

# **THE NUMBERS OF HIDDEN HOMELESS AND OTHER PEOPLE IN HOUSING NEED**

## **A REPORT FOR THE GLA**

**April 2004**

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## INTRODUCTION

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### INTRODUCTION

The current, legal definition of homelessness for England and Wales is given in the 1996 Housing Act. According to the law, a person is homeless if:

- either, there is no accommodation that they are entitled to occupy;
- or, they have accommodation but it is not reasonable for them to continue to occupy this accommodation.

To be classified as statutorily homeless, a person has to first apply to their local authority. A decision then depends on the interpretation of the law in their particular circumstances, something which requires judgements about what constitutes entitlement to occupy and what is reasonable to occupy.

Furthermore, even if someone is classified as statutorily homeless, the local authority is only required to provide accommodation if it also judges them to be in priority need, something which usually only happens if the person has dependent children, is pregnant or is considered to be vulnerable.

This report provides estimates of the numbers of people in London who arguably fit the legal definition of homelessness but who have not been provided with accommodation by their local authority. It is purely a factual and transparent quantification exercise.

Whether the various groups of people being counted in this report should be considered to be 'hidden homeless' or 'in housing need' is not of concern to the report and the reader should feel free to use whichever terminology they consider to be more appropriate.

The report also makes no judgements about how these people should be viewed nor what policies should be adopted on their behalf. It does, however, provide information which is relevant to such policy development.

The report has been drafted by the New Policy Institute at the behest of the GLA.

## GROUPS INCLUDED IN THE ANALYSIS

<b>Major Category</b>	<b>Sub-Category</b>
<b>1. Houselessness</b>	A. People living involuntarily in B&Bs and other boarded accommodation
	B. People living in hostels, night shelters or refuges on a non-permanent basis
	C. People staying in institutions who are due for discharge/release but have no accommodation to go to
<b>2. Insecure Accommodation</b>	D. Concealed households living in overcrowded conditions
	E. Concealed households where the owner/renter is dissatisfied
	F. Households where someone is being harassed
	G. People at imminent risk of eviction
<b>3. Inadequate Accommodation</b>	H. People squatting involuntarily
	I. Severely overcrowded households
	J. Households without central heating who are also dissatisfied with their accommodation

Note: the major categories of housing need in the left hand column come from the European Observatory on Homelessness. The sub categories in the right hand column were derived from a list provided to us by the GLA.

As requested by the GLA, estimates of the number of rough sleepers are not included as these are already available from the rough sleeper counts.<sup>1</sup> Also as requested by the GLA, asylum seekers are not explicitly considered, in part because of the dangers of double counting and in part because they are currently being considered by another GLA project.<sup>2</sup>

In each case, the estimates are presented using a proforma which covers the following:

- Description: a longer description of the sub-category of people.
- Rationale for inclusion: why people in the sub-category are considered to be houseless, in insecure accommodation or in inadequate accommodation (whichever is relevant)

<sup>1</sup> The latest estimate of rough sleepers was carried out by local authorities in August 2003. This found 267 people to be rough sleeping on the night of the count. Clearly, this is only a 'snapshot' estimate and will be much less than the total number of people sleeping rough in London at some point during the year. It compares with a figure provided by the CHAIN, which recorded contact with 1,547 different individuals on the streets of London between July –September 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Although many asylum seekers are arguably homeless according to the legal definition, they are not eligible to apply as homeless, and therefore would not be statutorily homeless. In addition, at the end of September 2003, there were around 25,000 asylum seekers on a NASS subsistence grant and 3,000 accommodated by NASS. Little is known about the housing needs of people accommodated by NASS. On the one hand, they have a place which they are legally entitled to occupy. On the other, there is some evidence that the accommodation given to asylum seekers is far from adequate. A small scale research project carried out by Shelter found that 20% of NASS accommodated asylum seekers are in 'unfit' accommodation. Another concern is those who applied for NASS and so consider themselves destitute, but who are not accepted as eligible for NASS support. They are not entitled to any support even while their appeal is processed. The most obvious group here is those rejected by NASS due to Section 55 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act. Research carried out by RIS in 2003 estimated total numbers of section 55 asylum seekers using services in London to be around 500 per day.

- Issues relating to subgroups: the identification of any obvious subgroups within the sub-category where the issues may be different, for example where the extent of the insecurity may be qualitatively different.
- Issues relating to double counting: a statement of which households in this sub-category have been excluded from the estimated numbers because they have already been counted in one of the other sub-categories.
- Data source: the data source used to estimate the numbers.
- Estimated numbers: the resulting estimate.
- Estimated risk: this is the most problematic heading as there are choices about what risk it is referring to. Currently, the material focuses on the relative probability (high, medium or low) that the people in this sub-category will classify themselves as homeless – either now or in the future - and potentially, therefore, apply to be classified as statutorily homeless. Note that, in many of the categories, it is single adults that dominate rather than families with children. Such people would typically not be provided with accommodation by their local authority even if they are accepted as statutorily homeless. Thus, while it could be expected that most families who consider themselves to be homeless will apply to their local authority to be classified as such, no such presumption can be made about single adults.
- Issues relating to the calculation: a statement of any points that are needed to clarify how the estimation numbers were derived.
- Further breakdowns available: further sub-divisions of the estimated numbers that can be analysed from the data source used in the overall estimation.
- Adequacy: a statement of how reliable the estimate of the size of the sub-category is in terms of both the reliability of resulting number and the extent to which the data used is in line with the sub-category being considered.
- Other possible sources: other sources which were considered for use but rejected in favour of the data source actually used (this field is usually blank).
- Relevant legislation: reference to any Acts/Bills that are directly relevant for this sub-category.
- Other comments: (this field is usually blank).

## SUMMARY OF THE ESTIMATES

Sub-Category	Estimated Adults <sup>3</sup>	Estimated risk
A. People living involuntarily in B&Bs and other boarded accommodation	9,000	High
B. People living in hostels, night shelters or refuges on a non-permanent basis	15,000	High
C. People staying in institutions who are due for discharge/release but have no accommodation to go to	no data	
D. Concealed households living in overcrowded conditions	80,000 aged 25+	Medium
	110,000 aged 16-24	Low
E. Concealed households where the owner/renter is dissatisfied	30,000 aged 25+	Medium
	20,000 aged 16-24	Low
F. Households where someone is being harassed	210,000	Varies
G. People at imminent risk of eviction	700	High
H. People squatting involuntarily	8,000 at most	High
I. Severely overcrowded households	140,000	High
J. Households without central heating who are also dissatisfied with their accommodation	40,000	Low

To provide some context for these estimates, in the latest quarter for which London data is available (the third quarter of 2003):

- Around 9,000 households were accepted as statutorily homeless and in priority need.
- Around 4,000 households were accepted as statutorily homeless but not in priority need.
- Around 60,000 households were in temporary accommodation.

Even for those accepted as statutorily homeless and in priority need (mainly families), the biggest reason causing them to apply was because friends and family were no longer willing to support them.

<sup>3</sup> At any point in time.

The Numbers of Hidden Homeless and Other People in Housing Need

MAJOR CATEGORY	1. HOUSELESSNESS
Sub-Category	<b>A. People living involuntarily in B&amp;Bs and other boarded accommodation</b>
Description	People staying in B&Bs or other boarded accommodation who are doing so through lack of an alternative. Receipt of housing benefit is used as a proxy measure for lack of choice – claimants have a low income and are therefore not likely to be there by choice whereas non-claimants will mostly have higher incomes and thus will be in the boarded accommodation through choice (e.g. as a temporary measure while changing jobs).
Rationale for inclusion	These people can be described as being houseless because they have no permanent housing and, because they also have low income, this situation is unlikely to be through choice and is also unlikely to change in the near future.
Issues relating to subgroups	Some of those in boarded accommodation are self-placed whilst others have been placed their by their local authorities. Those placed by local authorities comprise a mixture of statutorily homeless in priority need, asylum seekers placed before NASS, and social services placements.
Issues relating to double counting	<p>Local authority placements that are living in B&amp;Bs because they are statutorily homeless and in priority need should be excluded on the grounds that this will have been picked up by the ODPM PIE returns. However, this proportion is not known and thus, to be conservative in the estimation, all local authority placements have been excluded.</p> <p>The DWP definition of boarded accommodation includes people staying in hostels, residential homes and houses with multiple occupation (HMOs). Ideally, all of these groups should be excluded: those in hostels because of potential double counting with category B, those staying in residential homes because they are in permanent accommodation, and those in HMOs because their accommodation may be satisfactory. The DWP data does not, however, distinguish between these groups and those in B&amp;Bs. The choice is therefore between excluding this whole category in its entirety or counting all those who are private boarders. Given the conservative decision in the previous paragraph, it is suggested that the latter approach is the more appropriate.</p>
Data source	DWP Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management System Quarterly 100 per cent caseload stock count (averages for the year to August 2003).
Estimated numbers	9,000
Estimated risk	High - if they applied to their local authority, such people would appear to qualify as statutorily homeless even if not judged to be in priority need

**The Numbers of Hidden Homeless and Other People in Housing Need**

<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>1. HOUSELESSNESS</b>
<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>A. People living involuntarily in B&amp;Bs and other boarded accommodation</b>
Issues relating to the calculation	<p>From DWP figures, an average of 15,000 benefit units are both in boarded accommodation and in receipt of housing benefit at any point in time.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>Of these, 9,000 are private boarder units and 7,000 are local authority boarder units.</p> <p>National figures suggest that the vast majority of these households are single adults, with only 3% being couples<sup>5</sup></p>
Further breakdowns available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borough</li> </ul>
Adequacy	Medium – the estimated numbers are considered to be robust but the use of receipt of housing benefit as a proxy for lack of choice is somewhat arbitrary and arguably somewhat conservative. The numbers are also likely to be an underestimation due to the total exclusion of all local authority placed boarders.
Other possible sources	None
Relevant legislation	Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.175
Other comments	

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<sup>4</sup> DWP calculations include estimates where local authorities have not provided estimates - seven of the 33 London boroughs provided no information. 13 London boroughs provided information on only one category/subgroup.

<sup>55</sup> London-specific proportions are not available. A DWP 2001 national survey suggested that 92% of boarders in receipt of housing benefit were single people without dependant children, 5% were single people with dependant children and 3% were couples with dependant children.

The Numbers of Hidden Homeless and Other People in Housing Need

<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>1. HOUSELESSNESS</b>
<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>B. People living in hostels, night shelters or refuges on a non-permanent basis</b>
Description	As above
Rationale for inclusion	People living in hostels, night shelters or refuges usually only do so because they have nowhere else to live, or because they need support. The fact that they are only in the accommodation on a temporary basis means that, unless circumstances change, they face the prospect of having nowhere to live in the coming months.
Issues relating to subgroups	None obvious
Issues relating to double counting	<p>Some of the people in refuges may have accepted as statutorily homeless and in priority need and placed there by their local authority, for example because of domestic violence. While the numbers of such people are not known, and Women's Aid will not release such data, it would appear that the numbers are small. For example, only 145 households were accepted as in priority need in the third quarter of 2003 due to experience or threat of domestic violence.</p> <p>In most cases, even if some of the people have been declared to be statutorily homeless, it would seem that they have also been declared as not being in priority need as otherwise they would have been provided with some permanent accommodation.</p>
Data source	London Hostels Directory
Estimated numbers	14,500 adults at any point in time
Estimated risk	High. Hostel, night shelter and refuge populations are known to be unsettled, usually staying in accommodation for short lengths of time. Those staying presumably have nowhere else to live but are not being offered permanent accommodation in supported housing.
Issues relating to the calculation	<p>16,000 bed spaces for homeless people are recorded in the London Hostels Directory.</p> <p>Using an approximately void rate of 10% (on the basis of Resource Information Service research into void levels) reduces this figure to around 14,500.</p> <p>The LHD is the occupancy rate, not a yearly figure</p>
Further breakdowns available	<p>The following breakdowns are available from the Supported Housing CORE 'lettings' database:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Household type (90% do not have dependent children)</li> <li>• Age (three-fifths are 25 or over, two-fifths aged 16-24)</li> <li>• Sex (three-fifths are male, two-fifths female)</li> <li>• Ethnicity (half are White, two-fifths are Black and one-tenth are Asian)</li> <li>• Whether classified as homeless by their hostel (four-fifths are, one-fifth is not)</li> </ul>



The Numbers of Hidden Homeless and Other People in Housing Need

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<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>1. HOUSELESSNESS</b>
<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>B. People living in hostels, night shelters or refuges on a non-permanent basis</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borough</li> <li>• Proposed length of stay</li> </ul> Last settled accommodation
Adequacy	Medium – the London Hostels Directory a 100% sample and the resulting numbers are considered to be robust. However, it is likely to be something of an estimate because it does not include local authority hostel accommodation
Other possible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CORE and CHAIN:.</li> <li>• CORE collects data on numbers and details of the hostel population. However, it underestimates the number since it does not include hostel/service providers with less than 250 units unless they are part of a wider service provider</li> <li>• CHAIN collects data primarily on rough sleepers, some of whom will be being picked up in official rough sleeper counts, while others will form part of the hostel population counted in the London Hostels Directory.</li> </ul>
Relevant legislation	Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.175
Other comments	

The Numbers of Hidden Homeless and Other People in Housing Need

MAJOR CATEGORY	1. HOUSELESSNESS
Sub-Category	<b>C. People staying in institutions who are due for discharge/release but have no accommodation to go to</b>
Description	<p>People currently staying in hospitals, police custody, prisons, other institutions who are due for discharge or release in the near future but have no accommodation to go to.</p> <p>What constitutes ‘near future’ is a matter of judgement, with the issues obviously being sharper the closer the release date. But, given the lack of data, this point is moot from the perspective of numbers estimation.</p>
Rationale for inclusion	These people are an obvious houseless category who will typically not be picked up in the statutorily homeless and in priority need counts.
Issues relating to subgroups	Of these groups, prisons leavers are likely to represent the most substantial sub-group – with a third of prisoners reported to lose their accommodation whilst serving their sentence.
Issues relating to double counting	None
Data source	<p>None.</p> <p>Note that the Home Office will be collating some such data for offenders in April this year as part of its development of a national accommodation strategy for offenders.</p>
Estimated numbers	No basis for estimation
Estimated risk	High. Those leaving prisons with no fixed abode would, if they applied, typically be considered statutorily homeless. However, despite the widened categories of priority need, many ex-prisoners are still not being classified as priority need, and therefore not entitled to long-term housing from their local authority.
Issues relating to the calculation	N/a
Further breakdowns available	N/a
Adequacy	N/a
Other possible sources	Research on these people was attempted in 1995 but was hampered by the difficulties in data collection, reliant as it was on responses from individual prisons, hospitals, and police stations. Many of them did not respond, and of those that did, few kept the information required by the research. Numbers of people leaving all prisons with no fixed abode will be available from 2005 due to the introduction the new key performance indicator.
Relevant legislation	Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.175; Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) Order 2002 s.5

<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>1. HOUSELESSNESS</b>
<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>C. People staying in institutions who are due for discharge/release but have no accommodation to go to</b>
Other comments	Attempts were made during this study to collect data from London prisons. However, some prisons did not reply, and others reported very low numbers of no fixed abode ex-prisoners. This is because London prisons are predominantly local, low category prisons. Higher numbers would be found from high category prisons (where therefore longer sentences, and increased likelihood of loss of home) around the London area. In this case, numbers could be estimated in theory by counting prisoners who enter with a London address, but leave with no fixed abode. In practice, however, difficulties in data collection of this sort rule out this option at the current time.

<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>2. INSECURE HOUSING (ALSO INADEQUATE)</b>
<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>D. Concealed households living in overcrowded conditions</b>
Description	Adults living with their parents, other relatives or friends in accommodation where they are not the owner or renter of that accommodation (nor their partner) and where at least one of the adults does not have their own bedroom.
Rationale for inclusion	The accommodation is insecure because such people have no legal rights to stay in their accommodation, with their ability to stay there depending on the views of the owner/renter (something which may well be problematic given the overcrowded nature of the accommodation). The accommodation is inadequate because at least one of the adults (presumably usually those who are not the owner/renter) does not have a bedroom of their own.
Issues relating to subgroups	The situation is regarded as less satisfactory for those aged 25 and over than for those aged 16-24. This is on the grounds that the vast majority of those aged 25 and over have reached a settled living arrangement, whereas those aged 24 and below are often still in the period of transition from dependent to independent living.
Issues relating to double counting	None
Data source	London Household Survey 2002
Estimated numbers	190,000 adults, of whom 80,000 are aged 25+ and 110,000 are aged 16-24.
Estimated risk	Depends on both age and who they are living with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High if aged 25 and over living with non-relatives.</li> <li>• Medium if aged 25 and over living with relatives.</li> <li>• Medium if aged 16-24 living with non-relatives.</li> <li>• Low if aged 16-24 living with relatives.</li> </ul>
Issues relating to the calculation	Whether or not a person is part of a concealed household is a calculation performed by the New Policy Institute. Issues relating to this calculation are discussed in Appendix A.  Whether or not the household is overcrowded is a calculation performed by Opinion Research Services, where a negative score represents overcrowding.
Further breakdowns available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of overcrowding</li> <li>• Relationship to the owner/renter</li> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Sex</li> <li>• Ethnicity (but small sample sizes)</li> <li>• Borough (but very small sample sizes)</li> <li>• Household satisfaction with accommodation</li> </ul>
Adequacy	Medium – the estimated numbers are considered to be reasonably robust but the security or otherwise of the housing will depend on individual circumstances and cannot be determined from the survey data.

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The Numbers of Hidden Homeless and Other People in Housing Need

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<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>2. INSECURE HOUSING (ALSO INADEQUATE)</b>
<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>D. Concealed households living in overcrowded conditions</b>
Other possible sources	Survey of English Housing (but a much smaller survey of London households than the London Household Survey)
Relevant legislation	Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.175; Housing Act 1985 Part X s.358-364
Other comments	

<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>2. INSECURE HOUSING</b>
<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>E. Concealed households where the owner/renter is dissatisfied</b>
Description	Adults living with their parents, other relatives or friends in accommodation where they are not the owner or renter of that accommodation (nor their partner) and where the owner/renter is dissatisfied with the current accommodation.
Rationale for inclusion	The accommodation is insecure because such people have no legal rights to stay in their accommodation, with their ability to stay there depending on the views of the owner/renter (something which may well be problematic given that there is some dissatisfaction with the accommodation).
Issues relating to subgroups	<p>The situation is regarded as less satisfactory for those aged 25 and over than for those aged 16-24. This is on the grounds that the vast majority of those aged 25 and over have reached a settled living arrangement, whereas those aged 24 and below are often still in the period of transition from dependent to independent living.</p> <p>Clearly, the reasons for dissatisfaction will vary from household to household and some reasons will more directly relate to the insecurity of the housing than others. The data available does not, however, provide any direct information on the reasons for dissatisfaction.</p>
Issues relating to double counting	Overcrowded households excluded to avoid double counting with category D.
Data source	London Household Survey 2002
Estimated numbers	50,000 adults, of whom 30,000 are aged 25+ and 20,000 are aged 16-24.
Estimated risk	<p>Depends on both age and who they are living with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High if aged 25 and over living with non-relatives.</li> <li>• Medium if aged 25 and over living with relatives.</li> <li>• Medium if aged 16-24 living with non-relatives.</li> <li>• Low if aged 16-24 living with relatives.</li> </ul>
Issues relating to the calculation	<p>Whether or not the person is part of a concealed household is a calculation performed by the New Policy Institute. Issues relating to this calculation are discussed in Appendix A.</p> <p>People are included only if the respondent to the survey said that they were 'very dissatisfied' or 'fairly dissatisfied' with their present accommodation.</p>
Further breakdowns available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of dissatisfaction (very or fairly)</li> <li>• Relationship to the owner/renter</li> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Sex</li> <li>• Ethnicity (but small sample sizes)</li> <li>• Borough (but very small sample sizes)</li> </ul>
Adequacy	Medium – the estimated numbers are considered to be reasonably

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The Numbers of Hidden Homeless and Other People in Housing Need

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<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>2. INSECURE HOUSING</b>
<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>E. Concealed households where the owner/renter is dissatisfied</b>
	robust but the extent to which the owner/renter's dissatisfaction means that the housing is insecure will depend on individual circumstances and cannot be determined from the survey data.
Other possible sources	Survey of English Housing (but a much smaller survey of London households than the London Household Survey)
Relevant legislation	Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.175
Other comments	

<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>2. INSECURE HOUSING</b>
<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>F. Households where someone is being harassed</b>
Description	Adults living in households where someone in the household is currently being harassed.
Rationale for inclusion	The accommodation is insecure because the harassment might force them to leave due to the consequent threats to personal safety or psychological well-being.
Issues relating to subgroups	Clearly, some forms of harassment will be much more/less serious than others but this can not be determined from the data.  Tenure is also relevant in that local authorities and registered social landlords typically have policies to re-house in the case of harassment. The implication is that such households should be excluded from the estimated numbers.
Issues relating to double counting	Concealed households excluded to avoid double counting with categories D. and E. Severely overcrowded households excluded to avoid double counting with category I.
Data source	London Household Survey 2002
Estimated numbers	210,000 adults living in households where someone is being harassed, together with 90,000 dependent children.  Note that number is currently an overestimate as it includes people in social housing and, as per the discussion above, such households should be excluded. However, there is no obvious field in the London Household Survey to distinguish between those in social housing and those in private renting.
Estimated risk	The level of risk will depend on the severity of the harassment, something which cannot be judged from the survey data.
Issues relating to the calculation	As discussed above,  People are included if the respondent to the survey said that someone in the household had been harassed over the last twelve months and that this harassment was still going on. All the adults in these households are included on the basis that any potential threat to their continuing to live in the accommodation is a threat to all of them.  Threats to personal safety or psychological well-being due to domestic violence or harassment cannot be included in the estimates as the London Household Survey does not include any questions on this subject.
Further breakdowns available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type of harassment</li> <li>• Ethnicity (but small sample sizes)</li> <li>• Household type</li> <li>• Borough (but very small sample sizes)</li> </ul> (neither age nor sex are applicable as the count is of all the adults in the relevant households)
Adequacy	Low – some of the harassment will not be sufficiently severe to cause the housing to be insecure whilst domestic forms of



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The Numbers of Hidden Homeless and Other People in Housing Need

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<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>2. INSECURE HOUSING</b>
<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>F. Households where someone is being harassed</b>
	harassment cannot be included in the estimates.
Other possible sources	None
Relevant legislation	Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.175-177; Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) Order 2002 s.6
Other comments	

<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>2. INSECURE HOUSING</b>
<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>G. People at imminent risk of eviction</b>
Description	People without dependent children who have received outright possession orders (and so are at imminent risk of eviction) for rent arrears (so the risk is not because of their behaviour).
Rationale for inclusion	The accommodation is insecure because someone who receives an outright possession order will cease to have a legal right to occupy their house within 28 days. Homelessness legislation states that someone is homeless if they are threatened with homelessness within 28 days.
Issues relating to subgroups	<p>People with dependent children can, in principle, apply to their local authority and be classified as statutorily homeless and in priority need. On this basis, such people are excluded from the estimates on the basis that they would be included in the ODPM PIE statistics.</p> <p>In contrast, people without dependent children would be deemed intentionally homeless if they were facing eviction for rent arrears, and unless they have a specific vulnerability, would not be considered to in priority need.</p>
Issues relating to double counting	People with dependent children excluded, as discussed above.
Data source	Various, as explained under the heading 'issues related to the calculation'
Estimated numbers	700
Estimated risk	High - those facing eviction would, if they applied, be classified as statutorily homeless as they are threatened with homelessness within 28 days.
Issues relating to the calculation	<p>From the 2001 Census, there are around 3 million households in housing association dwellings. The Housing Corporation estimates an eviction rate in 2000 of 7.8 per 1000 among one bedroom housing association dwellings, given an estimated 23,500 evictions from housing association dwellings each year. Excluding families<sup>6</sup> and those threatened with eviction for anti-social behaviour<sup>7</sup> (on the grounds that it is not reasonable to include those who are facing eviction because of their behaviour), reduces this figure to 9,500 per year.</p> <p>A person is considered to be threatened with homelessness if they are likely to be homeless within 28 days, so around 700 (28/365ths of 9,500) can be considered at imminent risk of eviction at any one time (a point-in-time estimate being required to put the calculation for this group on the same basis as that for the other groups).</p>

<sup>6</sup> Estimated to be 50% of outright possession orders in *Possession action – the last resort?* NACAB, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Estimated to be 20% of outright possession orders in *Possession action – the last resort?* NACAB, 2003.

<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>2. INSECURE HOUSING</b>
<b>Sub-Category</b>	<b>G. People at imminent risk of eviction</b>
Further breakdowns available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By type of possession (rent or mortgage)</li> <li>• By type of landlord (local authority, social or private)</li> <li>• By county court area</li> <li>• By household type (NACAB)</li> </ul>
Adequacy	Medium – the estimate above is likely to be an underestimate because a) not all of the people with dependent children will apply to be classified as statutorily homeless and b) those who are threatened with homelessness because of <i>suspended</i> possession orders are not included. <sup>8</sup> But these issues would not affect the order of magnitude of the estimate.
Other possible sources	Court Service Statistics, April 2002 –March 2003: around 10,000 households were issued with outright possession orders in 2002/03 and the National Housing Federation estimates that the number of evictions is similar to the number of outright possession orders. <sup>9</sup>
Relevant legislation	Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.175; Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.190-192
Other comments	

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<sup>8</sup> Suspended orders mean that a person may have to leave their accommodation anytime within 14 days to six weeks. Legislation states that someone is homeless if they are going to become homeless within 28 days, so this will clearly apply to some of those who have been issued with suspended possession orders

<sup>9</sup> See *House keeping*, Shelter, 2003.

The Numbers of Hidden Homeless and Other People in Housing Need

<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>2. INSECURE HOUSING</b>
<b>Sub Category</b>	<b>H. People squatting involuntarily</b>
Description	People who are squatting and who are doing so because they have no alternative form of accommodation.
Rationale for inclusion	The accommodation is insecure because such people have no legal rights to stay in their accommodation. Only those who are squatting because they have no alternative should be included as people who are squatting voluntarily are doing so out of choice.
Issues relating to subgroups	None
Issues relating to double counting	None
Data source	Estimates of Young Single Homelessness, London Research Centre 1995
Estimated numbers	8,000 people at most
Estimated risk	High. Squatters would be classified as statutorily homeless since they have no place where they are legally entitled to occupy. But the local authority would only have a duty to provide them with accommodation if they have children, are pregnant or vulnerable
Issues relating to the calculation	Estimates of Single Homelessness (1996) gave an estimate of 9,600 for England in 1995. The research also suggested that 80% of squatting takes place in London.  No data is available on the proportion of squatters who are there because they have no alternative.
Further breakdowns available	None
Adequacy	Low – the estimate is a) out-of-date and b) includes voluntary squatters.
Other possible sources	The only other published research is from 1990. During this study, we contacted each Empty Homes Officer in each Borough to provide more up-to-date information but this yielded few responses.
Relevant legislation	Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.175
Other comments	Gypsies are another group that potentially could have been included here. Whilst some of these could be considered to be legally homeless, since they have parked on unauthorised land (an estimated 100 caravans), the view has been taken that many would not consider themselves to be homeless but, rather, that they have made a lifestyle choice.

The Numbers of Hidden Homeless and Other People in Housing Need

<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>3. INADEQUATE HOUSING</b>
<b>Sub Category</b>	<b>I. Severely overcrowded households</b>
Description	Adults living in accommodation where there is severe overcrowding.
Rationale for inclusion	The accommodation is inadequate because of the severe overcrowding.
Issues relating to subgroups	None – the overcrowding threshold has been chosen at a sufficient level of severity that all the people included are clearly in inadequate accommodation.
Issues relating to double counting	Concealed households excluded to avoid double counting with categories D. and E.
Data source	London Household Survey 2002
Estimated numbers	140,000 adults together with 50,000 dependent children.
Estimated risk	High – the level of overcrowding is such that the housing is clearly inadequate.
Issues relating to the calculation	<p>The extent to which a household is overcrowded is a calculation performed by Opinion Research Services. The method of calculation is [Jonathan Lee providing details], where a negative score represents overcrowding.</p> <p>Whether or not the household is overcrowded is a calculation performed by Opinion Research Services. People are included if they are living in accommodation with an overcrowding score of – 2 or less (implying two or more bedrooms short) but are excluded if they are living in accommodation with an overcrowding score or –1 (implying one bedroom short). Note that 340,000 adults are living in housing with an overcrowding score of precisely –1.</p>
Further breakdowns available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Sex</li> <li>• Ethnicity (but small sample sizes)</li> <li>• Household type</li> <li>• Borough (but very small sample sizes)</li> </ul>
Adequacy	Medium – the estimated numbers are considered to be reasonably robust but the choice of threshold (two or more bedrooms short) is somewhat arbitrary and arguably too conservative.
Other possible sources	Survey of English Housing or General Household Survey (but both are smaller surveys of London households than the London Household Survey)
Relevant legislation	Housing Act 1985 Part X s.358-364
Other comments	

<b>MAJOR CATEGORY</b>	<b>3. INADEQUATE HOUSING</b>
<b>Sub Category</b>	<b>J. Households without central heating who are also dissatisfied with their accommodation</b>
Description	Households without central heating whether the household is also dissatisfied with their accommodation.
Rationale for inclusion	The government has a system for classifying homes as ‘decent’ or ‘non-decent’. The main reason that home are classified as ‘non-decent’ is if they lack a reasonable degree of thermal comfort, something which mainly depends on whether or not the home has central heating. If a home lacks central heating and the people living there are dissatisfied with the accommodation, then it seems reasonable to assume that the accommodation is inadequate.
Issues relating to subgroups	None
Issues relating to double counting	Concealed households excluded to avoid double counting with categories D. and E. Harassed households excluded to avoid double counting with category F. Severely overcrowded households excluded to avoid double counting with category I.
Data source	London Household Survey 2002
Estimated numbers	40,000 adults together with 20,000 dependent children.
Estimated risk	Low – neither lack of central heating nor dissatisfaction with the current accommodation are able to reflect housing inadequacy as clearly as other measures, for example, severe overcrowding.
Issues relating to the calculation	<p>People are included if the accommodation lacks central heating and the respondent to the survey said that that they were ‘very dissatisfied’ or ‘fairly dissatisfied’ with their present accommodation.</p> <p>Note that a further 380,000 adults are living in housing without central heating but did not voice dissatisfaction with their accommodation when responding to the survey.</p>
Further breakdowns available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of dissatisfaction (very or fairly)</li> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Sex</li> <li>• Ethnicity (but small sample sizes)</li> <li>• Household type</li> <li>• Borough (but very small sample sizes)</li> </ul>
Adequacy	Medium – the estimated numbers are considered to be reasonably robust and lack of central heating is widely agreed to be the major reason for housing being ‘non-decent’, but the decision to include only those who also voiced dissatisfaction with the accommodation to represent problems with housing adequacy is somewhat arbitrary and arguably too conservative..
Other possible sources	Survey of English Housing (but a much smaller survey of London households than the London Household Survey)
Relevant legislation	Housing Act 1985 s.604 (amended 1989 Local Government Housing Act) Housing Act 1996 Part VII s.177
Other comments	

## APPENDIX A – IDENTIFICATION OF CONCEALED HOUSEHOLDS IN THE LONDON HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

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The identification of ‘concealed households’ is fundamental to our calculations as such people do not have any legal rights to continue living in the accommodation they are in and are thus in insecure accommodation.

We define someone as being in a ‘concealed household’ if they are an adult but are not an owner or renter of the accommodation they are living in nor the partner of that owner/renter. (Note that the biggest group of such people is adults living with their parents).

This appendix sets out:

- How we have estimated the number of adults in concealed households from the LHS data.
- How we have estimated the age breakdown.
- How our estimates compare to those estimated from the Survey for English Housing.

### HOW WE HAVE ESTIMATED THE NUMBER OF ADULTS IN CONCEALED HOUSEHOLDS

In most cases, the numbers of such adults in a household can be estimated from the London Household Survey (LHS) using the following variables:

- The number of adults in that household.
- The household type.

So, for example:

- If the household type is ‘married’ and there are 3 adults in the household, then the number of concealed adults is 1 (the 3 adults less the 2 married adults).
- If the household type is ‘lone female’ and there are 3 adults in the household, then the number of concealed adults is 2 (the 3 adults less the lone female).

Uncertainties arise when:

- When the number of adults in the household is unclear.
- When the household type is unclear.
- When the owner/renter is unclear.

The methods used in each of these cases is set out below. ***In summary, the only issue where the precise assumptions made can materially affect the estimated number of concealed households is where the household type is classified as ‘other’.***

### **When The Number Of Adults In The Household Is Unclear**

The LHS has three relevant variables: the number of adults (n16plus), the number of children (nupto16) and the number of people (qa2). In most cases, these three variables are consistent (i.e. number of people = number of adults + number of children). In 3% of cases (235 records), however, these variables are inconsistent in that the number of people is greater than the number of adults + the number of children.

After taking advice from the GLA and ORS, where these inconsistencies exist, we calculate the number of adults from the number of people (qa2) and number of children (nupto16) fields rather than from the number of adults (n16plus) field. The main reason for this is that the qa2 variable is the one which is consistent with the rest of the person data in the survey, for example the data on the age and sex of the various people living in the household.

*Because the number of inconsistencies is relatively small, this issue does not materially affect the estimates.*

### **When The Owner/Renter Is Unclear**

The LHS survey methodology was to ask the owner/renter of the accommodation or their partner, rather than any of the other people in the accommodation, to answer all the questions on behalf of the survey.

One of the questions asked (q6q7) was the relationship of the respondent to the owner/renter. In the majority of cases, the answer to this question was either 'self' or 'partner'. In 22% of cases (1,817 records), however, this field is blank.

After taking advice from the GLA and ORS, we treat these households in the same way as those who did answer the question; in other words we assume that the respondent is either the owner/renter or their partner. The main reason for this is that it is both consistent with the survey methodology and with the assumption that the majority of these cases have either paid off their mortgage or are living rent-free. Furthermore, in the vast majority of the 1,817 cases, the respondent is either the only adult in the household (604 records) - in which case there is no ambiguity - or is living with their partner (989 records) – in which case, it seems reasonable to assume that they and their partner are the owners/renters.

### **When The Household Type Is Unclear**

In most cases, the household type (hhldtype) is sufficient for us to calculate the number of adults who are owner, renters or their partners. In 12% of cases (966 records), however, the household type is sufficiently ambiguous to make our calculations ambiguous. These cases are:

- 31 'all student' households.
- 53 'unresolved' households.
- 249 'multi households'.
- 633 'other' households.



***'All student' households***

We exclude these households from the calculations on the grounds that sharing between students is a common occurrence which in no way implies that any of the students is either in insecure housing nor that they are 'concealed'.

***'Multi' households'***

From the GLA, we understand that this classification is used when there is one family unit of one/two adults with dependent children plus at least one other adult who is not their non-dependent child. So, for example, a couple living with their dependent children and one of their parents would be classified as a 'multi' household.

For the purposes of calculating the number of concealed adults, we assume that an average of 2 adults in these households are owners/renters or their partners. This is done on the grounds that, on average, this will lead to a slightly conservative estimate of the number of adults who are concealed as the typical accommodation will have either 1 or 2 owners/renters plus partners.

***'Other' households***

From the GLA, we understand that this classification is used whenever the household type does not fit in any of the other categories. The LHS does contain detailed data of the relationships of the various adults in these households. Examination of this data suggests that the most common household compositions in the 'other' household category are:

- 2 or more non-relatives sharing the accommodation.
- 2 or more adult siblings sharing the accommodation.

For the purpose of calculating the number of concealed adults, we assume that:

- Where all the adults sharing the accommodation are non-relatives, we assume that there are no concealed adults. Clearly this is somewhat of a conservative assumption, but there is no way of distinguishing from the data between 2 non-relatives who are jointly renting and 2 non-relatives where one is sleeping on the sofa of the other.
- Where some of the adults sharing the accommodation are relatives or partners, we assume that an average of 2 of these adults are owners/renters. In other words, we treat such households in the same manner as 'multi' households. As with 'multi' households, this is likely to lead to a slightly conservative estimate.

Because there are a significant number of non-relative 'other' households in the LHS, differing assumptions can materially affect the resulting estimates. An estimated 500,000 adults live in such circumstances, collectively comprising 150,000 households. So, at an extreme, the number of concealed adults could be up to 350,000 (i.e. 500,000 less 150,000) rather than the zero which we have assumed.

## **HOW WE HAVE ESTIMATED THE AGE BREAKDOWN**

The methods set out above provide an estimate of the number of concealed adults in each household. The age breakdown is then obtained by examining the relationship of each adult in the household to the respondent to the survey. If the relationship is other than that of partner (spouse or co-habitee) then that adult is considered to be concealed (on the grounds that the survey methodology is to seek out the owner/renter or their partner to respond to the survey questions). Their age is then incorporated into the calculations.

Where the household type is such that there is some uncertainty about precisely which of the adults in the household are the ones who are concealed (as per the earlier discussion), all the possible candidates are identified and each is given an equal probability of being one of the concealed adults.

## **HOW OUR ESTIMATES COMPARE TO THOSE ESTIMATED FROM THE SURVEY FOR ENGLISH HOUSING**

Using the methods set out above, our overall estimate of the number of concealed adults in London is 900,000. This is 18% of the total estimated 4.9 million adults in London.

The annual Survey for English Housing includes around 2,600 London households (compared with the 8,200 in the LHS). It contains a similar set of questions to that of the LHS, except that it explicitly asked questions about owners, renters, tenancy groups and people who are in none of these categories. Thus, it provides a direct estimate of the number of concealed adults.

From the 2002/03 Survey for English Housing, the estimated proportion of adults in London who are concealed is 18%, the same proportion as our estimates from LHS.