

Homeless Link

National move-on report

May 2005



Frontline agencies in partnership

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Key Findings

Many hostels have to manage move-on supply from a number of different sources.

Some hostels have a surplus of move-on supply in some support categories, although many of these have a shortfall in other categories, suggesting that they suffer from a supply of inappropriate type.

Most hostels have a shortfall of move-on supply for one or more categories of support.

There is a significant overall shortfall of move-on accommodation, which extends across all categories of support.

There are large numbers of residents in hostels across England and Wales waiting for move-on accommodation. Three fifths of these are waiting for accommodation with little or no support or low support.

Three fifths of residents waiting to move on are in Direct Access or Second Stage accommodation.

45 per cent of bed spaces across England and Wales are occupied by people waiting to move on.

Some hostels have all of their bed spaces occupied by residents waiting to move on.

In over 10% of hostels, people are waiting over 2 years for move-on. The median wait for move-on is six months to a year.

Key Finding: the median wait for move-on is six months to a year.

Key themes from interviews

Interviewees reported a lack of access to appropriate move on options, with both private landlords and housing associations reluctant to house single homeless people.

Increased waiting times for move-on are resulting in motivational difficulties affecting both residents and staff. Unsuitable accommodation is having negative effects on service users.

Some interviewees reported that the lack of move-on accommodation has had a negative effect on the way that they work while others described positive steps that they have taken to try to overcome some of the difficulties that they see.

1 Introduction

Recent figures on statutory homelessness (ODPM, December 2004) indicate that there are increasing numbers of homeless people in temporary accommodation provided by local authorities. During the third quarter of 2004 there were over 100,000 homeless households in such accommodation. People are also spending an increasing length of time in temporary accommodation. In the March quarter of 1997 the average length of stay for homeless households prior to leaving temporary accommodation in England was around 100 days; the equivalent figure for 2004 was around 270 days.

These figures relate to people for whom local authorities have accepted a statutory rehousing duty. The other half of the picture is that many single people who are not considered to be in "priority need" under homelessness legislation live in voluntary sector hostels, which rely on a variety of sources of "move on" accommodation. This research came about because many of the Homeless Link members agencies who run these hostels reported that their access to move-on accommodation for their residents was decreasing, causing the hostels to become clogged up with people who were ready to move on but had nowhere to go.

2 Methodology

This report is based on 139 responses to a questionnaire and interview data collected from five case study areas.

2.1 The Questionnaires

The questionnaire was sent out a number of times between May and July 2004 to all full members of Homeless Link unselectively. It was intended to be answered by individual hostels, but it was not possible to target hostels specifically or to send the questionnaire to separate projects/hostels within member organisations. This makes it difficult to calculate an accurate response rate. However, it is possible to say that the 139 responses came from 65 different organisations and represent 5,900 bedspaces.

The survey did not specifically define what was meant by a 'hostel' and therefore increased the scope of the research to incorporate smaller accommodation projects which otherwise may have been missed. For this reason, there were a relatively large number of responses from people answering for an 'other' type of project. The other categories of hostel were: rolling shelter, direct access, second stage, and specialist.

The questionnaire collected background data on the hostel, information on average waiting times for move-on accommodation, numbers of current residents waiting to move on, number of move on places required in the previous year and the number accessed, and sources of move-on. Much of the survey, asked respondents to break the answers down by different support levels according to the following definitions:

- little or no support - (e.g. rent collection, housing management)
- low support - (e.g. staff visit as required, offer advice and onward referrals)

- medium support - (e.g. key work system, staff on site)
- high support - (e.g. 24 hour staff cover, counselling, group work)

The questionnaire also included some open-ended questions on what would have an impact on the move-on situation and whether there are particular groups of people for which it is more difficult to find move-on.

Analysis on the survey data has been carried out with SPSS statistical software to categorise the results further, explore measures of central tendency (averages), calculate overall numbers and percentages and explore the results in relation to other factors such as types of hostel and location. However, all the analysis is based on descriptive statistics. No statistical tests have been carried out and therefore this report can only draw attention to patterns in the results rather than state any significant relationships.

2.2 The case studies

The case study areas were selected for their differences. Each case study involved a structured interview with a hostel manager, a resident of the hostel, and someone who makes referrals to the hostel. In three areas an interview was also completed with someone working for an organisation providing move-on for the hostel.

The case studies were in no way intended to represent the situation in England and Wales, or necessarily of the situation of the local area. Instead, the purpose of the case studies was to explore the impact of the need to wait for move-on accommodation and draw out similarities in agencies' responses to the lack of move-on accommodation.

With the exception of London, the areas and the hostels within those area were not picked with any specific knowledge of the move-on situation. No effort was made to pick hostels whose situation with regards to move-on accommodation was particularly good or bad.

The interviews with hostel managers and service users were carried out face-to-face and were tape-recorded. This meant it was then possible for them to be transcribed (partially). The face-to-face interviews in the Welsh case study were carried out in Welsh and so were transcribed and then translated. The interviews with referrers and move-on providers were conducted over the telephone and notes written up in detail. A further telephone interview was carried out with an organisational manager in one case study in order to supplement the data collected from the hostel manager who had only been in post for a relatively short period of time.

The report first considers the survey data before discussing some of the findings from the qualitative interview data.

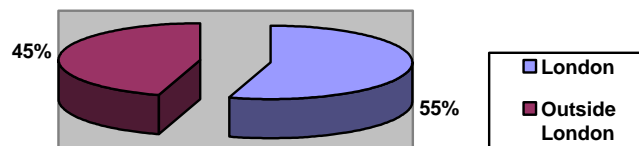
3 Background data for hostels responding to the survey

This section describes the hostels for which responses were received.

3.1 Regional location of hostels

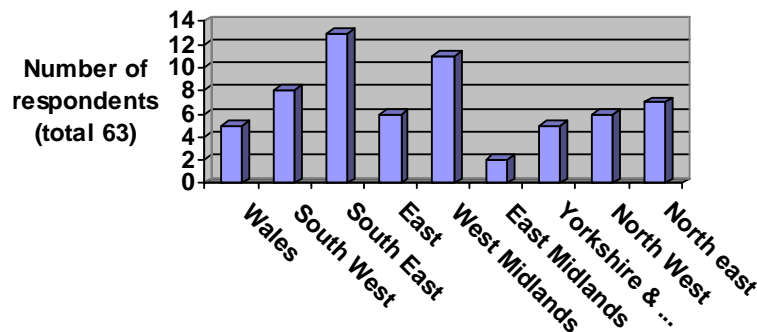
As stated above, the survey went out to Homeless Link members across England and Wales. However, specific work around move-on was carried out with London members to identify the issues, design the initial questionnaire and ensure a good response rate. It is partly due to this targeted work that the split between London responses and responses from the rest of the country and Wales is fairly even. This can be seen in the chart below:

Chart 1: London/non-London split



The numbers of responses from hostels in other regions in England and from Wales are shown in the chart below:

Chart 2: The regional distribution of responses (excluding London)

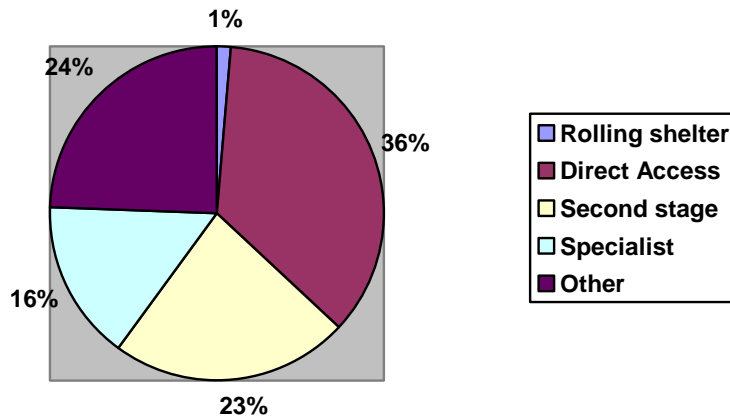


The small numbers of respondents per region precludes analysis of the results on a regional basis, but some analysis has been carried out comparing the results for London with those for the rest of the country and Wales.

3.2 Type of project

Respondents were asked to indicate the type of project for which they were answering. As can be seen in the chart below, Direct Access hostels formed the largest single group, but other types of hostels are well represented (excluding Rolling Shelters, of which numbers are small anyway).

Chart 3: The different types of hostels included in the research

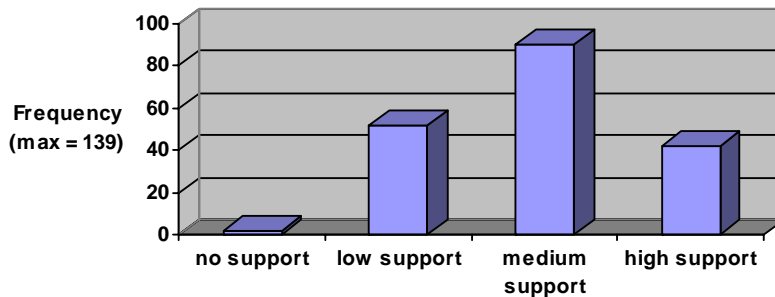


Specialist hostels included those targeted at a particular age group or those specifically working to address drug and/or alcohol issues. Accommodation projects ticking the 'other' box included resettlement centres and supported housing projects.

3.3 Levels of support offered by the hostels

Respondents were asked to indicate the levels of support offered to service users resident in the hostel. Respondents were not in all cases invited to show all levels of support provided and over 70 per cent of the total sample of hostels indicated only one level of support. This may well have affected the results below.

Chart 4: Levels of support provided by hostels

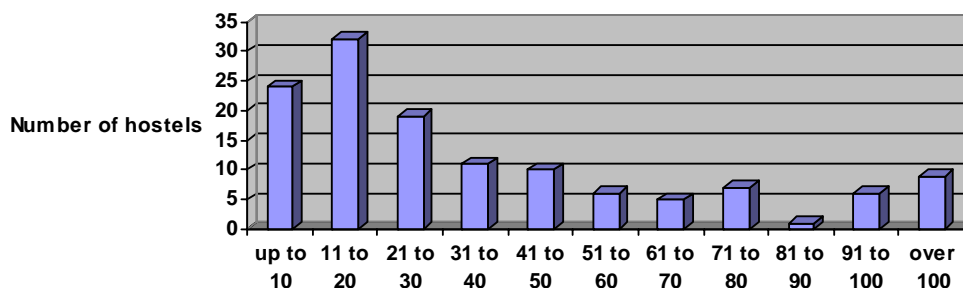


As can be seen above, very few respondents indicated that their hostel had residents to whom 'no support' was offered. Nearly two-thirds of hostels indicated that they offered a medium level of support to some or all of their residents. Direct Access hostels were typical in this with 65 per cent offering medium support, while nearly equal numbers of such hostels offer low support (42 per cent) and high support (44 per cent). Second stage hostels are also most likely to offer medium level support (71 per cent), with 48 per cent offering low support but few indicating that they offer high support. Specialist hostels are more likely to offer medium or high support rather than no support or low support: 48 per cent stated that they offer medium support and the same percentage offer high support, including 19 per cent stating that they offer both.

3.4 Bed spaces

Respondents outside London were asked to indicate the size of the hostel in terms of the numbers of bed spaces. This information was collected from the London Hostels Directory (2003) for hostels within London. The number of bed spaces ranged from four to 175, reflecting the disparate nature of the hostels included in the research. The most common size of hostel was 12 bed spaces, but the mid point of the sample was 25 bed spaces. The split is shown in the chart below.

Chart 5: The size of the hostels included in the research by number of bed spaces



A brief analysis of the size of hostel by the type of project shows that Second Stage hostels tend to be smaller - in the 'up to ten bed spaces' category. It is apparent that London hostels tend to be bigger: 77 per cent of London hostels have more than 20 bed spaces, compared to 34 per cent of those outside London.

4 Demand and supply

The survey collected information on demand and supply for move-on accommodation among hostels over the previous financial year (April 2003 to March 2004). Respondents were asked to indicate the numbers of accommodation places needed across all four support needs and the number of places they had access to, again for each level of support need. This section looks first at the level of demand for move-on places. It then explores the level and sources of supply, before addressing the gap between demand and supply.

4.1 Demand

The actual number of places respondents stated were required have been categorised to make the results easier to present and interpret. They are shown in the table below.

Table 1: The number of move-on places required by hostels over the last financial year by level of support need

Number of move-on places required per hostel between April 2003 - March 2004	Number of hostels requiring places for different levels of support needed			
	No support	Low support	Medium support	High support
1 - 5	19	15	20	16
6 -10	10	24	13	8
11-20	16	11	8	6
21-40	8	5	9	2
Over 40	7	10	5	2
Total where need stated	60	65	55	34
No need stated	79	74	84	105
Total	139	139	139	139

The category of “no need stated” includes cases where no valid answer was given as well as answers of zero. It is likely that the majority of cases where no answer was given represent answers of zero but it has not been possible to base an analysis of the results on this assumption. It has only been possible to analyse the level of move-on required where hostels indicated a need for move-on accommodation for the different support needs.

In most cases, where hostels needed move-on accommodation with a particular level of support, the majority required between one and ten places, except the no support category, where slightly more hostels needed more than ten places.

Averages have been calculated, based on the median number (mid-point) of places needed:

- Based on 60 responses, the average number of places with little or no support required by hostels needing this type of move-on accommodation was 11.5.
- Based on 65 responses, the average number of places with low support required by hostels needing this type of move-on accommodation was 10.
- Based on 55 responses, the average number of places with medium support required by hostels needing this type of move-on accommodation was 8.
- Based on 34 responses, the average number of places with high support required by hostels needing this type of move-on accommodation was 6.

It can be seen that hostels are more likely to need move-on accommodation with no support and low support and in particular are more likely to need large numbers of move-on places of this type. This partly reflects the fact that people needing

this type of accommodation are likely to come from all types of hostel. People moving out of hostels tend to need a similar or lower level of support while people with high support needs are less likely to move out of hostels.

4.2 Supply

The number of places respondents stated they had access to have been categorised to make the results easier to present and interpret. They are shown in the table below.

Table 2: The number of move-on places hostels had access to over the last financial year by level of support need

Number of move-on places hostels had access to between April 2003 - March 2004	Level of support provided			
	No support	Low support	Medium support	High support
1-5	28	25	22	19
6-10	13	15	13	6
11-20	8	6	7	2
21-40	6	7	11	1
Over 40	2	7	4	1
Total where supply stated	57	60	57	29
No supply stated	82	79	82	110
Total	139	139	139	139

As with the demand figures, the category “no supply stated” includes answers of zero, of which there were slightly more here. For each type of support need, fewer hostels stated that they had a supply than had indicated a need.

Only the responses of hostels with access to each type of move-on were analysed. Again, averages were calculated, based on the median number of places hostels had access to for each support group.

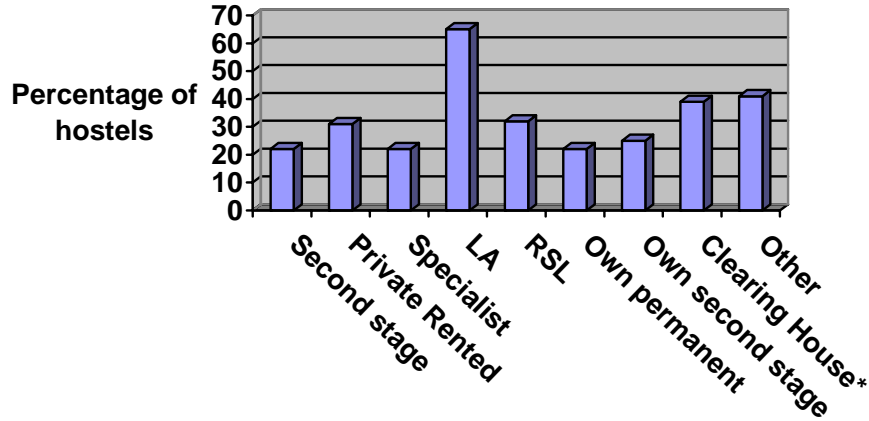
- Based on 57 responses, the average number of move-on places with no support available to hostels with access to this type of accommodation needs was 5.
- Based on 60 responses, the average number of move-on places with low support available to hostels with access to this type of accommodation was 6.
- Based on 57 responses, the average number of move-on places with medium support available to hostels with access to this type of accommodation was 6.
- Based on 29 responses, the average number of move-on places with high support available to hostels with access to this type of accommodation was 3.

4.2.1 Sources of move-on

Information was also collected on sources of move-on. Hostels were asked where possible to give the actual number of move-on spaces from each source available to them over the previous financial year. However, in some cases, respondents were not able to provide figures but nevertheless indicated that the hostel had secured

move-on places from a particular source. The first chart therefore shows the percentage of respondents indicating that their hostel had move-on accommodation from the various possible sources.

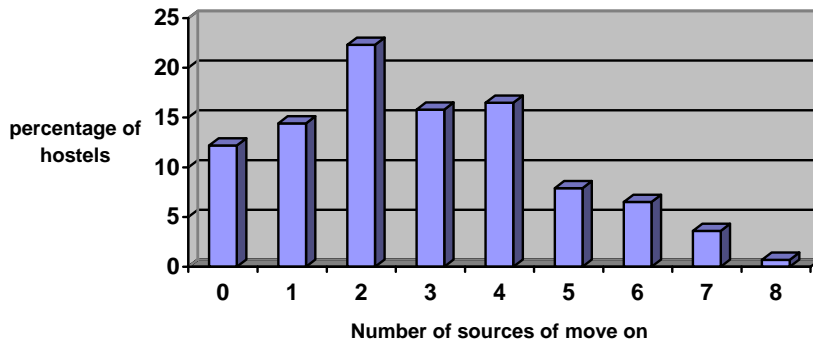
Chart 6: Percentage of respondents who said their hostel had access to different sources of move on:



*Only hostels in London have access to accommodation through the Clearing House. This figure has been calculated as a percentage of the 76 respondents in London.

The majority of hostels had access to move-on accommodation from more than one source. The chart below shows the percentage of hostels with different numbers of move-on sources, including those that did not state that they had any supply of move-on.

Chart 7: Percentage of hostels with different numbers of move-on sources



It can be seen that many hostels' move-on accommodation comes from a large number of different sources, particularly as the "other" category may represent more than one type of move-on accommodation.

Key finding: Many hostels have to manage move-on supply from a number of different sources.

The number of move-on places from the different sources also varies significantly between hostels. One rolling shelter in London stated that it had access to 142 places under the "other" category, although this may reflect the fact that its usual source of move-on - other hostels - does not fall into any of the specific categories.

The large variation and the small number of hostels with access to high numbers of places means that it is important to present the average numbers available in a variety of ways and not only rely on the mean.

The following table shows the range of responses given to the question asking for the number of move on places available to hostels for each category of accommodation, and the average (excluding zero responses and missing answers), expressed as the mean (the sum divided by the number of responses), the median (the mid point) and the mode (the most frequently occurring number).

Table 3: The average number and range of move-on places available from different sources

	Second stage	PRS	Specialist	LA	RSL	Own permanent	Own second stage	Clearing House*	Other
Range	59	36	27	51	49	26	44	40	141
Mean	6	6	5	9	9	6	8	7	12
Median	2	4	2	4	4	3	4	3	5
Mode	2	1	1	1	3	2	2	1	1

* Only hostels in London have access to move-on places through the Clearing House.

4.3 Gap between demand and supply

As stated above, the survey asked respondents to indicate the amount of move-on accommodation they required and the amount they had access to. Therefore it was possible to calculate the gap between supply and demand for different accommodation.

The average gap between supply and demand for different support needs are given below. Again the median has been used instead of the mean to avoid distorting the results. These figures only represent hostels where responses were given for both supply and demand for a type of move-on accommodation. For these reasons, the average shortfall may differ from the difference between averages for demand and supply given above.

- Based on 52 responses, on average individual hostels were short of 3.5 move-on places for people waiting for accommodation with little or no support.
- Based on 56 responses, on average individual hostels were short of 4 move-on places for people waiting for accommodation with low support.
- Based on 47 responses, on average individual hostels were short of 2 move-on places for people waiting for accommodation with medium support.
- Based on 23 responses, on average individual hostels were short of 2 move-on places for people waiting for accommodation with high support.

The calculations produced answers ranging from -30 (i.e. one hostel had 30 move-on place more than they needed) to 86 (i.e. one hostel had a shortfall of 86 move-on places) for people waiting for accommodation with no support needs. The figures were -6 to 100, -29 to 46 and -2 to 33 for people with low support needs, medium support needs and high support needs respectively. Most of the hostels that reported a surplus of move-on places for a particular level of support also

reported a shortfall of move-on for one or more other levels of support, so that they did not so much experience an excess of move-on as a supply of inappropriate type.

Key finding: some hostels have a surplus of move-on supply in some support categories, although many of these have a shortfall in other categories, suggesting that they suffer from a supply of inappropriate type.

The general distribution of answers can be seen in the table below:

Table 4: The shortfall of accommodation in individual hostels by support need for the period April 2003 to March 2004:

	More places than needed (-30 to -1)	No shortfall (0)	Shortfall of 1-10 places	Shortfall of 11-20 places	Shortfall of 21-40 places	Shortfall of over 40 places	Total
No support needs	4	9	26	7	2	4	52
Low support needs	3	8	35	2	2	6	56
Medium support needs	4	15	19	5	2	2	47
High support needs	1	8	8	5	1	0	23

Key finding: most hostels have a shortfall of move-on supply for one or more categories of support.

Further analysis of the results shows that there is no marked difference in the gap between demand and supply when comparing London with the rest of the country and Wales. However, when looking at the results by different project types, Direct Access hostels are most likely to have a supply surplus, but are also most likely to have the biggest shortfall in places.

The aggregate of shortfalls and surpluses of move-on places experienced by hostels for each support need were calculated and are shown in table 5, which also shows the net shortfall of move-on accommodation for each support need.

Table 5: Overall Gap between Supply and Demand

	No support	Low Support	Medium support	High support	Total
Aggregate of move-on deficits for individual hostels	462	651	243	122	1478
Aggregate of move-on surpluses for individual hostels	48	13	42	2	105
Net move-on shortfall	414	638	201	120	1373

It should be noted that the aggregate of move-on deficits reported by individual hostels represents 1478 people who were not able to move on. Although subtracting the move-on surpluses reported by other hostels might suggest that the overall shortfall is smaller, this is unlikely to be the case. Where hostels have reported more move-on places for particular levels of support than they have been able to use, these same places may have been made available to other hostels and therefore counted a second time within the survey. Therefore the aggregate of deficits would represent the position even after these surpluses have been counted as supply. On the other hand, many unused move-on opportunities may have been lost to the sector altogether, which raises a question of efficiency.

Key finding: there is a significant overall shortfall of move-on accommodation, which extends across all categories of support.

When considering the gap between demand for and supply of move-on accommodation, it should also be remembered that demand is likely to be curtailed by the wait for hostel places. In other words, the true extent of demand over the course of the year is not known because hostels can only accommodate a limited number of people. The more people are waiting for move-on accommodation the fewer people can be admitted into the hostel, an effect that will lower the perceived level of demand. For this reason, it is also crucial that consideration is given to the number of people waiting in hostels and blocking bed spaces and to waiting times.

5 Waiting for move-on

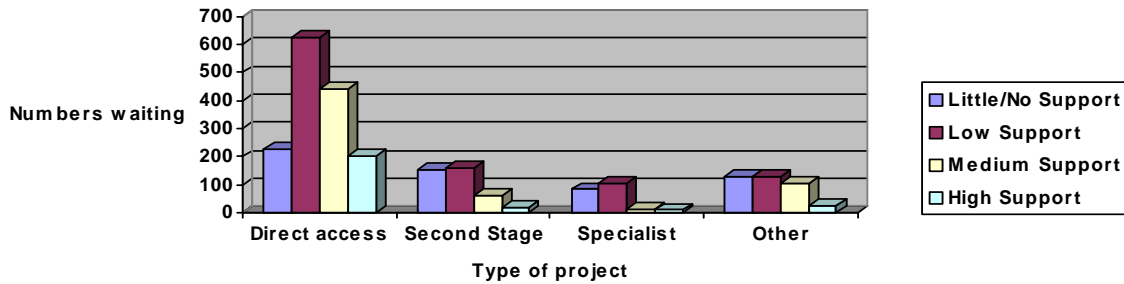
5.1 Numbers waiting for move-on - a snap shot

Hostels were asked how many of their residents were currently waiting for move on accommodation in each support need category. The total number of people waiting for move-on was 2,497.

There were 593 residents waiting for move-on with no support and 1022 waiting for move-on with low support. The numbers waiting for move-on with medium support and high support were 624 and 258 respectively.

Key finding: there are large numbers of residents in hostels across England and Wales waiting for move-on accommodation. Three fifths of these are waiting for accommodation with little or no support or low support.

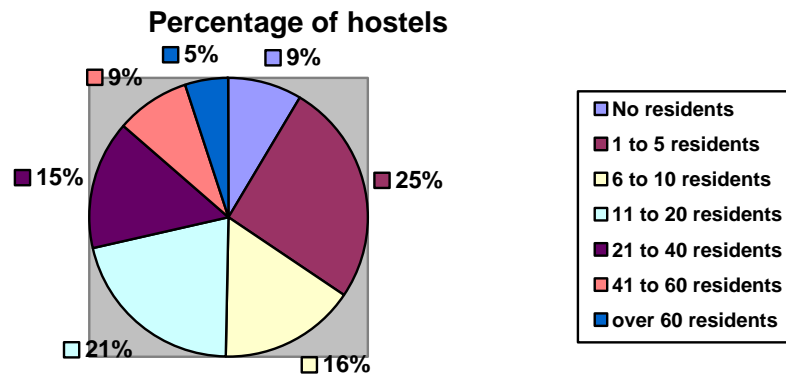
Chart 8: The total number of service users waiting for move-on accommodation by project and support need type



Key Finding: Three fifths of residents waiting to move on are in Direct Access or Second Stage accommodation.

5.1.1 Numbers waiting per hostel

Chart 9: The number of service users waiting for move-on per hostel

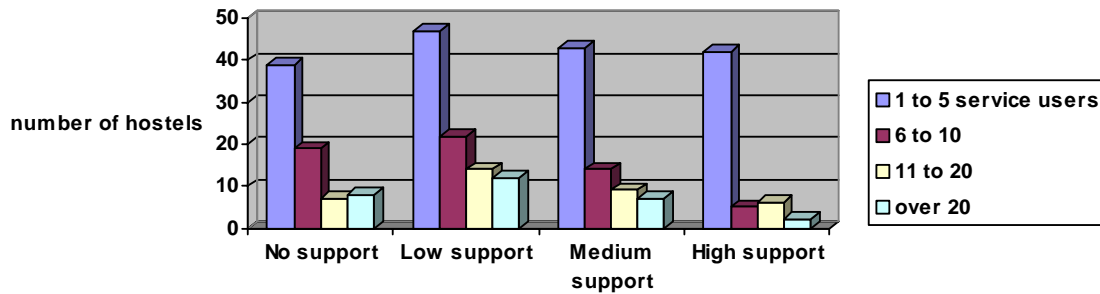


These figures are based on 139 responses. For the purposes of adding the figures given across different support needs, all missing numbers were counted as zero. Therefore the numbers given above are likely to be an underestimation.

Calculating the mean number of people waiting per hostel gives an average of 18 people. This number reduces to 10 when looking at the median number of people waiting. It is probably more appropriate to take the median as the more representative figure, as there are three hostels with over 100 residents waiting that stand out distinctly from the rest and skew the mean number upwards.

The numbers waiting for the various types of move-on in each hostel were categorised and the results are shown in the chart below.

Chart 10: Number of service users waiting for accommodation by support need



As can be seen above, hostels typically have between one to five service users waiting for move-on across all support needs, most markedly in the high support category.

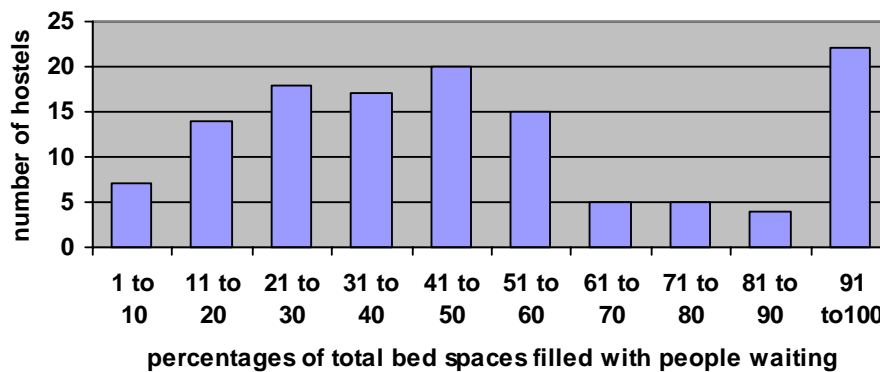
5.1.2 Percentage of residents waiting to move on

While it is useful to develop an idea of the actual number of people needing accommodation in individual hostels at any one time, in order to understand better the potential impact of having people waiting for move-on it is perhaps more helpful to look at the numbers in relation to the hostels' total number of bed spaces. Using the information on the total number of people waiting for each hostel and the data on the number of bed spaces for each hostel, it was possible to calculate the percentage of total bed spaces filled with people waiting, both for each hostel and for the whole sample. Bed spaces in hostels with missing or zero responses for residents waiting were excluded.

Key finding: 45 per cent of bed spaces across England and Wales are occupied by people waiting to move on.

The percentages for individual hostels were then categorised, as presented below:

Chart 11: The percentage of total bed spaces filled with people waiting for move-on accommodation



As can be seen above, the largest number of hostels had between 91 per cent and 100 per cent of their bed spaces filled with people waiting to move-on. All but one of these had 100 per cent of residents waiting.

Key finding: some hostels have all of their bed spaces occupied by residents waiting to move on.

The breakdown between London and outside London is shown in the table below:

Table 6: Percentage of bed spaces filled with people waiting to move on comparing London with outside London

Percentage of bed spaces filled with people waiting to move-on	London hostels	Hostels outside London
0-30 %	34%	28%
31-60 %	47%	33%
Over 60 %	19%	39%

As can be seen, hostels outside London are more likely to have higher percentages (over 60 per cent) of bed spaces filled with people waiting for accommodation.

Analysis by hostel type shows that Direct Access and Second Stage hostels are more likely than specialist hostels to have over 60 per cent of their bed spaces filled with people waiting to move on. The figures are 40 per cent of Direct Access hostels, 27 per cent of Second Stage hostels and 15 per cent of specialist hostels.

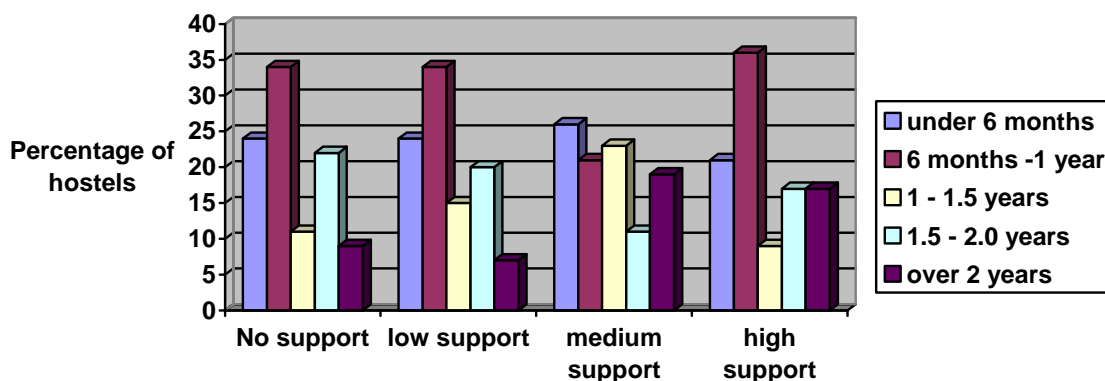
5.2 Waiting times

Information was collected on the average length of time people were waiting for accommodation across the four different levels of support need. Respondents were not asked to provide exact times, but rather to indicate which out of a series of categories most accurately reflected the wait in their hostel. The categories were given as follows:

Under 3 months	[]	1½ years - 2 years	[]
3-6 months	[]	2 years - 2½ years	[]
6 months - 1 year	[]	2½ years - 3 years	[]
1 year - 1½ years	[]	Over 3 years	[]

Data on waiting times were collected in this format to maximise the number of responses. It was felt it would be too difficult for respondents to provide more accurate details, given that the questions asked for **average** times. Asking for average times means variation in waiting times within hostels is not captured fully, but this was the only feasible means of gaining an overall sense of the waiting times.

Chart 12: Average waiting times for service users by support need



Key finding: In over 10% of hostels, people are waiting over 2 years for move-on.

The variation in waiting times across all levels of support may well reflect the fact that hostels rely on a variety of different combinations of sources for move-on.

A brief analysis of the results in relation to type of project suggests that people in Second Stage hostels are more likely to have waits of over one and a half years than people in Direct Access hostels for accommodation across all levels of support need. When comparing the results for hostels within London with results for the rest of the country and Wales, it can be suggested that people waiting for accommodation with no support needs, low support needs and medium support needs in London are more likely than people with the same needs living elsewhere to wait for over one and a half years.

The median waiting times across all hostels by different levels of support need are given below. However, these should be treated with some caution as respondents were already asked to give averages and these averages were mainly presented in time period categories of six months. Therefore we are averaging averages that are already quite broad.

- Based on 82 responses, on average residents with no support needs had to wait between six months and one year for move-on accommodation.
- Based on 91 responses, on average residents with low support needs had to wait between six months and one year for move-on accommodation.
- Based on 70 responses, on average residents with medium support needs had to wait between one and one and a half years for move-on accommodation.
- Based on 53 responses, on average residents with high support needs had to wait between six months and one year for move-on accommodation.

Key Finding: the median wait for move-on is six months to a year.

6 The Case Studies

The location and type of hostel involved in the case studies were as follows:

- Specialist hostel for young people in a rural area in Wales (referred to as area A)
- First stage hostel in London (area B)
- Direct Access hostel in a Northern¹ University city (area C)
- Direct Access hostel in a Northern area of regeneration (area D)
- Second Stage hostel in a Southern coastal town (area E)

A number of clear themes emerged. These included: lack of access to move-on and inappropriate move on options; motivational difficulties affecting both residents and staff; the negative effects of unsuitable accommodation. These are set out in the sections below.

Some interviewees reported that the lack of move-on accommodation had had a negative effect on the way that they worked. Others described positive steps that they had taken to try to overcome some of the difficulties that they saw. These comments are included in the relevant sections.

6.1 Lack of access to Move-on Accommodation

Interviewees reported that there was a lack of suitable move-on accommodation for homeless people and that homeless people were often directly or indirectly excluded from the accommodation that there is.

A provider of move-on accommodation in case study area B (London) felt that the local authority was not putting resources into providing accommodation for single people:

'No priority is given by the Local Authority to either build or refurbish, for example, self-contained flats. [...] Single people are not a priority for the Local Authority but families are.'

A referrer in case study area E said:

'The social housing is very difficult to access and that does not help the move-on. In addition to that, the private rented sector is not easy either. In our opinion it should accept people on benefit but also those that need to be helped with keeping up with their tenancy.'

Many interviewees spoke about the direct or indirect barriers to the private sector for homeless people.

A move-on provider in case study area A (Wales) said:

'The main problem is that there are too few properties. Also the rent in the private sector is very expensive and the Housing Benefit does not cover it'

¹ 'Northern' and 'Southern' in this context are not used to refer to particular government regions.

completely. There are Bond Schemes locally but, again, the rent is too high for it to be used effectively.'

The **hostel manager** in case study area E revealed that even when homeless people overcame initial financial barriers, they could face discrimination:

'The main initiative in the area is about Rent Deposit Schemes, but we do not have much hope for it. In relation to the latter, it is often the case that [landlord's] insurance will prevent them from taking people on benefit. It should then be up to the government to consider that discriminatory.'

The **hostel manager** in case study area D also found private landlords unwilling to take people on benefit:

'One of the issues I think [in relation to] homelessness increasing:- landlords who 15-20 years ago bought their properties for buttons have sold them off for big bucks. So the amount of private landlords who are taking people on housing benefit, I mean HB are slow to pay and all sorts of problems and this has had a major impact. Go back 10-5 years ago, there would be plenty of landlords saying "DSS welcome". Hard pressed to say that now.'

For a **move-on provider** in case study area C, discrimination went beyond financial issues:

'No chance from the private rented sector because the kind of people that we are dealing with are not attractive to landlords (i.e. drug and/or alcohol users, ex offenders).'

But the **hostel manager** in the same area told how, faced with the "very widespread" problem of private landlords taking only non Housing Benefit claimants, her organisation had worked with service users to develop their skills:

'If you take as a given that landlords won't accept people on housing benefit, if you take as a given that the pressure we're on immediately after reaching the two-thirds reduction target ... we felt the landlords aren't going to change so we'll change the client group. We'll attempt to climb the Everest of injecting a sense of work ethic into clients so they can go into work. ... we put together [a volunteer] project with the council and as a result of that we have got 14 people in accommodation and jobs in less than a year, and I'm talking about people who had a £300 a day habit.[...] That's how we respond to the lack of move-on, by creating opportunities.'

Some interviewees stated that housing associations (referred to by some people as RSLs) were also reluctant to rehouse homeless people.

A **move-on provider** in case study area D said:

'Local councillors have publicly excluded a large sector of society. For example, one of them said that no additional tenant with support needs will be accepted [...] The Stock Transfer programme has now conditions attached to it that relate also to what is called "good neighbourhood", which does not help [with] move-on for our type of client, that is believed not to fit such criteria.'

A referrer in the same area said:

'A lot of regeneration plans in the area had actually adverse effects on us. The Stock Transfer Programme, for example, handed over 16000 properties but with no nomination rights attached to them. So homeless people would not benefit from the programme. Moreover, the agency to which the properties were transferred, instituted new application forms and we have to re-apply after having had our clients on the waiting list of the LA. That was not a good move for us at all [...] What we find slightly improving the situation is the Choice Based Lettings scheme, because one application form puts the client in touch with 9 accommodation providers. However, also with this scheme there is no compulsion to accept nominations. [With RSLs], people with substance misuse problems are simply not re-housed.'

The hostel manager in case study area E said:

" We tried to work with the local RSL but it is difficult to persuade them to work with us."

Many interviewees reported that they were working with landlords and other agencies to change their views of homeless people and approach to housing them.

The hostel manager in case study area E also said:

' There needs to be a further understanding among the whole community about people who are homeless... hence why a lot of our people are involved in voluntary work.... [It is] very useful for us when speaking to housing providers to talk about worthwhile daytime activities and obviously useful for people in paid employment to get housing.'

Similarly, in case study area C the hostel manager was attempting to develop links with housing associations and other providers:

' The key players attend [the Homeless Strategic Forum], such as Housing Associations, it's about keeping homelessness on the agenda.'

A move-on provider in case study area A (Wales) described the focus of their work:

' To support those in need and especially tackling anti-social behaviour, are certainly issues that should be addressed together with move-on. [Although] properties shortage is still the main problem for us.'

6.2 Inappropriate move-on options

Many interviewees said that the accommodation that was available did not provide the appropriate support. A number of interviewees reported that places to which they had access (sometimes for historical reasons) did not match the clients that they were trying to move on. Many would be left with a core of people who were not able to move on, particularly drug/alcohol users and those with mental health problems.

The hostel manager in case study area E said:

' People need to be able to manage their own accommodation. So support schemes need to be put in place for them to be able to achieve independent living.'

The hostel manager in case study area C said:

' We have got lots of links into housing, particularly supported housing schemes. so what you tend to do is focus on those people who fit the criteria and you aim to move them on quickly. So people that you're left with are people where it is very, very difficult [to get them rehoused].'

The London hostel manager, reported that clients waited 9 months on average for move-on:

' But some people do strike lucky and get a nomination through quickly. You then want them to not tell anyone but word gets out that they've got one and the other residents can complain.'

' A nomination came through from [a local housing association] for a young black woman, under 25 with no support needs. The only resident who fitted the criteria had only been here for a few weeks, but we had to put her forward or lose the nomination. She has her interview later this week. If she is accepted she could be there within a couple of weeks which means she would have been here for about 6 weeks in total.'

The same hostel manager said:

' People are having to match criteria rather than working with a specific group. Supporting People has brought a lot of people into line. So now they are taking people whereas before they would take people with lower support needs. Now you stress support needs, sometimes to their detriment as then they get seen as having too high needs or if you play it down too much, you get told their needs are too low.'

6.3 Motivational issues

Service users, hostel managers, and people referring clients to hostels all reported that extended waits for move-on made it difficult for clients to maintain motivation to work towards resettlement, particularly for clients with alcohol/drug issues.

A service user in case study area E said:

' You will get depressed. You will get fed up with you. You think, why do I bother? Nothing working, it's all going wrong. You do sometimes, you get seriously depressed, but because of the way the staff work with you - you have key working sessions - they'll talk you through it, they'll help you with it, they're there to encourage you all the time so you don't get badly depressed.'

Another service user, in case study area D, described the stress of waiting in temporary accommodation with no timescale for moving on:

'But once I got it into me head - when they said 3-6 months I were ticking the weeks off, then the months off and it didn't happen - I were going downhill. Did get to the point when I did really beat myself up over the time limit, the waiting really did get to me.'

The hostel manager in the same case study area said:

'We have to be very careful that we try and maintain motivation for individuals so they can continue to do their key work and that motivation does tend to die away when the realisation comes along that actually this is a long way away.'

However, the hostel manager case in study area B saw a positive side to the extended waiting times:

'This has enabled us to work more in depth with residents; they can participate more and there is more potential for preparing them for move-on. When people only stayed for a short time they didn't really get involved or participate, rather they were just looking to get their flat. Now the priority is about maintaining your stay here, engaging with services. Move-on is the last stage.'

A referrer in the case study area E highlighted the particular difficulties for clients with drug and alcohol problems:

'At times it is difficult, for we feel that we do not offer what our clients need. Then when it is cold and we can only give people blankets before turning them away it is also hard [...] When the waiting goes on for too long before being accommodated, if at all, service users become demoralised. Especially if the person that we are dealing with manages to "clean" him or herself from alcohol or drug use, it is then difficult to know for how long she or he will be able to keep up with that when the motivation is not there any longer.'

The move-on provider in case study area C wrote:

'When people are waiting to be offered accommodation and they stay like that for too long, their mental and physical health is affected - let us not forget that these are individuals having problems with alcohol and/or drug use. As a result of that, the relationship between them and us is also affected.'

A referrer in the same area wrote:

'It can be difficult. We cannot make people false promises, and when we tell people the truth about how long they should wait before being accommodated they can be put off and disappear. [Or] they would become impatient, lose hope and, in the worst case scenario, they would fall back into drug use.'

Asked whether the lack of move-on has had any implications for staff, the hostel manager in case study area E said:

'I would say motivation and morale. Job satisfaction is difficult when there are people who really don't now need our service here - and we know that there are lots of people that do, or that there are people that really need our continued input but actually this project has served their purpose for them and they need that independent start. Therefore that affects staff morale and motivation.'

The move-on provider in case study area A (Wales) said:

'It has affected our relationship with hostels [to the extent] that, because we cannot move on people, they feel that they are not able to fulfil their role (which is to provide temporary accommodation only). Service users have now become nearly permanent figures for hostels.'

6.4 Effects of unsuitable accommodation

Many interviewees reported that the lack of move-on opportunities presented difficulties for the long term resettlement of service users, whether they made their own arrangements or remained in hostels that were no longer appropriate.

The hostel manager in case study area E reported that housing provision in the area was more likely to be available for clients over 60 years old:

'So the type of client group that we are dealing with is better off to develop a chronic problem and stay in the street. In this way they become a priority need and will eventually be housed. However, they are not ready for independent living and the likelihood is that after six months they are evicted and back on the street. This time the difference being that they fall under the category "voluntary homeless".'

The hostel manager in case study area C said:

'It could be years. And the difficulty is, is that people will also secure accommodation for themselves on a very short term basis and disappear out of that link if you like and the whole process starts all over again when they represent. So it's part, only part, of the reason why people cycle homelessness for years.'

The hostel manager in case study area D said:

'The lack of move-on is having a detrimental effect on other examples. For example, if there's someone on a script, we've got a [Primary Medical Service] putting people on scripts but as long as they hang around with other users, sooner or later they're going to slip. Essential that we respond to that need, whole lot of people on scripts - we need somewhere for them to go.'

The hostel manager in case study area B suggested that another of her organisation's hostels would find it particularly hard to find its residents move-on as they have substance misuse issues:

'... providers will say they are entrenched drinkers so they cannot take them. They could become ghettoised in drinkers only projects and they don't have things to aspire to.'

7 Conclusions

The survey has identified a significant annual shortfall in the number of move-on places available to hostels on an annual basis. This has resulted in long waiting times and a severe backlog of residents ready to move on but unable to do so, who now represent nearly half of the residents of those hostels. Three fifths of these residents are in Direct Access or Second Stage accommodation. A similar majority of residents waiting to move on are waiting for accommodation with little or no support or low support.

The shortfall of move-on places is mainly a result of an inadequate supply of accommodation across all support categories, although there is some evidence of inefficient targeting of the supply that is available, particularly in that support of the appropriate level is not available. The fact that many hostels are dependent on a large range of sources for move-on accommodation may be a factor in the failure to match supply to demand.

The case studies have highlighted the difficulties that homeless people have in obtaining private sector accommodation, including financial difficulties and the reluctance of many private sector landlords to let to them. Unfortunately, interviewees have also reported that housing associations, including post stock transfer landlords, are reluctant to house single homeless people. Recent Data from CORE (the Continuous Recording of housing association lettings) shows housing associations make only 16.2% of lettings to statutory and 17.5% to "other" homeless applicants, at total of 33.7%.

Waiting times vary considerably across all categories of support need. Although the average wait for move on accommodation is between six and 12 months, many residents wait over two years. This variability may reflect the haphazard process of allocating move-on opportunities.

Interviewees, including hostel residents, have reported that extended waits for move-on affect residents' mental and physical health and make it difficult to maintain residents' motivation to address issues such as drug and alcohol misuse. These difficulties are exacerbated in hostels with a high proportion of clients with ongoing drug and/or alcohol problems.

In its recent report, "More than a roof: progress in tackling homelessness", the National Audit Office recommended that the government's Homelessness and Housing Support Directorate should: "Establish the extent of problems in accessing move-on accommodation for former rough sleepers and other hostel residents." It commented that: "more needs to be done to ensure that the route from hostel to settled accommodation is as efficient as possible."

8 Recommendations

8.1 The Role of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) is in a pivotal position to use its influence with local government. It should involve the Housing Corporation and call a Move-on summit to ensure potential investors in and providers of move-on accommodation sign up to do so expeditiously. The ODPM can also push providers to supply the support that must go with accommodation in order to ensure tenancies can be maintained - i.e. tenancy sustainment or floating support and ensuring it is also available to those who may be moving into the private rented sector.

We support the National Audit Office's recommendation that the Homelessness and Housing Support Directorate should: "Establish the extent of problems in accessing move-on accommodation for former rough sleepers and other hostel residents."

8.2 Short term measures to relieve the immediate pressure

Where appropriate, regional rent deposit & approved landlord schemes should be established, building on existing good practice. This would enable people in hostels who have little or no support needs to move into the private rented sector. Schemes should be linked to short-term resettlement support.

Local Authorities should each make available a quota of self-contained permanent accommodation towards move-on. This would resolve the immediate problem of the gap between needs and allocation and unblock hostel spaces across England and Wales, allowing rough sleepers access to appropriate support.

They should use the full range of their powers to ensure that properties that can be available for move-on accommodation are made available from public and private sources.

They should offer move-on accommodation with floating support or the support of tenancy sustainment teams, as appropriate.

They should address problems with payment of Housing Benefit that discourage or prevent the private sector offering move-on housing.

8.4 Long-term measures to solve the problem

Local Authorities should ensure that their homelessness and Supporting People strategies identify challenging but achievable targets for move-on from homeless services within their area.

They should allocate move-on accommodation to those living in hostels in the area.

They should work constructively with hostel providers to ensure that they identify those people in hostels who are homeless and in priority need

They should where appropriate, co-ordinate sub-regional allocation with neighbouring authorities

They should ensure floating support and tenancy sustainment services are available for as long as is required to sustain a tenancy successfully.

Regional Housing Boards and the **Housing Corporation** should identify investment to develop new supported accommodation for those people who are not ready to live independently.

They should identify investment for the re-modelling of existing services that are not appropriately used at present

They should set an ambitious target in the Regional Housing Strategies for the reduction of the number of people in hostels who are waiting to move on.

Planning authorities should ensure that district plans acknowledge that move-on accommodation is a high need to address social inclusion and use planning powers to ensure that more is provided, including through planning gain.

The **National Housing Federation** should promote to Housing Associations the need to allocate units to hostel residents and to promote the practice needed to support former rough sleepers in settled accommodation. They should promote to specialist Supported Housing Providers the need to plan for, allocate units and train staff to meet the specific needs of formerly homeless people.

Voluntary Sector providers of services to homeless people should explore and promote innovative approaches to identifying through public and private sector partnerships, including those that enable greater access to the private rented sector. They should also make best possible use of the opportunities offered by the Homelessness Act.