

Homelessness & Housing Need

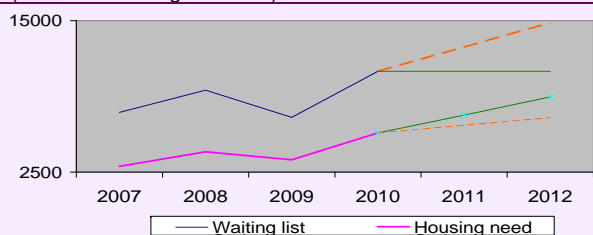
Addressing the needs and aspirations of those in housing need in the city remains an ongoing challenge. Affordability of housing is a major factor in people's housing choices and social housing remains the preferred option for many. However, the availability of social housing has decreased in recent years, especially in family housing, where lets have reduced by 30%, and the current economic climate is precluding people from considering home ownership. The Council and its partner Registered Social Landlords are building an average of 321 new affordable homes each year against a predicted requirement of 2,173 (Local Housing Market Assessment 2008) per annum which is clearly not addressing the prevailing need.

For many, acute housing need results in them seeking support from the statutory homelessness safety net contained within the *Housing Act 1996* (as amended by the *Homelessness Act 2002*). Whether due to being given notice by a landlord, vulnerability due to age, medical or housing conditions, Cardiff Council and its partners seek to prevent homelessness wherever possible through the provision of advice on a range of options, or where necessary, practical support. The provision of housing advice has been boosted through the development of the [cardiffhousing](http://www.cardiffhousing.co.uk) website (www.cardiffhousing.co.uk) which has been developed with partner Registered Social Landlords to provide up to date information about housing options in Cardiff including the availability of social rented accommodation; access to the private rented sector; assisted home ownership and student accommodation, along with other housing-related information. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, and a duty is accepted, Cardiff Council will provide temporary accommodation as necessary until more permanent accommodation can be offered.

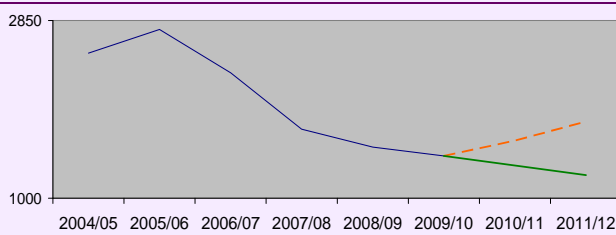
For those with additional support needs, Cardiff is fortunate to have a wide range of supported housing schemes and housing-related floating support services. A number of these schemes failed to meet the Welsh Assembly Government's *Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (Wales) Order 2006* and have necessitated capital financing to re-develop and modernise this provision. Partnership arrangements ensure that those accessing supported housing who then need statutory assistance are helped, and that access to the private rented sector is facilitated where this is appropriate, predominantly through the "CalonLettings" service. The proposed Single Assessment Centre will ensure that all services to homeless people are coordinated and managed from initial enquiry through to re-housing, including access to health services. Specifically, the health of homeless people is coordinated through the development of the Homeless and Vulnerable Groups Health Actions Plans, led by the Cardiff & Vale University Health Board.

Headline Indicators and how are we doing?

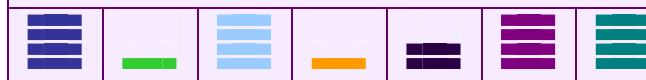
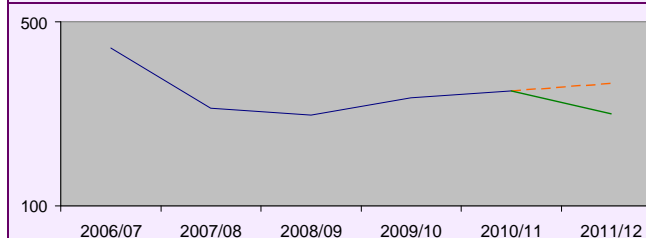
No. of households registered on the common waiting list and of those, households with a discernible housing need
(Common Waiting List Data)



No. of people presenting to statutory services for homelessness assistance
(Comino Enquiries Monitoring Data)

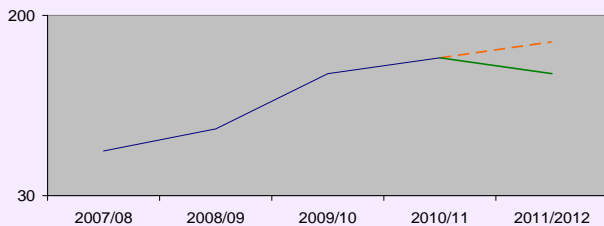


No. of repeat presentations for homelessness assistance including supported housing
(Speculative Data)



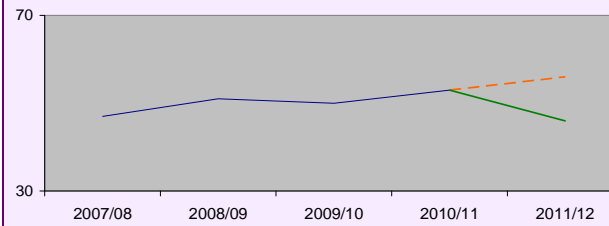
No. of children and young people (under the age of 18) affected by homelessness

(Speculative Data)



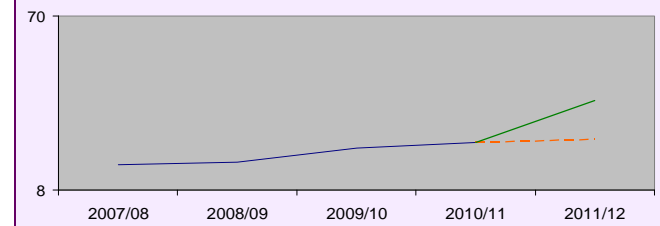
No. of statutory presentations where the cause is relationship breakdown

(Welsh Assembly Returns (WHO12) Data)



No. of homeless people with mental health needs successfully engaging with specialist services

(Speculative Data)

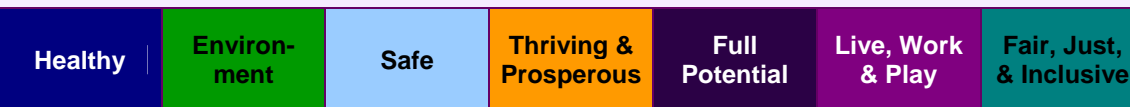


Key:

— — — — — The route we will take if we do nothing

————— The curve we want to turn

The bars under each graph represent how the indicator impacts on the seven Cardiff outcomes for the city as seen below:



Data Development:

- Repeat homelessness: Data is needed on the numbers and causes for this.
- Children and young people affected by homelessness: Data is dispersed and needs to be collated across Cardiff.
- Mental health needs: Data on those accessing services is currently very minimal.
- Private rented sector tenancy failures: Little is known of the rates of tenancy failure in this sector.

Stories behind the baselines

No. of households registered on the common waiting list with a discernible housing need – Cardiff Council and all the Registered Social Landlords operating in the city now use a shared waiting list for applicants wishing to move into social housing. As of August 2010 this list had 10,822 households waiting to be allocated a home, of which only 53% had a discernible housing need. Also, between 09/2009-08/2010 there were only 1,923 lets made.

No. of people presenting to statutory services for homelessness assistance – Using the safety net of the homelessness legislation should be a last resort to address housing need. By promoting more preventative measures and through better advice, people will be able to make informed decisions on the full range of housing options open to them.

No. of repeat presentations for homelessness assistance including supported housing – Where people need to re-present for help, this highlights potential failings in existing services and systems to adequately support and assist people facing homelessness. For some people, homelessness can be cyclical with either only short-term, or no breaks in the periods of living in temporary/supported accommodation or even sleeping rough.

No. of children and young people (under the age of 18) affected by homelessness – A statutory duty is owed to 16 and 17 year olds but for these and especially younger children of families living in temporary or supported housing, the experience of moving between different types of accommodation is a daunting one. The disruption to schooling, friendships and the family unit as a whole can have lasting effects on children and young people.

No. of statutory presentations where the cause is relationship breakdown – Over the past 4 years this has accounted for an average of 50% of all reasons for loss of last stable accommodation for those presenting to the Council. Whether a relationship breakdown between parents and young people or between partners, whether the break-up is violent or not, the lasting implications to all concerned go beyond the immediate need for accommodation.

No. of homeless people with mental health needs successfully engaging with specialist services – Homelessness can result in, or be caused by, traumatic events which results in people's mental well being deteriorating. Access to specialist mental health services is often problematic due to the chaotic lifestyles of the more entrenched homeless people who tend to have more severe issues, and the general inability of those who have been displaced to access mainstream services through the usual referral routes.

Partners with a role to play

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|--|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cardiff Council ○ Housing & Neighbourhood Renewal ○ Adult Services ○ Children's Services ○ Planning and Sustainability ○ Strategic Estates ○ Citizen & Democratic Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Private Sector Housing ○ Corporate Services ● Registered Social Landlords ● Private Sector Landlords ● Housing-Related Support Providers ● Regional Local Authorities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● South Wales Police ● South Wales Probation Trust ● Cardiff Health Alliance ● Safer Capital Partnership ● Children and Young People's Partnership ● Cardiff & Vale University Health Board | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cardiff Landlord Forum ● Private house builders ● Advice Agencies ● Department for Works and Pensions ● Welsh Assembly Government |
|--|--|--|---|

What are we going to do?

- Continue the development, implementation and monitoring of the annual updates to the Cardiff Homelessness Strategy and Local Housing Strategy and associated plans.
- Ensure the Single Assessment Centre is developed and implemented with the involvement and support of all relevant stakeholders.
- Continue to develop and supplement the [cardiffhousing](#) website to include energy efficiency and financial capacity advice as well as training and employment opportunities.
- Ensure a more collaborative approach to provision of outreach services to rough sleepers including the development of robust monitoring mechanisms.
- Work with the Intake and Assessment Team of Children's Services and other partners to develop the joint assessment and support service for vulnerable 16/17 year olds.
- Review the Council's Allocation Policy to ensure that those in greatest housing need are assisted and those unlikely to be re-housed are provided with necessary advice.
- To undertake an annual snapshot survey of households engaging with the range of advice and homeless services to seek views on their experiences of this provision.
- To continue to develop sustainable solutions to assist with the prevention of homelessness.
- Improve access to mental health services for those engaged with housing-related support services, rough sleeping or vulnerably housed.
- Continue to work in partnership with neighbouring local authorities in the South East Wales region to develop innovative solutions to homelessness.
- Maximise the efficiency of the Supporting People budget available in Cardiff in providing housing-related support services.
- Ensure all tenancies are sustainable and to provide reactive services at crisis points to prevent homelessness.
- Continue to improve the relationship with the private rented sector, improving standards and challenging attitudes where necessary.
- Ensure that any opportunities or investment dedicated to developing new affordable housing is maximised.
- Increase housing options and work towards developing alternative solutions to ensure timely move-on to more permanent accommodation.
- Continue the development of the Homeless and Vulnerable Groups Health Action Plans.