in Annexes C and D). The report is based on the answers given to these questions.

**1.3** Some of the issues to do with rough sleeping also apply to the wider and related context of single homelessness generally. Consequently, although the focus of this report is rough sleeping, it also covers issues of the wider perspective of single homelessness.

**1.4** The report was not intended to act as a detailed assessment of the situation in each local authority area. However, it provides a general guide to the information available on rough sleeping in Wales through surveys and statistics. It also gives a general guide to the views of local authorities and many voluntary organisations on gaps in current provision.



## 2. Definition of rough sleeping

**2.1** It has been difficult to keep to an exact definition of rough sleeping within this report. Parts of the report draw together research which has already been undertaken in Wales into rough sleeping. The report includes statistics provided by organisations which are often linked to funding requirements and which do not necessarily neatly define rough sleeping. Similarly, parts of the report relate to conversations with representatives of organisations who may define rough sleeping in slightly different ways.

**2.2** As a general guide, however, the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions definition of people sleeping rough has been used:

"People sleeping, or bedded down, in the open air (such as on the streets, or in doorways, parks or bus shelters) ; people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations or 'bashes')."

**2.3** This definition is also used in the Framework for a National Housing Strategy for Wales. It does not include squatters, travellers or people who are living in hostels, night shelters or other similar temporary accommodation, or people who are staying temporarily with friends or relatives.

**2.4** In parts of the report the term 'street homeless' has been used. The term is increasingly used, for example, by outreach teams in urban areas who meet people 'on the street.' Street homeless is often used as an interchangeable term for people who are sleeping rough. However, it may also refer to people who are contacted on the street at times of the day when it cannot be clearly evidenced whether they are

sleeping rough. In the context of outreach work the more important issue is that people feel it necessary to have contact with outreach services on the street which may enable them to access appropriate help.



### 3. The incidence of rough sleeping

**3.1** It is difficult to establish the number of people sleeping rough in an area. Some people sleep rough for only one or a few nights and never have to again. Others live in various types of accommodation – moving from one friend's or relative's floor to another, to a Bed and Breakfast, to a hostel, back to a friend's floor – interspersed with occasional periods of sleeping rough. There are others who have slept rough for longer periods who find it increasingly difficult to access services, and for whom a lifestyle of sleeping rough has become normal. Some people who sleep rough may not wish to be contacted and may not contact housing or support organisations. Consequently, with such a changing population, and with the difficulty in identifying people sleeping rough through traditional survey methods, it is likely that attempts to 'count' people who are sleeping rough at any one moment will not provide an accurate picture. Attempts to 'count' people will usually, therefore, underestimate the numbers of people sleeping rough.

**3.2** However, it is nonetheless important to try to establish the number of people sleeping rough in order to judge the scale of the situation. This report draws on statistical records from some organisations and surveys undertaken into the number of people sleeping rough in Wales since 1996.

**3.3** In some areas (e.g. Caerphilly, Cardiff, Gwynedd, Newport, Pembrokeshire, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Swansea) surveys have been undertaken on more than one occasion between 1996 and 1999. In some areas a one-off survey has been undertaken (e.g. Isle of Anglesey and Monmouthshire). Some surveys have been local authority-wide, whereas some have been in one main city or town.

**3.4** Some surveys have involved head counts over various periods (e.g. on two or three nights, a continuous 24 hour period, once a month or once or twice a week for ten weeks). Some surveys have recorded approaches made by people sleeping rough to agencies over a few months or a year.

**3.5** The definitions used for people sleeping rough have not always been recorded, or there are slight differences from one survey to another.

**3.6** Some surveys provide predominantly statistical information, and others have included more qualitative information on, for example, the reasons for homelessness and the needs of people sleeping rough.

**3.7** The surveys and statistics demonstrate that more people sleep rough during the course of a year than do so on any one night.

**3.8** The diversity of types of surveys and information available on rough sleeping in Wales is highlighted by the following examples:

**1996:** A survey in 15 locations in Wales over two or three nights in January and February 1996 found 86 people sleeping rough (The Special Needs Housing Advisory Service and Shelter Cymru, 1996);

- The Cyrenians Cymru mobile outreach scheme made contact with 116 people who were street homeless for one or more nights in Swansea city centre between 12th February and 21st April 1996.

**1997:** A three night survey in November 1997 found 8 people sleeping rough in Caerphilly borough (Caerphilly County Borough Council and Shelter Cymru, 1997);



- A 24 hour survey on September 24th 1997 estimated that 12 people were sleeping rough in Cardiff city centre (Cardiff County Council - City Centre Team, 1997);
- Through their daily breakfast run between December 1997 and March 1998 the Wallich Clifford Community met 60 people who were sleeping rough in, or around, Cardiff city centre (Wallich Clifford Community, 1998);
- Night time counts once a week over ten weeks found 38 people sleeping rough in Gwynedd (Gwynedd Council and Shelter Cymru, 1997);
- A street outreach study found that during the period July 1996 to May 1997 up to 30 people at any one time were living on the streets of central Swansea (Cymdeithas Caer Las, 1997).

**1998:** A 12 month survey between July 1997 and June 1998 found that 75 people approaching 39 agencies in Pembrokeshire said they were sleeping rough (Pembrokeshire Action for Single Homeless, 1998);

- A three night survey in August 1998 found 11 people sleeping rough in Caerphilly borough and 13 people in Newport borough (Newport Action for the Single Homeless, 1998);
- A one night survey on 17th July 1998 found 5 people sleeping rough in the borough of Rhondda Cynon Taff (Rhondda Cynon Taff Single Person Housing Forum, 1998);
- Night time head counts once or twice a week over ten weeks found 34 people sleeping rough in Gwynedd (23 in Bangor and 11 in Caernarfon). In addition 12 people were accommodated via a pilot drop-in scheme that was running

concurrently with the head count (Gwynedd Council and Cywaith Joseff, 1998);

- The Rhyl night shelter in Denbighshire accommodated 80 people from 1st December 1997 to 22nd March 1998, 70 of whom had slept rough at some stage in their lives, and 58 had slept rough at some stage during the previous year (NACRO Services North Wales, 1998).

**1999:** The St. Mary's night shelter in Bangor (Gwynedd) accommodated 50 different people between 21st December 1998 and 4th April 1999, of whom 29 had been previously sleeping rough and a further 5 had been in a squat (North Wales Housing Association, 1999);

- On 13 once a month night time 'walkabouts' in Wrexham between 10th April 1998 and 9th April 1999 by Wrexham Action Trust Christians for Homeless there were 18 sightings of people sleeping rough;
- A three night snapshot survey in January and February 1999 found 5 people sleeping rough in Newport, nobody in Caerphilly (although reliable information suggested that 7 people were sleeping rough) and nobody in Monmouthshire (although reliable information suggested that 3 people were sleeping rough). Two people who stayed at Abergavenny winter night shelter for most of the time between 25th December 1998 and 31st March 1999 were long-term rough sleepers in the area (Newport Action for the Single Homeless, 1999);
- The Cyrenians Cymru outreach service contacted 169 people who were street homeless for one or more nights in Swansea city centre between 3rd December 1998 and 5th May 1999 (Cyrenians Cymru, 1999);



- Of the 253 people who stayed at the Cymdeithas Caer Las Lodge House overnight centre in Swansea between August 1998 and March 1999, 25 of those who provided details said that they had been sleeping rough the night before admission;
- Through their daily breakfast run between 1st December 1998 and 31st March 1999 the Wallich Clifford Community met 75 people who were street homeless (i.e. people who were, or who said they were, sleeping rough) in, or around, Cardiff city centre (Wallich Clifford Community, 1999);
- Between March 1st 1999 and July 29th 1999 Andy Webb's soup run in Cardiff on Thursday nights found a core group of approximately 6 people sleeping rough. Between June 3rd 1999 and July 29th 1999 the soup run found 8 to 10 people each Thursday night (except on one night when 14 people were found);
- Eighteen members or supporters of Rough Sleepers Cymru, an alliance of Welsh homelessness organisations, estimated that for the areas in which they work, over 150 people were sleeping rough and over 1600 people were in temporary accommodation in Wales on May 6th 1999 (Shelter Cymru, 28 June 1999).

**3.9** As these examples suggest the incidence of rough sleeping in Wales is difficult to monitor at present due to different methods of collecting information, and a shortage of organisations equipped or commissioned to collect detailed information in some areas. The lack of a consistent format for collecting information makes comparisons difficult. However, outreach work, in particular, can play a very useful role in providing up to date, reliable information. The main areas in which outreach work is currently being undertaken are Cardiff, Swansea, Bangor and Caernarfon.

## 4. The causes of rough sleeping

**4.1** Every person who sleeps rough has their individual reason, or reasons, for being in that situation. However, the following main underlying causes of homelessness can be identified, one or a combination of which may directly result in a person sleeping rough.

- Relationship breakdown. This can occur, for example, when partners separate and one partner moves out of the home; where a young person is told to leave home following arguments or unacceptable behaviour; where a young person cannot stand living at home any longer and needs to have his or her own 'space'; following a remarriage or where a new partner moves into the home, which leads to difficulties between the 'step parent' and a young person. This can result in the young person being forced to leave, or having to move out because of being unable to cope with the situation any longer;
- A lack of a stable or structured enough background (e.g. moving from one situation of local authority care to another);
- Poverty. If people cannot afford to support all members of their immediate family one or more members can be forced to leave home;
- Long-term unemployment;
- Mental health problems, which may lead to an inability to manage;
- Eviction (sometimes due to an inability to manage the responsibilities of being a tenant);
- Inability, particularly amongst some young people, to manage alone in accommodation e.g. with domestic skills, dealing with bills, benefits, and dealings with landlords;
- Leaving local authority care without adequate preparation or support;
- Relationships in supported lodgings for young people breaking down with nowhere else for the person to move to afterwards;
- Leaving prison without having accommodation or adequate skills to live independently;
- Leaving hospital (particularly psychiatric hospital) without proper arrangements in place for appropriate accommodation and support;
- Leaving the armed forces without the ability to cope well in the less institutionalised environment of civilian life. Also, there can be a culture in the armed forces of heavy drinking at the weekend. In civilian life this can lead to people sleeping rough temporarily;
- Domestic violence (primarily against women although also evident against men);
- Threat of violence which leads to a person moving out of their property to escape from this situation;
- Sexual or physical abuse causing a person to move out of home or care;
- Harassment;
- Mortgage repossessions;
- Loneliness;
- Bereavement of a partner which leads to a person 'giving up' hope and the will to continue in their situation;
- Drug or alcohol use can cause difficulties between parents and young people which may result in the young person moving out of home; some people's drug or alcohol use is such that they cannot manage to sustain a tenancy; some people are evicted for rent arrears which are due to the person feeding a drug habit rather than paying rent;
- Some people display 'chaotic lifestyles' where they move from one form of accommodation

to another, may be involved in crime, in use of illegal substances etc.;

- In some seaside towns some landlords charge low rents in the winter and higher rents in the summer, which means some tenants move out due to being unable to afford these higher summer rents;
- Loss of tied accommodation, through loss of work in rural areas;
- Inability to find suitable, affordable accommodation;
- Unfit accommodation;
- Lack of sufficient good quality affordable accommodation in appropriate areas.

**4.2** One or a combination of these factors may contribute to a person becoming homeless, and may result directly in a person sleeping rough. However, there are a number of additional factors which can sometimes lead to a person sleeping rough. These can be particularly prevalent in the larger urban locations even if some outreach services, emergency direct access accommodation and resettlement and support services exist.

- People being banned from hostels or night shelters (e.g. because of violence, breaking rules regarding drugs, alcohol etc);
- Some people may forget that they have somewhere to live, or how to get to their accommodation. This may particularly be the case with people who have an alcohol problem and who have previously slept rough for many years;
- Some young people run away from home or from care and have nowhere to go. If they are under 16 years old they may be afraid to contact any official or voluntary organisation for fear of having to return home or to care and so they sleep rough and remain secretive. They may also not know where to go for help and may not want, or be able, to stay with friends or family;

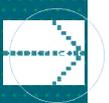
- Some people do not initially know where to find emergency accommodation in the larger cities and towns;
- Rules in hostels exclude some people (e.g. some hostels will not accommodate couples, and few will allow dogs to stay which can mean that their owners will not move into the hostel);
- Some people do not want to use the hostels which exist due to the regimes or rules;
- Some people who have committed serious crimes and who are on the run from the police do not want to be found and so may move to another area and sleep rough;
- A small number of people make a conscious decision to choose a particular lifestyle which may include periods of sleeping rough (e.g. 'eco warriors');
- Some people opt out of the system because, for example, they know that if they have too much money they will drink too much and possibly die as a result of their alcohol problem. Some people in this situation do not claim state benefits and rely on begging and/or selling small numbers of "The Big Issue" to survive;
- A small number of asylum seekers have been found sleeping rough (in Cardiff, for example) because they did not know where to go for help and as they could not speak English this made their circumstances more difficult;
- Some people have an unrealistic impression of what it is like to live in hostels, and consequently do not ask to be admitted;
- Some people will not use hostels due to their pride.

**4.3** A common experience amongst some people who sleep rough is that they move from one type of insecure accommodation to another, and eventually exhaust their access to accommodation. For example, they may move



from one friend's floor to another, into a Bed and Breakfast, back to a friend's floor, into a temporary bedsit, but find that occasionally they have nowhere to stay and have no option but to sleep rough. Some people sleep rough for only one night and never again, whereas others sleep

rough on a number of separate occasions. There are others who have slept rough for longer periods of time, and it is often these people, in particular, who find it increasingly difficult to access services and to re-establish themselves in accommodation and more mainstream society.



## 5. Examples of existing services

**5.1** The report provides examples of existing services in each local authority area to assist single homeless people in general. Many of these services will have limited direct contact with people sleeping rough. They are recorded as examples of services which play a part in helping single homeless people and contribute to the reduction in the likelihood of people sleeping rough.

**5.2** The services which are traditionally likely to have the most direct contact with people sleeping rough have, however, been identified in each area. These services are primarily soup/breakfast runs, outreach services to rough sleepers, night shelters, direct access hostels and day centres. The following list provides information on those local authority areas in which such services have been found to exist.

### **5.3 Soup/breakfast runs**

Cardiff, Conwy (Colwyn Bay, Llandudno), Denbighshire (Rhyl), Gwynedd (Caernarfon and Bangor), Newport, Swansea.

### **Outreach services to people sleeping rough**

Cardiff, Gwynedd (Caernarfon, Bangor), Swansea.

### **Night shelters (all year)**

Cardiff, Gwynedd (Bangor), Swansea, Wrexham.

### **Night shelters (winter 1998/99)\***

Cardiff, Denbighshire (Rhyl), Gwynedd (Bangor), Monmouthshire (Abergavenny).

### **Direct access hostels (24 hour access for, at least, 18-65 year old men and women)**

Cardiff, Carmarthen, Newport, Swansea.

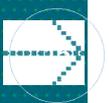
### **Day centres and drop-in centres for homeless people**

Cardiff, Newport (part time drop-in centre for food/clothes) and Swansea (evening café support service and part time day time 'drop-in').

- \* In Pembrokeshire people sleeping rough can be referred to the local authority hostels in Tenby and Pembroke Dock during the winter.

## 6. Single homelessness strategies

**6.1** Out of the 22 local authorities 4 have a written single homeless strategy. Merthyr Tydfil has produced a "Single Persons Homeless Strategy 1998/2000", and Rhondda Cynon Taff has a "Single Person Housing Strategy 1999-2002". Cardiff's strategy is not currently a working document and is undergoing review. Swansea's single homeless strategy is in the process of review with plans for it to be completed by the autumn of 1999. There is a Swansea Youth Homelessness Strategy which has been in operation and regularly reviewed since 1994. In some authorities there are housing or homelessness forums (or similar groups) which would appear to be suitable arenas in which to develop a single homelessness strategy. These authorities are Bridgend, Caerphilly, Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey, Newport, Pembrokeshire and Vale of Glamorgan.



## 7. Gaps in provision for people sleeping rough and single homeless people

**7.1** Despite the small number of written strategies all areas have been able to identify gaps in provision for rough sleepers and single homeless people in general. In some cases these have been identified through the views of voluntary organisations and/or local authorities, and in some areas these have been reinforced by surveys or reports. The list below outlines the unmet needs.

### Emergency accommodation

**7.2** All local authority areas identified a need for emergency accommodation for homeless people who do not fall into a priority group eligible for emergency accommodation under the Housing Act 1996.

**7.3** The type of emergency accommodation identified included more direct access beds or night shelter beds than are currently provided (in Cardiff, Carmarthenshire [specifically new provision in Llanelli], Newport and Swansea), direct access schemes (in Denbighshire, Gwynedd, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath Port Talbot and Wrexham), and small scale direct access or emergency provision (e.g. 1-6 emergency beds) in one or more towns in some authorities (Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Ceredigion [particularly for young people], Conwy, Flintshire, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Torfaen and Vale of Glamorgan).

**7.4** Some areas identified the need for specific emergency accommodation for young people (Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey, Swansea and Vale of Glamorgan), for over 25 year olds (Isle of Anglesey), or for temporary night shelter provision which would also help to more clearly identify the level of need in the area (Monmouthshire and Rhondda Cynon Taff).

**7.5** In Blaenau Gwent, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey and Vale of Glamorgan the possibility was indicated of accommodating young people in volunteers' homes in emergency, short-term situations along the lines of the Barnardo's Nightstop model.

**7.6** In all areas a need was identified for accommodation for men or women which can be accessed immediately.

**7.7** The need for emergency accommodation was not limited to the main urban centres, but was also identified in the more rural authorities. A view which was reiterated was that people often do not want to move from their home town, even if sometimes it only means moving a mile or so away. This was particularly the case in many of the South Wales valley communities, but also in other authorities with smaller towns and rural areas, such as Flintshire, Pembrokeshire and Vale of Glamorgan.

### More affordable, good quality, accommodation for single people in appropriate areas

**7.8** The provision of emergency accommodation in any area needs to be complemented by sufficient longer term accommodation into which people can move. Otherwise the emergency accommodation can quickly become full, and new people needing to move in are unable to do so, with the consequence that their immediate housing needs are not addressed. The longer term accommodation needs to be affordable, of good quality and where people want to live.

**7.9** In some of the more urban local authorities the large social housing estates were identified as



unattractive due to their location, reputation, and lack of commercial and social facilities.

**7.10** In some of the more rural authorities the simple need for more single person accommodation in the smaller towns was identified. The point was regularly made that many people do not necessarily want to move away from their familiar areas in which they may have family, friends and a sense of belonging.

**7.11** The assumption should not be made that all single people want one bedroom properties, as some may prefer a 2 or 3 bedroom house, and some may need more than one bedroom to enable dependants (e.g. children following a separation) to stay periodically.

**7.12** The eighteen areas which identified the need for more accommodation for single people in appropriate areas which is affordable and of good quality were Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly (particularly for young people), Cardiff, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Swansea (particularly for young people), Torfaen, Vale of Glamorgan and Wrexham.

### Support services in people's own accommodation

**7.13** Supporting people in their own accommodation can have a significant effect in helping some people to manage their tenancies, and to contribute to preventing homelessness.

**7.14** Many areas identified a need for a funding mechanism similar to Supported Housing Revenue Grant to support people in council or private rented accommodation. Supported Housing Revenue Grant 'floating support' funding is available to support housing association tenants only.

**7.15** Flexibility in the criteria for support was identified as being needed (such as supporting people with a wide range of needs, for non time limited periods for some people, and tailoring support to individual needs rather than to particular categories of need).

**7.16** Seventeen areas identified more support being needed for people in their own accommodation. These were Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Cardiff, Ceredigion, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, Pembrokeshire, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Swansea and Vale of Glamorgan.

### Advice services

**7.17** More housing advice was identified as being needed in some areas, and in some cases this was felt to be needed in a "one stop shop" setting in which other advice was also available. The twelve areas in which more housing advice services were identified as being needed were Blaenau Gwent, Bridgend, Caerphilly, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Denbighshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Swansea, Torfaen and the Vale of Glamorgan. Many of these areas are rural authorities in which arrangements were felt to be needed to provide advice in a number of towns as opposed to only in the largest or main town.

### Resettlement services

**7.18** Some homeless people who move into accommodation need help with matters such as obtaining accommodation, preparing for living more independently, completing benefit applications, making arrangements with services (gas, electricity, water etc.), obtaining furniture, and general assistance in the initial stages after moving. For some people such help may greatly enhance their opportunity to settle and manage in accommodation. This type of service was identified as being needed in Bridgend,



Ceredigion, Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Vale of Glamorgan.

### Services for people experiencing drugs related problems

**7.19** In ten areas the provision of more services for people experiencing a drugs dependency or drugs related problems was identified. These areas were Caerphilly (accommodation with high support), Cardiff (supported accommodation), Carmarthenshire (drug rehabilitation services), Ceredigion, Isle of Anglesey, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath Port Talbot (accommodation with high support), Pembrokeshire (advice and support), Vale of Glamorgan and Wrexham.

### Services for people experiencing alcohol related problems

**7.20** In eight areas the provision of more services for people experiencing alcohol related problems was identified. These areas were Cardiff (more detoxification beds which are quickly accessible, and more supported accommodation), Ceredigion, Denbighshire (a service for long-term rough sleepers with an alcohol problem), Merthyr Tydfil, Neath Port Talbot (a "wet house"), Newport (a "wet house"), Swansea (a "wet house"), and Vale of Glamorgan.

### Research

**7.21** Eight areas recognised that they needed more information on rough sleeping and single homelessness. These were Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Conwy, Denbighshire and Flintshire in which surveys are all due to undertaken in 1999 or 2000, and in Monmouthshire, Powys and Torfaen.

### Drop-in or day centres

**7.22** Seven areas identified day centres or some form of day provision as being needed. These were in Blaenau Gwent (for young people),

Ceredigion, Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd, Newport and Swansea.

### Bond schemes

**7.23** Bond schemes can play a very useful role in guaranteeing bonds and rent in advance to landlords in order to help people access private rented accommodation. Schemes exist in some parts of Wales, such as Cardiff, Ceredigion, Gwynedd, Newport, Swansea and Vale of Glamorgan.

**7.24** Some areas have bond schemes which are relatively small-scale (e.g. Blaenau Gwent, Merthyr Tydfil and Monmouthshire) or which are primarily for certain age or client groups (e.g. Bridgend and Wrexham [both due autumn 1999] and Caerphilly).

**7.25** Carmarthenshire, Conwy, Flintshire, Powys and Torfaen identified the need for new bond schemes, and Isle of Anglesey a possible need.

**7.26** Blaenau Gwent, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taff identified the need for increased funding for the schemes which already operate to increase the level of service available in the area. Caerphilly identified a need for widening the eligibility of the existing bond scheme.

### Outreach services

**7.27** Five areas specifically identified the need for outreach work to contact people sleeping rough. These were Caerphilly, Denbighshire, Isle of Anglesey, Newport and Pembrokeshire. The need to consider an increase in the amount of outreach work in the spring, summer and autumn was identified in Swansea.

### Supported accommodation for people displaying behavioural problems or chaotic lifestyles

**7.28** Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Conwy and Swansea (particularly for young people) identified



the need for supported accommodation for people displaying behavioural problems or a chaotic lifestyle. It appears that some people in such situations are not receiving appropriate help and are falling through traditional 'safety nets'.

### Homelessness prevention work in schools

**7.29** Flintshire, Swansea, Torfaen and Vale of Glamorgan indicated that housing advice and discussions regarding homelessness in schools was an area of importance in work to prevent homelessness. The Vale of Glamorgan also identified the need to extend such work to 14-18 year olds in colleges and youth clubs.

### Other gaps in services

**7.30** Various other gaps in services were identified. These gaps were supported accommodation for young people (Ceredigion), supported lodgings scheme (Merthyr Tydfil), an expansion of a current supported housing scheme for single homeless people (Merthyr Tydfil), supported accommodation for people with mental health problems (Ceredigion), halfway housing between emergency and long-term accommodation (Pembrokeshire), more long-term shared housing (Cardiff), more supported

accommodation in which people can gain, or improve on, basic life skills, such as cooking and budgeting before moving into more independent housing (Cardiff), social workers to work specifically with homeless people who have a mental health problem (Swansea), crisis intervention service for people who are mentally ill (Swansea), multi-disciplinary team with a budget which cuts across traditional departments (Newport), counselling services (Ceredigion), mediation service to help to prevent some homelessness (Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly), appropriate services to work with homeless people who are violent and others who are regularly banned from hostels (Cardiff), registration scheme for private landlords in Port Talbot (Neath Port Talbot), information booklet/directory of services (Carmarthenshire and Isle of Anglesey), befriending service (Swansea), youth outreach work (Carmarthenshire), TB screening service (Swansea), an out of hours counselling service (Carmarthenshire), public baths where people can shower, wash and change their clothes (Cardiff and Pembrokeshire), clinic, incorporating health advice, for homeless people (Cardiff and Swansea), secure lockers in which people sleeping rough can put blankets, clothing and personal items (Cardiff).



## 8. Other issues

**8.1** The gaps in provision identified in the previous section have potential resource and funding implications. However, a number of issues emerged from this research which would not necessarily involve significant funding requirements. Indeed, some issues emerged which would involve small or no additional funding requirements, and yet could potentially improve provision and opportunities for people sleeping rough and single homeless people in general. The points listed below cover the areas identified in these respects.

### Registering with GPs and accessing health care

**8.2** People sleeping rough and single homeless people in general can find it difficult to register with a GP, particularly if they are new to an area or were not registered with a GP when they were in more stable accommodation in the area. If a person is not registered with a GP this can restrict access to other health care services.

**8.3** GPs are able to refuse to register a person at their surgery for any reason they choose. This could, for example, lead to a person being unable to register because of their unkempt appearance, personal hygiene or anticipated behaviour. If someone is refused registration with a GP he or she can contact the local health authority in order to be allocated a GP.

**8.4** However, in order to register it is necessary to have an address for correspondence. A 'c/o' address is acceptable for people without accommodation. For example, a benefits agency, social services office or a GP's surgery are often acceptable 'c/o' addresses with the appropriate agency's agreement.

**8.5** In practice many areas identified registering with a GP as a common problem for people

sleeping rough and single homeless people generally. This was identified by Bridgend, Cardiff (to a certain extent), Carmarthenshire (in Llanelli), Conwy, Gwynedd, Monmouthshire, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, Pembrokeshire, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Swansea and Wrexham.

**8.6** In some areas arrangements are made by hostels with local GPs to try to address this problem to a certain extent. The Rhyl winter night shelter in Denbighshire, for example, established a link with a local GP surgery which agreed to register people living at the shelter. Very good links exist between some hostels and GPs in Cardiff, but are not as well established for residents of other hostels. A nurse practitioner for the homeless visits many Cardiff hostels regularly and can assist people to register with a GP. The Carmarthen direct access scheme has developed good links with two local GPs who will register residents.

**8.7** Some people may not feel able to approach a GP's surgery, or may not be able to manage to go through the process of contacting their local health authority to be allocated a GP. People in this situation are particularly vulnerable to not having a GP, and by the nature of their situation (especially people who are sleeping rough) may be particularly vulnerable to very poor health. They can, for example, experience significant problems with their feet (through not having changes of socks and shoes which are regularly wet or sweaty), health problems related to very poor diet or insufficient food, problems related to lying on very hard surfaces (e.g. cardboard on concrete), chronic chest and breathing problems, wounds and skin complaints, and vulnerability to other illnesses.

**8.8** Consideration may need to be paid to why people must have an address to register with a GP, whether more outreach/pro-active primary



health care would be appropriate to people who may find it difficult to use traditional primary health care services, whether access to other health care services can be improved for people who do not have a GP, and attitudes towards homeless people by some health professionals.

### **Obtaining help for people who are experiencing problems in relation to two or more areas of mental health, drug and alcohol misuse**

**8.9** Some people experience problems in relation to two or more areas of mental health, drug and alcohol misuse. Difficulties in obtaining appropriate help by people in such a situation was identified in Caerphilly, Cardiff, Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Swansea and Wrexham.

**8.10** The type of difficulties encountered by people experiencing a mental health problem and an alcohol problem, for example, is that they may be refused help from mental health services because they are told that they need to address their alcohol difficulties first. However, alcohol services may tell people that their alcohol problems are a result of their mental health problem, and it is this which needs addressing before the alcohol problem can be addressed. Similarly, people may be barred from using certain mental health services because of the behaviour they display when they have been drinking.

### **Benefits**

**8.11** Ten areas expressed difficulties for single homeless people in relation to benefits. Carmarthenshire, Isle of Anglesey, Pembrokeshire, Powys and Swansea specifically highlighted the restrictions in housing benefit rules for under 25 year olds as causing hardship to young people. Caerphilly identified difficulties for some people who had no fixed address in obtaining their

benefit payments. Powys identified significant difficulties for vulnerable 16 and 17 year olds in obtaining benefits.

**8.12** Difficulties in obtaining DSS Social Fund payments for furniture and equipment were identified in Pembrokeshire and Wrexham. There appear to be large disparities in the size of awards of Community Care Grants, and they appear to be more difficult to obtain in some areas than others. Similarly, there are cases (in Cardiff, for example) where homeless people in apparently very similar circumstances obtain significantly different amounts and types of DSS Social Fund Payments. If a Budgeting or Crisis Loan is obtained this can often result in significant hardship as regular deductions are made from the person's benefit for repayment of the loan.

**8.13** The introduction of tighter rules on the need for identification for housing benefit entitlement may also be problematic. Newport identified that many people who stay in hostels do not have identification, and this is even more likely to be the case for people who are sleeping rough who may find it very difficult to obtain identification from traditional sources, such as a medical card, passport, bank account, bills etc. In Flintshire a need was identified to pay benefits to some young people on a weekly rather than on a fortnightly basis, so as to assist them to budget more appropriately.

### **Social services involvement with single homeless people**

**8.14** Eight areas expressed concerns over the apparent low priority given by social services departments to single homeless people. Caerphilly, Cardiff, Flintshire and Newport identified that social services assessments can be difficult, and take a long time, to obtain. Cardiff also identified the need for social services to be more involved in an integrated response to rough sleeping, in the provision of help for homeless



people with a mental health problem, and to be more available outside of traditional office hours. Neath Port Talbot identified difficulties in obtaining social services' help if the person's needs cover more than one social services team. In Merthyr Tydfil concern was expressed that social services were not undertaking their full responsibilities under the Children Act. One hostel in Conwy was sometimes finding difficulties in obtaining help from social services. In Powys difficulties were sometimes found in securing the ongoing support of social services and the probation service once a person had moved into some supported housing schemes.

### Obtaining help for people with a personality disorder or behavioural problem

**8.15** Difficulties can be experienced by people in obtaining appropriate help if they have a 'personality disorder' or a 'behavioural problem.' They may not be eligible for medical treatment if, for example, they are not suffering from a mental or physical illness. Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Conwy, Denbighshire, Neath Port Talbot, Swansea and Wrexham identified that obtaining appropriate help for people who display behavioural problems can be very difficult. Their behaviour can result in exclusion from accommodation and the use of services.

### Single homelessness strategies

**8.16** Rhondda Cynon Taff identified the need for a specific person to be employed with responsibility for developing a single homelessness strategy. Swansea already employ a "single homeless strategy co-ordinator" with a specific remit to undertake this role, and it is part of the duty of one local authority member of staff in Cardiff. Blaenau Gwent, Carmarthenshire, Denbighshire, Neath Port Talbot, Newport and Wrexham the development of a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary single homelessness strategy was regarded, often primarily by voluntary

organisations, as an important way forward in developing services.

**8.17** The existence of a youth homelessness strategy in Swansea has been useful in helping to increase joint working between organisations. This is illustrated, for example, by the establishment of the Swansea Youth Homeless Team which involves Barnardo's, the local health authority and the housing and social services departments providing a co-ordinated approach to youth homelessness in the city.

### Access to social housing

**8.18** Access to social housing can be extremely difficult for people sleeping rough as they do not have an address at which they can be contacted. Ironically, for people with literally no accommodation it can be difficult to even get onto the housing register of a local authority or the waiting list of a housing association. Similarly, it can be difficult for homeless people who are regularly moving from one address to another to keep on the waiting lists, and thus access social housing. Bridgend, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Neath Port Talbot and Powys identified these areas of concern.

**8.19** Gwynedd suggested that assessments of support needs could prove useful at the start of tenancies to identify people who may need assistance to manage their tenancies.

### Access to drug rehabilitation services can be very slow

**8.20** If people have reached a point where they feel ready to undergo drug rehabilitation they often need access to services immediately or very quickly. Caerphilly, Cardiff, Denbighshire and Rhondda Cynon Taff identified that such access can be very slow, which can result in the person's difficulties increasing and the motivation for undergoing rehabilitation diminishing. In some cases people may no longer feel ready for rehabilitation when a place becomes available.

## Better preparation for people being released from prison

**8.21** Some people have no secure accommodation to move into on release from prison. They may have lost their previous accommodation due to not being able to pay their rent whilst in prison. Housing benefit is only payable for a limited period for people who are in prison. Some people may move into a hostel, a Bed and Breakfast, or stay with friends etc. on release, whereas some people may find nowhere to stay on release. Cardiff, Gwynedd, Newport and Swansea identified this as of particular concern.

## Difficulties in accessing dentists

**8.22** Carmarthenshire, Gwynedd, Powys and Swansea identified that homeless people were experiencing difficulties in accessing dentists who would register patients for NHS care.

## Legislative changes

**8.23** Flintshire, Gwynedd and Swansea identified that legislative changes may be needed if issues related to rough sleeping and single homelessness are to be addressed more comprehensively. This could include, for example, widening the homelessness priority groups for local authority assistance under Section 189 of the Housing Act (e.g. including people sleeping rough as a priority group), and requiring local authorities to undertake assessments of homelessness applicants in relation to support needs and future prevention of homelessness. The latter suggestion would need to be followed up with the provision of appropriate support if it was needed and wanted by the tenant, and referral to appropriate agencies.

## Young people

**8.24** Flintshire, Gwynedd and Newport identified the need for more planning, preparation and support for young people who are leaving care. Neath Port Talbot identified the need for more

help for 16 and 17 year olds who fall outside the remit of social services. Carmarthenshire identified a need to extend the age of leaving foster care.

## Discharge from psychiatric hospitals without adequate arrangements and support in place

**8.25** Cardiff and Gwynedd identified this area of concern. Without proper planning and appropriate support arrangements for people who are discharged from psychiatric hospitals the chances of some people managing adequately is potentially greatly reduced. This can increase the probability of some people becoming homeless.

## Funding

**8.26** The National Assembly for Wales funding for voluntary sector homelessness schemes under Section 180 of the Housing Act 1996 is available on a time limited basis (usually for 3 years). Cardiff and Gwynedd expressed concern regarding time limited funding. This can make it very difficult for voluntary organisations to make long-term plans as they are not sure whether they will be able to secure continued funding after this period. This means that services may close after three years if new funding sources are not found.

**8.27** The availability of 'permanent' funding, subject to satisfactory monitoring and continued need for a service (as in the case of Supported Housing Revenue Grant), would provide greater security of established services for clients and to the organisations providing them. It may be appropriate for the time limited nature of Section 180 to be reviewed, whilst ensuring that new projects are not penalised from being established.

**8.28** Some voluntary organisations (e.g. in Blaenau Gwent) were not aware of the existence of Section 180 funding despite being amongst the main voluntary organisations providing services to single homeless people in the

authority. As invitations to bid for this money are not sent to a comprehensive list of voluntary organisations throughout Wales there is a strong onus on many local authorities to contact local organisations themselves, and in some cases this is not happening.

### Other points

**8.29** A number of other issues were raised in one or two areas which may also apply elsewhere in Wales. These include more appropriate interventions by the police with people sleeping rough (which in part relates to the police being able to access more appropriate services for people sleeping rough [Swansea]), the availability of help with basic skills before people undertake training schemes (Carmarthenshire), difficulties in accessing hostel and other accommodation if a person has a dog (Cardiff and Denbighshire), avoiding the need for people having to go to many locations and agencies to obtain help when

some form of consistent assessment, advice and referral could be provided by all agencies (Gwynedd), research being needed on why people abandon tenancies (Newport), consideration being made for potential homelessness and rough sleeping amongst some refugees (Swansea), issues around responses to Schedule One offenders staying in hostels (Cardiff), the need for a common local authority and housing association application form (Cardiff), the development of formal inter-agency working arrangements to improve links between agencies and service delivery to clients (Denbighshire), and the need for a homelessness forum and more awareness amongst agencies and clients of what services exist in an area (Carmarthenshire). A suggestion of introducing trial tenancies for some people was made in Swansea whereby a tenant would not jeopardise their future housing options if they were not able to manage successfully during an initial period.

## 9. Conclusions

**9.1** It is very difficult to examine rough sleeping in isolation from homelessness in general. There are specific situations in which this may prove easier if, for example, a person has slept rough for a long time. However, many people who sleep rough do so for very short periods of time during their period of homelessness.

**9.2** The determination of exact numbers of people sleeping rough is very difficult. Even with regular outreach work backed up with occasional surveys the incidence can only be estimated.

**9.3** The development of trust between agencies and people sleeping rough is crucial in the provision of effective support and services. In the example of setting up the Wallich Clifford Community Shoreline Project in Cardiff for street drinkers, many of whom had slept rough for a long time, it has been possible, in consultation with these men, to provide an effective and appropriate service. In order to provide appropriate services for people who have slept rough for a long time this example demonstrates the need to talk to the individuals concerned, work through imaginative solutions and for funding to be flexible enough to accommodate new ideas. In some cases appropriate help may involve providing a new service for a particular group of people who display similar characteristics. In other cases the appropriate help may need to be tailored to the individual needs and wishes of the one person alone. Although it may be stating the obvious it is necessary to talk to the individuals concerned regarding what help, if any, they would like. This process may take a considerable time as a trusting relationship will need to be established between a 'worker' and client. For some people a relationship may be established with staff working in particular schemes (e.g. night shelters or direct access schemes). However, particularly in the case of long-term rough sleepers it is very likely that a

pro-active outreach type service will need to be provided to make contact and establish a trusting relationship.

**9.4** The fact that some people have slept rough for a long time and may sometimes have become well known local characters should not lead to complacency on behalf of organisations. Nonetheless, if a person clearly wishes to remain sleeping rough this right should be respected, but with assistance being available at a time appropriate to that individual. This will mean the informal monitoring of a person's situation (e.g. through observation by a service) so that at least there is a contact point known to that individual if needed. Part of the value of soup runs, breakfast runs and outreach teams is that a monitoring role of someone's situation can be established and there is the availability of relatively easy contact with an initial service if required.

**9.5** The evidence indicates a higher number of people sleeping rough in the larger cities and towns than in smaller towns. This is evident, for example, in Cardiff and Swansea, and, to a lesser extent, in Newport and Wrexham. Rough sleeping, however, does occur in smaller towns, such as Abergavenny, Bangor, Caerphilly, Caernarfon, Crickhowell and Llandudno. In Cardiff and Swansea, and in certain smaller towns (e.g. Abergavenny and Wrexham) it is possible to identify some people who are well known as either having slept rough for a long time or who have a history of sleeping rough on-and-off for a long time. There may be more tendency for people sleeping rough in larger towns to sleep in, or close to, the town centres, and in relative proximity to one another. Similarly, there may be a greater culture of communal street homelessness in cities. There can develop a greater support network between rough sleepers and people often spend time together. In rural

areas the recorded incidence of rough sleeping is smaller, often more difficult to detect, and people would appear to be more solitary as there is less of a network of support from other rough sleepers.

**9.6** Rough sleeping and single homelessness often involves factors much wider than housing issues alone. Many single homeless people have additional issues which may need addressing, such as substance misuse, mental health problems, emotional and psychological problems, basic living skills, education and training. As well as appropriate accommodation, help for many people sleeping rough and single homeless people more generally must also include the provision of appropriate support.

**9.7** There are potentially two main areas at which work to reduce levels of rough sleeping can be aimed. Firstly, emergency and move-on services which need to be provided in order to assist people who are currently sleeping rough and those who will do so in the future. This includes the continuation of existing appropriate services and the development of new services where the need is demonstrable. Examples of emergency services are outreach work, direct access schemes and night shelters. However, such services provide only one part of a solution. It is essential that there are varied, appropriate and sufficient types of move-on accommodation and support from these emergency services, in order for people to be able to move into more sustainable accommodation. Not only does this increase the opportunities for people sleeping rough to resettle, but it also makes the emergency accommodation available for new people who become homeless. It can also help to reduce the amount of time which people need to stay in emergency accommodation. For some people long stays in direct access accommodation can create a problem of dependency and the

development of a culture of homelessness. Examples of appropriate move-on accommodation are staff supported housing schemes for people who are homeless and experiencing additional difficulties (such as mental health problems or alcohol or drug misuse), long-term supported accommodation, low support accommodation in which people can wait securely for more appropriate housing, and support for some people in their own accommodation.

Secondly, work to reduce the levels of rough sleeping can also be aimed at policies and services which will help to address the underlying causes of homelessness. These involve much wider considerations than emergency and move-on provision. They include issues such as reducing poverty, improving educational and training opportunities, increasing employment opportunities, providing services to improve family relationships, supporting people who are traditionally more vulnerable to the likelihood of sleeping rough (e.g. people who have been in local authority care, people leaving prisons, people who have difficulties related to drugs or alcohol), collaborative working between organisations to provide services, legislative changes in relation to responsibilities of local authorities to single homeless people, and adequate secure, affordable single person housing in the appropriate areas.

**9.8** This research suggests that additional services are needed to more effectively respond to single homelessness and rough sleeping in Wales.

**9.9** The development of well informed multi-agency, multi-disciplinary strategies to address single homelessness can play a very important role in ensuring the most effective use of resources and provision of appropriate services.

## Recommendations

### To The National Assembly for Wales

**1. A national homelessness strategy for all homeless people should be written and developed by a multi-disciplinary and multi-agency group.** The strategy should encompass all homeless people, and not be restricted to people who fall under statutory provision through the Housing Act 1996. The strategy should link in with other strategies, both at a national and local level. The lead in developing a national strategy should be taken by the National Assembly for Wales (and could be led by the National Consultative Forum on Housing in Wales). From the outset appropriate individuals and organisations should be involved. This could include representatives of services such as local authorities' housing and social services departments, housing associations, voluntary organisations working to help homeless people, health, police, probation and other appropriate organisations. The purpose should be to ensure that appropriate accommodation, support and other services are developed throughout Wales for homeless people. At present there are areas where services for homeless people, such as supported housing, are sparse or non-existent. Some homeless people are moving out of their familiar area to obtain accommodation and other services. Anecdotal evidence suggests that often people do not want to move away from their home areas, and that by doing so they can experience additional difficulties, such as loneliness and isolation.

**2. The time limited nature of funding for voluntary organisations under Section 180 of the Housing Act 1996 should be reviewed.**

The present system of funding schemes, usually for three years, makes it very difficult for voluntary organisations to take a long-term view of the most effective services required. If organisations cannot secure funding from this or

other sources after the three years the services face closure. Permanent funding should be considered which is subject to satisfactory monitoring, and a demonstration of continued need for that service. During this review, however, consideration should also be given to ensuring that there is the capacity to allow new services to develop.

**3. The National Assembly for Wales should invite a larger number of voluntary organisations working to address homelessness to apply for funding under Section 180 of the Housing Act 1996.** Many voluntary organisations are not informed of opportunities for funding through this source. This is partly due to the Assembly having a limited distribution list of voluntary organisations. The Assembly should increase and regularly update its list of voluntary organisations to whom it sends applications for funding. Although some local authorities contact some voluntary organisations in their areas regarding Section 180 funding opportunities, there are some who do not contact a wide number and some who do not appear to contact any groups.

**4. Consideration should be given to the funding implications for schemes addressing single homelessness under the "Supporting People" proposals.** There are concerns from some voluntary organisations that funding for some services for single homeless people may be reduced or stopped if all of this funding mechanism is, as proposed, given to local authorities to allocate.

**5. A grant, equivalent to Supported Housing Revenue Grant, should be made available to support those tenants of local authorities and private landlords needing help to sustain their accommodation.** Supported Housing Revenue Grant is widely regarded as

very useful in homelessness prevention, but has the limitation of being restricted to supporting housing association tenants. Such a funding mechanism would be very useful if extended to include tenants of local authority and private landlord housing.

**6. Through consultation with appropriate organisations a consistent format and method of keeping records of rough sleeping and single homelessness should be established.** In some areas little information is available on the extent of rough sleeping, and in others the information is not updated. Information obtained should not solely identify numbers of people but have an emphasis on the needs of people to inform policy decisions. The National Assembly for Wales should consult appropriate organisations in deciding, for example, upon a definition of single homelessness and rough sleeping, on what information is required, and on how this should be collected. This should ensure a more consistent approach to information obtained in helping to inform national and local policy decisions.

**7. Under Section 189 of the Housing Act 1996 the categories of homeless people who are regarded as being in priority need of accommodation should be widened to include people sleeping rough.** Powers to amend or repeal the primary legislative definition on priority need are within the authority of the National Assembly for Wales.

### **To The National Assembly for Wales and Central Government**

**8. Legislative changes should be made to entitlement to housing benefit payments to 16 – 25 year olds so that payments are raised to the level of over 25 year olds.**

**9. Legislative changes should be considered requiring local authorities to ensure that support assessments with homeless applicants**

**are undertaken, and that appropriate support is provided for people in applicable cases.** The assessment could help to identify possible areas of support which, if provided, could significantly assist to prevent some people becoming homeless again.

### **To Local Authorities, Housing Associations and other voluntary organisations**

**10. All local authorities should develop a written homelessness strategy in collaboration with appropriate agencies, and there should be a 'champion' in each authority to ensure its development, implementation and monitoring.** Strategies should be developed by a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency group, and the views of single homeless people should be obtained and taken into account in this process. The strategy should encompass all homeless people (including rough sleepers and non statutorily homeless people), and should be a working document which is regularly monitored and reviewed. The strategy should clearly identify the level of need in each area, the services which currently exist, the services which are needed in each area, and lay down action plans of how they will be provided. Regular reviewing of the strategy should occur to ensure that priorities are still appropriate. The strategies should complement a national homelessness strategy. There should be a 'champion' in each authority who should ensure the development, implementation and monitoring of the strategy.

**11. Regular reviews of provision for single homeless people should be undertaken to ensure that the most appropriate services are being provided.** Organisations working to help single homeless people should ensure that their services are in line with current models of good practice. They should also periodically objectively review that their services are provided in the most effective way to help single homeless people. Providing services which most



appropriately respond to the needs of single homeless people should be the overarching focus of such reviews. If services are not felt to be of the most effective type then appropriate changes should be investigated and made. Ideally any significant changes should be undertaken within the wider context of the local single homelessness strategy.

**12. More outreach work should be undertaken in some areas to make contact with people sleeping rough.** This would also help to assist closer monitoring of the extent of rough sleeping. Outreach work is a very effective method of making, and maintaining, contact with people sleeping rough. This is particularly the case with people who do not access existing services. It can also provide information on the type of appropriate help which is required for people who are sleeping rough, based on their individual circumstances. New outreach services have been identified as being needed in Caerphilly, Denbighshire, Isle of Anglesey, Newport and Pembrokeshire, but all areas should consider more closely the need for outreach work, particularly where there are larger towns or where it is known that people sleep rough. In appropriate circumstances, where low levels of rough sleeping are known to occur, the need for a full time outreach service may be unjustified. However, in such circumstances there should be some outreach work undertaken as part of another service (e.g. by local authority or housing association staff, or by appropriate voluntary organisations).

**13. More emergency 24-hour accessible accommodation for men and women who are 'non statutorily homeless' should be provided throughout Wales.** In many areas this needs to be small scale provision (e.g. 3 to 4 bed spaces), and in a number of towns in the local authority area. This provision would assist many people through situations of accommodation crises and, as an emergency measure, should reduce the need for anyone to sleep rough. However, such

provision must be regarded as one small part of a much wider provision for single homeless people as identified in many of the other recommendations.

**14. Appropriate support services should be provided in conjunction with emergency accommodation to help people to prepare for, and settle into, suitable longer term accommodation.** These include the availability of support to people in emergency accommodation, resettlement work to assist some people to obtain and settle into accommodation, and longer term support for some people in their accommodation. Care should be exercised in not building up significant dependencies by tenants on staff. However, the support provided should be geared to individual needs which may result in longer term support being appropriate for some tenants than may currently be possible under some present funding mechanisms (e.g. Supported Housing Revenue Grant).

**15. Day centres should be provided in some areas.** Day centres can play a valuable role in the prevention of homelessness (e.g. through advice services), but also in providing opportunities for people to obtain practical help, to gain new skills and to make new social contacts. Decisions will need to be made as for whom the day centres are provided, and where they are located. In some areas it may be more appropriate to have a small facility out of the town centre area which could assist measures to prevent homelessness amongst people who are already housed. In other situations it may be appropriate to have a facility in a town centre for people who are sleeping rough or staying in insecure accommodation. Good practice suggests that day centres should consider providing basic assistance (such as food, bathing and laundry facilities), and have services available to provide opportunities for people to obtain advice, develop skills, undertake recreational activities, and to integrate with the wider community.



**16. Local authorities should ensure that an assessment of the support needs of all people whom they find to be homeless is undertaken, and that appropriate arrangements for support services are made.** Where support is needed and wanted the local authority should ensure that arrangements are in place for it to be provided. However, extreme care should be taken not to restrict access to housing to people who have support needs. The emphasis should be on providing the appropriate support in conjunction with the appropriate accommodation. Any new or increased support services which are identified as being needed in an area should be included in the local single homelessness strategy.

**17. More good quality, secure, affordable single person accommodation should be provided in most parts of Wales in the areas in which people want to live.** This need was identified in eighteen local authority areas. This could be addressed through, for example, building more single person housing, adapting existing stock, or renovating existing stock, but could also include widening the entitlement of single people to two or three bedroom social housing. Appropriate facilities and services need to be available in, or easily accessible from, such areas.

**18. More housing advice services should be provided in some areas.** Thirteen areas identified this need as a preventative measure in helping to reduce homelessness. Often the need is for such services to be provided through an accessible source in small towns.

**19. Some new bond schemes should be developed, and some existing schemes should be expanded, in order to help people to access private rented accommodation.** Bond schemes can play a very useful role in enabling people to move into private rented accommodation by guaranteeing the bond and rent in advance, which many people are unable to afford.

**20. Bond schemes should consider providing, or having arrangements with other agencies to provide, support to some of their clients in moving into and sustaining accommodation.** This type of provision is available through some bond schemes (e.g. Cardiff), but not through some others. Such support may be an effective means of preventing future homelessness amongst some clients.

**21. More services should be provided for people who are experiencing drug and/or alcohol related difficulties.** These could include, for example, more rehabilitation services and supported accommodation. In relation to some homeless people new services should be provided which directly cater for their needs and wishes. In some areas (e.g. Newport and Swansea) there appear to be an identifiable group of people who have drug and/or alcohol related difficulties who have spent considerable lengths of time sleeping rough (or have been homeless for a considerable time). They appear to find difficulty using, or have been excluded from using, available services. Provision for people in such circumstances should be tailored specifically and realistically to their needs and wishes.

**22. Improved preparation, and follow up support work, should be undertaken with people moving out of local authority care.** This can involve basic life skills training, finding appropriate accommodation, resettlement and support after moving, all of which should help to reduce the likelihood of homelessness (and other difficulties).

**23. Improved help should be provided for people who have two or more difficulties of a mental health problem, drug and alcohol misuse.** Services for people experiencing mental health problems, drug or alcohol difficulties should ensure that people with more than one of these difficulties are not excluded from receiving appropriate help. This may involve existing agencies working more closely together to ensure

that people receive appropriate help, or the establishment of new multi-disciplinary services to provide specialist help to people in this situation.

**24. More assistance should be provided for people who display behavioural problems or personality disorders.** This may involve more responsibility being taken by the psychiatric services to assist people displaying such problems, as their behaviour can pose potentially serious risks to themselves and to others. It may also include closer working between agencies to work towards providing appropriate assistance to people displaying this behaviour.

**25. Access to drug rehabilitation services should be speeded up.** People who are at a stage of wanting to address a drug dependency often need access to rehabilitation services very quickly. This can help to avoid them losing their motivation to receive assistance. In some areas there are difficulties in obtaining such quick access.

**26. Social services should give a higher priority than at present to helping single homeless people.** This need is particularly demonstrated through the delays experienced by some homeless people in obtaining assessments of their support needs, and in the level of support given by some social services departments.

**27. All local authorities and housing associations should ensure that they are not imposing unjustified restrictions on access to their housing registers or waiting lists for people without an address.** Ironically, it can be difficult, or in some cases not possible, for people without a fixed address to register on the housing lists of some local authorities or housing associations.

**28. More mediation services should be provided to try to reduce the number of relationship breakdowns which are a significant cause of homelessness.**

**29. More information about housing and homelessness should be provided to schoolchildren.** This should be done in a way which can be easily understood and does not encourage experimentation in a homeless lifestyle. This should be provided to all children, but consideration should also be given to working particularly closely with children who may be more likely than others to be vulnerable to future homelessness (e.g. those who are already vulnerably housed and children in care).

**30. Providers of hostel and night shelter accommodation should regularly review that they are only banning people from their schemes for clearly justifiable reasons and lengths of time.** Some people sleeping rough have been banned from emergency accommodation. The emphasis should be on doing everything possible not to ban people, although at the same time maintaining good practice safety standards for clients and staff.

**31. A member representative body should be established for voluntary organisations working to help homeless people in Wales.** Such a body could be consulted, and raise issues, on matters such as policy changes and funding mechanisms. It could also enable wider dissemination of information on best practice, training opportunities etc. Organisations such as the Welsh Federation of Housing Associations and the Welsh Local Government Association provide a clearly identified representative voice for its members, whereas such a member representative organisation does not exist for voluntary sector organisations working with homeless people.

### **To the National Health Service**

**32. The issue of difficulty in accessing GPs for some single homeless people and rough sleepers in Wales should be investigated further.** Information received in the course of this research would indicate that some single



homeless people are finding difficulty in registering with GPs and thus accessing primary and other health care.

**33. Dental health care should be more accessible to homeless people.** Access to dental care can be difficult for homeless people. Part of the reason for this may lie in the reduction in the numbers of dentists undertaking NHS work over the last few years. In order to improve access it may be appropriate for dental services to be regularly available at hostels in some areas.

**34. Consideration should be given to establishing static or mobile clinics for homeless people in Cardiff and Swansea.** Such provision could include access to nursing, GP, dental, chiropodist and other appropriate services and health advice.

**35. Improved preparation and follow up support arrangements should be made for homeless people being discharged from hospital.**

#### **To the Department of Social Security**

**36. There should be more consistency in the types of payments, and the amounts of**

**money given, to homeless people through the DSS Social Fund to furnish accommodation when moving from supported housing schemes.** In some areas there are reports of payments which are considerably higher than in others. Similarly it appears that in some areas they are much more easily available than in others. It is also felt that sometimes people in apparently very similar circumstances are obtaining different awards (i.e. a grant or a loan and of significantly different amounts).

#### **To the Home Office**

**37. Improved preparation regarding accommodation and follow up support should be undertaken with people being released from prison.** Some people are leaving prison with nowhere to stay or with no appropriate support in place to reduce the possibility of future homelessness. Sometimes, for example, relatively small arrangements made on entry to prison can prevent homelessness on release (such as making claims to continue housing benefit payments whilst in prison).

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## Annex A: The position in each local authority area

The information contained in this annex is based on visits to the housing sections of all of the local authorities, and to voluntary organisations working with single homeless people.

The authorities are in alphabetical order and each area has been subdivided into information relating to the incidence of rough sleeping, causes of rough sleeping, examples of services which currently exist, single homelessness or rooflessness strategies, what services are missing for people sleeping rough in the area, and other issues.

### BLAENAU GWENT

#### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

No survey has been undertaken.

However, in November and December 1998 Blaenau Gwent CBC sent out approximately 350 questionnaires to organisations and individuals asking for known or probable sites of rough sleeping with the intention of possibly undertaking a 3 night snapshot survey. A few possible sites were identified (e.g. the derelict Semtex building in Brynmawr, a multi-storey car park, and in cars), but a survey was not undertaken.

Ebbw Fach Development Trust was aware of young people sleeping rough in boarded up council properties in Brynmawr in March 1999.

The Newport Action for the Single Homeless survey "Single homelessness and rough sleeping in the counties of Newport, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen, Snapshot Surveys: Summer 1998 and Winter 1998/99" found that, between 1st August 1998 and 31st October 1998, 9 out of 12 single homeless people presenting to 3 agencies said that they had slept rough at some point.

Blaenau Gwent CBC expressed the opinion that one or two people may occasionally be found sleeping rough in the borough. One man, for example, was known by the local authority to be sleeping rough at the end of March 1999.

#### 2. Causes of rough sleeping

The main causes identified were:

- Young people not being able to live at home any more due to relationship breakdown;
- Family disputes;
- Mental illness;
- Inability to afford accommodation, particularly young people under 25 years old in receipt of housing benefit due to the restrictions on the amount payable for this age group.

The Newport Action for the Single Homeless survey found the main causes of homelessness in descending order to be relationship breakdown, inability to find suitable accommodation, being asked to leave family or friends, and being unable to cope.

#### 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- Bond Scheme (15 hours per week) run by Ebbw Fach Development Trust;
- Youth outreach services;
- Drugs service providing advice, information, counselling, support run by Drug Aid;
- Information shop, shower and laundry facilities for young people in Brynmawr provided by NCH Action for Children Wales;
- Temporary supported housing, and a supported lodgings scheme for young people run by NCH Action for Children Wales;

- Furniture recycling scheme.

#### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy, and no homelessness forum. The local authority says that it deals with isolated cases of rough sleeping as they arise.

#### 5. What services are missing for people sleeping rough in the area?

- Emergency accommodation (small scale e.g. 3-4 beds, or through a scheme such as Barnardo's Nightstop, where trained volunteers accommodate young people for one or a few nights in their own home);
- Full time bond scheme;
- One stop shop in various towns for all age groups where people can obtain information, advice and help related to accommodation issues;
- Drop-in centre for young people providing food, information, advice, support and company;
- More good quality affordable accommodation for young people near the town centres;
- Mediation service to help reduce family breakdowns;
- Support services for people in their own accommodation.

#### 6. Other issues

- The view emerged from one voluntary group that the co-ordination of a single homelessness strategy and good working protocols between agencies was needed;
- There is often a reluctance for people to move from one town to another in Blaenau Gwent, and there are often well established social networks amongst people.

## BRIDGEND

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

A number of churches undertook a survey of rough sleeping in Porthcawl through weekly checks in July, August and September 1998 and daily checks and weekly reports from 1st November 1998 until 6th December 1998. This found that 5 or 6 was the most common number of rough sleepers during July, August and September and 3 or 4 between 1st November and 6th December. The people found sleeping rough in the summer were largely "visiting seasonal folk", whereas the people sleeping rough between November and December were largely local people aged between 50 and 60 years old and who displayed alcohol related problems.

Cymdeithas Caer Las conducted an outreach survey in Bridgend and Porthcawl between 22nd January 1999 and 31st March 1999. The survey involved 49 'street walks' in locations throughout the borough and 22 drop-in sessions. Nobody was seen sleeping rough during the survey, although evidence of probable rough sleeping was found in four locations in Bridgend and four locations in Porthcawl. Seven of the 46 people who were contacted during the survey gave their reason for homelessness as being a 'long-term rough sleeper.' Cymdeithas Caer Las has commissioned a research project into the housing and support needs of people who have been, or are currently, homeless in the borough. This research should be completed by the autumn of 2000, and should provide quantitative and qualitative information on homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough.

### 2. Causes of rough sleeping

In the Cymdeithas Caer Las survey (above) the number of people who gave the following reasons for being homeless were:

- Eviction	9
- Long-term rough sleeper	7
- Asked to leave by family	7
- Not known	5
- Leaving care/custody/hospital	5
- Leaving by choice	5
- Unsuitable accommodation	2
- Domestic violence	2
- Thrown out of home	2
- Harassment	2
- Not given	1

### 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- Supported shared houses for young single homeless people, an after care support service and an information/advice service (Barnardo's);
- Housing advice surgeries in Maesteg, Bridgend and Porthcawl on different days of the week (Shelter Cymru);
- Shared supported housing schemes (Cymdeithas Caer Las);
- Floating support service for young people leaving care (Cymdeithas Caer Las);
- Supported housing schemes for people with mental health problems (Gofal Housing Trust);
- Some churches in Porthcawl provide food to homeless people.

### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy. However, there is a long established Single Housing Forum consisting of a wide variety of organisations.

This forum would probably be an appropriate group to develop a strategy.

### 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- Emergency accommodation for non statutory single homeless people in Porthcawl (approx. 6 beds), Bridgend (4-6 beds), and possibly in Maesteg;
- Resettlement and support services;
- Move-on accommodation. There is a severe lack of sufficient one person accommodation in the whole of the borough (i.e. council, housing association and private);
- One stop shop which could provide housing, social services and other services at one location.

### 6. Other issues

- Following the closure of the Stormy Down DSS direct access Resettlement Unit no replacement was established in the borough;
- Generally people are reluctant to move from one town to another in the borough and generally reluctant to move out of the area altogether. Hence the need for emergency and more rented accommodation in a number of towns (as identified above);
- It is difficult for people sleeping rough to access a GP;
- It is very difficult for people sleeping rough to get on the council housing register due to not having an address. Also some single homeless people moving from one address to another may not continually change their address on the council list, and thus have more difficulty in obtaining secure accommodation.

## CAERPHILLY

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

The 1997 Caerphilly CBC and Shelter Cymru report "Rough Sleepers Winter Count Caerphilly County Borough Council Area November 1997" found 8 people sleeping rough in Caerphilly County Borough through a 3 night survey on 27th, 28th and 29th November 1997.

The 1998/1999 Newport Action for the Single Homeless report "Single homelessness and rough sleeping in the counties of Newport, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen, snapshot surveys: summer 1998 and winter 1998/99" found:

- Eleven people sleeping rough on the nights of 27th, 28th and 29th August 1998;
- Nobody was observed sleeping rough during a 3 night survey on 24th, 28th January and 2nd February 1999, although information was obtained to indicate that at least 7 people were sleeping rough on one or more nights of this survey.

### 2. Causes of rough sleeping

The reasons given by 4 people interviewed in the 1998 survey were:

- Relationship breakdown;
- Being asked to leave family/friends and being unable to find suitable accommodation;
- Having to leave friend's accommodation following an argument;
- chose to do so (this man had slept rough for 15 years).

Other reasons identified in the area for homelessness amongst young people were poverty and relationships in supported lodgings breaking down with nowhere else for people to move to afterwards.

### 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- Accommodation and support for single homeless people in 6 bedsits in one house in Llanbradach and 5 self contained flats in one house in Senghennydd (managed by Cwm Rhymni Housing Action [CRAG]). The accommodation is accessed through a referral system and is for 16 to 25 year old single homeless people;
- A café and an advice service for young people in Caerphilly town (run by Caerphilly Youth Project);
- Accommodation and support services for single homeless people with a mental health problem (run by Gofal Housing Trust). This comprises 4 supported self contained flats with an attached office in Llanbradach, supported bedsits in Bargoed, and support, advice and advocacy service in Caerphilly for people with mental health problems who have a housing need or difficulty;
- Bond scheme for young people referred primarily by social services or the probation service (managed by Barnardo's);
- Housing advice services in various locations in the borough (some provided by Shelter Cymru and some by Barnardo's);
- Floating support service operated by Barnardo's for young people in 3 self contained flats;
- Floating support service run by Rhymney Valley Move On;
- Drugs service providing advice, information, counselling and support (provided by Drug Aid);
- Women's Aid refuges for women escaping violence or the threat of domestic violence.

#### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy. However, there is a Single Persons' Housing Forum which is in the process of developing a single person housing strategy, a move-on strategy and a directory of services for single homeless people.

#### 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- Emergency accommodation for young people (possibly one scheme in one town);
- Outreach services (e.g. soup run, outreach workers) to, in part, further identify gaps in current provision;
- Bond scheme with wider eligibility than currently available;
- More floating support services;
- More social housing for young people which is in appropriate areas;
- High support accommodation for people with particular needs (e.g. related to drug use);
- Wider availability of advice services throughout the borough;
- Mediation services to help young people to stay with their families.

#### 6. Other issues

- The local authority felt that more work needs to be undertaken to examine the most appropriate ways to address the issues of rough sleeping and single homelessness in the borough;
- There can be difficulties in obtaining social services assessments for young people;
- Help is difficult to obtain for people who have a mental health problem and a drug or/and alcohol problem;

- There is a long waiting time for drug rehabilitation service in the area which can cause difficulties for some people;
- Some young single homeless people who do not have fixed address experience difficulty in obtaining benefits.

## CARDIFF

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

The survey "Cardiff County Council – City Centre Team A snap-shot survey of the non-residential area of Cardiff City Centre" found that in the 24 hour period of 25th September 1997 there were 12 people sleeping rough in the city centre.

"A snapshot survey of vulnerability in Cardiff City Centre September 24th 1998" organised by the Cardiff City Centre Team found that in the 24 hour period 20 people in the city centre "were estimated to have been observed and judged to have been sleeping rough."

Some hostels in Cardiff allow people to sleep in their lounges if they have no vacancies. Cardiff Action for the Single Homeless, for example, allowed 59 people to stay in the lounge of their emergency unit overnight accommodation between December 1998 and March 1999 due to having no vacancies. Without this accommodation it was felt that some of these people would have been sleeping rough.

In the 4 months between December 1997 and March 1998 60 people were contacted who were sleeping rough through the work of the Wallich Clifford Community daily breakfast run to homeless people in, or around, Cardiff city centre. Fifty were men, and 26 of the 60 were aged under 26 years old.

Between 1st December 1998 and 31st March 1999 the Wallich Clifford Community daily breakfast run met 75 people who were street



homeless (i.e. people who were, or who said they were, sleeping rough) in, or around, Cardiff city centre. Sixty seven were men, and 39 of the 75 were aged under 26 years old.

Between 7th December 1998 and 31st March 1999 127 people stayed at the Wallich Clifford Community Winterwatch night shelter. One hundred and thirteen of these people had at some point slept rough.

A once a week soup run undertaken by Andy Webb and other volunteers gave soup and food etc. to approximately 25 to 30 people each Thursday night between June 3rd 1999 and July 29th 1999. Approximately between 8 and 10 of these were sleeping rough, whilst the remaining people were staying in hostels, squats, flats or bedsits. On one Thursday night the soup run found 14 people sleeping rough, some of whom were travellers new to Cardiff. Throughout the period March 1st 1999 to July 29th 1999 there was a core group of about six people who were sleeping rough.

## 2. Causes of rough sleeping

The 1998 City Centre Team survey states that "people sleep rough for many reasons, and there is usually a mixture of factors that have built up and made it seem impossible to overcome. It is common to find that rough sleepers have suffered a breakdown in relationship, a substance addiction, an illness or a mental health problem. The reasons why rough sleepers are often not receiving services are also varied, and although occasionally complex, it is true to say that many people are on the streets because they have not been aware of services, or felt able to access them."

Other causes of rough sleeping identified in Cardiff include:

- People being banned from hostels (e.g. because of violence, breaking rules regarding drugs, alcohol, sexual misconduct – for example, some women being

promiscuous with many men, which leads to problems in the hostel and to the woman being banned);

- Some people may forget that they have somewhere to live, or how to get to their accommodation. This may be particularly the case with people who have an alcohol problem and who have previously slept rough for many years;
- A small number of people have been in the armed services and are used to a culture of drinking heavily at the weekend. In civilian life this can lead to them being unable to get home due to being drunk in the city centre at the weekend. As a result they may sleep rough temporarily. It can also lead to additional problems which could potentially lead to more long-term rough sleeping;
- A small number of young people sleep rough because they have missed their last train or bus home after being in pubs or clubs;
- A small number of young people run away from home or from care and have nowhere to go. Because they are under 16 years old they may be afraid to contact any official or voluntary organisation for fear of having to return home (or to care) and so they sleep rough and remain secretive. They may also not know where to go for help and may not want, or be able, to stay with friends or family;
- Some people opt out of the system, because they know that if they have too much money they will drink too much and possibly die as a result. Some people in this situation do not claim state benefits and rely on begging and/or, for example, selling small numbers of "The Big Issue" to survive;
- A small number of asylum seekers have been sleeping rough in Cardiff (e.g. from Kosovo) because they did not know where

to go for help and could not speak English to ask for appropriate help;

- A small number of "eco warriors" who have made a conscious decision to choose a particular lifestyle which may include sleeping rough;
- Some people who have committed serious crimes and who are on the run from the police do not want to be found and so may move to another area and sleep rough;
- Some people don't know where to find emergency accommodation, particularly if they have not been homeless before;
- The rules in hostels can exclude some people e.g. few hostels will allow dogs to stay in the building. As some homeless people with dogs will not leave them elsewhere this can result in some people sleeping rough;
- Some hostels will not take homeless couples which can lead to some couples sleeping rough if they cannot find alternative emergency accommodation;
- Some people do not want to use the hostel accommodation which is provided due to not liking the regime or rules;
- Some people have an unrealistic impression of what it is like to live in hostels, and consequently do not ask to be admitted;
- Some people will not use hostels due to their pride.

In more general terms a number of main reasons for initial homelessness can be identified:

- Relationship breakdown e.g. in some situations remarriages or a new partner can lead to a young person being told to leave home. The young person, alternatively, may feel that he or she cannot cope with the new "step parent" and leave home as a result. This may result in homelessness,

which may include sleeping rough at some stage for some people. A young person's behaviour at home may also be unacceptable leading to him or her being told to leave;

- Poverty;
- Unemployment;
- Tenancy problems (e.g. rent arrears, inability to cope);
- Difficulty in finding suitable and affordable accommodation (particularly in the case of young people);
- Mortgage repossessions;
- Domestic violence (particularly against women, although also evident against some men);
- Mental health problems;
- Discharge from psychiatric hospitals without appropriate accommodation and follow up support arrangements;
- Difficulties related to a person's use of alcohol or drugs (e.g. some people do not pay their rent or manage financially in accommodation as they are feeding a drug habit; other people, such as family members, can no longer cope with the lifestyle of a person in their household who is using drugs and insist that the person leaves home);
- Leaving prison without accommodation to move into;
- Young people (some of whom have been in local authority care) being unable to manage in their own accommodation and without appropriate support;
- Bereavement of a partner which leads to a person 'giving up' hope and the will to continue in their situation.

Some people are in a cycle of homelessness moving from one hostel to another, in and out



of bed and breakfasts and other temporary accommodation.

### 3. Examples of services which currently exist

"Streetwise", a comprehensive directory of services for single homeless people, including people who are sleeping rough, is produced and updated in Cardiff.

Some examples of services include:

- Breakfast run organised by Wallich Clifford Community and various soup runs throughout the week run, (e.g. the Salvation Army, Paradise Run, Glenwood Church, Cyncoed Methodist Church, Andy Webb);
- Night shelters - Huggard Centre (20 beds) run by Cardiff Action for the Single Homeless, and the Wallich Clifford Community night shelter (5 beds);
- Direct access schemes, e.g. Wallich Clifford Community (20 beds), Tresillian House (20 beds) run by Cardiff County Council, Cardiff YMCA Housing Association (73 beds), Ambassador YMCA (16 family rooms and 20 single rooms, one of which is kept for emergency use by the Vale of Glamorgan County Borough Council) and Salvation Army (currently undergoing redevelopment which should be completed by the end of April 2000. There were 88 beds in July 1998, but this will reduce to 61 beds by April 2000 of which 9 are planned to be emergency very short-term direct access beds. The other beds will be available for homeless people with varying types of needs);
- Outreach team - City Centre Team (involving housing, social services and education staff);
- Bond scheme run by Cardiff Bond Board
- Housing advice centre (Housing Help Centre);
- Specialist accommodation for homeless people with specific needs, e.g. Wallich

Clifford Community "Shoreline Project" for 18 homeless street drinkers;

- Dry hostel for 18 homeless people who wish to address alcohol or drug issues, run by Cardiff Housing Link;
- Support services for people moving into independent accommodation, e.g. Cardiff Move On, and resettlement workers based with various organisations;
- Day centre for homeless people run by Cardiff Action for the Single Homeless;
- Primary health care team working primarily at Tresillian House. This consists of a nurse practitioner working specifically with homeless people, a GP, chiropodist and community psychiatric nurse. They all make regular visits to Tresillian House, and the nurse practitioner also visits other schemes.

### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

A single homeless strategy was first produced in 1993. However, Cardiff no longer has a working strategy document. The strategy is at a stage where it needs to be at least reviewed, and probably rewritten. Part of the responsibility of one member of local authority staff is to produce a current single homeless strategy for Cardiff in conjunction with other organisations. A number of housing forum exist e.g. Cardiff Housing and Homelessness Forum, Direct Access Providers group, Voluntary Action Cardiff, Streetcarers (a forum of individuals and churches who organise soup runs).

### 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

Many of the areas identified as missing in Cardiff relate to appropriate move-on accommodation from hostels. Shorter stays in emergency accommodation could be facilitated through the provision of more



"second stage" appropriate supported housing. This would enable more people to be able to use emergency accommodation, without the need for a large increase in the number of emergency accommodation beds.

- More small supported housing schemes where people can gain, or improve on, basic life skills, such as cooking and budgeting, before moving to more independent housing;
- Supported accommodation and services for homeless people with a personality disorder or behavioural problem. Some people in this situation are being excluded from hostels and are not being diagnosed as having a mental health problem by psychiatric health services. They are, consequently, often not receiving appropriate help;
- Supported accommodation and services for people who display a chaotic lifestyle e.g. people who are in and out of prison, sometimes act very inappropriately, may give up a tenancy over a small issue which would not lead other people to give up a tenancy, in and out of hostels and other temporary accommodation;
- More supported accommodation for people with a drug problem;
- More supported accommodation for people with an alcohol problem;
- More long-term shared housing for those people who do not want to live on their own;
- More availability of long-term support to help some people in their own accommodation;
- More good quality move-on accommodation in the right areas which is close to amenities and affordable to people on low incomes or benefits;
- More alcohol and drug detoxification facilities which can be accessed quickly;

- Services for people who are experiencing problems in a combination of two or more areas of mental health, drugs and alcohol. People are sometimes receiving help with one of these issues, but in isolation from the other(s). New services may be needed to address this issue or greater co-operation and joint working between existing services to provide appropriate help;
- Clinic (including health advice) specifically for homeless people, and possibly close to one of the existing hostels;
- Appropriate ways of helping people who are violent;
- Emergency accommodation which will accept people who have dogs;
- Public baths and public washing facilities;
- Secure, free or very cheap lockers in which people sleeping rough can put possessions, such as personal items, blankets, clothing etc. Such items are often lost, stolen or damaged (e.g. become wet and unusable) due to no appropriate place to store them;
- More bed spaces in some emergency accommodation e.g. Huggard Centre night shelter (Cardiff Action for the Single Homeless) or of the type provided in the Wallich Clifford Community night shelter;
- More emergency accommodation specifically for 16 and 17 year olds.

## 6. Other issues

- Discharge arrangements from hospital are not always satisfactory. Some people are being discharged from psychiatric hospital without adequate accommodation and support arrangements being in place;
- Preparation for people being released from prison does not adequately ensure that people have somewhere to live. In some instances work done on admission to prison

could resolve this problem (such as completion of appropriate housing benefit forms etc.);

- Community care assessments can be difficult to obtain for some people, and can involve a long wait before being undertaken;
- Social services work and involvement with rough sleepers could be improved, and could become part of an integrated response to working with people sleeping rough;
- Easier access to social services help out of office hours would be useful;
- Access to mental health social services help is difficult for some hostel residents;
- It can be very difficult to obtain help for people who are diagnosed as having a personality disorder or behavioural problem;
- As far as possible services should be provided which are tailored to the individual needs of people sleeping rough;
- Registering with GPs can be very difficult for people sleeping rough. This can be due to not having an address, but also, anecdotally, to the appearance, personal hygiene and possible behaviour of some people in the surgery. Cardiff's draft single homeless strategy identifies this as an area of concern. There are two GPs who are used regularly by residents of some hostels who are very helpful and willing to register residents. Nonetheless, there are reports of staff having to contact Bro Taff Health Authority in order for residents to be allocated a GP;
- Difficulty in accessing a GP can mean difficulty accessing any health services which require the referral of a GP (e.g. mental health services);
- Difficulties in knowing what appropriate response to take towards accommodating known Schedule One offenders;

- Some churches are very helpful in, for example, providing soup runs, giving donations of food, clothes and money to various organisations;
- Some people are sleeping in hostel lounges due to a lack of vacant bedrooms. Housing benefit cannot be claimed by organisations in respect of these people;
- People who sleep rough often have support needs which require addressing. The solution to their situation is rarely just a matter of providing accommodation;
- Long-term funding for the work of voluntary organisations would make long-term planning much easier, and the availability of a service much more secure for clients. Such funding would need to be the subject of satisfactory monitoring and the continued need for the service, as in the case, for example, of Supported Housing Revenue Grant;
- Funding needs to be flexible enough to be tailored to individual needs, rather than being based on fitting into particular client groups;
- A common housing application form for local authority and housing association accommodation would be useful in, for example, helping to reduce the time spent applying for housing, and ease of comparisons between applications. This is currently under discussion in Cardiff;
- Some apparent inconsistency has been noticed in some hostels in the types and amounts of DSS Social Fund awards for people who appear to be in very similar circumstances;
- Some people who are sleeping rough in Cardiff are banned from hostels. This raises issues over the severity of some bans and the need to consider alternative solutions for people who are regularly banned.



## CARMARTHENSHIRE

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

The Special Needs Housing Advisory Service in Wales and Shelter Cymru survey of 1996 "A survey of rough sleepers in Wales" found nobody sleeping rough in Llanelli on the nights of 1st and 2nd February 1996. "Anecdotal evidence from local police and taxi drivers suggested, however, that there were rough sleepers present in the town."

No survey is known to have been undertaken since then in Carmarthenshire. However, Cymdeithas Caer Las is commissioning a research project into the housing and support needs of people who have recently been, or are currently, homeless in the borough. This research is due to be completed in the autumn 2000, and should provide quantitative and qualitative information regarding homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough.

Information provided by a voluntary organisation working with single homeless people in Swansea suggests that one or two people may have been sleeping rough in Llanelli in November 1998.

A probation linked shared housing scheme for single homeless people in Llanelli, run by Gwalia Housing Society, estimated that at least 3 people were known to be sleeping rough in Llanelli on 5th July 1999. Two of its three residents on 6th July 1999 had at some stage slept rough.

Of the 8 residents living at the Gwalia Housing Society Furnace Banc direct access hostel in Carmarthen on 6th July 1999 one had been sleeping rough directly before moving in. The hostel estimated that there may have been 1 or 2 people sleeping rough in Carmarthen on 5th July 1999.

### 2. Causes of rough sleeping

- Relationship breakdown is very common. For young people this often involves being told

to leave home, or being unable to get on with parents or a step parent and leaving home as a result. For older people it often involves separation from a partner;

- Eviction from accommodation largely due to being unable to manage in independent accommodation without some support;
- Violence;
- Poverty, particularly where a child reaches the age of 16 and is not working or in full time education. Some parents tell the young person to leave home giving the reason as being the cost of keeping him or her at home;
- Alcohol or drug related problems;
- A history of being in local authority care;
- Prison history with no secure accommodation to move into on release.

### 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- Direct access hostel (8 beds) in Carmarthen owned and managed by Gwalia Housing Society (called Furnace Banc) for men and women aged 16 to 65;
- Supported accommodation scheme for young women leaving local authority care in Carmarthen run by Cymdeithas Tai Hafan;
- Shared house with staff support (referral only) in Ammanford for 6 young single homeless people (aged 16 to 24 years old) managed by Gwalia Housing Society;
- Supported accommodation (social services referral only for care leavers) in Llanelli managed by Gwalia Housing Society (4 bed supported shared house and 2 self contained flats with floating support for 16 to 21 year olds who have been in care); and a supported 3 bed shared housing scheme and 2 self contained flats in Llanelli for probation service clients aged 16 to 65;
- Floating support service to some tenants of Gwalia Housing Society;



- Shelter housing advice surgery once a week in Llanelli;
- Shared accommodation and 2 self contained flats for single homeless people (with support available) in Llanelli managed by Cymdeithas Caer Las.

#### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy specifically in relation to single homelessness or rough sleeping. There is no multi-agency homelessness or housing forum in Carmarthenshire.

#### 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- Bond guarantee scheme;
- Emergency direct access accommodation in Llanelli (for approximately 6 people);
- Housing advice service in Carmarthen for up to one day per week;
- One stop shop covering advice on a wide variety of topics (e.g. housing, training, employment, shopping, basic living skills) in Llanelli;
- Directory of services for homeless people for use by agencies and single homeless people;
- More youth outreach work in Llanelli;
- Out of hours counselling service in Llanelli;
- There are a group of people in Llanelli (July 1999), primarily aged 18 to 25 years old, who have a chaotic lifestyle who are currently not receiving appropriate help, for whom supported accommodation may be appropriate;
- Drug rehabilitation facilities, as there is a high incidence of drug misuse amongst young people in particular (some of whom are also homeless).

#### 6. Other issues

- Better targeting of training to help some people to be able to start training courses for employment;
- A homelessness forum would be useful as a means of sharing information and ideas regarding services in the area, and the development of a strategy to address single homelessness and rough sleeping;
- A survey or other method of gathering information in relation to rough sleeping is needed in order to add to information available on areas of need in the borough;
- Registering with a GP or dentist can be very difficult for people living in the Gwalia scheme in Llanelli. This often involves members of staff contacting the health authority to arrange allocation of a GP for a resident. However in Carmarthen there are GPs who are willing to register residents of the Furnace Banc direct access hostel;
- Some young people have said that they would like to have been able to stay in foster care over the age of 16;
- The restrictions in housing benefit payments for under 25 year olds is causing hardship to some young people.

### CEREDIGION

#### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

A snapshot survey of people sleeping rough is planned for the whole of Ceredigion on three nights in September and October 1999. This is being organised by Hope for Young People Everywhere (HYPE). Anecdotal information suggests that at the beginning of February 1999 there may have been one person sleeping rough in Cardigan, one or two in Lampeter, one or two in Tregaron, and between one and ten people in Aberystwyth.

The incidence of rough sleeping was felt to be different in the summer than in the winter in Aberystwyth due to the influx of people to this coastal town in the summer.

A soup run undertaken in Aberystwyth by St Michael's Church twice a week between 1996 and the end of 1998 estimated that on most occasions between 0 and 2 people were seen who were sleeping rough. This number increased occasionally if some 'travellers' spent some time in the town.

## 2. Causes of rough sleeping

- Leaving care and leaving prison without sufficient preparation and follow up;
- Leaving psychiatric hospitals without adequate support arrangements.

## 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- Advice and information service for young people run by Hope for Young People Everywhere (HYPE) in Aberystwyth;
- The Big Issue has an office in Aberystwyth;
- Bond scheme (due to open autumn 1999) run by Ceredigion Care Society;
- Advocacy service for people with a mental health problem in Aberystwyth which occasionally helps people who are homeless to obtain accommodation (Ceredigion Advocacy Network).

## 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy.

There is a Housing Consultation Group which usually meets twice a year to consider what to include in Ceredigion's Housing Strategy and Operational Plan for submission to The National Assembly for Wales.

There is no specific homelessness forum.

## 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- Emergency accommodation, particularly for young people, in Aberystwyth but also possibly in other towns;
- Housing advice service;
- Accommodation with support for young people (including shared housing);
- Supported accommodation for people experiencing alcohol, drugs or mental health problems;
- Resettlement and support services for helping people to move into and to sustain independent accommodation;
- Drop-in or day centre;
- Counselling services;
- Survey into rough sleeping and single homelessness.

## 6. Other issues

"Hidden homelessness", such as people staying temporarily on friends' floors and moving from one temporary address to another, was identified as being much more widespread than people sleeping rough in Ceredigion. There may be occasions for some people in this situation that when they have nowhere to stay for one or a few nights they sleep rough.

## CONWY

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

No survey is known to have been undertaken in the borough although one is planned to take place in 1999, which will be commissioned by the Conwy Youth Homelessness Forum.

A one day a week soup run is organised by Get It While You Can. Between 1st April 1999 and 30th June 1999 it found 6 people



sleeping rough in Colwyn Bay and 6 people sleeping rough in Llandudno. One man, who is known to be a long-term rough sleeper, calls into their advice centre in Colwyn Bay approximately once every three months which provides him with clothes, food etc.

## 2. Causes of rough sleeping

One voluntary organisation (Clwyd Cornerstone Trust) cited an increasing and large cause of homelessness amongst young people accommodated at its hostel as being unacceptable behaviour at home. This was often in relation to drugs or alcohol issues and resulted in the young person moving out, or being told to move out, of home.

Other causes of homelessness and possible rough sleeping were that in coastal resorts in Conwy some landlords charge low rents in the winter and then high rents in the summer. Tourism produces an increased demand for accommodation in the summer both from tourists and temporary summer staff. This can result in homelessness as some people cannot afford the higher rents in the summer.

Similarly some people obtain temporary summer work, but are unemployed in the winter. Some people in this situation drink a lot more in the winter partly as a way of occupying time. This can affect people's accommodation situation and, in some cases, lead to homelessness.

Loss of tied accommodation can lead to homelessness in some cases.

Get It While You Can have found that the two most common experiences contributing to people using their hostels have been coming from broken homes and/or having experienced sexual abuse.

## 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- Housing advice service run by Shelter Cymru;

- Information and advice centre in Colwyn Bay, providing assistance primarily in areas related to alcohol, drugs and homelessness (run by Get It While You Can). This is not a day centre, but shower facilities, clothes and supplies of food are available, which can be used by people who are sleeping rough;
- Soup run once a week covering Colwyn Bay and Llandudno (run by Get it While You Can);
- Alcohol and drug counselling service (run by Get It While You Can);
- Eight bed staffed house in Llandudno Junction for homeless men who want to address alcohol or drugs issues (run by Get It While You Can). Access is via referral only;
- Hostel providing temporary accommodation for 13 homeless men in Kinmel Bay. Access is via referral only (primarily from the Probation Service). The scheme is run by Clwyd Cornerstone Trust.

## 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy. A survey of single homelessness, including rooflessness, is planned for 1999 which should provide information which can be used in the development of a strategy. There is a Conwy Youth Homelessness Forum which may be the appropriate group to develop a strategy.

There is also a North Wales Accommodation Forum covering a wider area than Conwy alone.

## 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- Emergency direct access provision (possibly small scale in a number of towns);
- Bond scheme;
- More single person move-on accommodation in the appropriate areas;



- Resettlement service;
- Support services for some people in their own accommodation to help them to sustain their tenancies;
- Drop-in centre where people can meet others for company, and for food and drink;
- Survey into homelessness and rough sleeping (due to begin autumn 1999).

## 6. Other issues

Difficulties are faced by some homeless people in:

- Accessing a GP;
- Accessing information;
- Obtaining help if they have a behavioural problem or personality disorder;
- Obtaining social services involvement;
- Obtaining help if they have a mental health problem and a drug/alcohol problem. Mental health services say that they cannot treat the person until the drug/alcohol problem has been addressed. The drug/alcohol services see the mental health problem as contributing to the drug/alcohol problem. Consequently, it is difficult for the person to address these problems until they have received help with their mental health problem.

## DENBIGHSHIRE

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

The Special Needs Housing Advisory Service and Shelter Cymru report of 1996 "A survey of rough sleepers in Wales" found 17 different people sleeping rough in Rhyl on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th February 1996. All of these people were aged under twenty five years old.

The Rhyl night shelter accommodated 80 homeless people from 1st December 1997 to 22nd March 1998. Of these people 70 said

that they had slept rough at some stage during their lives, and 58 had slept rough at some stage during the previous 12 months.

The night shelter accommodated 76 people from 1st December 1998 to 29th March 1999. Some people stayed on a number of separate occasions and a report on the shelter's work included statistics on such repeat visits. This meant that 95 stays at the shelter were analysed which found that 21 people said that their main type of accommodation in the previous month was sleeping rough.

A twice a week soup run is organised by Get It While You Can in Rhyl. Between 1st April 1999 and 30th June 1999 it found 13 people sleeping rough in Rhyl.

### 2. Causes of rough sleeping

Of the 17 people sleeping rough in the 1996 survey (see above) the following causes of rough sleeping were given:

- Affordability of accommodation (10 people – 59%);
- No accommodation (4 people – 24%);
- Alcohol problems (1 person – 6%);
- Does not know what accommodation is available (1 person – 6%);
- Prefer to sleep rough (1 person – 6%).

Of the 80 people who stayed at Rhyl night shelter from 1st December 1997 to 22nd March 1998 the following reasons for their homelessness were given:

- Search for work (16 people – 20%). A report on the work of the night shelter states that "this is not surprising due to the seasonal nature of the town's main trade, tourism. It has long been established that many people travel to the area in search of employment. This was most apparent during the latter months of February and March;"



- Family disputes (12 people – 15%);
- Relationship problems (11 people – 14%);
- Eviction (11 people – 14%). The report states that "it was felt that arguments over money, use of, or dealing in drugs could be a significant reason for eviction and short-term instability in finding and maintaining accommodation;"
- Out of prison (10 people – 12.5%) which "highlights the difficulties and lack of support for those leaving prison and re-integrating into community life." Housing benefit is only usually payable for a limited period for a person's accommodation whilst they are in prison. This can mean that they have lost their accommodation by the time they are released, and may immediately have nowhere to stay;
- Drug abuse;
- Passing through;
- Victimised;
- From other hostel;
- Out of hospital.

The main reasons for homelessness of the people staying at Rhyl night shelter between 1st December 1998 and 29th March 1999 were, in descending numerical order:

- Mental health problems (sometimes combined with alcohol, drugs or a physical health problem);
- Relationship breakdown;
- Family breakdown;
- Leaving prison;
- Tenancy problems;
- Leaving psychiatric care;
- Domestic violence;
- Loss of tied accommodation;

- Leaving detox;
- Gambling/relationship breakdown;
- Landlady dispute;
- Chaotic lifestyle;
- Lifestyle choice.

### 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- Rhyl night shelter providing 8 beds, including a resettlement service. The night shelter is only open during the winter months, and is managed by the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO);
- Soup run twice a week in Rhyl (run by Get It While You Can);
- Rhyl Homeless Persons Resettlement and Support Service, run by the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, from April to December when the night shelter is closed;
- Bond scheme (Denbighshire Bond Board run by local churches);
- Housing advice and advocacy service run by Shelter Cymru in various towns throughout Denbighshire;
- Women's Aid refuges;
- Floating support service for 5 tenants (aged 16 to 25) of Cymdeithas Tai Clwyd.

### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy. However, it is the intention to develop a Denbighshire Rooflessness Strategy based on the work of the Rhyl night shelter and the resettlement service. There is a Housing Forum in Denbighshire which is chaired by the Housing Department of Denbighshire County Borough Council.

## 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- Emergency 24 hour direct access provision available throughout the year;
- More resettlement services;
- Support service to help people to maintain their tenancies;
- Outreach service to people sleeping rough, which could help people to access services;
- Day time service (e.g. drop-in/day centre);
- More single person move-on accommodation (particularly housing association accommodation) in appropriate areas throughout the borough;
- Provision for some long-term rough sleepers who have an alcohol dependency;
- More advice services;
- More information on rough sleeping (e.g. through a survey).

## 6. Other issues

- People who have a mental health problem and a drug/alcohol problem are finding difficulty in getting help from mental health services or drug/alcohol services. The mental health services, for example, say that the person has a drug/alcohol problem which needs to be addressed first, whereas the drug/alcohol service providers say that the person's mental health needs to be addressed first. The result is that the person receives little or no help from either service;
- Access to drug rehabilitation services can involve a 6 to 8 week waiting period. Some people decide during the waiting period that they are no longer at the stage where they want to address their problem, and the right moment is lost due to the wait;
- There are difficulties for people receiving help from psychiatric services if they have a

"personality disorder" as this is not recognised as a mental illness;

- Access to the Rhyl winter night shelter during the winter of 1998/99 was difficult for people who had a dog;
- Access to social housing in Denbighshire can be very difficult as housing application forms are not capable of processing applicants without an address;
- The development and implementation of a co-ordinated homelessness strategy would be very useful;
- The development of formal inter-agency joint working agreements could improve links between agencies and service delivery to clients.

## FLINTSHIRE

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

A survey has not been undertaken into the incidence of rough sleeping in Flintshire. However, Shelter Cymru, in conjunction with the local authority, plans to undertake a snapshot two night count towards the end of 1999.

### 2. Causes of rough sleeping

No information was available on the causes of rough sleeping in Flintshire due to the lack of definite knowledge of whether people are sleeping rough in the borough. The survey noted above may help to provide some qualitative information in relation to the causes of rough sleeping.

### 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- Housing advice provided by Shelter Cymru in Holywell, Buckley and Connah's Quay;
- Hostel for 17 single homeless people aged 16 to 25 years old in Holywell. Admission is through referral only. Resettlement and

support is provided for people moving from the hostel. The hostel (Llys Emlyn Williams) is run by Clwyd Alyn Housing Association;

- Four bed supported housing scheme for young single homeless people in Greenfield (near Holywell) run by Clwyd Alyn Housing Association;
- Temporary accommodation, support and advice for women provided by Women's Aid and in Connah's Quay and Holywell by Cymdeithas Tai Hafan.

#### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy. However, information obtained from the survey (see above) may be used in the development of a strategy. There is no homelessness forum specifically in Flintshire, although there is a more general North Wales Accommodation Forum which is attended by a housing department representative.

#### 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- More single person social housing;
- Bond scheme;
- Research into rough sleeping in the area;
- Short-term emergency accommodation for young people (such as the Barnardo's Nightstop model);
- Direct access emergency accommodation for single homeless people (ideally in two towns) with approximately 6 beds in each scheme;
- More support for people in their own accommodation;
- More preparation for school children in relation to being able to manage in accommodation (e.g. covering cooking, budgeting skills, tenancy issues).

#### 6. Other issues

- Some people experience difficulties in obtaining social services' community care assessments;
- Legislative changes to the Housing Act 1996 would probably be needed if a serious attempt to address the issue of single homelessness is to be made, such as widening the priority needs group of unintentionally homeless people;
- People who are of 'no fixed abode' have difficulty registering on some housing waiting lists (e.g. people cannot register on Clwyd Alyn Housing Association's list without an address);
- The payment of benefits on a weekly rather than fortnightly basis would be very useful for many young people, in particular, to assist them to budget more appropriately;
- There is some reluctance in the area for people to want to move from their home town to another area;
- More planning and preparation for young people leaving care is needed to reduce the amount of homelessness.

### GWYNEDD

#### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

The 1996 Special Needs Housing Advisory Service and Shelter Cymru report, "A survey of rough sleepers in Wales", found that on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th February 1996 14 people were sleeping rough in Bangor, and that on the 2nd, 3rd and 5th February 1996 2 people were sleeping rough in Blaenau Ffestiniog.

The 1997 Shelter Cymru/Gwynedd Council survey, "Rough Sleepers: A Rural Issue", involved night time head counts once a week over ten weeks. 38 different people were found sleeping rough in Gwynedd. There were

44 positive instances of people sleeping rough, although 6 of these were duplicate counts. The towns where people were sleeping rough were Bangor (30 instances), Caernarfon (10 instances) and Pwllhelli (4 instances). Five other towns were surveyed in which nobody was found.

The 1998 Cywaith Joseff/Gwynedd Council survey, "Rough Sleeping 1998 Update", involved night time head counts once or twice a week over ten weeks. The survey found 34 people sleeping rough (23 in Bangor and 11 in Caernarfon). In addition 12 people were accommodated through a pilot drop-in scheme that was running concurrently with the head count.

For the period 21st December 1998 to 4th April 1999 the St. Mary's night shelter in Bangor accommodated 50 different people, 29 of whom had been previously sleeping rough.

A twice a week soup run is organised by Get It While You Can in Bangor. Between 1st April 1999 and 30th June 1999 it found 12 people sleeping rough in Bangor.

## 2. Causes of rough sleeping

- Relationship breakdown;
- People losing their accommodation because they cannot manage properly;
- Some young people being told to leave home due to poverty in the family;
- Mental health problems leading to inability to manage;
- Some young people leaving social services care without sufficient preparation and planning;
- Some people leaving prison without accommodation;
- Lack of sufficient accommodation;
- Inability to afford accommodation.

## 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- Soup run in Caernarfon undertaken by a Pentecostal Church;
- Soup run in Bangor twice a week, run by Get It While You Can;
- GISDA (Grŵp Ieuencid Sengl Digartref Arfon – Arfon Young Single Homeless Group) work with 16-25 year olds providing a direct access scheme for this age group in Caernarfon, one 4 bed direct access scheme and 4 move on beds for young people in Blaenau Ffestiniog, support to people when they move into more independent housing, drop-in service for young people in Meirionnydd and Dwyfor, and a 24 hour help line;
- North Wales Housing Association runs a 5 bed night shelter in Bangor, a 7 bed hostel (Pendinas) primarily for young people in Bangor (accessed via referral), and a number of houses and flats in which staff support is provided;
- Cymdeithas Tai Eryri has a referral only 6 bed hostel in Pwllheli which is mainly for people with mental health problems and has 6 move-on beds from this scheme. In Bangor it has a 7 bed temporary rehabilitation hostel for people with alcohol problems run in partnership with Cyngor Alcohol Information Services, and a hostel for ex-offenders run in partnership with the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders;
- Women's Aid scheme in Blaenau Ffestiniog for women escaping domestic violence;
- Sylfaen (Children's Society) in Caernarfon work with young people to help them to access services, obtain accommodation, support young people in accommodation and will advocate on behalf of young people;



- Outreach service to people sleeping rough primarily in Bangor and Caernarfon, run by Cywaith Joseff;
- Rent guarantee/bond scheme called "Agorfa" run by Cywaith Joseff.

#### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy. However, there is a multi-agency group which meets regarding the way forward in relation to homelessness in Gwynedd. This comprises of the local authority and many of the above mentioned organisations, and would seem to be an appropriate group to devise a strategy. It may be appropriate for representatives of other organisations to also be part of this group (e.g. health authority). The 1997 and 1998 surveys, and the organisations running services at present, can provide valuable information which can be used in the development of a strategy.

#### 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

The "Rough Sleeping 1998 Update" makes the following recommendations:

- "The provision of a direct access hostel with at least 6 to 8 bed spaces;
- The provision of more move on accommodation that is accessible for people leaving Pendinas, GISDA, and the direct hostel provision;
- The establishment of an emergency accommodation scheme for young people, possibly using the 'Nightstop' model" (accommodation provided temporarily in volunteers' homes). "This would take away the need for young people to sleep rough while accommodation within other agencies such as GISDA or Pendinas is sought;
- The development of a day centre with facilities for practical help, such as washing,

food, clothes etc., and one to one advice and support, as well as being a central organisation for co-ordinating referrals and procedures;

- The provision of inter-agency support and resettlement workers who can provide integrated resettlement plans taking into account the individual support needs and their own wishes;"
- Support to people living in private landlord and council tenancies;
- More single person affordable, good quality accommodation in the appropriate areas.

#### 6. Other issues

- Homeless people have difficulties accessing GPs, dentists and other health services;
- Discharge and follow up care arrangements for people leaving psychiatric hospitals could be improved;
- It is very difficult for people to access mental health services if they are using illegal drugs;
- Young people living in local authority care need more help to prepare for moving out of care, and more effective follow up support afterwards;
- People are not being prepared for release from prison well enough and some are consequently facing homelessness very soon after release;
- It would be helpful, as a measure to prevent homelessness, if better assessments were undertaken with people at the start of tenancies so as to identify support needs;
- The housing department could ensure that trained staff are available in every housing office to take homelessness applications and assess if any referrals to other appropriate organisations are required;
- The issue of loneliness needs to be addressed with some young people living on their own;



- Three year, time limited, funding makes it difficult to provide services taking a long-term view;
- It would be helpful if a client could present in any of the voluntary sector's agencies and access the services of any other agency through the first point of contact;
- The local authority could form working partnerships with the voluntary sector to facilitate the correct referral and standardised working procedures between the voluntary and statutory sector homeless provision.

## ISLE OF ANGLESEY

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

The Special Needs Housing Advisory Service and Shelter Cymru survey of 1996 "A survey of rough sleepers in Wales" identified 6 people sleeping rough in Holyhead on the nights of 1st, 3rd and 5th January 1996. Five were male and one was female. One was aged 16-17, two were aged 18-25, one was 25-34, one was 35-54 and one was aged over 55.

Since then there has been no further survey undertaken.

The Housing Department was aware of evidence of a few young people sleeping rough in Llangefni in January 1999. It was believed that some of these people had problems relating to drug use.

### 2. Causes of rough sleeping

A total of 8 reasons were given in the 1996 survey (see above) of which 4 people said the lack of accommodation, 3 said not liking available accommodation, 2 said psychiatric problems, 1 said cannot afford accommodation, 1 said health problems, 1 said problems with drugs, 1 said difficulty in settling down, and 1 said problems with claiming housing benefit.

The main causes currently identified are:

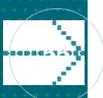
- Family breakdown (particularly amongst young people);
- Poverty (e.g. because of long-term unemployment, and the current under 25 single room rent housing benefit restrictions);
- Difficulty of obtaining money for a bond to move into private rented accommodation.

### 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- Two bedded supported housing scheme for young single homeless people (aged 16-25) in Holyhead run by Digartref Ynys Môn. Access is via referral. It is planned to increase this provision to 8 beds in 2000, with the possible addition of a further four, two bedroom bungalows which could be used as move on accommodation;
- Temporary self contained flats with support for ex offenders in Holyhead, managed by the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders and 'move-on' flats from this scheme with support;
- Advice services run by the Citizens Advice Bureau, the Young Homelessness Advisory Service, and the Holyhead Unemployed Workers Centre;
- Citizens Advice Bureau and the Lydia Project in Holyhead give talks in schools regarding housing and homelessness.

### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no specific written strategy. The Ynys Môn Housing and Social Care Forum meets approximately every 6 months to discuss current and future housing needs, and is the main consultation forum in respect of the Housing Strategy and Operational Plan.



## 5. What services have been identified as missing for people sleeping rough?

- Emergency accommodation for 16-25 year olds (e.g. of the Barnardo's 'Nightstop' model which provides overnight accommodation for young people in the houses of volunteer families);
- Emergency accommodation for over 25 year old homeless people;
- Outreach work to help people to access services;
- Bond scheme (possibly needed, although there was a bond scheme which closed in 1998);
- More provision for people experiencing drug problems (which was identified as a growing area of need);
- Practical help, such as food, clothing etc.;
- Information booklet or directory of services (which could be used by homeless people and agencies) which outlines the help and services available for homeless people.

## 6. Other issues

- Changes to the current restrictions of housing benefit payments for young people could help to reduce homelessness.

## MERTHYR TYDFIL

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

The 1996 Special Needs Housing Advisory Service and Shelter Cymru report "A survey of rough sleepers in Wales" found that on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th February 1996 there were 16 different people sleeping rough in Merthyr Tydfil. All were male, and 12 were in the 16 to 24 age range.

The 1997 Opinion Research Services Ltd (University of Swansea) report "Housing needs

in Merthyr Tydfil: Homelessness and Rooflessness" found that on the nights of the 23rd, 24th and 25th October 1997:

- 1 person was sleeping rough;
- 1 person was reported to be sleeping rough; and
- 1 person interviewed in another section of the research said that they had slept rough during that period.

The survey also involved all agencies involved in the Merthyr Single Homeless Forum completing a questionnaire with people presenting as homeless, about to become homeless or sleeping rough in September 1997. Out of 43 questionnaires completed 10 people said they had slept rough at some stage as a last resort, and out of 1500 respondents to the housing needs survey 5 had a member of the household who had slept rough at some stage.

Between 1st April 1998 and 1st March 1999 the voluntary organisation ADREF received 77 referrals from probation officers to its once a week housing advice surgery in Merthyr Tydfil. Five of these referrals were for people who were sleeping rough. All were male between the ages of 18 and 25. They had all been homeless for less than two weeks when they approached ADREF, and on average for 4 days.

### 2. Causes of rough sleeping

The 1996 survey identified the following causes of rough sleeping:

- Cannot afford accommodation (identified 13 times);
- Difficulties because of alcohol problems (identified 8 times);
- Difficulties because of drug problems (identified 8 times);
- Family/relationship breakdown (identified twice);

The 1997 survey found that the main causes of homelessness were partnership breakdown, leaving parental home, forced to leave/evicted/lack of accommodation, and harassment. Sleeping rough was found to occur "as a result of a crisis, when a person becomes suddenly and unexpectedly homeless. The survey found that when this happens and a relation or friend cannot be found to provide temporary accommodation people will sleep rough for short periods whilst they attempt to find help. There is some evidence of long-term or persistent rough sleeping in the Merthyr area, concurrent with drink or drug addiction, though it is not known whether the addiction is the cause or effect of this type of persistent rough sleeping. In one case the person sleeping rough appears to have been a victim of long-term failure by his parents and failure by a number of agencies to provide him with the advice and support required."

The ADREF housing advice surgery from 1st April 1998 to 1st March 1999 found that 4 of the 5 people who were sleeping rough had either a mental health problem or a learning difficulty/mental handicap.

### 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- Bond scheme run by Barnardo's;
- Part time housing advice services run by ADREF (for probation service clients) and Shelter Cymru;
- Floating support service for probation service tenants run by ADREF in conjunction with Merthyr Tydfil Housing Association and the probation service;
- Floating support service and supported shared accommodation for people with mental health problems, run by Gofal Housing Trust;
- Supported housing for single homeless people in three, two bedroom houses. This is

currently being piloted with one person being accommodated and supported in each house.

### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

Merthyr Tydfil has a "Single Persons Homeless Strategy 1998/2000" which was written by the Merthyr Single Persons Housing Forum. This forum consists of representatives from 15 organisations (including housing associations, health trust, local authority and a variety of voluntary organisations working with young people).

### 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

The Single Persons Homeless Strategy identified a number of gaps in provision, on which work is being undertaken to establish the following:

- Emergency direct access accommodation;
- Expansion of the three, two bedroom supported housing projects (noted above) to provide supported accommodation for 8-10 people;
- Supported lodging scheme;
- More appropriate move-on accommodation from supported schemes;
- The conversion of specialist accommodation with low demand to provide housing for young single homeless people;
- Community based projects in the lower Merthyr valley (such as youth groups).

Other services which have also been identified as needed are:

- Independent housing advice centre;
- Resettlement and support services;
- More help for people with a drug or alcohol problem;



- Expansion of the Barnardo's bond scheme so that more guarantees can be issued to help people access private rented housing.

## 6. Other issues

- Some concerns were expressed over whether social services are undertaking their full responsibilities under the Children Act 1989.

## MONMOUTHSHIRE

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

In 1999 the local authority undertook a survey which is recorded in the Newport Action for the Single Homeless report "Single Homelessness and rough sleeping in the counties of Newport, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen, snapshot surveys summer 1998 and winter 1998/99". This included a 3 night snapshot survey of people sleeping rough on the 24th and 28th January, and 2nd February 1999 in Chepstow, Caldicot, Abergavenny and Monmouth. Nobody was found sleeping rough, although reliable information indicated that at least 3 people were probably sleeping rough on one or more nights of the survey.

A night shelter which was open in Abergavenny between 25th December 1998 and 31st March 1999 accommodated 15 different people. Two people, who have slept rough for many years in the area, stayed at the shelter for virtually all of this period.

### 2. Causes of rough sleeping

- Relationship breakdown;
- Mental health problems;
- Alcohol problems;
- Inability to find suitable accommodation.

### 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- Bond scheme called RightMove run by the local authority;
- Emergency overnight accommodation (usually for no longer than 3 weeks) in Monmouth for 16 to 25 year olds in a 3 bed house and occasionally in volunteers' homes. Access is via referral. The scheme (called StopOver) is run on a volunteer basis by Churches Together in Monmouth;
- Housing advice provided by the local authority in its housing offices in Abergavenny, Monmouth, Chepstow and Caldicot;
- Supported shared accommodation for people with mental health problems in Abergavenny run by the mental health charity MIND;
- Drop-in centre for people with mental health problems in Abergavenny run by MIND;
- A night shelter was open in Abergavenny from 25th December 1998 to 31st March 1999.

### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy. However, the local authority intends to develop a strategy which will take into account the information provided by the Abergavenny winter night shelter.

### 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- Possibly some form of small scale direct access emergency accommodation in a few towns in the area;
- Possible night shelter provision in Abergavenny with the longer term possibility of a 24 hour direct access provision;



- Resettlement and support service;
- More affordable, good quality single person housing in appropriate areas.

## 6. Other issues

- The local authority would like to obtain more information on the extent and needs of single homeless people and people sleeping rough, so as to identify what services are the most appropriate to be provided;
- The case for some form of emergency accommodation in Abergavenny has been strengthened by the findings of the Abergavenny winter night shelter of 1998/99;
- The night shelter identified that access to GPs and other health care can be very difficult for people sleeping rough. In some cases this may be due to people being unable to manage to obtain a GP for themselves without the help of an advocate.

## NEATH PORT TALBOT

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

There has not been a survey undertaken specifically on rough sleeping in the borough, and there is little information available on the incidence of rough sleeping. Between 1st April 1998 and 22nd November 1998 the Dewis advice service in Port Talbot was aware of one client who had slept rough and four others whom they believed to be sleeping rough.

Cymdeithas Caer Las is commissioning a research project into the housing and support needs of people who have recently been, or are currently, homeless in the Neath Port Talbot borough. This research is due to be completed by the autumn of 2000, and should provide quantitative and qualitative

information on homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough.

### 2. Causes of rough sleeping

- Breakdown in family relationships often related to drugs issues amongst some young people;
- Some young people coming out of prison without anywhere to live may temporarily stay with friends, but may reach a point where they cannot stay any longer and have no option but to sleep rough;
- Evictions;
- Rent arrears resulting in evictions or the person voluntarily moving out of a property;
- Some young people being told to leave home because parents cannot afford to look after them any more.

### 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- YMCA 13 bed hostel for 16-25 year old men in Port Talbot;
- Bond scheme in Port Talbot run by Dewis;
- Advice service (including housing advice) in Port Talbot run by Dewis;
- Three shared houses with support available for single homeless people run by Cymdeithas Caer Las;
- Temporary accommodation in flats and bedsits run by Dewis;
- Women's Aid services in Port Talbot, Neath and Pontardawe.

### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy. However, the information provided in the Cymdeithas Caer Las research project should provide information which can contribute to the appropriate development of a strategy.



## 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- Emergency 24 hour direct access accommodation;
- Wet house for people with alcohol problems;
- Resettlement and support services for people moving into independent accommodation;
- Support for some people living in local authority and private accommodation;
- Accommodation with high support for people with drugs problems;
- Registration scheme for private landlords in Port Talbot;
- More good quality, affordable accommodation for single people in the right areas.

## 6. Other issues

- It is difficult for people with personality disorders or behavioural problems to obtain help. They are not diagnosed as having a mental health problem and do not fall under the umbrella of mental health or any other services;
- Support for 16/17 year olds outside of social services responsibility can be difficult to access;
- People who have difficulties in two or more areas of a mental health problem, alcohol and drug use often find it difficult to obtain help from mental health, drug or alcohol agencies;
- Social work support can be difficult for some people to obtain if their needs cover more than one area (e.g. a person with a child and family social worker may have difficulty getting a social worker from the mental health team at the same time);
- Registering with a GP can be difficult for homeless people;

- A person who is sleeping rough (and has no permanent address) cannot get on the local authority housing waiting list and will, therefore, not get re-housed by the local authority through this route;
- If someone is of no fixed abode and, for example, moving from one person's floor to another this can make re-housing difficult as the person needs to complete a new form for every move, is very difficult to contact etc.

The following strategy documents were felt to be needed in the area:

- Single homeless strategy;
- Move-On strategy;
- Youth homeless strategy.

## NEWPORT

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

The 1996 Special Needs Housing Advisory Service and Shelter Cymru report "A survey of rough sleepers in Wales" found 6 different people sleeping rough in Newport on 1st, 2nd and 4th February 1996.

The 1999 Newport Action for the Single Homeless report "Single homelessness and rough sleeping rough in the counties of Newport, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen: snapshot surveys summer 1998 and winter 1998/99" found:

- 13 different people sleeping rough in Newport on 27th, 28th and 29th August 1998;
- 5 different people sleeping rough in Newport on 24th, 28th January and 2nd February 1999. One person was found sleeping rough in both the August and January/February surveys.

The Newport Action for the Single Homeless direct access scheme can accommodate 12

single homeless people. Of the 133 people who were accommodated between 1st April 1998 and 31st March 1999 29 had been sleeping rough or in a squat on the night before moving into the scheme.

## 2. Causes of rough sleeping

The surveys noted above, and information relating to the Newport Action for the Single Homeless direct access scheme, found the following causes of rough sleeping:

- Lack of knowledge of available accommodation;
- Not liking available accommodation;
- Unable to afford accommodation;
- Eviction;
- Unable to cope in previous accommodation (e.g. having built up rent arrears due to problems related to housing benefit claim);
- Banned from hostels;
- Relationship breakdown (e.g. amongst older people separation from partner, or amongst younger people leaving home following difficulties with a parent or step parent);
- Being asked to leave family or friends;
- Being released from prison;
- Preferring to sleep rough;
- Running away from care;
- Sexual or physical abuse.

## 3. Examples of services which currently exist

Newport Action for the Single Homeless runs the following services in Newport:

- Direct access scheme (12 beds);
- Resettlement service ;
- 7 bed hostel providing move on temporary accommodation for people who have lived at the direct access scheme;

- 26 bed hostel for single homeless people with special needs (primarily people with a mental health problem);
- 2 shared staffed houses providing temporary accommodation (4 beds in each);
- 1 shared house providing permanent accommodation (4 beds);
- Bond scheme.

Other services in Newport include:

- Support and accommodation for homeless 'runaway' children run by The Porth Project;
- Drop-in service providing, for example, meals and clothes run by 'Caring Hands' (linked to King's Church, Newport);
- Once a week day time soup run ('Caring Hands');
- Bond scheme for probation service clients, run by Trothwy Housing Association;
- Housing advice provided by the local authority;
- Hostel and floating support service for probation clients and ex offenders managed by Trothwy Housing Association;
- Intensive supported housing project for alcohol and drug users, called the "In2change" project, run by Trothwy Housing Association.

## 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy. There is a multi-agency Special Needs Housing Group which may be an appropriate group to develop a strategy.

## 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- Outreach work to make contact with people sleeping rough and to help them to access services if appropriate;



- Day centre;
- Floating support to some people living in private or council accommodation;
- A wider variety of provision for people with alcohol problems, including a 'wet house' (possibly along the lines of the Shoreline project run by the Wallich Clifford Community in Cardiff);
- More direct access beds;
- Multi-disciplinary team with a budget which cuts across traditional departments so that needs can be more easily addressed.

## 6. Other issues

- Some homeless people experience difficulties registering with GPs and consequently accessing some other health services;
- Access to benefits can be difficult if a person does not have identification. Some people sleeping rough have no identification and may have difficulty in obtaining it;
- Detailed assessments of needs by social services can be difficult to obtain;
- Ways of helping to prevent rough sleeping could include young people leaving care being better prepared and supported in relation to living more independently, more assistance given to people being released from prison, and more work on addressing why people abandon tenancies;
- The development of a working single homeless strategy could assist the identification of need and the targeting of resources and funding applications appropriately.

## PEMBROKESHIRE

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

The 1996 Special Needs Housing Advisory Service and Shelter Cymru report "A survey of

rough sleepers in Wales" found 8 different people sleeping rough in Pembrokeshire on 31st January and 2nd February 1996. Seven of these people were in the 18–24 age group.

From 1st July 1997 to 30th June 1998 Pembrokeshire Action for Single Homeless undertook a 12 month survey in Pembrokeshire entitled "Study to establish the extent and nature of rooflessness in the local authority area and the provision of advice, resettlement and support services for rough sleepers" which found 75 different people sleeping rough. The survey involved 39 agencies in Pembrokeshire agreeing to complete a questionnaire with people approaching them who said they were sleeping rough. The 75 people were sleeping rough in the following areas:

- Haverfordwest	33
- Pembroke Dock	22
- Milford Haven	5
- Scattered throughout rural areas	15

51 of the 75 people were aged under 30 years old.

From 1st July 1998 to 31st December 1998 10 people calling upon the services of Pembrokeshire Action for Single Homeless were sleeping rough and 21 were 'of no fixed abode' (some of whom may have been sleeping rough).

Since 1993, during the winter periods, to avoid the necessity for anyone to sleep rough, people can be referred for emergency accommodation in the local authority's two hostels for homeless people. This scheme is called Winterwatch.

- Between 1st December 1997 and 31st March 1998 11 people who would otherwise have been sleeping rough stayed at the hostels;



- Between 1st December 1998 and 31st March 1999 15 people who would otherwise have been sleeping rough stayed at the hostels. All were male and in the age groups 16-25 (3), 25-34 (3), 35-44 (7), and 45-60 (2).

## 2. Causes of rough sleeping

The Pembrokeshire Action for Single Homeless survey identified that there were usually a number of contributory factors leading to a person sleeping rough. In the survey respondents were able to cite more than one reason for them sleeping rough. The reasons (and numbers of times these reasons were given) were:

- Relationship breakdown	30
- Arguments	30
- Eviction	19
- Ex-offenders	14
- No money	19
- Violence	8
- Drugs, alcohol, medical problems	6
- Job searching, further education	9

The survey states that "the people that have been rough sleeping for over 6 months had one of two common factors, they are either ex-offenders or have been evicted."

The reasons for homelessness given by the 15 people who used the Pembrokeshire County Council's hostels under the Winterwatch scheme between 1st December 1998 and 31st March 1999 were:

- Relationship breakdown	6
- Parents/family requested to leave	3
- Release from prison	2
- Burglary in private landlord property	1
- Notice to quit from private landlord	1
- Repossession (business)	1
- Not homeless (after investigation)	1

## 3. Examples of services which currently exist

Pembrokeshire Action for Single Homeless provides the following services in Pembrokeshire:

- Advice services in various locations (e.g. Haverfordwest, Milford Haven, Pembroke Dock and appointments available in Fishguard, Narberth and Tenby);
- A bond scheme comprising a general scheme for single homeless people; a partnership with the probation service to provide bonds and limited support to probation service clients; a partnership with social services to provide bonds and short-term support to 16 and 17 year olds;
- A floating support service to 4 tenants of a housing association;
- A support service to assist under 18 year olds with housing and benefit issues;
- Starter packs (e.g. food and personal hygiene items) to rough sleepers or new tenants with little money;
- A freephone advice line (2 hours per day Monday to Friday).

The local authority runs the 'Winterwatch' hostel scheme. This is where people with nowhere else to stay, and who would otherwise be sleeping rough, are accommodated in one of the two local authority hostels for 'statutorily' homeless people or a bed and breakfast during the period 1st December to 31st March. People do not have to be 'statutorily' homeless or in priority need under the Housing Act 1996 in order to be admitted. The scheme is not direct access, although people can move in immediately on referral by organisations (such as Pembrokeshire Action for Single Homeless, police, duty social worker, probation, housing officers, social services).

#### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy. However, part of the current work of Pembrokeshire Action for Single Homeless (including the survey noted above) could be used to contribute to a strategy. There is a 'Joint Commissioning Team for Housing' involving representatives of various organisations which may be the appropriate group to develop a strategy.

#### 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- Outreach service to make contact with rough sleepers to help them access services;
- Emergency accommodation, which would probably need to be provided in various locations throughout Pembrokeshire (e.g. Pembroke Dock, Fishguard and Haverfordwest) rather than solely in one main town. This is because many people can be very reluctant to move from one town to another as their social networks are often well established in one town only. Also, as Pembroke Dock and Fishguard are two ferry ports for people arriving from Ireland this can increase the demand for emergency accommodation in these towns;
- 'Halfway housing' and support for people who become homeless if private landlord accommodation is unavailable. Their situation can be assessed and suitable long-term accommodation obtained;
- More safe, suitable, secure and affordable accommodation for single people;
- More support for some people to sustain their accommodation, particularly in local authority or private landlord tenancies;
- More high profile local advice services;
- More drug advice and support services;
- Public washing facilities (e.g. public baths).

#### 6. Other issues

- It is very difficult for people without an address to register with a GP;
- It is very difficult to obtain a DSS Social Fund Community Care grant for furniture and equipment to furnish a property. People may obtain a Budgeting or Crisis Loan, but this automatically puts them into debt when their income is already very low;
- Rent in advance for moving into private landlord accommodation is difficult for people on benefit or low income to pay, thus restricting their access to much private rented accommodation;
- There can be difficulty for people who have a dual diagnosis in certain aspects of health to obtain help (e.g. people with a mental health problem, and a drug or alcohol problem, or a learning disability). Agencies in Pembrokeshire are trying to address this by working towards the first agency which is contacted taking on the responsibility of working with the client;
- Housing benefit restrictions for under 25 year olds are making it very difficult for this age group to be accommodated and sustain tenancies in the private sector.

### POWYS

#### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

The 1996 Special Needs Housing Advisory Service and Shelter Cymru report "A survey of rough sleepers in Wales" found 5 people sleeping rough in two towns in Powys (4 people in Welshpool on 3rd, 5th and 6th February 1996 and 1 person in Newtown) on 2nd, 3rd and 4th February 1996.

No survey is known to have taken place in Powys since that time.



However, through its general work the Powys Drugs and Alcohol Council has been in contact with 56 people sleeping rough in Powys between 7th September 1996 and 2nd August 1999. Recently it has introduced a youth outreach service which includes evening outreach work to young people at risk. This has led to a significant increase in the organisation's contact with young people who are sleeping rough. It estimated that on 2nd August 1999 15 people were sleeping rough in Powys. Five people were estimated to be sleeping rough in Brecon, two in Builth Wells, two in Llandrindod Wells, two in Llanwrtyd Wells, two in Welshpool, one person in Newtown and one in Hay on Wye. The age group of those 15 people was between 16 and 23 years old.

One woman (aged 65 years old) who stayed at Abergavenny night shelter in Monmouthshire during the winter of 1998/99 is known to have been sleeping rough for periods since it closed which has included sleeping rough in Crickhowell.

Between 1st April 1998 and 1st April 1999, of those people presenting as homeless at Powys local authority housing offices who were classed as single and homeless but not in priority need, 66 people were roofless. Roofless was defined as people sleeping outside, in cars or able to stay with friends for no more than 2 nights.

## 2. Causes of rough sleeping

The 1996 Special Needs Housing Advisory Service and Shelter Cymru survey noted above found the following reasons for rough sleeping:

- Do not like available accommodation;
- No accommodation available;
- Unable to afford accommodation;
- Health problems;
- Alcohol problems.

Other reasons identified by organisations currently working in Powys are:

- Relationship breakdown (identified as the most common cause) which is often linked to poor communication between young people and their parents or step parents;
- A young person may not be able to get on with a mother's new partner who has moved into the house, and leaves as a result;
- Abuse of a young person by a parent or step parent;
- A lack of security and stability in a person's upbringing (e.g. through living in a large number of different local authority care placements) may result in a chaotic type of lifestyle as the person reaches the age of leaving care which creates difficulties in maintaining accommodation;
- Eviction;
- People moving away from an area to escape threats of violence.

## 3. Examples of service which currently exist

- Emergency accommodation for 'statutorily homeless people' (in Newtown, Welshpool, Ystradgynlais and Llandrindod Wells). People who are homeless, but not in a priority need group, may occasionally be placed in this emergency accommodation;
- Bond scheme operated by the local authority which is restricted to people who are statutorily homeless;
- Temporary supported accommodation for single homeless people provided by Trothwy Housing Association in Llandrindod Wells, Brecon, Ystradgynlais, Newtown and Welshpool. Access is via referral from agencies such as probation, social services, community mental health team, voluntary organisations and the local authority housing department. Self referral is also accepted;



- Floating support service for single homeless people referred to Trothwy Housing Association in various parts of Powys;
- Youth outreach service run by Powys Drugs and Alcohol Council. Part of this work involves contact with people sleeping rough. This contact includes building up trust with a person, advice on harm reduction and assistance to obtain appropriate help. The service has a much broader remit than working exclusively with people sleeping rough, but will purchase meals for people sleeping rough and provide help with obtaining clothing.

Some other organisations may meet single homeless people (and possibly people sleeping rough, or who have slept rough) through their work. These include:

- A drop-in centre for unemployed people in Brecon;
- Cymdeithas Tai Hafan and the probation service have resettlement services available for their clients (i.e. homeless women, and ex-offenders);
- Women's Aid services (e.g. accommodation for women escaping domestic violence, support and advice services);
- Powys Challenge (a befriending service to young offenders);
- Bare Necessities (furniture recycling in Brecon).

#### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy, and no specific regular forum of agencies in Powys to discuss housing/homelessness issues. There is a Housing Initiative Group which meets regularly throughout Powys. This was established by the Community Mental Health Team and discusses individual clients' needs to

try to ensure that no clients known to the group fall through the net of support in Powys.

#### 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- Emergency direct access 24 hour staffed accommodation in various parts of Powys for homeless people who are not 'statutorily homeless' (a particular need was identified in Brecon, and a probable need in Newtown and Llandrindod Wells). This provision could be small scale, such as between 1 and 4 beds in each of these towns. It may be appropriate to link them with existing staffed schemes;
- Housing advice services;
- Bond scheme may be appropriate for areas of Powys where there is a reasonable supply of private rented accommodation (e.g. Llandrindod Wells);
- More affordable, good quality, single person accommodation in some areas (particularly in Brecon and to a smaller extent in Newtown);
- More research and information on single homelessness and rough sleeping is needed.

#### 6. Other issues

- It can be difficult for homeless people to register on the housing waiting lists of some housing associations as they do not have a permanent address (e.g. they may be staying temporarily with various friends);
- The housing benefit restrictions for under 25 year olds has made it difficult for many to manage financially;
- It can be difficult to obtain appropriate assistance for people who have a dual diagnosis involving mental health, drug and alcohol problems. This has been recognised and work is being undertaken between

mental health, drug and alcohol agencies to improve working arrangements for people in this situation;

- Access to dentists is very difficult due to the small number of dentists undertaking NHS work;
- There can be substantial difficulties for vulnerable 16 and 17 year olds obtaining welfare benefits;
- Obtaining the involvement of social services and probation can sometimes be difficult, particularly when a client is placed in some supported housing schemes.

## RHONDDA CYNON TAFF

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

The 1997 report "Rough Sleeping and Homelessness in Rhondda Cynon Taff" (Susan Hutson and Stuart Jones) found that, during two weeks in January and February 1997, of 131 people who were interviewed who presented to agencies as homeless 64 had slept rough in the past, and 24 said they were currently sleeping rough.

A 3 night count on March 21st, 22nd and 23rd 1997 found 2 people sleeping rough (one person in the Rhondda and one outside Pontypridd) and evidence of 5 other sites of rough sleeping.

A rough sleepers count undertaken by Rhondda Cynon Taff Single Person Housing Forum throughout the borough found that on the night of 17th July 1998:

- 5 people were found sleeping rough (all were men, one aged 18-25, three aged 26-39 and one whose age was not known). 3 people were sleeping rough in Pontypridd, 1 in Treorchy and 1 in Taff Ely;
- There was evidence of a further 6 sites of rough sleeping (2 in Pontypridd, 2 in

Aberdare, 1 in Ferndale/Maerdy and 1 in Ynysir);

- 4 men had been placed in emergency temporary accommodation by the local authority over the night of the count.

### 2. Causes of rough sleeping

The 1997 report found that 60% of people who were homeless "were leaving parents, early and often as a result of conflict, and 20% were leaving partners. Rather than moving directly into stable accommodation, many move through unstable and temporary accommodation such as sleeping on the floors of friends and relatives. If access to private rented accommodation is gained it is often of poor quality, insecure and seen as temporary. Rough sleeping, which often reoccurs in people's housing histories, is linked with the young age and destitution of those involved."

The report also notes a distinction between short-term rough sleeping (which may take the form of one or two nights here and there) and long-term rough sleeping which extends over weeks, months or even years. "Short-term rough sleeping often occurs following a crisis such as an eviction – by a landlord, a partner or a parent. After a few days sleeping out, temporary accommodation may be found in a friend's house for example. Long-term rough sleeping occurs when the temporary accommodation options have run out or are not available. Both short- and long-term rough sleeping were described during the interviews and the survey figures indicate that:

- 54% had slept rough for less than a week;
- 29% had slept rough for up to a month;
- 17% had slept rough for more than one month."

### 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- YMCA in Mountain Ash has 3 emergency short stay beds (up to 7 consecutive nights)



for 16 to 25 year olds. They are direct access (although access is restricted to mainly office hours);

- Detached Youth Work Project which involves outreach work to young people on 3 evenings per week. Homelessness advice is incorporated in this work;
- Housing advice services (e.g. Barnardo's Information Shop for 16-24 year olds in Pontypridd, ADREF housing advice service in Aberdare, local authority housing advice in Pontypridd);
- Bond scheme managed via a partnership between the local authority and Rhondda Cynon Taff Bond Board, a sister charity to ADREF;
- Floating support scheme for ex-offenders run by ADREF;
- 7 bed supported housing scheme for people aged 16 to 24 years old in Trecynon. Access is via referral, and the scheme is run by ADREF;
- Support services to people with mental health problems run by Gofal Housing Trust.

#### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

The Rhondda Cynon Taff Single Person Housing Forum has produced a "Single Person Housing Strategy 1999-2002" which includes issues relating to single homelessness and of rough sleeping. The membership of the forum comprises representatives of the local authority (housing, social services, housing benefit), benefits agency, education, housing associations, voluntary organisations (e.g. related to drug and alcohol, single homelessness, women's issues, mental health). There is no representative from the health service.

The strategy includes information on research undertaken in the area, the services currently

available, and the services which are missing and needed in the borough in relation to single person accommodation and support.

#### 5. What services have been identified as missing in the area?

- Possibly emergency direct access accommodation (possibly small houses in 3 different towns rather than one larger hostel in one town), although additional information is needed to justify the establishment of such schemes;
- Resettlement and support services, including new or additional floating support services for single homeless people, people with mental health problems, women escaping domestic violence, young single homeless people, and single vulnerable women;
- More move on accommodation for single people, particularly in the Taff Ely area;
- Increased capital funding for the bond scheme;
- Capital funds to redevelop the current NCH Action for Children Wales scheme;
- Winter night shelter.

#### 6. Other issues

- Homeless people can find it very difficult to register with a GP and obtain some other health services. There are examples of an organisation contacting the local health authority in order for a GP to be allocated to a homeless person;
- It is difficult to obtain a diagnosis and help for people who have two or more problems related to their mental health, drug and alcohol use;
- Obtaining an assessment for people with drug problems can take many months which may result in the opportunity of helping a person having been missed due to the length of the wait;



- It is felt to be very useful if a person could be employed who could devote adequate time to developing the Single Person Housing Strategy.

## SWANSEA

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

There have been a number of studies undertaken and statistics provided in Swansea regarding the incidence of rough sleeping in the city. Although this is very useful it has meant that comparisons between the findings are in some cases difficult. This is largely due to the different methods used. Some of the statistics are detailed below, which refer to the city of Swansea, rather than the wider borough of Swansea.

**1996:** The Special Needs Housing Advisory Service and Shelter Cymru report "A survey of rough sleepers in Wales" found 7 different people sleeping rough in Swansea on 3rd, 4th and 7th February 1996.

The Cyrenians Cymru mobile outreach scheme made contact with 116 people who were street homeless for one or more nights in the city centre over the period 12th February to 21st April 1996.

The survey "Single Homeless Research: Rough Sleepers Count" undertaken by Will O'Kelly found the following numbers of people sleeping rough in Swansea:

- |                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| - 6th December 1996  | 11 |
| - 7th December 1996  | 8  |
| - 8th December 1996  | 7  |
| - 9th December 1996  | 6  |
| - 10th December 1996 | 8  |

However, on each night additional evidence of rough sleeping was found in certain sites, some people were known to be sleeping

rough but were not found, and there were people squatting in Swansea. Statistics from this source are not included in the above figures. The conclusion of the report is that "the researchers could testify from their own observations that at least 15 and potentially up to 27 rough sleepers may be present in Swansea on any one night. The actual figures are likely to be an average of these figures – around 21 people."

**1997:** The Cymdeithas Caer Las report "Access: A Street Outreach Feasibility Study Conducted in Swansea July 1996 - May 1997" found that up to 30 people at any one time during the study were living on the streets of central Swansea. Sixty four people at some point were living on the streets during the period of the study.

The Cyrenians Cymru mobile outreach scheme made contact with 123 people who were street homeless for one or more nights in the city centre during the period 1st December 1996 to 10th May 1997.

**1998:** The Cyrenians Cymru mobile outreach scheme contacted 108 people who were street homeless for one or more nights in the city centre during the period 13th December 1997 to 7th April 1998.

**1999:** The Cyrenians Cymru mobile outreach service assisted 169 people who were street homeless for one or more nights in the city centre during the period 3rd December 1998 to 5th May 1999 (36 were female, 133 were male). The age ranges were 16-25 (32), 26-35 (53), 36-45 (34), 46-55 (9), 56-64 (4) and 66-75 (1).

Between 1st January 1999 and 31st March 1999 the Cymdeithas Caer Las outreach team contacted 63 people, 37 of whom had slept rough at least once during that time, and 6 of whom had slept rough exclusively throughout this period.



The Cymdeithas Caer Las outreach team contacted 243 street homeless people during the year 1st April 1998 to 31st March 1999.

From August 1998 to March 1999 of the 253 people who stayed at the Cymdeithas Caer Las Lodge House overnight centre, 25 said that they had been sleeping rough the night before admission. 23 people who were admitted during this period said that they were long-term rough sleepers.

It appears that there is a group of well known long-term street drinkers who are, or spend periods of time, sleeping rough. This group tend to regularly associate with each other. In addition there are a few long-term rough sleepers who have mental health problems who are living in a very isolated fashion.

At the beginning of July 1999 it was estimated by the Elim Church Friendship Café and the Outreach Nurse that the number of people sleeping rough known to them in Swansea was 8 or 9 on one night, although towards the end of June 1999 the figure may have varied between 12 and 15 on some nights. On some occasions they said that the figure can rise to be in the 20s on a single night.

In mid July 1999 the nightly soup run organised by Action of Churches Together in Swansea estimated that there is a group of approximately 6 people who are long-term rough sleepers in Swansea, one of whom has slept rough for approximately 20 years in Swansea. Some other people who are met by the soup run are only seen sleeping rough on one or a few nights, whereas there are others who are seen sleeping rough off-and-on over a period of a few weeks, months or occasionally over a year.

## 2. Causes of rough sleeping

The causes of rough sleeping are varied and peculiar to individual circumstances. However, a number of main reasons can be identified

which include relationship breakdown, abuse, mental health problems, leaving care, prison or the armed forces without sufficient preparation and support, poverty, and arriving from Ireland with nowhere to live for a few nights.

The reasons for homelessness (as opposed to rough sleeping) given by the 253 people who stayed at the Cymdeithas Caer Las Lodge House overnight centre in Swansea between August 1998 and March 1999 were:

- No reason given/refused to answer	30%
- Eviction from tenancy	9%
- Long-term rough sleeper	9%
- Leaving by choice	8%
- Leaving care/custody/hospital	8%
- Relationship breakdown	7%
- Asked to leave by family/friends	5%
- Harassment	5%
- Unsuitable accommodation	3%
- Thrown out of home	2%
- Asylum seeker	0.5%
- Oscillator (regularly moving between insecure types of accommodation)	0.5%
- Other	3%

## 3. Example of services which currently exist

The "City and County of Swansea Single Homeless Resource Directory" contains a comprehensive list of organisations working with single homeless people in Swansea. Examples include:

- Outreach schemes: winter outreach, run by Cyrenians Cymru; multi-disciplinary street outreach project run by Cymdeithas Caer Las (involving an outreach nurse, mental health nurse and resettlement workers);

- Soup run organised by Action of Churches Together in Swansea (ACTS);
- Night shelter: Lodge House overnight centre run by Cymdeithas Caer Las (12 bed scheme providing emergency overnight accommodation);
- Direct access hostels: Dinas Fechan 24 hour direct access hostel run by Cymdeithas Caer Las (15 beds); Paxton Street 24 hour direct access hostel run by Cyrenians Cymru (13 beds); YMCA (17 bedsits for men only, although this accommodation is not currently able to be fully used);
- Resettlement services: Cymdeithas Caer Las, Cyrenians Cymru;
- Drop-in/café e.g. cooked meals, showers, clothes, access to health care via an outreach nurse, (the Friendship Café run by Elim Church); evening café/drop-in with access to washing and bathing facilities, advice and support (at Lodge House, run by Cymdeithas Caer Las);
- Bond scheme, run by Swansea Bond Board (Barnardo's Youth Homeless Team);
- Advice services: Housing Options (City and County Of Swansea) provides housing advice and takes applications under Part III and IV of the Housing Act 1996; Shelter Cymru provides advice, advocacy and legal representation for housing problems; Citizens Advice Bureau provides a wide ranging advice service; Swansea Drugs Project (SAND) provides drop-in information, advice, needle exchange, assessment for prescribing and detoxification;
- Women's services, e.g. Women's Aid (5 bedroom refuge for women and their children experiencing, or having experienced, domestic violence; support to women in their own homes);
- Services for young homeless people, e.g. accommodation with floating support for 16-21 year olds (Cymdeithas Caer Las); a

multi-agency service (housing, social services, health outreach service, Barnardo's) providing statutory Children Act/homelessness assessments for 16 to 21 year olds, access to temporary/permanent accommodation and support, supported lodgings and after care support (Swansea Youth Homeless Team); Swansea Foyer (33 bed housing scheme providing support with life skills, training and employment); floating support service and accommodation for 16-21 year olds provided by Swansea Young Single Homeless Project;

- Support services, e.g. floating support provided by Cyrenians Cymru, and Cymdeithas Caer Las.

#### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is a Single Homeless Strategy and a Move-On Strategy which are both currently under review (August 1999). There is a "City and County of Swansea Youth Homelessness Strategy August 1998 to August 2001" which has been in place since 1994.

The City and County of Swansea has employed a Single Homeless Strategy Co-ordinator, part of whose work is "to co-ordinate and monitor progress towards meeting the aims and objectives of the Single Homeless Strategy through the Single Homeless Policy Group." There is a multi-disciplinary Single Homeless Policy Group consisting of the Single Homeless Strategy Co-ordinator and representatives of health, social services, the housing department and the voluntary sector. Sub groups of this steering group have particular remits on various topics.

#### 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

As the strategy document is currently under review a more collective view should be forthcoming shortly. However, a number of gaps have been identified:



- Provision for street drinkers (e.g. a wet house) has regularly been identified for long-term street drinkers who have been sleeping rough for long periods. This identified group of people in Swansea appear not to be receiving appropriate long-term provision at present, and a wet house targeted specifically for the needs of this core group appears to be particularly needed;
- Day provision (e.g. day centre) has regularly been identified by some organisations. Drop-in provision exists during part of the day on some days of the week in Elim Church (run by volunteers) and in the evening at Lodge House (run by Cymdeithas Caer Las);
- Central point where advice, information and advocacy on a wide range of topics (such as housing, benefits, health) are available;
- Possible increased outreach service provision during the spring, summer and autumn. Street outreach work is undertaken by Cymdeithas Caer Las on five days per week during these periods;
- More direct access beds;
- More emergency accommodation for young people (particularly 16 and 17 year olds) instead of having to use Bed and Breakfasts in many cases;
- More appropriate and affordable move-on accommodation in the right areas (e.g. where people have friends, family support and familiarity);
- Better quality rented accommodation than is available in some areas;
- Accommodation with high support for young people who display challenging behaviour or a chaotic lifestyle;
- Support to people living in local authority and private landlord accommodation;
- Town centre clinic for homeless people;

- Befriending service;
- Crisis intervention service for people who become mentally ill;
- Social worker(s) to work with homeless people who have a mental health problem;
- Screening services for tuberculosis;
- Education in schools aimed at preventing homelessness, and provided by people who are aware of the realities of homelessness.

## 6. Other issues

- Registering with a GP and accessing other health care can be very difficult for people sleeping rough and single homeless people generally (due to them often living in temporary accommodation);
- Many people sleeping rough have problems with their feet through having damp, sweaty feet, no socks, ill fitting shoes etc. Access to chiropody services is very difficult for people sleeping rough;
- Some people sleeping rough find it difficult to use hospitals for treatment (including accident and emergency departments), and so taking services to rough sleepers could be useful (e.g. chiropody);
- Accessing dentists who will undertake NHS work can be difficult;
- Better planning and preparation for people in prison could help to reduce homelessness, as well as more help regarding keeping previous accommodation when someone goes into prison;
- People experiencing more than one difficulty related to mental health, alcohol and drugs can find difficulty obtaining help;
- People with personality disorders or behavioural problems do not fall neatly into particular traditionally recognised health or social services categories. This means that they may not obtain adequate help;



- Easy and quick access to furniture would make the resettlement process a lot easier for many people;
- Consideration could be given to adding 'people who are sleeping rough' to the priority need groups under the homelessness legislation in Section 189 of the Housing Act 1996;
- The restrictions of the amount of housing benefit payable to under 25 year olds has affected their access to private rented accommodation;
- There is an increasing tendency for some girls and young women to want to associate with homeless people in Swansea, which can lead them into situations of vulnerability, and homelessness themselves;
- It would be useful if the police were more involved in decisions relating to the services and help needed for people sleeping rough. This could contribute to a reduction in the time spent, and the inappropriateness of, putting people into police cells overnight, for example, if they are long-term street drinkers who are 'drunk and disorderly.' If suitable constructive services were identified and provided this could be helpful for the individuals, agencies and the public generally. An example of such a service is the provision of a 'wet house';
- A faster resettlement of clients from current schemes could enable more people to use emergency accommodation in the area. Such resettlement, however, should continue to work towards ensuring that people move to appropriate accommodation;
- Trial tenancies could be a useful mechanism to allow people to try living in independent housing without jeopardising future independent housing options if the tenancy fails;
- The Single Homeless Strategy should consider plans for providing accommodation and support for refugees;
- Competition for funding can sometimes cause difficulties in the area. More co-operation and trust between organisations may be needed in some situations;
- Arrangements for sharing information between organisations regarding clients could be beneficial in relation to providing a better service to clients and in relation to the health and safety of clients and staff. Issues of confidentiality would need to be considered carefully and appropriate protocols devised;
- More flexibility of support funding would be useful so that an individual's support needs can be addressed without the person needing to fall into specifically defined categories;
- Cymdeithas Caer Las has commissioned a research project into the housing and support needs of people who have recently been, or are currently, homeless in the borough. This should be completed in the autumn of 2000 and will add to the quantitative and qualitative information available on homelessness and rough sleeping in the borough.

## TORFAEN

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

A recent survey of rough sleeping has not been undertaken in the borough.

However, in November 1998 some preparatory work for a 3 night survey was undertaken by the housing department of the local authority. The Newport Action for the Single Homeless report "Single homelessness and rough sleeping in the counties of Newport, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Blaenau



Gwent and Torfaen, snapshot surveys: summer 1998 and winter 1998/99" records that "approximately 50 questionnaires were sent to various organisations asking for probable sites of rough sleeping in the borough. A small number of replies were received identifying probable locations, but as some of these were too vague (e.g. someone being known to have been sleeping on a hillside, or in a car) it was decided not to undertake the three night survey. It is worth recording that 2 of the 3 people who completed the single homeless questionnaires between August and October 1998 said they had slept rough within the last month."

## 2. Causes of rough sleeping

The Newport Action for the Single Homeless report identified relationship breakdown, being asked to leave family/friends, and release from prison as contributory factors to rough sleeping.

## 3. Examples of services which currently exist

There is not an organisation which works specifically with single homeless people in Torfaen. Organisations who may meet single homeless people in the course of their work include:

- Cwmbrân Centre for Young People (which provides advice on various matters, including housing);
- Youth and Continuing Education 'Nightrider Project' which aims to improve the educational and employment opportunities of young people;
- Pontypool MIND and Cwmbrân MIND;
- The housing department of the local authority provides housing advice, and has two 5 bed hostels for homeless people (but these are used only to accommodate unintentionally homeless people in priority need);

- Local housing associations (e.g. Eastern Valley and Gwerin).

## 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy, and no multi-disciplinary homelessness forum in the borough.

## 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- Bond scheme;
- Emergency accommodation for homeless people who are in non- priority need. A large hostel in one town may not be appropriate, as the need may be for smaller units in a number of towns (e.g. in Cwmbrân and Pontypool);
- Independent housing advice service;
- Homelessness preventative work, e.g. discussion of homelessness and housing issues in schools;
- More one bedroom flats in appropriate areas. There are regular vacancies in single person bedsit council and housing association accommodation in some areas, but there is not great demand for this type of accommodation;
- Research to provide more information on the scale of single homelessness and rough sleeping.

## VALE OF GLAMORGAN

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

Prior to 1998 no survey is known to have been undertaken looking specifically at the incidence of rough sleeping in the borough.

However, Llamau Housing Society is in the process of undertaking a 3 year study (April 1998 to the end of March 2001) "to establish the extent and nature of rooflessness in the



local authority area and the provision of accommodation and support for rough sleepers." Between 1st April 1998 and 31st March 1999 15 people who approached their service in Barry said that they were long-term rough sleepers.

## 2. Causes of rough sleeping

Information available from Llamau Housing Society on the reasons for enquiries to their project between 1st April 1998 and 31st March 1999 were:

- Asked to leave home by family	203	40%
- Relationship breakdown	96	19%
- Unfit/unsuitable accommodation	36	7%
- Domestic violence	24	5%
- Evicted from tenancy	21	4%
- Thrown out of home	16	3%
- Harassment	15	3%
- Long-term sleeping rough	15	3%
- Leaving care/hospital	9	2%
- Friction at home	2	0.5%
- Asylum seekers/refugees	1	0.25%
- Mortgage repossession	1	0.25%
- Other	65	13%

## 3. Examples of services which currently exist

Llamau Housing Society in Barry provide the following services:

- Bond scheme;
- Floating support scheme to some housing association tenants;
- Resettlement and befriending work with a limited number of clients;

- Pre-vocational training for people in their own accommodation to help them reach a stage where they may be more able to obtain training or employment;
- Basic housing and welfare benefit advice.

Other services include:

- John Rowley Trust, which provides accommodation (5 beds) for 16 to 21 year olds. Access is via referral;
- Bond scheme and housing advice service run by "Home Access", Tabernacle Church in Penarth. Help is also available in obtaining furniture;
- Young person's (Children's Services) social worker with a particular responsibility for homelessness;
- Supported housing for ex-offenders managed by Trothwy Housing Association;
- Support services for people with mental health problems (including people who are homeless), run by Gofal Housing Trust;
- Housing advice service run by the local authority in various parts of the borough.

## 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy.

However, there is a Vale Housing and Homelessness Forum which comprises a number of voluntary groups (e.g. Llamau, Shelter Cymru, Home Access, Women's Aid, John Rowley Trust, ShortLife Housing, Black Association of Women Step Out, Vale Council for Voluntary Services), housing associations (e.g. Trothwy, United Welsh), Children's Services (social services) and local authority councillors.

A single persons strategy is planned to be developed, and this forum may be an appropriate group to advise on a strategy.



## 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- Emergency direct access accommodation, but not necessarily a large scheme in one location. It may be more appropriate to establish small scale provision in a few towns (e.g. Barry, Penarth and Cowbridge);
- Nightstop scheme, whereby young people can be referred in an emergency to stay with volunteer families for one or a few nights until more appropriate accommodation has been obtained;
- More move on accommodation for single people which is affordable, of good quality and in the right place;
- More support services to help people to maintain their tenancies, particularly in local authority and private landlord accommodation;
- Drug and alcohol services;
- More services for 16 and 17 year olds (e.g. accommodation which could provide some emergency beds and some brief stay beds, with provision for move on from this accommodation);
- Resettlement service to assist people moving into accommodation;
- Increase in the housing advice and advocacy services available (e.g. related to tenants' rights and harassment issues);
- Extension of the local authority's Housing Advice Section's schools programme to raise awareness of homelessness amongst 14 to 18 year olds and giving information about housing options.

## 6. Other issues

- The local authority has an arrangement with the direct access Ambassador YMCA hostel in Cardiff whereby it pays for one bed to be kept available throughout the year for a

person in the Vale who needs emergency accommodation. This facility may not be the most appropriate as people have to move out of their home area to use this accommodation. A more local arrangement (which may also use resources more efficiently) may need to be considered in the absence of a direct access facility;

- Some differences of opinion appear to exist between social services and housing departments within the local authority in relation to responsibilities for obtaining housing for young homeless people under the Housing Act and the Children Act.

## WREXHAM

### 1. Incidence of rough sleeping

The 1996 Special Needs Housing Advisory Service and Shelter Cymru report "Survey of rough sleepers in Wales" found 5 different people sleeping rough in Wrexham on 31st January, 1st and 2nd February 1996.

Wrexham Action Trust Christians for Homeless (WATCH), which runs a night shelter in Wrexham, undertakes a once a month 'walkabout' in Wrexham town between approximately 4.45am and 7.00am to see if they can find anybody sleeping rough. They have found the following:

April 10th 1998	1
May 15th 1998	0 (but evidence of 2 people sleeping rough)
June 19th 1998	0
July 17th 1998	0
August 10th 1998	0
September 7th 1998	0
October 16th 1998	1 (Oct - Dec. 4 sightings, but only 2 different people)

November 9th 1998	1
December 7th 1998	2
January 8th 1999	1 (Jan. & Feb. 3 sightings, but only 2 different people)
February 6th 1999	2
March 11th 1999	3
April 9th 1999	7 (2 missed their train, 1 was too drunk to get home)
May 12th 1999	2

These figures relate to 'walkabouts' on one night in each month. However, WATCH are of the opinion that there are not great numbers of people sleeping rough in Wrexham. They have occasionally received reports of 6 or 7 people sleeping rough together, but have been unable to find them when they have attempted to do so.

The night shelter accommodated 103 men between September 1997 and August 1998, many of whom WATCH and the local authority believes would have been sleeping rough if the shelter did not exist.

## 2. Causes of rough sleeping

In the 1996 survey 13 responses were given by the 5 people sleeping rough regarding the reasons for sleeping rough. These were:

- Cannot afford accommodation (2);
- Alcohol problems (2);
- Drug problems (2);
- Prefer to sleep rough (2);
- No accommodation available (1);
- Do not like available accommodation (1);
- Do not know about accommodation (1);
- Psychiatric problems (1);
- Health problems (1).

WATCH identify the following main causes of rough sleeping:

- Relationship breakdown;
- Not being able to manage in accommodation;
- Loneliness;
- Drug problems (increasingly a common factor);
- Alcohol problems.

## 3. Examples of services which currently exist

- Night shelter (direct access) in Wrexham for 10 men aged over 18 years old, run by WATCH. It is open 5pm to 9am (although in very bad weather people can stay throughout the day);
- Free midday meal 5 days per week at WATCH night shelter, and free evening meal 7 days per week at St. Mary's Catholic Cathedral, Wrexham;
- Some resettlement and support undertaken by WATCH for its residents;
- Housing advice service provided by Shelter Cymru;
- Hostel (Hurst Newton) for 11 single homeless 16-25 year olds (referral only) in Wrexham, run by Clwyd Alyn Housing Association;
- Wrexham Foyer (36 beds), providing accommodation and training for young single homeless people;
- Drug and alcohol detoxification unit in Wrexham;
- Single Persons' Living Project in Wrexham run by Barnardo's which provides education, training, housing and other advice to young people;
- Bond scheme in Wrexham run by Barnardo's.



#### 4. Single homelessness or rooflessness strategy

There is no written strategy. There is no specific homelessness forum, although there used to be a joint homelessness working party up until approximately 1996.

#### 5. What services have been identified as missing from the area?

- A variety of services for people with drug problems. WATCH are aware of an increasing number of people who are using 'hard' drugs in Wrexham;
- More single person housing which is in the right area and is affordable;
- 24 hour direct access emergency hostel which can accommodate and support men and women. Emergency accommodation for women is particularly lacking as the night shelter does not accommodate women.

#### 6. Other issues

- It is very difficult for people staying at the night shelter and Hurst Newton hostel to register with a GP. The staff often have to contact the local health authority in order for

a GP to be allocated to residents. The difficulty appears to relate to the fact that the person lives at these particular addresses;

- It is very difficult for people to obtain a DSS Social Fund Community Care Grant (e.g. for clothes, furniture and equipment) from the night shelter, although less difficulty is encountered by residents of Hurst Newton;
- People who display behavioural problems are often excluded from accommodation (including the night shelter and hostel) and can find difficulty in obtaining accommodation and services as their behaviour becomes more well known in the area;
- People experiencing an alcohol related difficulty and a mental health problem can find difficulty in obtaining help from mental health or alcohol services due to their dual needs;
- A single homeless strategy involving all relevant agencies would be very useful to bring organisations closer together and to work towards providing the most needed services in the area.



## Annex B: Local authorities and organisations contacted

(Visits made to all those listed except those marked with an asterisk with whom telephone contact was made)

### Local Authorities (housing sections)

Blaenau Gwent  
Bridgend  
Caerphilly  
Cardiff  
Carmarthenshire  
Ceredigion  
Conwy  
Denbighshire  
Flintshire  
Gwynedd  
Isle of Anglesey  
Merthyr Tydfil  
Monmouthshire  
Neath Port Talbot  
Newport  
Pembrokeshire  
Powys  
Rhondda Cynon Taff  
Swansea  
Torfaen  
Vale of Glamorgan  
Wrexham

### Organisations and individuals (with local authority area specified)

Abergavenny night shelter, Monmouthshire  
Action of Churches Together in Swansea (ACTS) soup run, Swansea  
ADREF, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taff  
Andy Webb (Soup Run), Cardiff

Bangor night shelter, Gwynedd  
Cardiff Action for the Single Homeless (CASH), Cardiff  
Cardiff Housing Link, Cardiff  
Caring Hands, Newport  
Ceredigion Care Society, Ceredigion  
City Centre Team, Cardiff  
Clwyd Alyn Housing Association, Flintshire and Wrexham  
Clwyd Cornerstone Trust, Kinmel Bay, Conwy  
Cwm Rhymni Housing Action (CRAG), Caerphilly  
Cymdeithas Caer Las, Swansea  
Cymdeithas Tai Cantref, Ceredigion  
Cymdeithas Tai Eryri, Isle of Anglesey and Gwynedd  
Cyrenians Cymru, Swansea  
Cywaith Joseff, Gwynedd  
Dewis, Neath Port Talbot  
Digartref Ynys Môn, Isle of Anglesey  
Eastern Valley Housing Association, Torfaen \*  
Ebbw Fach Development Trust, Blaenau Gwent  
Elim Church, Swansea  
Get It While You Can, Conwy  
Grŵp Ieuenctid Sengl Digartref Arfon (GISDA) – Arfon Young Single Homeless Group, Gwynedd  
Gwalia Housing Society, Carmarthen and Llanelli, Carmarthenshire  
Gwerin Housing Association, Torfaen \*  
Hafod Housing Association, Bridgend  
Home Access, Tabernacle, Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan \*  
Hope for Young People Everywhere (HYPE), Ceredigion  
Hurst Newton Hostel, Wrexham \*  
Llamau Housing Society, Vale of Glamorgan  
My Father's House, Ceredigion  
Network, NCH Action for Children Wales, Blaenau Gwent

Newport Action for the Single Homeless (NASH),  
Newport

North Wales branch of National Association for  
the Care and Resettlement of Offenders  
(NACRO), Denbighshire

North Wales Housing Association, Gwynedd

Outreach nurse, Iechyd Morgannwg Health,  
Swansea

Pembrokeshire Action for Single Homeless  
(PASH), Pembrokeshire

Powys Drugs and Alcohol Council, Powys

Rhyl night shelter, Denbighshire

Salvation Army hostel, Cardiff

Shelter Cymru, Bridgend,

Shelter Cymru, Wrexham

Swansea Youth Homeless Team, Swansea

Sylfaen (Children's Society), Gwynedd

Tresillian House Direct Access Scheme, Cardiff

Trothwy Housing Association, Brecon, Powys

Trothwy Housing Association, Newtown, Powys

Wallich Clifford Community, Cardiff

Wrexham Action Trust Christians for Homeless  
(WATCH) night shelter, Wrexham

YMCA, Cardiff

YMCA, Neath Port Talbot

## Annex C: Local authority questions

### Questions/issues related to people sleeping rough in local authority areas

1. Is there any information you can add to that which is in your current Housing Strategy and Operational Plan on the number of people sleeping rough in your area and the causes of their situation?

(If possible please could I have a copy of any surveys or reports etc which have been undertaken into rough sleeping in your area)

2. What accommodation and services are available for people sleeping rough in your area? e.g. soup runs, emergency accommodation, hostels, advice services, outreach services, resettlement services, bond schemes, day centres etc.

(If possible please could I have a list of any contact names, addresses and phone numbers of appropriate agencies in your area?)

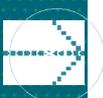
3. Do you have a strategy drawn up with other agencies to meet the immediate and long-term needs of people sleeping rough?

(If possible please could I have a copy of your strategy including the names of other people/agencies who are involved)

4. Does your Housing Department have any policy or services for preventing rough sleeping?

5. What services are working well for people sleeping rough in your area?

6. What services are not working well (or you have not found appropriate) for people sleeping rough in your area?
7. What services or help are missing for people sleeping rough in your area?
8. What help is it difficult for people sleeping rough to get in your area?





## Annex D: Voluntary organisations' questions

### Questions/issues related to people sleeping rough

1. What information do you have on the number of people sleeping rough in your area and the causes of their situation?

(If possible please could I have a copy of any surveys or reports etc. which have been undertaken into rough sleeping in your area)

2. What accommodation and /or services do you provide for people sleeping rough and for homeless people in general?

(If possible please could I have a copy of any literature on the services you provide)

3. What services do you provide, or exist in your area, to help to prevent people from sleeping rough?

4. What links do you have with the local authority and other agencies for providing services to people sleeping rough?

5. Is there a strategy in your area to address the immediate and long-term needs of people sleeping rough?

6. What services are working well for people sleeping rough in your area?

7. What services are not working well (or you have not found appropriate) for people sleeping rough in your area?

8. What services or help are missing for people sleeping rough in your area?

9. What help is it difficult for people sleeping rough to get in your area?



