

Position of Employability Priority Groups in Edinburgh –

Homeless

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(this research project was compiled by Robbie Pye an intern with Capital City Partnership during 2010; if you require more information on this work or the work of the Job Strategy Team, please contact Capital City Partnership on 0131 270 6030)



# Homeless

## Definition

Persons defined in current legislation as homeless persons and persons threatened with homelessness, i.e. those: -

- Without any accommodation in which they can live with their families
- Who can't gain access to their accommodation or would risk domestic violence by living there
- Whose accommodation is "unreasonable"; or is overcrowded and a danger to health
- Whose accommodation is a caravan or boat and they have nowhere to park it.
- Those persons experiencing one or more of the following situations, even if these situations are not covered by the legislation: Roofless, Houseless, Insecure Accommodation, Involuntary Sharing of Housing in Unreasonable Circumstances.

Those classed as having slept rough have spent at least one night sleeping outdoors due to a lack of accommodation.

Repeat homelessness accounts for those who have presented themselves as homeless more than once within 365 days.

Those assessed as a priority need include households or individuals in the following situations: have dependant children, pregnant, elderly, disabled, chronic ill health, previously in care, aged between 16 and 17, fleeing domestic violence or abuse, or other reasons that have made the individual vulnerable.

## Outline

There is a strong link between homelessness and unemployment, with the vast majority of the homeless being unemployed. Although cases of homelessness have been steadily decreasing, so has city investment into affordable housing. Estimates suggest that 12,000 new affordable homes will be required over the next 10 years, but the city will fall short of this target by 7,000 (City of Edinburgh Council, 2008). This could threaten the trend that has seen a reduction in rates of homelessness.

## Scope

In 2009/2010 **4,762** people presented themselves as homeless - a decrease of 13% from 2006/2007. **9.8%**, or **466**, homeless presentations had slept rough

the night before. Cases of repeated homelessness also stood at **9.8%** of presentations (City of Edinburgh Council, 2010a).

Of those who presented themselves as homeless 3,857 (81%) were assessed as being in priority need and 1,191 (25%) were on the council's housing waiting list in 2008-2009 (City of Edinburgh Council, 2008; Scottish Government, 2009).

However, homelessness does not tend to be long term, so annual totals can be misleading. Although homelessness may have long term psychological effects, it is the immediate employment barriers that pose the largest problem for this report. An analysis of quarterly homelessness presentations in Edinburgh shows that about 1,193 people are made homeless every 3 months, which is about 398 a month (assuming homelessness does not last over one month).

Table 4: Number of homeless in Edinburgh

Target Group	Number in Edinburgh per annum	Not in Employment
Homeless	5,000 (about 398 during any one month) Less than 500 slept rough	4,500

(Randall and Brown, 1999; City of Edinburgh Council, 2008; City of Edinburgh Council, 2010a)

## **Employment**

It is estimated that about **90%** of the homeless are unemployed (Randall and Brown, 1999).

## **Barriers to Employment**

- Stress of homelessness/potential homelessness causes difficulties in employment
- Absence of a stable address can create barriers to finding employment
- Employer attitudes towards homeless
- Lack of awareness of services available
- Less access to job searching facilities
- Prohibitive cost of hostel rents if working  
(Gillespie, Mulvey and Scott, 2005)

## Overlaps

City of Edinburgh Council (2010) reported that roughly 4,000 homeless presentations in one year had one or more priority needs. This creates a high probability that these 4,000 overlap with at least one of the other target groups.

- Between 117 (25%) and 154 (33%) rough sleepers are care leavers
- 154 (33%) to 233 (50%) rough sleepers and 386 priority needs presentations have a drug or alcohol addiction
- 280 (60%) rough sleepers and 424 (11%) priority needs presentations have mental health problems
- 233 (50%) rough sleepers been in prison
- 103 (22%) of presented homeless were lone parents in 2007
- Of homelessness presentations 114 (2.4%) were Black or Asian and 129 (2.7%) were listed as "other" in 2007
- 501 (13%) priority needs presentations were young people (Randall and Brown, 1999; City of Edinburgh Council, 2008; Scottish Government, 2010)

## Services

**\*Move On** – Helps homeless people develop the skills and tools they need to achieve a long term solution. Clients are provided with training and advice to help them progress towards employment. They also provide a peer mentoring service for those who have been homeless or in care.

**\*Edinburgh Cyrenians** - Cyrenians Homeless Prevention Service – Offers advice on homelessness and employment and training opportunities. Cyrenians also provides a mediation service called Amber with delivery partner Sacro. Cyrenians target a variety of disadvantaged groups – mental health conditions, drug and alcohol addicts, refugees and asylum seekers and other vulnerable people – and run several programmes aimed at improving employability.

**Midpoint Accommodation Support (Turning Point Scotland)** – Works with homeless people with drug addictions. They provide a variety of services, including life skills and training and employment access.

**Stopover** – An emergency hostel for the homeless that also provides support for training and employment.

**Gateway to Homes and Communities** – A first step for new tenants providing support and advice for setting up a new home, including accessing employment support and volunteering opportunities.

**Gateway Visiting Support Service** – A consortium of 5 organisations that offers support to homeless and vulnerable people, including access to training and employment.

**Grassmarket Mission** – Focuses on people who are homeless, have mental health conditions, have drug or alcohol addictions or are socially excluded. They also provide work experience and training in cooking and food preparation and a woodwork workshop in partnership with Edinburgh Cyrenians.

**Number Twenty** – Provides services for young homeless women aged 16-21. Temporary accommodation and support with employment, training and benefits advice is provided.

**Bethany Trust** – Specifically targeted at the homeless, but also open to anyone, this organisation provides advice, access to employment opportunities and training courses for the unemployed.

**Streetwork UK** – Runs a project called 'GOOD!' which provides training in food hygiene, food preparation, bar work and table waiting for the homeless and young people.

### **Research Issues**

- Lack of up to date statistics on employment rates