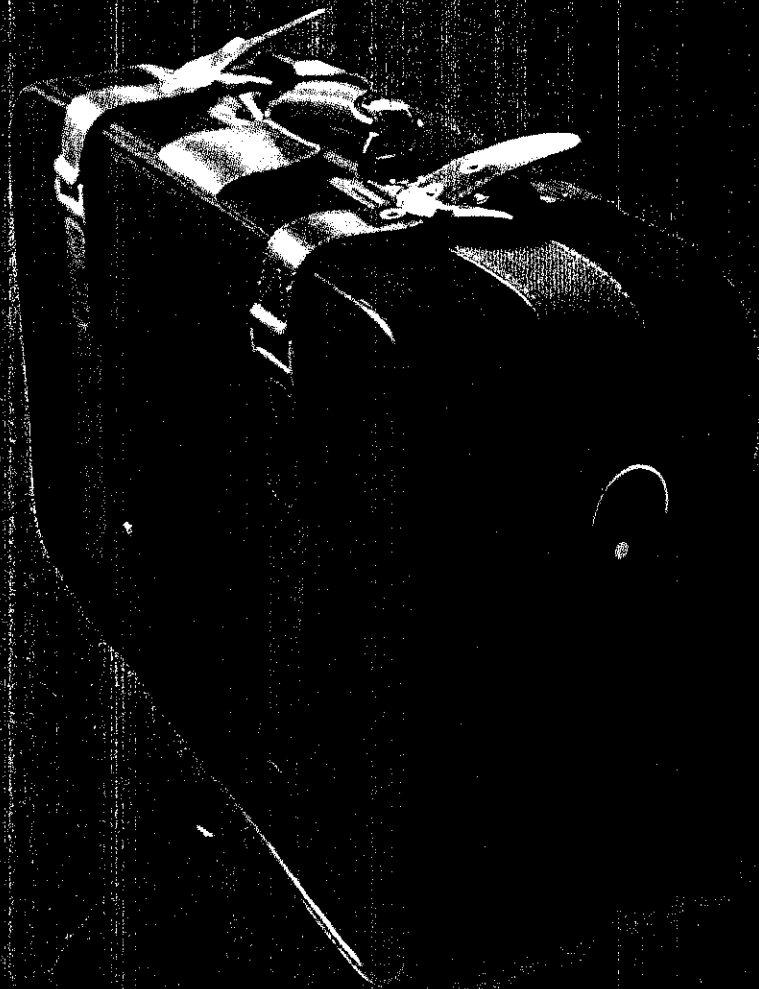




# in focus



**THE USE OF BED AND BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION  
FOR HOMELESS ADULTS IN DUBLIN**

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Report

## **B&B in Focus**

**The Use of Bed and Breakfast  
Accommodation for Homeless  
Adults in Dublin**

Focus Point 1994

Researcher: Jeanne Moore

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*Design and typesetting:*  
Catherine Higginbotham, Focus Point

*Printing:*  
Genprint Ltd.

*Cover:*  
Language

## Preface

This report paints a picture of what it is like for people who are homeless in Dublin and staying in B&B's. It may seem surprising that B&B's, normally associated with holidays and travel, are being used as emergency accommodation for homeless people. The fact is that young families- young adults with young children, have been increasingly placed in B&B's over the last three years. In Dublin alone during 1991, 5 households were placed by the Homeless Persons Unit of the Eastern Health Board. In 1993, 474 households were placed in B&B by the Eastern Health Board on behalf of the Dublin local authorities.

Nobody is happy with the use of B&B accommodation as temporary accommodation for homeless people, neither the policy makers, service providers, B&B owners or the people themselves. It continues to be used primarily because of the lack of sufficient alternative emergency accommodation. In the United Kingdom, Bed and Breakfast accommodation has been used in this way for over 15 years, but is being phased out by local authorities because it has proven to be neither cost-effective or suitable as emergency accommodation.

Being out-of-home in a B&B can mean one family staying in one room, with no access to cooking or laundry facilities. Many homeless people in B&B's wake up each day uncertain of where they will spend the day or the next night, or the next year, and in addition, having to cope with having no place to go during the day, whatever the weather, whether the children are sick or well and whether they have cash in their pockets or not. This is how many homeless people in this situation have to live for weeks.

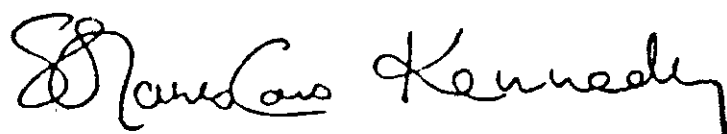
This is a disturbing piece of research, painting as it does a picture of families in distress. People confused and frightened, going around in circles, not sure whether they will be able to break out of the circle, or the cycle of homelessness. It is one thing to lack the basic necessities of life, a kettle, access to a kitchen, a place for the children to play, somewhere to sit during the day- but it is another thing entirely to lack these things and not know if and how the situation will come to an end. Despite contact with state services, people feel out of control of their own lives, of how and where they are living their lives, of where they are going in the future which is a major source of stress for these people.

They are frustrated, fatigued, lonely and feel powerless. The result is that these young adults and families find themselves caught in a cycle of homelessness and poverty, helplessness and powerlessness for a variety of reasons which is very difficult to break out of.

For people out of home, B&B's have some things to offer: privacy, some protection from the stigma attached to homelessness, being able to stay together as a family (which is not an option in hostels, for example). But B&B's, which after all are intended for people on holiday or on business, cannot provide the supports or even the basic necessities that people out of home badly need. What these people require is good-quality emergency housing with practical facilities in a supportive, caring environment, followed by appropriate (long-term accommodation) housing so that they can move on out of that emergency accommodation.

There is also a strong economic argument in favour of making the sort of provision outlined here. Suitable emergency accommodation for these people would cost no more than current expenditure on B&B. Failure to make this provision costs a lot more in financial and social terms.

Homeless people have the same needs, the same fears, the same hopes, the same vulnerabilities, the same aspirations as you and me. Above all, they feel the same about their children as the rest of us do. They love them, and they want to cherish them and bring them up well and give them the best. These are families who have fallen on hard times, and like the rest of us in hard times, they need to be cushioned against the worst of their situation. But there is little cushioning for these families. These people are the same as you and me, but an enormous gulf divides us, not necessarily the gulf that divides the rich from the poor, but the gulf that divides those who have some modicum of stability in and control over their lives from those who have their control over their own lives wrenched away from them by the fact of their homelessness.



**Sister Stanislaus Kennedy**  
**President of Focus Point**

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the residents of B&Bs for generously sharing their experiences of staying in a B&B. The owners and staff of the B&Bs who participated in the study, were enthusiastic and very co-operative during the data collection. My thanks to them all for helping to make this research possible.

I would like to thank the staff of Focus Point Crisis Service and Coffee Shop who were extremely helpful and patient in making contact with people staying in B&Bs.

Many thanks to the Steering Committee, each of whom provided continuous support, advice and feedback during the research and valuable comments on drafts of this report. I am grateful to Dublin Corporation, the Department of the Environment and the Eastern Health Board for their considerable time and support. Thanks in particular to Gerry Kenny of the Eastern Health Board who provided invaluable information and statistics on the Homeless Persons Unit and Travellers Unit. Thanks also to Combat Poverty for their time and financial support.

My thanks also to Rachel Collier, Sister Stanislaus Kennedy, Justin O'Brien, and Maureen Lynott for their insightful editorial assistance with this report. My thanks to Carmel Kelleher for her support and advice during the study. In addition I would like to thank Catherine Higginbotham for painstakingly typing and laying out this report.

**Jeanne Moore**  
**Researcher**

## **Advisory Group to the Study**

The Advisory Group included key representatives from statutory and voluntary bodies. Members contributed to the planning and execution of the research and with the preparation of the report.

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**The research was funded by Focus Point Project Limited  
with assistance from the Combat Poverty Agency**

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## OVERVIEW OF STUDY

### Background

This study is concerned with the use of "bed and breakfast" accommodation as temporary accommodation for people who are homeless in Dublin. It was carried out over the period February to September 1993, and was funded by Focus Point, with partial funding by the Combat Poverty Agency.

### Aims & Objectives

The main aim of this study was to find out more about the current use of B&B accommodation for those who are homeless.

The objectives were as follows:

- to document the policies on the current use of B&B accommodation in Dublin for people out-of-home
- to put the use of B&B accommodation in its historical and legislative context
- to document the extent of the use of B&B accommodation in Dublin and, where possible nationally
- to find out more about people out-of-home staying in B&B's and describe their experiences
- to make recommendations in relation to the use of B&B's as emergency accommodation for people out-of-home

13 key policy makers and service providers and 40 people staying in B&B accommodation were interviewed. In addition, information was gathered (on current use of B&Bs) from the Eastern Health Board and nationally from local authorities and health boards .

## Conclusions of this Study

The main conclusions which have emerged from this research are as follows:

### Policy and Practice

1. *The roles and responsibilities of the health boards and local authorities in providing emergency accommodation and supports for homeless people are unclear under existing legislation.*

The Housing Act (1988) enables local authorities to make provisions for people out-of-home but it does not require them to do so. Furthermore the Health Act (1953), which places responsibility to provide accommodation with the health boards is still in force. There is no one statutory body with overall responsibility for the provision of emergency accommodation including on-site care. The need for a family hostel has been recognised by the Dublin Housing Forum but the capacity to establish such accommodation has been impaired by a lack of a clearly defined scheme of operational funding. In addition there is a lack of agreement as to which statutory body is responsible for on-site care costs involved in the running of such a hostel.

2. *There are insufficient hostel spaces available for women with children and none for two-parent families.*

The rise in the numbers of people out-of-home has resulted in more women and children and two-parent families seeking emergency accommodation than ever before. Existing hostel accommodation cannot meet this need.

3. *B&B is increasingly used as emergency accommodation for homeless people in Ireland.*

In 1990, 5 households<sup>1</sup> were placed in B&B accommodation by the Homeless Persons Unit of the Eastern Health Board. By 1992, this had risen to 503 households placed by the Eastern Health Board. In 1993 there were 474 households placed in B&B

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<sup>1</sup> The term household refers to single adults, single parent or two parent families.

accommodation which may indicate the increasing trend has stabilised. Outside of Dublin, an estimated 244 households were placed in B&B accommodation by local authorities and health boards in Ireland in 1993 (see Appendix B for details).

4. *The increasing use of B&B as emergency accommodation can be explained primarily by the rise in homelessness and the shortage of alternative emergency accommodation.*

The early 1990's have been marked by a shortage of hostel units, and of permanent accommodation, and a general rise in the number of people seeking emergency and long-term accommodation. A lack of emergency accommodation has failed to meet rising levels of need. B&B accommodation has been used primarily because of a lack of sufficient emergency hostel accommodation. Furthermore, the Housing Act (1988) has enabled local authorities to fund the use of B&B accommodation, due to the recoupment of 90% from the Department of the Environment.

5. *The cost of placing homeless people in B&B accommodation in Dublin is rising. The money spent on B&Bs could be spent on providing more appropriate emergency accommodation.*

In 1990 the Eastern Health Board's Homeless Persons Unit spent £520 on B&B accommodation. In 1993, the Eastern Health Board spent £273,222. The cost of B&B accommodation rose by 27% from 1992 to 1993 despite the reduced numbers placed. There is insufficient hostel accommodation for people out-of-home, and there is no hostel accommodation for two-parent families. The alternative to placing people in B&B accommodation is to provide additional hostel accommodation. In terms of the provision of family units, it is estimated that at current levels, on average a minimum of 9-10 households or cases are in B&B in any one week. On average each household stays 16 nights. It would appear that two 10-family-units with 80 beds would meet this need. It is difficult to compare the capital and running costs of providing new hostel accommodation with the running costs of placing people in B&B accommodation. However, with current expenditure on B&B at over a quarter of a million pounds, it is likely that alternative hostel accommodation could be provided at no greater cost. The emergency accommodation provided

would be tailor-made to the needs of one-parent and two-parent families with children out-of-home who in 1993, represented 75% of those placed in B&B (See Chapter 3 for details).

## Characteristics

6. *The residents of B&B's are largely young women and children and young couples with children.*

The Eastern Health Board figures for 1993 indicate that nearly half (49%) of households placed in B&B were women with children. In addition, most of those interviewed in this study were young households with 82% (33) under the age of 39.

7. *People out-of-home are staying for longer periods in B&B in Dublin than ever before.*

The increased use of B&B as emergency accommodation raises important issues about the care and placement of people out-of-home. The average stay in a B&B was 12 days in 1992 and 16 days in 1993. This represents an increase of 33% in the average length of stay.

8. *People in B&B's are out-of-home for a variety of reasons, for example, from overcrowding, arrears, family arguments, or violence, among others.*

Homeless families and individuals have multiple needs which could be met with practical help, support and advice and a caring, supportive environment.

## Suitability of B&Bs as Emergency Accommodation

9. *There are no official standards in use for the selection or monitoring of temporary accommodation including B&B.*

The Eastern Health Board uses a "common-sense approach" to the selection of B&B's. There are no official standards. The responsibility for the B&B is placed totally with the owner to insure the building and maintain standards, including complying with local authority fire regulations. In May 1994 a fire broke out in a B&B used by the Eastern Health Board. Fortunately, no-



one was injured in the fire. If homeless people are placed in B&B accommodation by statutory bodies, there should be some set of official standards for their selection and use, and possibly a form of registration. The only registration currently in existence for B&Bs is operated by Bord Failte. B&B's registered with Bord Failte are subject to regulation as to the standard of accommodation and food. The B&B's used by the Eastern Health Board tend not to be registered with Bord Failte. One possible strategy would be to register and monitor all B&Bs whether they are accommodating homeless people or not. Another strategy would be to register and monitor all emergency accommodation including hostels. Clearly there are issues to be addressed and potential difficulties in the implementation of either alternative. With regard to the second alternative, the responsibility of this would seemingly lie with the local authorities although the Housing Act (1988) does not make this clear. However guidelines issued by the DOE in relation to the Housing Act (1988) indicate that the "housing authority should ensure that accommodation secured by the authority for a homeless person ... is of suitable standard".

10. *Many of those interviewed in this study must leave their B&B accommodation during the day and have no cooking or laundry facilities.*

People staying in B&Bs are not *entitled* to stay in during the day as this is at the discretion of the owner. 57% (23) of those interviewed in the study had to leave during the day. A recent survey of B&B's by the Eastern Health Board would suggest that more of the B&B owners are allowing people to stay in during the day.

11. *People in B&Bs know what kind of emergency accommodation they want.*

The experience of people out-of-home staying in a B&B accommodation suggests the need for accommodation which offers a safe, comfortable environment, where they can be together with their families during the day and have some facility for feeding the children. For them the positive aspects of the B&B were privacy, cleanliness, a lack of stigma and being able to stay together as a family. The experience of B&E

residents highlights the need for basic and practical facilities and services which are not currently available in B&B accommodation. Any new hostel accommodation should incorporate these positive aspects of the B&B experience.

12. *There are insufficient nursery facilities for children of families who are out-of-home in Dublin.*

Half of those interviewed in this study had pre-school age children. Focus Point Nursery<sup>2</sup> had 20% (8) of the families' children in their care. However with only 15 places available, the Focus Point Nursery cannot meet the nursery needs of all families out-of-home.

13. *Many of those interviewed felt tired, lonely and isolated.*

Many residents interviewed in this study, spoke of their sense of isolation and loneliness at being out-of-home. This isolation and loneliness was accentuated by being out-of-home in a B&B. They also felt they lacked information on useful services and entitlements.

14. *B&B's owners themselves find it difficult to respond to the needs of people out-of-home and their problems.*

The interviews with B&B owners presented in this report indicate that many find it difficult to respond to the needs of residents that are out-of-home. Owners feel they themselves take on the personal problems residents face, and have no-one to share these with.

15. *B & B accommodation is not appropriate for most people out-of-home. B&B accommodation was designed to suit the needs of tourists and not homeless people.*

B&B accommodation is not appropriate for people out-of-home except in rare emergency cases. Those interviewed who were staying in B&B's wanted a place where they can stay in during the day, cook for their children, get support and information; and have somewhere for the children to play. B&B can have benefits for people such as being private and enabling a family to

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<sup>2</sup> Focus Point receives partial funding for the Nursery from the Eastern Health Board.

stay together. However most people out-of-home need to have access to support and advice, and B&B accommodation does not meet their needs.

B&B accommodation is used primarily because the adult hostels for homeless people are full. It is also used for two-parent families who cannot be accommodated in emergency hostels. It would seem therefore, that B&B is not an alternative form of emergency accommodation, but is substituting hostel accommodation.

## Recommendations

The central recommendation of this study is that B&Bs should not be used for the vast majority of people out-of-home. A range of emergency and long-term accommodation should be developed.

1. *Additional emergency accommodation*

There is a clear and urgent need for a range of additional emergency accommodation units which could cater for lone parents, two-parent families and for single women. There is a particular need for short-term, safe units for women with children, including traveller women who are escaping a violent situation or seeking respite from a family dispute.

2. *Clear allocation of responsibility*

The relevant Government Departments, namely the Environment and Health, need to establish clearly who is responsible for the provision of emergency accommodation with on-site support services for families and adults who are out-of-home.

3. *Planned, co-ordinated response*

A planned and co-ordinated response to the provision of emergency accommodation and homelessness needs to be developed in Dublin and outside of Dublin by the relevant statutory and voluntary agencies. An achievable target date for ending B&B for all but last resort emergency use needs to be set.

4. *Policies and guidelines*

A composite set of policies and guidelines for the provision of emergency accommodation needs to be developed by the relevant statutory agencies in consultation with other statutory and voluntary agencies providing emergency accommodation. This could be achieved within the context of the Dublin Housing Forum. This could also be done on a national basis.

5. *Defined funding scheme*

A defined scheme of funding for the provision of emergency accommodation including management and care costs needs to be established.

6      *Standards*

Minimum standards should be developed and monitored in relation to the use of B&B accommodation for homeless people.

**Recommendations for the Immediate Use of B&B Accommodation**

While implementation of the recommendations above should commence as soon as possible, the following recommendations are made with regard to the current use of B&B accommodation.

7.      *Day services*

Day services should be provided for homeless families who are staying in B&B accommodation. This should include practical facilities such as kitchen, laundry and play areas. These could be provided in the local community or city centre.

8.      *Nursery facilities*

Extra nursery facilities should be provided for children of families who are out-of-home in Dublin.

9.      *B&B Outreach service*

A visiting services to B&Bs should be provided which would include advice and information on entitlements and local information.

10.     *Support for B&B owners*

A system for the provision of advice and support should be established for the B&B owners who need it.

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This report presents the central findings of a study that was carried out from February to September 1993 by Focus Point Project Ltd with partial funding by the Combat Poverty Agency. The study set out to examine the use of B&Bs ("bed and breakfasts") as emergency accommodation for homeless people, in the light of an apparent rise in their use in Dublin. The research focused primarily on Dublin but did also include an examination of the use of B&Bs outside of Dublin. The central areas of study were the history of the use of B&Bs as emergency accommodation, the current policy on their use, the extent of their use, and the direct experience of homeless residents of B&B accommodation. An important impetus for the research was the desire to make recommendations on policy and service provision in the light of discussions with policy makers, service providers and people out-of-home<sup>3</sup> staying in B&Bs.

Until recently, people in need of emergency accommodation have usually been placed in or referred to hostels run by the voluntary and statutory sector. These hostels cater for either men or women, but not couples together. This means that when families need emergency accommodation, the women and children have to be placed in one hostel and the men in another. The standard of existing hostels varies a great deal. In Dublin, the hostels range from adequately staffed, purpose-built or specially adapted hostels to dormitory accommodation in use for 80 years (Focus Point 1992).

B&Bs are the backbone of the country's tourist trade. They provide generally inexpensive accommodation located in someone's home, consisting of a bed for a night or a few nights and a full breakfast each morning. B&Bs can register with Bord Failte (the Irish Tourist Board) if certain standards are met. The Board Failte standards are high and there are many B&Bs in operation which are not registered with Bord Failte. There is no monitoring or regulatory body which oversees all B&Bs.

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<sup>3</sup> Previous Focus Point research with homeless people found that "out-of-home" is the preferred term for being homeless. It has the same definition as "homeless" in the 1988 Housing Act.

In the last few years, regional health boards and local authorities have begun to place people out-of-home in B&B accommodation<sup>4</sup>. However there are many questions about the suitability and effectiveness of the use of this essentially tourist accommodation as emergency accommodation for people out-of-home.

B&Bs have been used extensively as temporary accommodation for people out-of-home in the UK, and the experience there has revealed difficulties and drawbacks with this form of accommodation. Increasingly, local authorities in the UK are seeking to find alternative forms of temporary accommodation, such as private leasing, partly because of the high cost of using B&Bs, and partly because of other problems associated with the practice of placing people out-of-home in B&Bs<sup>5</sup>.

One key question which underpins this research is whether or not B&Bs are an appropriate form of temporary accommodation for people out-of-home. Another question concerns the future of the use of B&Bs and of emergency accommodation in general. A third concerns the alternatives for how the needs of people out-of-home can best be met in the planning of future provision.

This report provides an overview of the use of B&Bs as emergency accommodation in Dublin. The historical and policy contexts are presented along with detailed figures on the extent of B&B usage in Dublin and nationally. By including interviews with policy makers, service providers and the residents of B&Bs, the report presents as full an account as possible of the use of B&B accommodation for homeless people.

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<sup>4</sup> People out-of-home tend to get placed in emergency accommodation either by the local authority or by the community welfare officers in their local health board. In Dublin, people get placed during the day via two units of the Eastern Health Board - the Homeless Persons Unit and the Travellers Unit. At night adults are placed via the Eastern Health Board Afterhours Service. (For details of this arrangement see Chapter 2).

<sup>5</sup> Over the last ten years, the use of B&B has fallen to its lowest levels yet in the UK with only 6,240 households in B&B in the last quarter of 1993 (out of a total of 56,900 households in temporary accommodation). (*Department of Environment UK 1993*)

The historical, social, legislative and financial contexts of the use of B&Bs as emergency accommodation are dealt with in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 provides a full account of the people placed in B&B by the Eastern Health Board in Dublin in 1992 and 1993. In addition, the use of B&B outside Dublin is described for 1993. The experiences of people out-of-home staying in a B&B are presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 outlines the views of service providers and policy makers in relation to the use of B&B accommodation. Chapter 6 details the general conclusions of the study. Full tables and references can be found in the appendix, together with an account of the methods of the study.



## **CHAPTER 2: PUTTING B&B IN CONTEXT**

The history of the use of B&Bs as temporary accommodation for people out-of-home is a fairly recent one with regular and frequent use of this form of accommodation beginning in Dublin in 1991. It is difficult to monitor the use of B&B outside Dublin as there are no national figures available on the use of B&Bs outside of Dublin prior to the survey conducted as part of this research in 1993. The reasons why B&Bs have increasingly come to be used can only be explained by examining the historical, legislative, service and financial contexts in which this phenomenon has emerged.

### **2.1 Historical & Legislative Context**

Before 1991, B&B accommodation was rarely used by the Eastern Health Board as temporary accommodation. Since then, the Eastern Health Board has used B&B accommodation as emergency accommodation in addition to hostels. In 1993, the Eastern Health Board placed 474 households in B&Bs for an average of 16 nights. In 1993, an estimated 244 cases (households) were placed in B&Bs outside of Dublin by local authorities and health boards (see Appendix B for details).

The increased use of B&B accommodation by local authorities and health boards has developed for several reasons. The most significant factors were the shortage of permanent housing, the rise in homelessness and the shortage of emergency accommodation (see Appendix B for details). The Housing Act of 1988 provided a more defined legislative framework which facilitated B&Bs to be used as a form of emergency accommodation.

### **2.2 Legislation**

There are three central pieces of legislation which play a role in the provision of temporary accommodation for people out-of-home. The first is Section 54 of the 1953 Health Act which imposes a duty on a health board to provide institutional assistance to anyone in genuine need. Under Section 54 of the Health Act 1953, the Health Boards are required

to provide institutional assistance to persons who are unable to provide shelter and maintenance for themselves or their dependants.

The second piece of legislation is the 1966 Housing Act which focused on the relief of over crowding and bad housing conditions. It made it obligatory for local authorities to adopt a scheme of priorities for the allocation of dwellings.

The third piece of legislation is the 1988 Housing Act which defined homelessness for the first time. While the Act made it a statutory duty of the local authorities to assess housing need and the extent of homelessness, it only empowered (and did not oblige) local authorities to make arrangements and/or provide accommodation or lodgings for homeless persons. In addition to their powers to provide housing for persons in need of accommodation, housing authorities now had to meet the needs of persons regarded as "homeless". Housing authorities were empowered to make arrangements with approved bodies for the provision of accommodation for homeless persons, to provide assistance including financial assistance to homeless persons, and if necessary to rent accommodation, arrange lodgings or contribute to the cost of such accommodation or lodgings for homeless persons. The 1988 Housing Act (Section 5, Section 10) enabled local authorities to provide emergency and long-term accommodation for people out-of-home. Prior to the 1988 Housing Act the Community Welfare Service of the Eastern Health Board via its Homeless Persons Unit provided an income maintenance and emergency accommodation referral service for people out-of-home. The funding for this service came from the Department of Social Welfare. The health boards undertook these responsibilities under Section 54 of the 1953 Health Act and the Social Welfare (Consolidated) 1981 Act. The Eastern Health Board also provided some financial assistance to some of the voluntary hostels under a Section 65 grant and some funding to some of the hostels for each individual, as remuneration for board and lodging under Social Welfare legislation.

The 1988 Housing Act was enacted and became operational in 1989. However, Section 5 and Section 10 of the 1988 Act were not fully implemented until 1991.

In Dublin, upon the issuing of new guidelines from the Department of the Environment in May 1991, the local authorities and the Eastern Health

Board formally made arrangements whereby the Eastern Health Board's Homeless Unit (Charles Street, Dublin) would place people in emergency/temporary accommodation on behalf of the local authorities. The local authorities undertook to pay half of the existing staffing and running costs of the Charles Street Homeless Unit and the cost of bed and breakfast accommodation. This agreement was passed by the City Council in October 1991.

Dublin Corporation also contributed to the accommodation costs of some of the approved voluntary hostels under Section 10 of the 1988 Act. The latter was a significant new development. The local authorities were able to recoup 80% of the temporary accommodation and accommodation costs from the Department of the Environment. In 1993 this was increased to 90%. No recoupment was available to the local authorities for the funding of the staffing and running costs of the Homeless Persons Unit. The Department of Social Welfare via the Eastern Health Board continues to supplement the other half of the staffing costs for the Homeless Persons Unit.

Despite the close working relationship and arrangements between the local authorities and the Eastern Health Board for the provision of temporary accommodation for homeless adults, there are differences in understanding between them with regard to aspects of their roles and statutory functions under the 1953 Health Act and the 1988 Housing Act.

There is a common understanding between the statutory bodies that it is the responsibility of the local authority to provide long-term accommodation for homeless individuals and families, and the responsibility of the Health Board to provide community care support to homeless persons housed by the local authority in the community. It is the stated policy of the Eastern Health Board to guarantee accommodation to anyone who presents themselves as homeless in the Dublin area.

However the statutory bodies have different perspectives regarding responsibilities for establishing policies for the provision of emergency accommodation. This includes the planning of such accommodation and the development of a scheme of funding to provide for the accommodation and on-site care costs of emergency and temporary accommodation. There is an absence of a defined scheme of funding to

provide for the on-site care and support costs for people in temporary or emergency accommodation. The local authorities technically have the powers to financially assist voluntary housing bodies for the care and support aspects of their work under Section 5 of the 1988 Housing Act and Section 6 of the 1992 Housing Act. The health boards, under Sections 54 and 65 of the 1953 Health Act, have clear powers to provide such financial assistance. No defined scheme of operational funding exists under either Act, which delays the establishment of new hostels or temporary accommodation services. There is some debate within the health boards as to the necessity of providing care and support on the premises of emergency hostels as opposed to offering care and support in centres based in the community. The issue is being considered by the health boards but as yet no decision has been made.

The Dublin Housing Forum which was established by Dublin Corporation in 1992 with representatives from the local authorities, the Eastern Health Board and the voluntary sector, recognises that the provision of emergency accommodation entails accommodation costs, additional management costs and care costs, and that no scheme of funding for the latter costs exists.

*With separate pieces of legislation in existence, there is no one statutory body responsible for people out-of-home and the roles of the Dublin Local Authorities and the Eastern Health Board are open to interpretation.* This situation hampers the formulation of policy for emergency accommodation and the planning of new services both residential and non-residential as the needs arise.

### **2.3 The Rise in Homelessness**

In the last ten years, there has been a rise in the number of families and single people who find themselves without shelter and without a home. It is estimated that there are between 3000 and 5000 people out-of-home at any one time in Ireland. The Housing Assessment, carried out by the local authorities under the guidelines from the Department of the Environment, found 2667 people to be homeless in Ireland as of 31st March 1993. Although widely criticised for its methods, this assessment provides at least an official minimum figure of people out-of-home at any one time.

The Housing Assessment for Dublin City and County indicated that there were 1648 homeless people in March 1993 (62% of national total). For Dublin Corporation, the largest of the local authorities in Dublin, the number of households out-of-home was 1304 (or 1617 persons) in 1993 compared to 1351 households in 1991.

A major factor in the rise of homelessness is the lack of affordable permanent accommodation. There has been a decline in the construction of local authority housing over the last ten years. In 1981 the number of Dublin Corporation's housing completions were 1449. In 1991 the number of housing completions were 48. This represents an overall reduction of 97%. In 1992, the number rose to 80 completions. 1993 saw the revival of the construction of local authority houses, with 770 starts planned for Dublin city and county. The private rented sector offers little in the way of affordable housing without statutory financial support. However, there are approximately 15,000 people in the private rented sector on rent supplement in the Eastern Health Board area.

Further contributors to homelessness are the high levels of unemployment and poverty in Ireland. The reduction in emigration in recent years and the return of emigrants to Ireland, migration to Dublin, overcrowding in family homes, marital disputes, family violence, addictions, psychiatric illness, other illness, death, pregnancy, evictions and repossessions are other contributory factors (see Appendix B for further discussion).

## **2.4 Shortage of Emergency Accommodation**

### **2.4.1 Number of Adult Hostels in Dublin**

In Dublin, currently there are 13 adult hostels for homeless people. This figure has remained fairly constant since 1986 when there were 14 emergency and short-term hostels for men and women. In addition to this core number of hostels, there are also 3 long-term women's hostels. Some of the 14 hostels have long-term units in which residents have stayed for years. It is difficult therefore, to know precisely how many beds are available for emergency use. Of these 13 hostels, 6 are exclusive for men, 5 for women and 2 are mixed. There are no two-parent hostels in Dublin.

#### 2.4.2 Number of Hostel Beds in Dublin

In March 1993, there were 781 hostel beds for adults in Dublin. Overall the total number of hostel bed spaces has fallen by 16% from 932 in 1986 to 781 in 1993<sup>6</sup>. From 1991 to 1993 there has been an increase of 17% in the total number of beds.

**Table 2.1 Hostel Beds for Homeless Adults in Dublin**

Year	Hostel Beds			
	Mixed	Men	Women	Total
1970	-	1000	-	-
1986	47	647	238	932
1988	47	622	238	907
1991	60	446	162*	668
1993	62	512	207	781
% increase 91-93	3%	15%	28%	17%
% decrease 86-93	+32%	21%	13%	16%

\* This temporary reduction in bedspaces for women in 1991 was largely due to a roof problem at the Regina Coeli.

In 1970 there were 1000 beds in Dublin for adult men (O'Cinneide 1971). In February 1988 there were 622 beds in men only hostels (Focus Point 1988). This had fallen to 446 beds in March 1991 (Focus Point 1992) and risen again to 512 beds in March 1993. (Focus Point 1993) (See Tables B3 and B4 for a breakdown by hostel).

#### 2.4.3 Use of Hostels in Dublin

The hostels for homeless adults are usually full with an average occupancy rate of between 88.5% and 96.6%. Many of the hostel beds are not available for emergency use. 60% of the hostel users on one night in March 1991 had been there at least 5 years (Focus Point 1992).

A Census of hostels in Dublin in March 1991 estimated that 7500 people use existing hostel beds a year (Focus Point 1992). Over a three week

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<sup>6</sup> It is difficult to compare hostel beds over time due to hostel closure and refurbishment.

period in March 1991, 949 individuals used the hostels (743 Male, 206 Female). This had risen to 1009 individuals (833 Male, 176 Female) over the same period in 1993 which represents an increase of 6% from 1991-1993.

**Table 2.2                      Use of Dublin Hostels March 4th-21st 1991 & 1993**

	Male	Female	Total
1991	743	206	949
1993	833	176	1009
% change 91-93	+12%	-15%	+6%

The existing hostel accommodation caters primarily for men with only 26% of hostel beds specifically for women (with a further 8% for mixed use). From 1991 to 1993, the number of women residents of adult hostels fell by 15%, while the number of male residents increased by 12%. This rise in usage by men is in line with the 15% increase in beds in this period. The decrease in the number of women is in contrast to the 28% increase in hostel capacity for women. The increased capacity of hostels is largely due to the reinstated beds at the Regina Coeli. This disparity may also be due to the placement of women with their partners and children in B&B accommodation.

## **2.5            Service Context**

The Eastern Health Board is the primary agency in relation to placing people in B&Bs. The Department of the Environment has an overseeing role in relation to the local authorities under the Housing Act (1988), but it does not normally get involved in the precise details of the accommodation provided. The local authorities tend to avoid any direct contact with B&Bs and leave their selection and use to the Eastern Health Board, although in some rare cases, they will place people directly in B&B themselves.

In 1983, the Eastern Health Board set up a Homeless Persons Unit within the Community Welfare Service in Benburb Street in Dublin, to respond to the specific demands of homeless people. The service currently run in the Eastern Health Board Charles Street Homeless Unit, includes advice, income maintenance and referral to emergency accommodation including B&B accommodation and a resettlement service. The

Travellers Unit, at Castle Street in Dublin, responds to the needs of travellers and part of this service includes placement in emergency accommodation. Haven House, a hostel for women and children run by the Eastern Health Board, did place women directly in B&Bs out-of-hours but now adults are placed by the Eastern Health Board After Hours service.

Few Voluntary agencies come into contact with families and adults in B&B accommodation. Focus Point is the main voluntary body which has contact with B&B users. Based in Dublin city centre, Focus Point has frequent contact with people who have been placed in B&B accommodation through its crisis, 24 hour emergency phone and drop-in services. Focus Point's Crisis Service includes advice and information on housing and related matters, a social work service and a referral service to emergency accommodation for people out-of-home<sup>7</sup>. B&B residents can have access to practical support at Focus Point such as a nursery for B&B residents' children, food, use of a phone and general housing and social welfare advocacy and day activities. From 1985 to 1994, Focus Point operated an emergency 24 hour phone service for people out-of-home. In 1993 the Eastern Health Board set up an After Hours service in 1993 providing a freephone placement service to homeless adults in Dublin on behalf of the Dublin local authorities funded by the Department of Environment. Focus Point discontinued its phone service in 1994 following the establishment of the Eastern Health Board service.

## **2.6 Placement in B&Bs**

Most people who are placed in B&Bs get placed by the Homeless Persons Unit of the Eastern Health Board<sup>8</sup>. It is estimated that approximately 700 women and 2000 children seek accommodation through this unit in a year.

The Homeless Persons Unit's main policy is to place people in hostels. People are usually placed in B&Bs when the hostels are full or where there is some particular reason why B&B accommodation is thought to

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<sup>7</sup> In 1993 there were 1870 requests made for emergency accommodation.

<sup>8</sup> 82% (386) of all cases placed in B&Bs by the Eastern Health Board in 1993 were placed by this unit.



be more suitable for example, if the person is suffering from trauma, has children over the age of 12, particularly boys (who cannot be placed in a hostel with female relatives), has demonstrated unacceptable behaviour, or has been excluded from existing hostels. Some families may refuse to go to a hostel, and some may suffer distress at being separated (according to gender). Essentially, the Eastern Health Board argues that if people make a sustainable case as to why they do not wish to go to a hostel, it will be taken seriously and they may be placed in B&B accommodation. The Charles Street Homeless Persons Unit also argues that there is a wide range of exceptions and discretions with regard to placing people in hostels, and that whether a person is placed in a hostel often depends on the individual case.

The Homeless Persons Unit operates under two other policy lines in relation to homeless people. Firstly, there is a policy that accommodation is offered to those presenting in genuine need; and secondly, that people should be in a homeless situation for as short a time as possible. In line with this policy, people who are unlikely to receive local authority housing may be offered money to cover the deposit required in order to take a private rented flat and the first week's rent. A family or individual estimated to be in need of emergency accommodation for a long time will generally be placed in a hostel and not in a B&B because of the high cost involved, and the unsuitability of B&B for long periods.

## **2.7 After B&B**

There is no documented information on where people go to when they leave a B&B. The Eastern Health Board estimates that about half of those placed by the Homeless Persons Unit move on to a hostel after staying in a B&B, while the other half move to private rented or local authority accommodation or elsewhere. Once placed in a B&B, people usually have to return to the unit within a week to have their case reviewed. In that time, they may be seeking private rented accommodation or local authority accommodation or they may have returned home. Those placed by the Travellers Unit tend to return home. This group rarely request alternative long-term accommodation.

## 2.8 Use & Selection of B&Bs

The B&Bs used by the Eastern Health board were originally selected from the Golden Pages. The ones currently used are the ones which the Eastern Health Board has developed a relationship with over time and which will accept Eastern Health Board clients. They vary in price and to a certain extent in the quality of service. The Eastern Health Board relies on feedback from the residents to monitor standards. There are no regulations on standards or monitoring procedures<sup>9</sup>. The Eastern Health Board visits most of the B&Bs in use and makes, in their terms, a "common sense assessment" of their suitability.

## 2.9 Financial Context

The cost of placing people in B&Bs is high. In 1990, the Homeless Persons Unit of the Eastern Health Board spent £520 on placing people in B&Bs. In 1993 the Eastern Health Board, in both units, spent £273,223 on B&B accommodation. Table 2.2 presents the number of cases placed in B&B since 1990 and the total cost.

**Table 2.3 Cost of B&B Accommodation: Homeless Persons Unit & Travellers Unit.**

	Cost £	No. of Cases
1990	520	5
1991	67,329	221
1992	214,237	503
1993	273,222	474

In 1993 the total cost of placing adults in B&Bs in Dublin by the Eastern Health Board was over 500 times greater than it was in 1990. (see Figure 2.1) The rise in total overall cost (both Homeless Persons Unit and

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<sup>9</sup> In 1992, Dublin County Council carried out a survey of eight B&Bs in the city centre. All of the B&Bs took in tourists as well as people out-of-home. According to the owners, some B&Bs allowed access to the kitchen facilities and one had a play area for children. Most of the owners said they did not ask people to leave during the day.

Travellers Unit) was 27% from 1992 to 1993. The average weekly cost of providing B&B accommodation in 1992 was £4,120. In 1993, this had risen to £5,254 a week. *From 1992 to 1993, there was a 35% rise in cost per case*<sup>10</sup>. However the average cost per night has not changed. This would suggest that the rising cost is due to longer lengths of stay and not to higher rates at the B&Bs.

Of those placed in 1992, 391 were placed by the Homeless Persons Unit at a cost of £198,265. A further 112 cases were placed by the Travellers Unit at a cost of £15,972.

In 1993, 386 households were placed by the Homeless Persons Unit at a cost of £259,046.70. A further 88 cases were placed by the Travellers Unit at a cost of £14,176.

The cost of providing hostel accommodation is also high. However, the cost of keeping people in a B&B can be higher than keeping them in a hostel. Although this greatly depends on the length of stay in the hostel and the particular function and ethos of the hostel. One comparison can be made between the cost of running Haven House, an emergency hostel run by the Eastern Health Board for women and children, and the cost of placing people in B&Bs. This comparison does not take into account the capital costs of building the hostel but refers only to operational costs. In 1992, 706 cases were accommodated in Haven House at a cost of £202,000. Also in 1992, 503 cases were placed in B&B at a cost of £214,237. This works out as £286 per case in Haven House and £426 per case in a B&B. Thus each case placed in Haven House cost 67% of what it cost in a B&B. The cost of running the hostel includes trained staff and facilities, and for the B&B the cost covers bed and breakfast only. It is not the case that all hostel accommodation is cheaper than B&B accommodation. A further example of this is provided by the Women's Refuge which in 1993 accommodated 87 cases at a total cost of £232,000, which is £2,667 on average per case. In this example, the women stay much longer on average than those accommodated in Haven House.

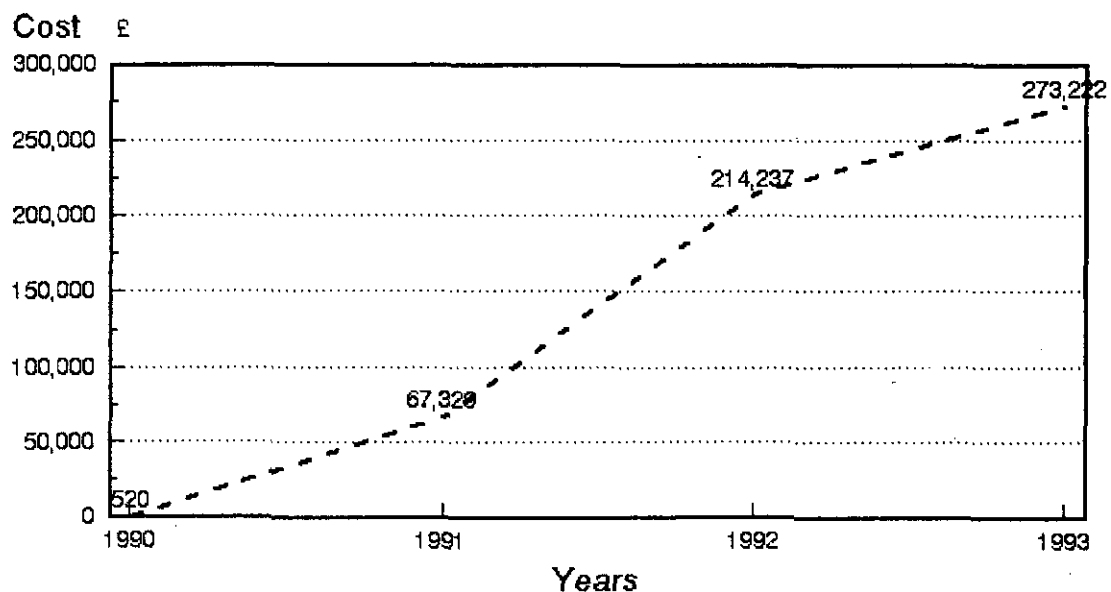
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<sup>10</sup> The average cost per case/household for 1992 was £426. Given that the average length of stay was 12 nights, this works out at £35.50 per night per household on average. The average cost per household for 1993 was £576, and the average length of stay was 16 nights, which works out at £36 per night.

These examples serve to illustrate that hostel accommodation is not a cheap option, but it would seem to make financial sense to offer tailor-made emergency accommodation for homeless families in an emergency hostel than in a B&B. However there is no hostel accommodation for two-parent families. In terms of the provision of a new family hostel, it is estimated that at current levels on average a minimum of 9-10 homeless families or cases are in B&B accommodation in any one week. In simple terms, two 10-family units with 80 beds would meet this need. The accommodation provided would be tailor-made to the needs of one- and two-parent families out-of-home who, in 1993, represented 75% of those placed in B&Bs (see Chapter 3 for details). Other forms of temporary accommodation could be developed as demonstrated by local authority in the U.K. many of which have a policy of not using B&B or only using it as a short-term expedient in emergencies (Burns and Smith 1994). A recent Shelter report compared the cost of alternative forms of temporary accommodation and found B&B to be the most expensive (Burns and Smith 1994). The cost of B&B in the U.K. is on average £33 per household per day which is similar to the cost for use in Dublin in 1991 at £35 per household per day.

**Figure 2.1 Cost of B&B Accommodation**

EHB Expenditure on B&B Accommodation for  
People Out-of-Home 1990-1993



## **CHAPTER 3: THE USE OF B&Bs FOR PEOPLE OUT-OF-HOME**

In Dublin, the Eastern Health Board's use of B&B as emergency accommodation has increased from 5 cases in 1990 placed by the Homeless Persons Unit, to 474 cases in 1993 placed by the Eastern Health Board (Eastern Health Board 1993, 1994). Detailed information was made available by the Eastern Health Board for the 503 cases placed in 1992 and some additional information for the 474 cases placed in 1993. B&B is also used, to a lesser extent, in other parts of the country.

### **3.1 Profile of People Out-of-Home Using B&B Accommodation (Dublin 1992)**

Altogether, 503 cases households or individuals (Table 3.1) were placed in B&Bs in Dublin in 1992, comprising 627 adults and approximately 700 children. Most (78%) of those placed by the Eastern Health Board in 1992 were placed by the Homeless Persons Unit, and the rest (22%) were placed by the Travellers Unit.

#### **3.1.1 Who Were They? (Dublin 1992)**

The Eastern Health Board provided figures for each household type placed in B&B. Most of the people out-of-home and placed in B&Bs in Dublin in 1992 were women and children.

The Homeless Persons Unit placed 391 households or individuals in B&Bs in 1992 (see Table 3.2). Of those, a little over half were women with children (52%), and 14% were women on their own. So women alone or with children made up two-thirds of the total cases placed in B&B. A quarter were couples with children, 5% were couples with no children, and only 3% were men alone or men with children.

The Travellers Unit placed 112 cases in B&B in 1992 (see Table 3.3). The huge majority (94%) of the cases placed in B&Bs were women on their own or with children (compared with 66% women with or without children placed by the Homeless Persons Unit). Roughly half were

women alone and half women with children. Only 4% were couples (as compared with 30% of those placed by the Homeless Persons Unit).

When looked at in total, of the 503 households placed by the two units, half were women with children. In fact, women alone and women with children between them made up almost three-quarters of the total number of cases placed by both units, and couples with children or without children made up the remaining quarter of cases. Men alone or with children represented a very small percentage (3%) of the total<sup>11</sup>.

### 3.1.2 How long Did They Stay in B&Bs (Dublin 1992)

Those placed in B&Bs in Dublin in 1992 stayed an average of 12 nights.

Couples with children stayed the longest time in B&Bs, with an average of 20 nights and men with children stayed an average of 18 nights. Women with children stayed an average 12 nights. (see Table 3.1).

This overall pattern is broadly reflected in the lengths of stay of people placed by the Homeless Persons Unit but with slightly longer averages (see Table 3.2). The total average for those placed by the Homeless Persons Unit was 13 nights.

Those placed by the Travellers Unit stayed on average for much shorter periods, with a total average of 5 nights. The highest average number of nights spent by any one case in B&B in 1992 was a woman with children who stayed 158 nights.

### 3.1.3 Why Were They Out-of-Home? (Dublin 1992)

Reasons for being out-of-home varied quite a bit among those placed by the Homeless Persons Unit. A third were thrown out by family or friends and almost a quarter left because of violence. The rest had returned from the UK, had suffered private rented evictions or, in a small number of cases, had had their accommodation repossessed by a financial institution (Figure 3.1).

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<sup>11</sup> This stands in contrast to hostel accommodation where 83% of the usage is by men. (Focus Point 1993).

Those placed by the Travellers Unit were mostly women seeking refuge from a domestic dispute or violence. Three-quarters of those placed by the Travellers Unit were out-of-home because of violence, which is over three times the rate among those placed by the Homeless Persons Unit. Some had returned from the UK or were barred from hostels (Figure 3.2).

#### **3.1.4 What Was Their Source of Income? (Dublin 1992)**

Over 90% of those placed by the Homeless Persons Unit were claiming social welfare or had cases pending. This refers to those cases which were still being processed. 100% of those placed by the Travellers' Unit were claiming social welfare payments or had cases pending. More than a quarter of those placed by the Homeless Persons Unit were on Lone Parents Allowance, 27% (106), with a further 10% (39) cases pending. Nearly a quarter were on Unemployment Assistance 23% (90) and 15% (59) were claiming Supplementary Welfare Allowance (Figure 3.3).

Approximately two-thirds of people's income types would seem to have remained unchanged since becoming homeless. Those people who are on Supplementary Welfare, or whose welfare is pending, indicate cases in which the Eastern Health Board have advised a change in income type. This includes approximately a third of all the cases who were placed by the Homeless Persons Unit in 1992.

Nearly a third, 31% (35), of those placed by the Travellers Unit were claiming Lone Parents Allowance with a further 17% (19) cases pending (Figure 3.4). In addition 16% (18) were claiming separate Unemployment Assistance with a further 15% (17) cases pending.

Comparing those placed by the two units, there were more people on Lone Parents Allowance and on separate Unemployment Assistance among those placed by the Travellers Unit than among those placed by the Homeless Persons Unit.

### **3.2 Profile of People Out-of-Home Using B&B Accommodation (Dublin 1993)**

In 1993, 474 cases were placed in B&Bs in Dublin (see Table 3.4), comprising 605 adults and approximately 714 children. This represents an overall percentage decrease in placements of 6% since 1992.

More than four-fifths of those cases were placed by the Homeless Persons Unit and the rest by the Travellers Unit. There was a 1% decrease in the total number of cases placed by the Homeless Persons Unit and a 21% drop in the number of cases placed by the Travellers Unit.

#### **3.2.1 Who Were They? (Dublin 1993)**

When both units are taken together there was no major change in the types of people placed in B&Bs in 1993 as compared with 1992, but there was a 6% drop overall in numbers. There were small percentage decreases or increases depending on the household type. The number of men with children staying in B&B accommodation trebled during this period from 5 to 15.

For the Homeless Persons Unit there was a decrease in the percentage of women with children and an increase of women alone and men with children (See Table 3.2).

For the Travellers Unit, however, there was a dramatic decrease in the number of women on their own - a fall of 64% - but there was an increase in the number of women with children placed in B&Bs. The net result of these changes is that for 1993, women alone represented only about a quarter of those placed, as compared with almost half of the cases in 1992. In addition, the percentage of women with children rose to 71% of the total, as compared with 45% in 1992. The number and percentage of couples remained low.

#### **3.2.2 How Long Did They Stay in B&Bs? (Dublin 1993)**

In 1993, the average length of stay taking the two units together was 16 nights as compared with 12 nights in 1992. The average length of stay for men with children rose from an average of 18 to 34 from 1992 to 1993. This may be a reflection of the difficulty of placing men with children in



hostels. Women on their own stayed longer on average in 1993, with the average length of stay also rising from 4 to 14 nights.

There was a rise in length of stay for those placed by the Homeless Persons Unit - from 13 nights in 1992 to 18 nights in 1993. The household types which showed the biggest increases in lengths of stay were men alone and men with children. The average length of stay of those placed by the Travellers Unit was slightly shorter in 1993, falling from 5 nights to 4, but for couples with children the average length of stay rose from 4 to 18 nights.

### **3.3 The Use of B&B Outside Dublin**

In February 1994, 84 local authorities and 7 regional health boards in the Republic were contacted by letter, requesting information on the use of B&B accommodation for homeless adults in 1993. Responses were received from 47 local authorities and all 7 regional health boards.

14 of the local authorities who responded had used B&B accommodation in 1993. In total 98 cases (households) had been placed in B&Bs in 1993. A further 78 cases (households) were placed in B&Bs by 7 health boards. *Thus a total of 176 cases were known to be placed in B&B in 1993 by regional health boards and local authorities outside of Dublin.* Based on the figures provided, a conservative estimate of 244 cases were placed in B&Bs outside of Dublin and 474 in Dublin, which is a total of 718 nationally. (An account of figures made available to the researcher is given in Appendix B).

#### **3.3.1 Placement Agents & Placement Arrangements**

The arrangements made under the Housing Act (1988) vary from area to area. In Dublin, the Eastern Health Board place people in B&Bs on behalf of the local authorities. Outside of Dublin, local authorities are the primary agents for placing people in temporary accommodation. In most areas, hostels run by voluntary agencies take referrals from the local authorities and health boards, with some financial support from one or both. In other areas, local authorities have vacant dwellings

which they use to place people in an emergency. Other local authorities use mobile homes.

There are alternative arrangements in operation in different regions of the country. For example, in Sligo, the local authorities have made an agreement with a voluntary agency, the Social Services Council, which provides a placement service for the area at a cost of £20,000 a year.

Many of the local authorities who have used B&B accommodation spoke of the difficulties involved in getting people accepted in a B&B. In some areas, this resulted people being sent to hostels in larger cities, some distance away, because no emergency accommodation could be found nearby.

Given the level of response and great variations, these figures are likely to undercount the number of people placed in B&Bs. In one Community Care area, B&B accommodation for homeless adults was paid out of the Community Care budget (in addition to the Supplementary Welfare budget) but this was not recorded as such or included in the current figures. This may be a common occurrence.

**Table 3.1      Number of Households Temporarily Housed in B&B by the Homeless Persons Unit & Travellers Unit 1992**

Household	Cases	%	Bednights	Ave No. Nights	Longest Stay (nights)
Women w/children	254	50%	2966	12	158
Men, women w/children	101	20%	2061	20	89
Women	111	22%	427	4	21
Men & Women	23	5%	219	9	35
Men	9	2%	41	4	21
Men w/children	5	1%	91	18	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>503</b>		<b>5805</b>	<b>12 (ave)</b>	<b>-</b>

**Table 3.2 Number of Households Temporarily Housed in B&B by the Homeless Persons Unit 1992**

Household	Cases	%	Bednights	Ave No. Nights	Longest Stay (nights)
Women w/children	203	52%	2611	13	158
Men, women w/children	99	25%	2053	21	89
Women	56	14%	252	5	36
Men & Women	21	5.5%	212	10	35
Men	7	2%	39	6	21
Men w/children	5	1.5%	91	18	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>391</b>		<b>5258</b>	<b>13 (ave)</b>	<b>-</b>

**Table 3.3 Number of Households Temporarily Housed in B&B by the Travellers Unit 1992**

Household	Cases	%	Bednights	Ave No. Nights	Longest Stay (nights)
Women w/children	51	45%	355	7	14
Men, women w/children	2	2%	8	4	5
Women	55	49%	175	3	30
Men & Women	2	2%	87	4	3
Men	2	2%	2	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>		<b>547</b>	<b>5 (ave)</b>	<b>-</b>

**Table 3.4 Number of Households Temporarily Housed in B&B by the Homeless Persons Unit & Travellers Unit 1993**

Household	Cases	%	Bednights	Ave No. Nights	Longest Stay (nights)
Women w/children	231	49%	2660	11	59
Men, women w/children	111	23%	2447	22	161
Women	87	19%	1245	14	200
Men & Women	20	4%	230	11	37
Men	10	2%	351	35	162
Men w/children	15	3%	513	34	211
<b>Total</b>	<b>474</b>		<b>7446</b>	<b>16 (ave)</b>	<b>-</b>

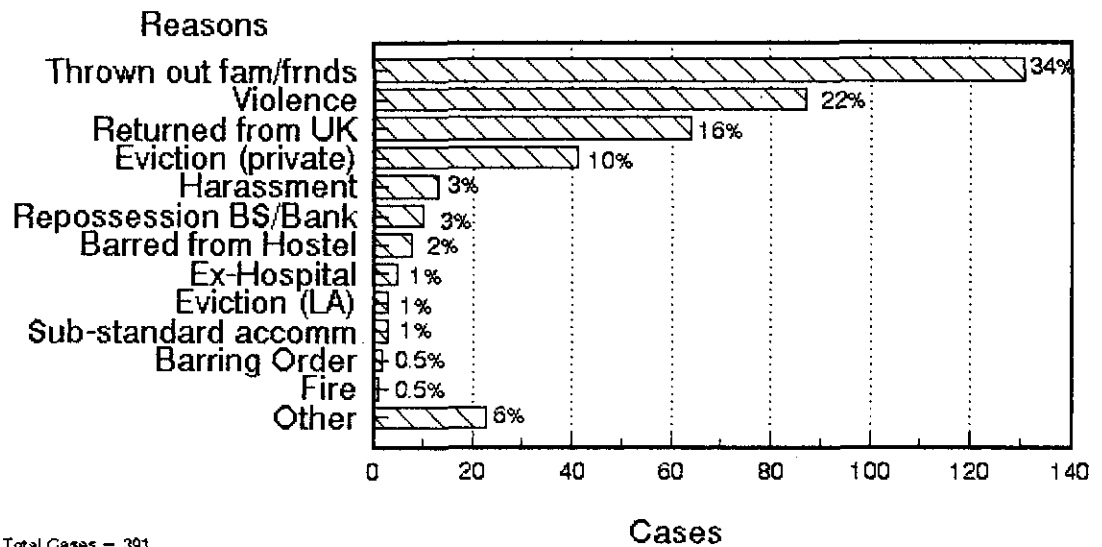
**Table 3.5      Number of Households Temporarily Housed in B&B by the Homeless Persons Unit 1993**

Household	Cases	%	Bednights	Ave No. Nights	Longest Stay (nights)
Women w/children	169	44%	2416	14	59
Men, women w/children	106	27%	2359	22	161
Women	67	17%	1204	18	200
Men & Women	20	5%	230	11	37
Men	10	3%	351	35	162
Men w/children	14	4%	510	36	211
<b>Total</b>	<b>386</b>		<b>7070</b>	<b>18 (ave)</b>	<b>-</b>

**Table 3.6      Number of Households Temporarily Housed in B&B by the Travellers Unit 1993**

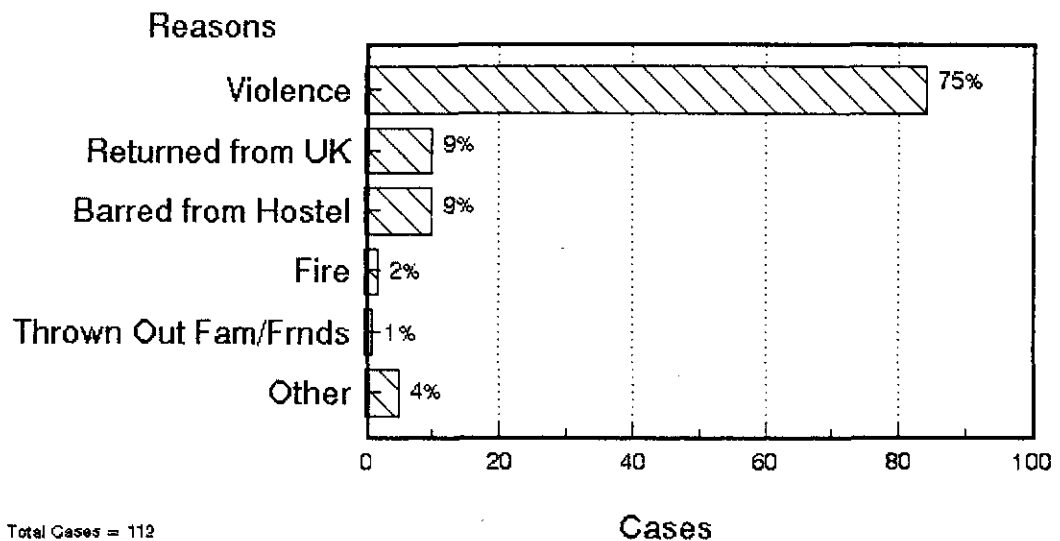
Household	Cases	%	Bednights	Ave No. Nights	Longest Stay (nights)
Women w/children	62	71%	244	4	28
Men, women w/children	5	6%	88	18	41
Women	20	22%	41	2	14
Men & Women	-		-	-	-
Men	-		-	-	-
Men w/children	1	1%	3	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>		<b>376</b>	<b>4 (ave)</b>	<b>-</b>

**Figure 3.1**  
**Homeless Persons Unit 1992: B&B**  
 Statistics : Reasons for Homelessness



Total Cases = 391  
 Figures Supplied by the Eastern Health Board

**Figure 3.2**  
**Travellers Unit 1992: B&B**  
 Statistics : Reasons for Homelessness

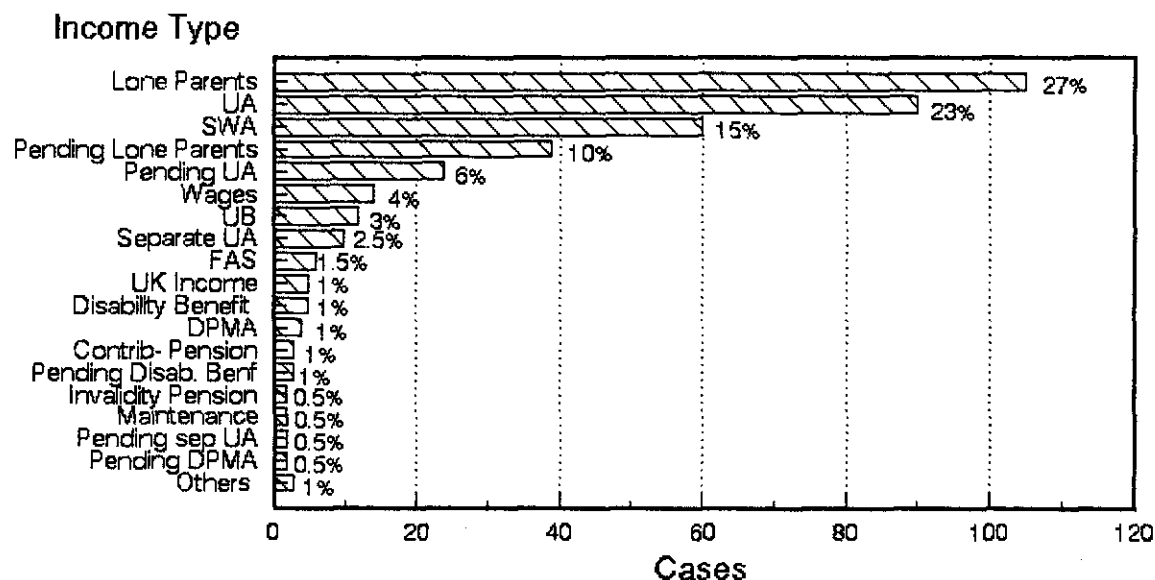


Total Cases = 112  
 Figures Supplied by the Eastern Health Board

Figure 3.3

### Homeless Persons Unit 1992: B&B

Income Type of Homeless People Placed in B&B



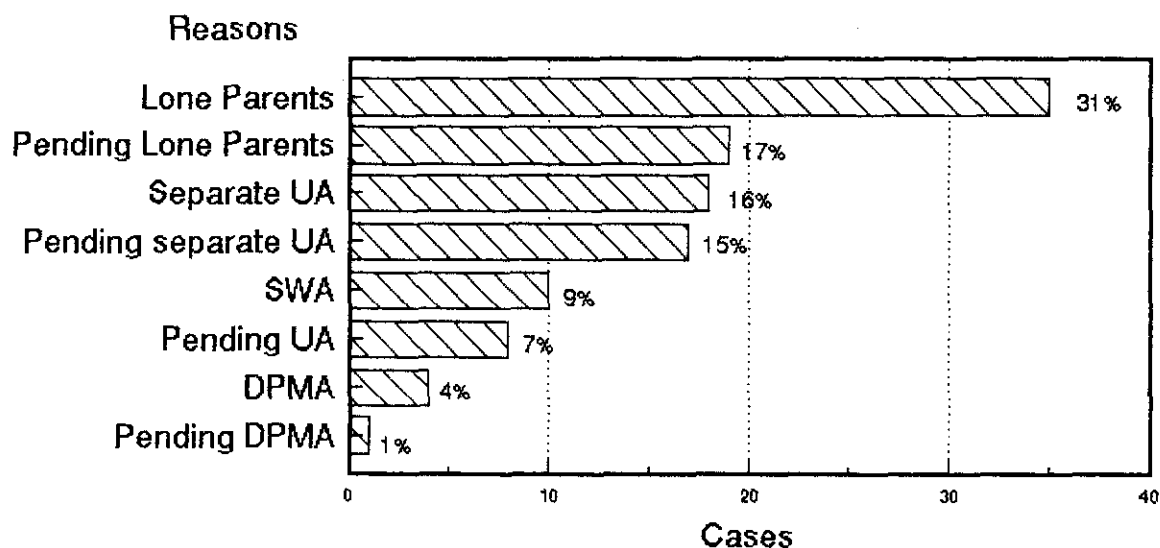
Total Cases = 391

Figures Supplied by the Eastern Health Board

Figure 3.4

### Travellers Unit 1992: B&B

Statistics: Income Type for Travellers placed in B&B



Total Cases = 112

Figures Supplied by the Eastern Health Board

## **CHAPTER 4: STAYING IN A B&B - THE EXPERIENCE OF OUT-OF-HOME RESIDENTS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Most people have probably stayed in a B&B at one time or another. B&Bs are usually places which suit our needs as tourists for a short period. A comfortable bed and a good breakfast are provided at a reasonable price. Most people stay only one or two nights as tourists in B&Bs, have lots to do during the day and have some money to spend.

For homeless people, staying in a B&B can be a very different experience. People out-of-home tend to have multiple needs and difficulties and need support, advice and information. They usually have little money, and nowhere else to go. Those placed in B&Bs by the Eastern Health Board in 1993 were mostly families with children, out-of-home for reasons of family disputes or violence. B&B accommodation offers no support for people in such circumstances.

As part of this study, a sample of 40 homeless people were interviewed who were staying in B&Bs in Dublin during the three-month period of May to August 1993.<sup>12</sup> The following information is taken from those interviews (Tables for this Chapter can be found in Appendix C).

### **4.2 Who were the B&B Residents?**

In line with the general profile of B&B residents (see Chapter 2) most of the residents of B&Bs interviewed for this study were women with children: 62% (25) of the 40 people interviewed were women and 38% (15) were men. All (40) of those interviewed were less than 50 years of age, with 15% (6) aged between 18 and 22 years.

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<sup>12</sup> This number represents approximately a third of all homeless people staying in B&Bs in Dublin during this period (See Appendix A).

**Table 4.1: Age of Residents**

<b>Age</b>	<b>People</b>	<b>%</b>
18-22	6	15
23-27	10	25
28-32	11	27
33-39	6	15
40-49	7	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

Most of those interviewed had either children or partners with them. 42% (17) were women with children; 32% (13) were part of a couple with children; 8% (3) were men alone; 8% (3) couples, and 10% (4) women alone.

42% (17) were married or cohabiting and 40% (16) were single; 13% (5) were separated or divorced and 5% (2) were widowed or deserted. Half, 50% (20), of those interviewed were lone parents.

82% (33) of those interviewed were caring for children. 22 of these had only one child. Between them, those interviewed had 76 children in their care. Nearly half of the children (36) were aged under three years, and nearly a third (24) were aged 11 or more.

However, only 55 of the total children were staying in the B&Bs at the time of interviewing. The rest were staying with family or friends. The children staying elsewhere with friends or family were the older ones.

Again, as with the profile of B&B residents presented in Chapter 3, 96% (36) of those interviewed were unemployed.

Most people, 70% (28) of those interviewed, had been born in Dublin but only 37% (15) of those born in Dublin had stayed there all their lives. The other 33% (13) of those born in Dublin, had been in Dublin for periods ranging from over five years (15%: 6) to less than a month (12%: 5). In addition, 12% (5) were not from Ireland and had been in Dublin for less than a week.



### 4.3 How Did People Become Homeless?

*I have been in and out of home all my life.*

*The landlord told us to go and I lost the head and I just broke up the house*

For most people there was more than one reason why they were out-of-home. When asked what were the main reasons why they were out-of-home, 82% (33) of people gave at least two reasons and 20% (8) gave four reasons.

The first reason given by over a third of respondents were family relationship difficulties, assault or partner problems (35%: 14). A further reason given by 20% (8) was to do with landlord difficulties; 5% (2) arrears; 5% (2) overcrowding; 5% (2) eviction. Other reasons, of each were mentioned once, by different people, were pregnancy, fire, addiction, problems with neighbours, drinking, leaving psychiatric care, and unemployment.

Many of those interviewed had been out-of-home for only a short time. 45% (18) had been out-of-home for less than a week. 18% (7) were "long-term" homeless, having been out-of-home for one year or longer.

In terms of previous experiences of homelessness, 58% (23) were homeless for the first time. 42% (17) has been out-of-home before. Of these 17 people, 4 had got a house or flat which ended their previous period of homelessness and 3 said the previous episode of homelessness had never really ended and they had been homeless all along.

27% (11) had stayed up to a month in a B&B prior to their current stay, either in Dublin or in the U.K. A further 5% (2) had stayed in another B&B for longer than a month.

50% (20) of those interviewed had previously stayed in a hostel. 38% (15) had slept rough and 35% (14) had stayed in a squat.

#### **4.4 Where Had People Been Staying Before?**

Nearly half of those interviewed had come directly from settled accommodation with 35% (14) in local authority accommodation and 10% (4) from private rented accommodation. These were not necessarily tenants, as 20% (8) had been staying with family or friends. 45% (18) had been staying at their last place for three months or less. 38% (15) were in their last place of stay for over a year (including 18% who were there five years or more).

The majority of those interviewed had been quite mobile in recent years, with 60% (24) having lived in more than six places in the last five years. Only 40% (16) of the sample had lived in fewer than five places in the last five years.

#### **4.5 How Did People Get Placed in B&Bs?**

The majority of people interviewed, 75% (30), were placed in B&Bs by the Homeless Persons Unit of the Eastern Health Board at Charles Street, Dublin. 15% (6) were placed by Haven House, a hostel for adult women and 5% (6) were placed by the Travellers Unit of the Eastern Health Board at Castle Street, Dublin. One person was placed in B&B by Focus Point during the research period<sup>13</sup>.

Generally, people made their own way to the B&B from the placing agency. Once placed in the B&B, people were generally told to come back in a day or two, or on a specific day the following week, in order to have their case reviewed. Most people who were interviewed went to the Eastern Health Board in need of accommodation and did not specially ask for B&B accommodation. Of those interviewed, 35% (14) said they asked to be placed in a B&B, but the majority, 62% (25), did not.

The residents were asked why they thought they were placed in B&B. Nearly a quarter did not know. 32% (13) thought it was because there was no space in the hostels; 20% (8) thought it was so that the family

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<sup>13</sup> This was an exceptional case, placed in B&B by Focus Point.

could stay together and 5% (2) thought it was because they would not go to a hostel.

*They wanted to put us in a hostel ... but the kids played up at Charles Street and cried that they didn't want to go to a hostel.*

*They wanted to split us up ... but my wife is depressed and I have to give her her medicine.*

47% (19) of the sample said they would have gone to a hostel if that is what they had been offered. 45% (18) said they felt they would have refused to go, and a further 8% (3) didn't know what they would have done.

#### **4.6 What Were the B&B's Like?**

The people staying in B&B accommodation who took part in this study, talked about the B&Bs they were staying in and what they liked and disliked about them.

All of the nine B&Bs (out of a possible 10 used by the Eastern Health Board) in which people were staying were within about two miles of the city centre. 36 of those 40 people interviewed were staying in one of five B&Bs which the researcher was allowed visit. The other four B&Bs had only one person from the study staying in each one. The researcher was not allowed visit these B&Bs.

The five main B&Bs are listed in Table 4.2 as A to E. (The names of the B&Bs can't be revealed for reasons of confidentiality). Descriptions of the facilities in the B&Bs are taken from the accounts provided by residents and visits by the researcher.

From the accounts the people interviewed gave, more than half, 57% (23), had to leave the B&B during the day. 33% (13) said they did not have to leave, and a further 10% (4) were not sure, as they had only been there one night. The majority of people interviewed happened to be staying in the two B&Bs where people were asked to leave during the day.

Visitors were not usually allowed and none of the residents were allowed to use the kitchen. Most people, 77% (31), had some access to a living room, but in some cases, the times of access were restricted. All of the B&Bs made an occasional exception to this rule.

**Table 4.2 B&Bs' Facilities**

B&B	Leave during day	Visitors allowed	Common room	Access to kettle	% people
A	Yes	No	Yes	No	35%
B	Yes	Not usually	No	No	22%
C	No	No	Some	Yes	17%
D	No	Not sure	Yes	No	8%
E	No (mostly)	No	Yes	Yes	8%
Others	Varied	Varied	Varied	Varied	10%

Since this survey, the Eastern Health Board claims that more B&B owners are allowing people to stay in during the day. From a follow-up telephone survey of the B&Bs the Eastern Health Board uses, none of the B&B owners said people had to be out during the day. Two indicated that people could stay in if they asked and the rest said everyone could stay in. This finding has to be taken with caution as some B&B owners in this study said they did not ask people to leave during the day, but the residents themselves said they had to leave.

#### **4.7 What People Liked About the B&B**

Overall, most people did not want to be in the B&B. Only 42% (17) said they "liked it here". However, there were positive aspects.

The main things people liked about staying in the B&B, looking at it as a temporary place and not for a long stay, were that the B&Bs were private, safe and clean places. 17.5% (7) people mentioned the privacy; 10% (4) the food; 8% (3) the cleanliness; and 8% (3) the friendly staff.

When asked about particular aspects of staying in a B&B, the majority were fairly positive about the facilities and the place in general. 67% (27) thought it was a comfortable place and 70% (28) felt they had enough privacy. A smaller number, 52% (21), thought the other residents

were friendly. Most people were happy with the food, with 75% (30) of people getting a full fry in the morning.

Residents were asked whether they would prefer to stay in a B&B or a hostel. Nearly three-quarters, 72% (29), said they would prefer the B&B and 15% (6) said the hostel. The remainder were undecided. Whether or not people had had previous experience of staying in a B&B or hostel did not make much difference to their preferences. Of the 29 who said they would prefer to stay in a B&B, half (15), had stayed in a hostel before and 9 had stayed in a B&B before. All of the 6 who said they would prefer to stay in a hostel had stayed in a hostel before and in addition 2 had stayed in a B&B before.

Those who preferred the B&B said it was to do with being able to stay together in a B&B; the cleanliness; the lack of stigma attached and the privacy:

*This place is more private than a hostel ... even though there are more people here ... I feel safer ... more secure.*

For many people the thought of going to a hostel was a frightening one. The reality of staying in some hostels has been documented (Focus Point, 1992) and the conclusion seems to be that there is great variation in the standards and quality of Dublin's hostels.

*I would rather sleep on the street (than go to a hostel) ... at least I would have my sanity.*

*My husband would kill himself if we went into a hostel.*

*I just don't want to bring the kids to a hostel.*

Positive experiences of staying in some hostels were reflected in the views of three of those interviewed, however. These people gave reasons why they would prefer to be in a hostel. These were that the children would be fed; they could cook; they would feel safe; and there would be more support there. These are all positive qualities of some of the Dublin hostels which provide specific services for people out-of-home.

#### 4.8 What People Disliked about the B&B

*Sunday is the worst ... everything is closed. It is a real problem, especially if it is raining. Only places open are pubs and churches ... last Sunday I sat through four masses and one of them was in Irish.*

*I'm still sort of on the streets ... out there all day. The only difference is that I have a bed for the night.*

*I just want to be able to come and go as I please and have a key ... I don't want to be stuck outside.*

One factor which many of the residents constantly referred to was that they had to leave the B&B during the day. For many of the residents, the normal day-to-day routine they had known was gone. Being out all day was particularly difficult for those with young children, or those who were pregnant or not feeling well.

*If you are sick ... you can't have a lie down during the day for a few hours ... Your life is bound up.*

One woman was eight months pregnant and had to be out during the day. Another couple were drug addicts trying to stay off drugs and needing lots of rest.

People found it difficult to mind young children in the B&B because of the cramped space, amount of stairs, lack of play-areas and the difficulty of meeting their children's eating requirements. Half those interviewed had pre-school-age children of whom they had to take care during the day. Only 20% (8) were using a crèche.

*I have to amuse the kids all day and end up buying them colouring books and things.*

Many (67%: 27) of the residents were staying on the second or higher floor of the B&B and found it difficult to carry young children up and down the stairs.

*You shouldn't be sent to places like this ... so high up with small children ... cramped in one room with no ventilation.*

Most of the residents' children played only in the bedroom. The children of the 20 families did not play anywhere else in the B&B, but the children of 12 families played in the living room as well.

People also talked about the difficulties involved in all sharing one room. 98% (39) had the use of one room only, even though the size of the families varied from 2 to 6. One family of 7 had the use of two rooms. Most people (60%: 24) said they had the use of a living room at night where they could watch TV.

Some people 40% (16) noticed that they were not treated the same as tourists.

*Maybe I'm just a bit paranoid ... but once they know your situation, you are treated differently.*

*They (the staff) look down on you a bit and like to keep you in the background ... you just go in and keep the door closed.*

When asked in what way they felt they were getting different treatment, 5 said that tourists could come and go as they like and would have got a key. 5 felt that the tourists would get better overall treatment by the staff and 3 said they were separated from the tourists at breakfast time.

In general people spent their time during the day mostly walking around town; visiting relatives; using some Focus Point services, parks or sitting in cafes. The things people mentioned were: 23% (26) walking around town; 19% (21) visiting Focus Point; 11.5% (13) sitting in a park. Other places mentioned were the Eastern Health Board, Dublin Corporation and shopping centres .

Over half (52%: 21) of those interviewed felt the services they needed weren't close by. These services included the Eastern Health Board and

Focus Point as well as cheap places to eat and places to be in during the day.

*I feel sick of running around.*

*I just want someone to come out here and explain what we're entitled to instead of us doing all the running around ... it costs a fortune.*

Another feature of staying in a B&B which people found difficult was the lack of any kitchen facilities. 75% (30) of people said they were not happy about not having the use of a kitchen.

*There's nowhere for me to boil the baby's bottle.*

*I would love to be able to make a cup of tea.*

Without the use of a kitchen, residents had to eat out, and many people found this both difficult and expensive. 72% (29) of those interviewed said they were dissatisfied with having to eat out everyday. 60% (24) of people ate out twice a day, mostly at the chipper or local cafe. 30% (12) said they ate out once a day.

*Having to eat out ... means I keep buying meals until he eats one ... there just isn't the option to feed him when he is hungry.*

*It is unfair if you are surviving on the same money and you have to feed yourself and the kids eating out.*

People talked about the difficulties of budgeting, mostly in terms of having to eat out, staying out all day and travelling on the bus. 77% (31) of those interviewed said they found it difficult to make ends meet while staying in the B&B. Some mentioned the initial shock at the money running out after a few days of eating in cafes and keeping the children amused.

Some people did not like the noise, the lack of laundry facilities and that visitors were not allowed.



#### 4.9 How Did People Feel?

*It would be nice to get a friendly face when you go in the door ... instead, I have to ask for everything.*

*There's no-one to talk to.*

For those interviewed, the experience of staying in a B&B was just part of the experience of being out-of-home. Many of the feelings and difficulties which homelessness brings were mentioned: loneliness, frustration, depression, fatigue.

*It's hard getting to sleep with all the worries.*

*I feel so drained.*

*The loneliness of it all.*

62% (25) felt "most stressed than usual" and 65% (26) felt "more tired than usual". Nearly half, 47% (19), felt "more lonely than usual" and 40% (16) were feeling "less hopeful than usual". However, 35% (14) of those interviewed felt "more hopeful than usual".

45% (18) of those interviewed felt their physical health was worse since they moved into the B&B. 17% (7) said their health was better. 27% (11) said their children's health was worse since moving into the B&B mainly due to being tired from walking around all day and not eating healthily. 72% (29) of those interviewed were registered with a doctor, with nearly two thirds, 62% (25) having a medical card. Over a quarter of the sample were not registered with a doctor and did not have a medical card. A worry for many people was the future, and where they were going to go after the B&B. Some felt confused and anxious.

*The reality is they are going to split us ... there's no light at the end of the tunnel.*

*You just don't know where you stand ... I've never had a Corporation flat ... you'd think they would give me just one chance.*

#### 4.10 What People Expected

When people were asked what they thought would happen after the B&B, the majority of people, 72% (29), said they expected to be rehoused. 12% (5) said they thought they would be placed in a hostel. 5% (2) thought they would return home. 10% (4) did not know what would happen.

Over a third, 40% (16), of people interviewed expected that they would be staying in the B&B for a week, while 28% (11) thought they would only be staying a few more days. 30% (12) didn't know how long they would be staying. Most, 75% (30), of those who were interviewed expressed a strong desire to have their own house.

*I just want a little front door of my own and a garden for her to play in.*

A further 10% (4) wanted a flat for their family and 15% (6) wanted to share a flat.

When asked if they were on any waiting lists, many of those interviewed were not sure. 52% (21) of the sample said they thought they were on Dublin Corporation's housing list. A further 12% (5) said they were on the County Council's list. 12% (5) said they were on the Homeless List. 10% (4) thought they were on no lists at all and a further 8% (3) did not know. Of those on a list, 22% (9) said they had been on a list for a month or less and 38% (15) for a year or longer.

55% (22) felt they would prefer local authority accommodation, while nearly a third, 32% (13), would prefer private rented accommodation. Others either said they would prefer hostel accommodation or they didn't know.

*I would like a long-term hostel ... a permanent home ... where help would be there if I needed it.*

18% (7) said they wanted to live on the north side of the city and a further 17% (7) mentioned specific places on the north side where they would like to live. 12% (5) wanted to live in the city centre. 10% (4)

wanted to live on the south side, and 2% (1) wanted to live in County Dublin. 15% (6) said they had no preference.

#### 4.11 Carol's Experience

The following is only one woman's experience but it serves to illustrate some of the difficulties of being homeless in a B&B.

*"The first day I became homeless is a day that will always stay in my mind. I went into the County Council and I told them my situation. They said that there was no accommodation available for me at that point in time. The only information they gave me was that I would have to find accommodation in a B&B or a hostel. This would only be for a short period of time. They passed me on to the Eastern Health Board Homeless Unit, Charles Street. I went to Charles Street that same day.*

*When I arrived there my first thought was to back away, but I was desperate for accommodation. There were various types of people with different "problems", e.g. drug addicts, alcoholics and people in my own position. I was really scared. Most of all for my baby who 14 months at the time.*

*After three hours of waiting in a stuffy, smelly room I got to talk to the man in charge of finding people accommodation. He referred me to a B&B. As this man didn't give me directions to this place, I had to find my own way there.*

*When I arrived at the B&B I was amazed at the condition of the house. As I walked in the door a smell of mould and dampness hit me in the face. The owner of the house showed me the TV room first where a family of six were sitting. One of the children had fallen ill with chicken pox. This was a threat to my own child. I was then brought to my own room which consisted of a single bed, a wardrobe, a shower and sink. There was no sleeping arrangements for my child so she slept with me. This room was the average size of a box*

room (10' x 6'). I did not sleep that night worrying about my situation.

I got up at 8 o'clock the next morning for breakfast. We ate bacon, eggs and toast. It was then announced that we had to leave the premises by 9.30 a.m. and could not return until after 7 o'clock. Before I moved in, this time limitation in the B&B had not existed, but as a result of an argument between two residents this new rule was brought in.

After leaving the B&B at 9.30 a.m. I walked around in despair trying to think of something to do for the next seven and a half hours. I cried more times than I can remember. My baby was cranky and didn't stop crying which made the day even more distressing.

At dinner time we went to a restaurant for a decent meal. It was very expensive, so I stuck to chips and sausages. I tried to stay in the restaurant for as long as possible to pass the time. I then made my way to the park and walked around in a daze for what seemed like hours. Eventually the time came to return to the B&B. I arrived there at 7 o'clock on the dot. We then watched some TV and went to bed. This first day became the typical way to spend the next nine weeks. The only time my routine was altered was when it was raining. On those days, the only thing I could do was to visit people and stay there until it was time to return to the B&B. This was hard after a while, because I knew people were getting tired of me there every rainy day.

I hope never to be in that situation again for my daughter's sake. As for the people who have no choice but to stay in B&B and hostels, I hope the conditions will be improved".

Carol

## **CHAPTER 5 THE VIEWS OF POLICY MAKERS & SERVICE PROVIDERS**

### **5.1 Policy Makers and Service Providers**

The views and experience of service providers and policy makers were examined as part of this study. This was in order to present a wide-ranging account of the use of B&B accommodation in Dublin for people out-of-home.

Thirteen people were interviewed altogether, including eight key representatives from the main policy and service agencies working in the area of the use of B&Bs for people out-of-home - Dublin Corporation, the Department of the Environment, Dublin County Council, the Eastern Health Board, Focus Point<sup>14</sup> and five B&B owners. In addition representatives from voluntary bodies working with homeless people and travellers were consulted (see Appendix A for the methods used).

The first section discusses the views of the policy makers and service providers, excluding those who run the B&Bs. The second section examines the views of B&B owners. The views and experiences of those interviewed are presented here without attributing them to each individual speaker for reasons of confidentiality.

#### **5.1.1 Views on the Use of B&B**

None of those interviewed considered B&Bs to be an appropriate long-term response to homelessness. There were different views as to whether it was an appropriate form of emergency accommodation. For people who are in need of support and who are vulnerable, the B&B was considered to be inappropriate by everyone. For others, B&B was considered appropriate in emergency cases.

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<sup>14</sup> A representative of Focus Point was interviewed on the basis that this agency is in contact with many homeless people staying in B&Bs via its drop-in centre, crisis and 24 hour services.

One person argued that in some cases, where there is domestic violence, for example, or an extreme incident such as a fire, B&B is the most appropriate form of temporary accommodation. It is considered to be a "last resort" which should be used only on a short-term basis.

*... don't favour the use of Bed and Breakfasts if at all possible ... it is not considered to be very suitable accommodation for people and secondly it is expensive.*

The most frequently cited benefit of B&Bs was the option for families to staying together. People also said that B&Bs will take in people for a short period. Other benefits mentioned were that the B&Bs are autonomous, anonymous and people have their privacy. It was argued that people may prefer B&B accommodation to hostels.

*In a B&B you have a room of your own, you have more privacy and you don't have to do your own cooking.*

The difficulties that were mentioned were that B&Bs are expensive, that there are no support services for people staying there and that many people have to be out all day and have no cooking facilities. This in turn makes it more expensive for the families to eat and therefore they have less money to live on. People felt that there are less facilities for children in the B&Bs and a lack of facilities generally.

*I think the fact that they have to be out during the day, lugging their children and their carry cots around the city and then trying to eat on the hoof ... whatever money they have is going on busfares and bringing the kids in to get chips.*

*The problems are that people need support and they don't have that available to them. During the day you have families wandering around the streets and coming back with no facilities to cook.*

*People in B&B's are isolated and not close to professional support.*

*The emotional trauma of being out-of-home ... people are worried about when they are going to be moved and split up which causes further trauma.*

*People don't seem in general to like to have to live in a B&B ... it's an uncertain time for them and they don't know what is around the corner and they want to get themselves settled.*

More specifically residents sometimes felt that they were being treated differently to tourists.

*People complain that tourists get better breakfasts and generally feel they are not being treated the way a paying customer would be.*

*I always associate B&Bs with going on holidays, but this is no holiday for them.*

One of those interviewed had also received some feedback from B&B owners and staff.

*I don't know whether B&B's are dropping out of the service but I have heard complaints where some people broke things or stole things in B&B or caused trouble, or where a woman's ex-husband might come along and kick up a rumpus and smash things.*

#### **5.1.2 Comparison with hostels**

All the service providers reported that people preferred to be placed in a B&B rather than a hostel.

*Some say the hostels really get them down because of the lack of privacy and the fact you can't keep food there ... stuff gets stolen and you end up buying stuff and carrying it with you.*

*Most of the feedback is people don't like hostels.*

Others said that this negative attitude towards hostels was based on fear mostly and that once they experienced the hostels their views changed.

*Most people would prefer B&B which is maybe due to misconceptions ... unless people experience the hostels they will fear them.*

*People who have been in a B&B and are moved to a hostel for the first time, whom you would have thought would be coming out saying "no way would I go back there" are saying "God I never realised it was like that". When people realise what they got themselves into they are generally far happier than they were in the B&B.....*

### **5.1.3 Suggestions for improvements**

There were several suggestions made on ways to improve the current situation. Some argued that a two-parent family hostel was a basic requirement.

*It is extraordinary that at this stage in the Republic of Ireland there is no two-parent hostel ... there is insufficient emergency accommodation for women and children in Dublin.*

*I imagine another hostel would be better in the long run ... if you had a hostel it would provide services, social workers and the Eastern Health Board and you could concentrate various services which I suppose you can't do in a B&B.*

Others suggested more support services and things for people to do during the day.

*What is needed is a family hostel or a two-parent hostel but also they need more services during the day as they literally have to walk around. Also they need practical things like access to the kitchen*



*to heat up bottles and make their own food, also washing facilities.*

*It would be better if there was a way of getting support services to people in B&B quicker.*

## **5.2 B&B Owners: Experience of Running B&Bs**

The five B&B owners interviewed as part of this study owned the places where the majority of the sample of residents were staying.

### **5.2.1 B&B Business Experience**

Of the five B&B owners, only one had had no prior experience of providing a B&B service before taking in homeless people. That owner decided to offer a B&B service to the Eastern Health board as a way of both doing something to help people out-of-home and making money from vacant flats. The others provide accommodation to tourists as well as to Eastern Health Board clients. At the time of the study three of the five owners had been taking Eastern Health Board clients for about 18 months.

### **5.2.2 Types of Resident**

Most of the B&Bs tended to take mostly Eastern Health Board clients at the time of the survey. However, during the first season, three out of the five took in tourists as well, and took on average only 10% of clients from the Eastern Health Board.

The main types of homeless people referred to the B&Bs were women with children, and occasionally couples and young people. Some of the B&Bs accepted travellers and others asked the Eastern Health Board whether the people being referred were travellers and would refuse to take them. They argued that this was because of difficulties experienced in the past with particular families.

### 5.2.3 Conditions for Residents

Three of the B&B owners said they did not generally allow people to stay in the B&B all day. People were asked to be out by 11.00 a.m. and asked not to return before 7.00 p.m.

*Tourists tend to have breakfast early and be gone until late at night. But some of the homeless couples tend to hang around the TV room and the children run around. I don't mind too much about the children, but the adults should be out there looking for flats and jobs and not hanging around.*

One of the B&Bs segregate homeless people from tourists at breakfast time by putting them in separate dining rooms.

None of the B&Bs allowed residents any access to the kitchen. It was not considered to be appropriate to the B&B service they were providing. Some said they allowed mothers to use the kettle for their babies and others said they made cups of tea when requested.

One owner argued that if they could plan ahead and knew business was regular, it would be possible to put in kitchens and a laundry for people to use. One B&B owner said it was possible the business could dry up overnight and any improvement made would be money down the drain.

### 5.2.4 Views on Taking Homeless People into B&B

For most of those interviewed, there were few benefits and many difficulties in taking homeless people.

*The benefits are purely financial, but now I am asking myself, is it really worth it?*

For most of the owners, the only benefit was a financial one. From the owners' perspective, it was better not to have to let a room out fresh every day and to have steady money for a week or two, especially off-season.

*... some financial advantage in winter, but in summer we lose more than we gain in damage and re-decoration.*

The difficulties of taking in people out-of-home varied from B&B to B&B. Some of the difficulties mentioned were to do with re-decoration which they said they had to carry out every two months.

*The wallpaper is often stripped and there are crayon marks on the walls. I would be ashamed to bring tourists in there.*

*I wouldn't be bothered re-decorating.*

But another owner was pleasantly surprised at the conditions of the rooms after the families had left. Another said they had had a few occasional difficulties such as blocked toilets, fleas and theft.

*If you leave a door open, they may go in and take things. They have nothing, you see. They even steal on each other.*

One owner commented that the problems were just part of the B&B trade and said that:

*You can get bad tourists as well as bad homeless people...The fellow that looks rough could be the best in the world. Last week I had a business man in a pinstripe suit walk out without paying.*

While most of the owners were sympathetic to the plight of homeless people, some considered them to be unwilling to sort themselves out.

*They have an attitude about waiting for things to happen. It is not up to the state or the Eastern Health Board or Focus Point to run around after people. It's up to themselves to sort themselves out.*

*A lot of their problems are self-made.*

There was no support service for those running the B&Bs who were often confronted with residents' personal difficulties. Often owners were offering more than a B&B service as most said they and their staff ended up listening and being drawn into peoples' problems. They were not trained to cope and some argued that it resulted in staff being abrupt and off-hand with Eastern Health Board clients in order to maintain some distance. This could come across as rudeness to the residents who could feel upset by this.

*The staff are good to them and talk about their problems, especially in the evenings when there isn't much for them to do.*

*We end up being cook and cleaner and social worker. They pour all their troubles out to us and we get depressed by their stories.*

*I can't help listening and talking to people and it gets to me. I have no-one to off-load those problems to. I once rang up Haven House (a hostel for women) and the lady there was sympathetic. It is a big difference dealing with this clientele and one does get involved.*

*I wouldn't know where to start to help them. It's like sitting on an ice flow, where do you start chipping?*

Owners felt that there was little support available for the residents once they were booked into the B&B.

*Once they're deposited here, they're forgotten...They're devastated when they arrive... They create a fuss when they leave.. They have no contact with anyone that seems to care.*

Clearly from the perspective of the B&B owners the money coming in may not be worth the difficulties they were experiencing and two were seriously considering opting out of the arrangement.

## CHAPTER 6 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

There has been a significant growth in the use of B&B accommodation for homeless people in Ireland in recent years. In Dublin during 1993, the Eastern Health Board used B&B as emergency accommodation nearly 100 times more than they used it in 1990. Although this trend seems to be stabilising, people out-of-home are staying longer than ever before in B&Bs, at a higher cost. B&B was designed for tourists and is neither appropriate when used as emergency accommodation for the vast majority of people out-of-home, nor does it make financial sense in the long run.

The reasons for the increased use of B&B can be traced to the rise in homelessness and the increased demand for housing which has resulted in a lack of emergency and long-term accommodation. Furthermore, the availability of funding under the Housing Act (1988) has contributed to the use of B&B as an emergency response. In addition there has been a lack of overall responsibility for the planning, development, monitoring and running of alternative services for people out-of-home.

This study has documented the many ways that B&B accommodation is generally inappropriate for people out-of-home.

Firstly, there is no register of B&B's used for this purpose in Ireland, no regulations, no official standards and no monitoring. B&B's therefore can vary in quality and service as well as in price.

Secondly, policy makers and service providers alike, do not support the general use of B&B accommodation. The owners of B&B's themselves, find it difficult to respond to the needs of people out-of-home.

Thirdly, the people out-of-home interviewed in this study told of the difficulties they experienced while staying in a B&B. Mostly young women or couples with children, they were out-of-home for a variety of reasons, including family arguments, overcrowding, arrears or violence. Their accounts of day to day living in B&B's present a picture of frustration, fatigue and loneliness. During the uncertain and anxious period of being out-of-home and trying to find long-term accommodation, they faced the additional difficulties of feeding themselves and their

children, and for many people, coping with having to be out all day, whatever the weather. They want accommodation which offers a safe, comfortable environment where they can be together with their families during the day, and have some facility for feeding their children. They want basic and practical facilities and services in a supportive and caring environment. There is also a positive side to staying in B&Bs which should also be a part of staying in any hostel - that is, cleanliness, privacy and a lack of stigma, and for two-parent families - the facility to stay together.

This report has made 10 clear recommendations in relation to policy and service provision. The central theme of these recommendations is that B&B should not be used for the vast majority of people out-of-home. This reduction in usage cannot happen overnight. However with a planned and co-ordinated response, clear allocation of responsibility and additional emergency and temporary accommodation, it would be possible to avoid the use of B&B except in rare emergency cases. In the interim, there are simple practical steps, outlined the recommendations, that can be taken to improve the day to day experience of the people out-of-home in B&B's. The time to take those steps is now.

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## **Appendix A: Methodology**

### **A.1 Background**

Initially, there was no available information on the population of B&B accommodation. The primary focus of the study was therefore to describe the homeless people staying in B&B's and to talk to them about their experiences. In addition, the historical and policy contexts were also examined.

In the early stages of the research, an Advisory Group was established with the role of informing and advising throughout the different stages of the study. Members included representatives from the statutory and voluntary sectors: the Department of the Environment, Dublin Corporation, the Eastern Health Board, Focus Point and the Combat Poverty Agency.

### **A.2 Stages of Research**

There were two stages to the research:

1. examining the policies and use of B&B in Dublin
2. focusing on the experience of those staying in a B&B

#### **Stage 1: Policies and Use**

The first stage of the research was to find out about the current policies and uses of B&B accommodation. This was carried out by interviewing 8 policy makers and service providers who were directly concerned with the policies and services related to people in B&B. Those interviewed included senior representatives from Dublin Corporation, Dublin County Council, the Department of the Environment, Focus Point, and the Eastern Health Board. Other people working in voluntary agencies were consulted. Five B&B owners were also interviewed. The names and addresses of the five B&B owners who were willing to take part in the study were supplied by the Eastern Health Board. The main focus of these interviews was on the difficulties and benefits perceived by B&B owners in providing accommodation for people out-of-home.

As well as finding out about the history and policies of using B&B accommodation, this stage of the research was concerned with discovering more about the people staying in the B&B's. To help with this aim, the Eastern Health agreed to make available statistics for 1992 which included the total number of cases placed in B&B; gender breakdown; the reasons why they were out-of-home and the total cost of placing them in B&B. Further figures were produced for 1993 but with less qualitative information.

The national use of B&B accommodation was explored by contacting every Health Board and local authority in Ireland. Replies were received from all 7 health boards and 47 local authorities which used B&B for 176 cases in 1993. This is estimated to be 244 for all areas outside of Dublin) and 718 nationally.

To place the residents of B&B's in a wider context, the population of adult hostels in Dublin was examined using figures from a recent hostel Census (Focus Point 1992; 1993). Second, a literature review was carried out of studies carried out about the use of B&B accommodation in the UK.

## **Stage 2:            Experience of B&B's**

This second stage of the research aimed to find out more about the people staying in B&B accommodation and about their experience. A questionnaire was used which allowed a wide range of subjects to be covered in a short amount of time. The survey of B&B residents was carried out over a three month period from May to August 1993.

### **A.3        About the Sample**

In total, 40 people were interviewed for the study. This number represents approximately a third of those staying in B&B during the research period. From the Eastern Health Board statistics for 1993, an average of 117 cases were placed in B&B in a three month period. This indicates that the sample of 40 represents 34% of the total population at that time.

43% (17) of people were interviewed in one of the B&B's and 57% (23) were interviewed on the premises of Focus Point. Of those interviewed,

35% (14) were staying in one B&B, 23% (9) were staying in another and 18% (7) were in a third. The remainder (10) were staying in 6 other B&B's.

#### **A.4 Sample Methods**

For reasons of confidentiality, a full list of people staying in B&B during the three-month period of the research was not available. In order to make contact with as many people as possible staying in B&B, three different approaches were used

The first approach was to visit the B&B directly. This involved contacting the B&B owner on a regular basis and finding out if there were any residents placed by the Eastern Health Board currently staying in the B&B.

The second approach involved the staff of Focus Point contacting the researcher if they came into contact with someone staying in a B&B.

The third approach was to distribute cards describing the research around the B&Bs and to a lesser extent within the Homeless Persons' Unit at Charles Street, Dublin. These cards asked people to phone or call in to Focus Point if they were willing to take part in the study.

**Table A.1: Place of Interview**

Place	People	%
B & B	17	43
Focus Point	23	57
Total	40	100

#### **A.5 The B&Bs**

The people interviewed in this study were staying in 9 different B&Bs. These are not named for reasons of confidentiality. Table A.2 presents the number of people interviewed who were staying in each of the B&Bs.

**Table A.2: Where People Were Staying When Interviewed**

B&B	People	%
A	14	35
B	9	22.5
C	7	17.5
D	3	7.5
E	3	7.5
F	1	2.5
G	1	2.5
H	1	2.5
I	1	2.5
Total	40	100

#### **A.6 Policy Makers & Service Providers: Interview**

A series of questions were drawn up in order to document the history of the use of B&B and to find out how it was viewed by policy makers and service providers as a form of temporary accommodation. These interviews were taped (where possible) and transcribed.

#### **A.7 Residents of B&Bs: Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was developed which included information on the following areas:

1. The B&B: space, facilities.
2. About the person staying in the B&B
3. Background to placement in B&B
4. Children
5. Day-to-day experiences
6. Health
7. Housing information and accommodation history
8. Future accommodation preferences

The questionnaire took about twenty minutes to complete and was filled in by the researcher during the interview. A copy of the questionnaire is to be found at the end of this report.

## Appendix B: Housing & Homelessness:

### B.1 Population Context

The County Borough of Dublin and the adjacent county area has a total population of 1,025,000 (April 1991). The population of Dublin City increased during the early 1960s but has declined significantly since then, by 7.3% between 1966 and 1981 and a further 12.2% between 1981 and 1991. In 1991 the population of Dublin city was 478,400. This decline is due in part to a decline in the number of births and emigration.

The population projections presented in the Lord Mayor's Commission on Housing (March 1993) predicted that the population of Dublin City will continue to decline over the next decade to be 442,400 in 2001.

In terms of age, a key feature is predicted to be a decline in the proportion of the population under 24 and an increase in the population in the middle age groups of 35-49. The average household size will decline from an estimated 2.89 in 1991 to just 2.53 in 2001.

There has been a very significant decline in the number of larger households in Dublin City over the past two decades and an increase in the number of one person households.

### B2 Housing Context

#### 1988 Housing Act

The 1988 Housing Act enables Local Authorities to

- *make arrangements with a voluntary body approved by the Minister, for the purpose of providing accommodation to the applicant*
- *provide a homeless person with assistance including financial assistance*



*renting accommodation, arranging lodgings or contributing towards the cost of such accommodation*

**(Focus Point 1990)**

The Act defines a person as homeless if

*a) there is no accommodation available, which in the opinion of the authority, he, together with any other person who normally resides with him or who might reasonably be expected to reside with him, can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of, or*

*b) he is living in a hospital, county home, night shelter or other such institution, and is so living because he has no accommodation of the kind referred to in paragraph (a),*

*and he is, in the opinion of the authority, unable to provide accommodation from his own resources.*

Guidelines were issued to local authorities on 29 November 1988, in regard to the accommodation needs of homeless people. These guidelines informed Local Authorities that they should operate the new powers available to them in a "flexible and sensitive manner". Each local authority was instructed to urgently establish appropriate procedures for dealing with homelessness in their areas which included "the establishment of effective liaison arrangements with the relevant health board and voluntary organisations". In Dublin this resulted in the establishment of the Housing Forum in 1992.

The Guidelines stated that "each housing authority should ensure that accommodation secured by the authority for a homeless person ... is of suitable standard". Furthermore the Guidelines emphasise the need for forward planning.

Further Guidelines were circulated in May 1991 which stated that,

*the Minister views as totally unacceptable the failure of any housing authority to respond to the*

*full extent of its powers and capacity to the deprivation that homelessness represents.*

### **B.3 Housing Demand**

The 1991 housing assessment indicated that in the Dublin Corporation area 5152 households were in need of new or improved accommodation. 35% were "unmarried mothers" and a further 27% were one person households. 11% were elderly. 22% of this total were either homeless or travellers. In 1993, 5152 households were found to be in housing need. 24% were one-parent households; 8% were elderly and 18% were homeless or travellers. In terms of homeless people, the housing assessment for March 31 1993 found 1,648 people without homes in Dublin, 641 of whom were in hostels.

Combining casual vacancies, dwellings constructed and dwellings purchases, the average number of families on the Dublin City waiting list accommodated in the past three years has been only 1500 a year (Lord Mayor's Commission on Housing, 1993).

### **B.4 Current Stock**

The current crisis is a far cry from the day of plentiful accommodation with a depleted housing stock, much of it in need of repair. The current Dublin Corporation stock consists of 33,000 dwellings (17,000 houses and 16,000 flats). 25,100 of these dwellings are in the City area: 9,190 houses and 15,910 flats. It also owns 7,500 houses in the County area (Lord Mayor's Commission on Housing, 1993). Only 39% of the flats documented in the Lord Mayor's Commission on Housing were considered to be in satisfactory condition. On average they are 32 years old. The houses are on average 18 years old.

### **B.5 Construction**

1993 saw the revival of the construction of local authority houses with 770 new starts planned for Dublin City and County (as compared to 45 in 1987).

From 1981 to 1991, Dublin Corporation went from 1449 to 48 housing completions (an overall reduction of 97%). In 1992 this reached 80.

## **B.6 Homelessness**

Homelessness is not a modern phenomenon in Irish society. Kennedy (1985) has described its existence in Ireland for over two hundred years. However, in the last twenty years, more families, young people and people of all ages and genders have found themselves without shelter. An even greater number have found themselves without a home, a place they can call their own (Blackwell and Kennedy 1988). Current definitions of homelessness include the idea of a continuum from physical qualities, such as being without a roof, to psychological qualities such as being without a "hearth", a place without any emotional, social or psychological aspects (Moore et al forthcoming; Watson and Austerberry 1986).

There has never been a national study of homelessness in Ireland. The actual number of people out-of-home is only estimated to be between 3000 and 5000 individuals at any one time. The recent housing assessment carried out by the Department of the Environment, despite having its methods widely criticised, found 2667 people to be homeless as of March 31 1993. In Dublin, the figure was 1648 individuals.

Given this lack of information, any discussion as to the reasons for its existence in contemporary society has to be treated with caution. A major factor to homelessness today is the lack of permanent affordable accommodation. In Dublin, there has been a decline in construction in local authority housing over the last 7-8 years. The private rented sector offers little in the way of affordable housing for those at risk. The hostels are stretched to capacity and currently have occupancy rates of 100%. A recent study of hostels demonstrated that 60% of hostel users on any one night have been resident in the hostel for five to ten years or more (Focus Point 1992). While the hostels are providing long-term accommodation, they are not able to offer the emergency service they were set up to provide.

Further contributors to homelessness are the high levels of unemployment in Ireland and general levels of poverty. Other factors include the reduction in emigration in recent years and the return of

emigrants to Ireland, and migration to Dublin; overcrowding in family homes, marital disputes, violence, addictions, psychiatric illness, other illness, death, pregnancy, evictions, repossessions are all factors which can lead to homelessness.

Focus Point has found in its contacts with people out-of-home in Dublin, that the main reasons given for homelessness are to do with family and marital disputes or violence. Usually it is a combination of particular experiences and events that precipitates an episode of homelessness. For many, there are recurring cycles of homelessness which involve long periods in and out of stable accommodation.

There is an important distinction to be made between becoming homeless and staying homeless. There are many things which could be done to help prevent people becoming homeless at a national and local level. In addition if appropriate services were available for people when they find themselves homeless, the experience of being homeless could be brief and less traumatic than it is currently.

The model of service which Focus Point has developed is based on the stages of homelessness in which people tend to move from threatened/insecure accommodation to temporary/transit places and through to finding somewhere to settle and being settled. Focus Point's services and programmes are linked to the task of helping people find, create and maintain a home of their own.

## **B.7 UK Context**

The available literature in the use of B&B/hostel accommodation in the UK falls into 6 main areas.

### **1. A Profile UK B&B Residents:**

There were 6240 households placed in B&B by local authorities in England at September 1993 out of a total of 56,900 households placed in temporary accommodation by local authorities. This had fallen to 5000 in the last quarter of 1993.

The general profile of B&B residents in the UK which emerges from the research carried out there over the last ten years is that two-thirds of households living in B&B are headed by women (Miller 1990; Hayden and Bose 1991).

Hayden and Bose (1991) found that 50% were headed by a single parent; half of those heads of families were under 25.

Canter *et al* (1989) conducted a telephone survey of 168 hotels in London and found that 37% of the hotel homeless reported to be staying there by the landlords were two parent families; 36% were one parent families; 22% were single people and 5% were childless couples. These include those not placed by local authorities. 31% of people in the sample were children. They found that from a sample of 159 London hotels, 43% accommodated less than 20 residents; 30% between 20 and 39; 12% 40-59 and 13% 60 plus (Canter *et al* 1989).

Thomas and Niner (1989) surveyed 1060 in hotels nationally of which 73% were placed by local authorities and 27% were not. They found similar household patterns to Canter *et al*'s (1989) findings: 41% two parent families; 33% single parents; 19% single and 4% childless couples.

Conway (1988) reported that in terms of length of stay of the sample of households in B&Bs in London, 18/57 had been there over 1 year; 24/57 between 6-11 months and 15/57 were there between 4-5 months. Hayden and Bose (1991) report that one third of their sample in Portsmouth had been in the B&B less than 1 year; one third there between 1 and 3 years and a third there longer than 3 years. In 1994 the average length of stay in B&Bs had fallen to 3 months (Burns and Smith 1994).

## **2. Conditions and Facilities of B&B Accommodation**

Randall *et al* (1982) carried out a large study of people staying in temporary accommodation which included those in B&B. Between 1976 and 1978, 517 families were given a two stage-interview, the first as close as possible to two weeks after being accepted as homeless by the local authority and the second a year later. Even at this early date, 29% of the homeless families were first accommodated in B&B. Of those who were in B&B 42% were dissatisfied with the accommodation. The difficulties mentioned were lack of cooking and washing facilities and

cramped conditions. 85% were provided with breakfast. One third cooked some meals in the hotel kitchen or in their room; 50% ate out/take aways and 20% used the hospitality of friends. Only 3 families had to leave the B&B during the day.

Conway (1988) examined the conditions in which 57 families were living in B&B in London. The report documents the storing, cooking and preparing of food, safety, overcrowding of residents, length of stay. She found that 22/57 had no use of a kitchen; 21/57 had exclusive use of a bath or shower.

The West London Homelessness Group (1987) carried out a study of 100 families living in one hotel in London. Of interest here are the recommendations the report makes about the use of hotels/B&B by local authorities. Included in these were the following: that local authorities should ensure that adequate standards are maintained; play areas should be provided and funded by the local authorities.

The University of Surrey study of hotels found that 64% of hoteliers reported that they provided cooking facilities; 23% provided laundry facilities; 26% provided a play area for children; 46% provided a fridge and 75% provided a television (Canter *et al* 1989).

Thomas and Niner (1989) carried out a survey of multiple occupation buildings of which B&Bs are just some and found that 38% lacked a satisfactory means of escape from fire; 28% lacked proper amenities; 16% were overcrowded and 33% needed major repairs. Three fifths of B&B units have inadequate bath, shower and WC facilities. In more than half of cases, these must be shared by ten or more people. Nine out of ten units have inadequate sink, cooking and food preparation facilities. Only 55% had access to cooking facilities.

The regular monitoring of B&Bs has been attempted by different organisations in London. BLIP (1986) carried out a telephone survey of B&Bs in London to examine prices, rooms, and who they accepted. The London Research Centre Board and Lodging Information Exchange (BABIE) currently maintains a database on B&Bs/hotels in London which is regularly updated by information supplied by environmental health officers and contains information on property; fire precautions' amenities and standards of management. In addition they carry out

quarterly surveys to local authorities on the numbers of families placed in B&B and the conditions of the B&Bs.

### 3. Health

At least twenty reports since 1980 have found evidence that living in B&Bs damages health (LBA 1990).

The research conducted by Conway (1988) refers directly to the health and diet of mothers, pregnant women and children and access to health care and environmental health action on standards in hotels for the homeless in London (cited in Canter *et al* 1989). The stress of living in B&Bs was evident in that 44% of the women interviewed said they felt unhappy most of the time and 24% burst into tears for no apparent reason. In terms of diet, 46 out of 57 felt that living in the hotel, their diet was worse than before.

A study by the Health Visitors Association and the British Medical Association in 1989 found that there are problems for children living in temporary accommodation with 40% of children suffering from behavioural problems including disturbed sleep; depression; over activity; bedwetting; aggression and temper tantrums. Adult problems included malnutrition, weight loss, marital and emotional problems, high levels of mental illness, and depression.

### 4. Experience of Residents

Murie and Jeffers (1987) document the experiences of 33 homeless households living in hotels. They found that there were low standards of accommodation in the hotels and health problems and low morale among residents.

Moore *et al* (forthcoming) document the evaluation of a small sample of residents and found that B&Bs/hotels are considered to be safe places to get some sleep and with a certain amount of freedom, but they are not social or comfortable places and are not generally liked as temporary accommodation. They also found that out of four homeless settings - squats, the street, hotels and hostels - those in hostels suffered from the

lowest levels of self esteem and fewer of this sample felt they were part of a community than in the other settings (Moore et al forthcoming).

The pressures of living in B&Bs was documented by the Bayswater Hotel Homelessness Project (1987) which included 1500 families in hotels in Bayswater in 1986. Some of the women interviewed commented on the pressures and stress which damaged their relationships.

### **Experience of B&B/Hotel Staff**

Stress to service providers is not new and has been documented by Hayden and Bose (1991) in their own interviews with 27 service providers and in studies by SHAC 1989; Howarth 1987; Conway 1988 and Furley 1989.

The staff in the hotels worked long hours as indicated by this survey as 25% said they were on call or actually working 24 hours a day; a further 26% said their hours were undefined and 13% worked from 10 to 18 hours a shift. Only 36% worked up to nine hours a day.

### **5. Costs**

Miller, among others, argued in 1989 that it cost local authorities nearly twice as much to keep a family in B&B for a year then it would to pay the annual loan on a new council home.

Walker 1987 assessed the total and comparative public sector costs of keeping households in B&B compared to equivalent costs incurred in new-built, public-sector acquisition of private dwellings and rehabilitation of voids. In 1987 it cost 11.6 thousand pounds a year to keep a 3-person family in B&B compared to 7.7 thousand as the first year costs of new build council housing.

Conway and Kemp (1985) argued that there is a clear financial benefit in providing council accommodation rather than maintaining people in B&B (p.36) "... more jobs ... more investment makes sense ... and a co-ordinated approach is needed".



Burns and Smith (1994) present clear comparison in cost between B&B, hostels, private sector leasing and other forms of temporary accommodation and found B&B to be the most expensive.

## 6. Policy recommendations

Hayden and Bose (1991) carried out interviews with policy makers in addition to in depth interviews with B&B residents. There were 27 policy interviews with service providers/planners. They conclude that

*It is already well known that B&B accommodation is likely to have a negative impact on the health and well-being of the whole family and that B&B accommodation is very variable in quality. It is all too clear that what such families need is suitable permanent accommodation. However what is often not addressed by those making this obvious point is the need for services provided for families whilst they are awaiting permanent accommodation and, in turn, the implications that this specific need has for service providers.*

Their recommendations were as follows: price agreements on B&Bs between the owners and the local authorities; information packs on different local areas; regular statistics on the numbers in B&Bs; and a zoning system of B&Bs which would keep people from a certain area within a certain radius of that area and prevent people being placed in a B&B in an unknown area.

The GLC in 1986 surveyed London boroughs concerning the use of temporary accommodation, which includes B&Bs. It made several recommendations including price controls on charges in B&B; a code of practice including minimum standards and inspection of accommodation; and that a pack giving information about services in the local area should be issued to all families before being sent to the hotel/B&B if they are unfamiliar with the area.

Robson (1986) outlines the legal position of people staying in B&Bs in England. The areas covered relate to environmental health, fire

regulations, building control, protection from eviction, homelessness, and rights of entry. This information is used by voluntary agencies or people out-of-home themselves to protect their rights.

The overall conclusion with regard to the use of B&B accommodation in the UK is that it is not cost-effective, healthy, or appropriate for people out-of-home.

Other forms of temporary accommodation such as private leasing, purpose-built accommodation are being used more by local authorities to reduce the number of households in B&B. In a recent Shelter report, 67 local authorities, which were described as good practice authorities, had a policy of not using B&Bs, or using it only as a short-term expedient in emergencies (Burns and Smith 1994).

## **B.8 National Survey of B&B Use in 1993**

### **Outside Dublin**

7/7 Health Boards responded and 50/84 Local Authorities.

**Table B1: Responses from Health Boards Outside of Dublin**

<b>Outside of Dublin</b>	<b>Cases/Households</b>
Southern Health Board	12
North Western Health Board	5
Western Health Board	4
Midland Health Board	4
Mid Western Health Board	22
North Eastern Health Board	24
South Eastern	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>

**Table B2: Responses from Local Authorities Outside of Dublin**

<b>Local Authorities Which Placed Adults in B&amp;B in 1993</b>	<b>Cases/Households</b>
Dungarvan County Council	4
Westport Urban District Council	2
Carrick-on-Suir UDC	1
Tipperary County Council	1
Longford County Council	2
Wicklow County Council	10
Cashel UDC	3
Kilkenny County Council	4
Tipperary UDC	1
Listowel UDC	2
Westmeath County Council	15
Athlone County Council	21
Limerick Corporation	2
Sligo County Council	7
Sligo Social Services	23
<b>Total Local Authorities (received)</b>	<b>98</b>

**Total (received)  $78 + 98 = 176$**

59% of local authorities responded. This suggests that for 100% of the Local Authorities, an estimated 166 cases were placed in B&B in 1993.

**The predicted Outside Dublin Total is  $127 + 98 = 244$**

**Predicted National Total is  $166 + 474$  (Eastern Health Board) = 718**

**Other replies received from:**

Roscommon County Council  
Youghal UDC  
Monaghan County Council  
Clonmel Corporation  
Arklow UDC  
Clonakilty UDC  
Letterkenny UDC  
Kilkenny Corporation  
Laois County Council  
Bray County Council  
Kinsale UDC  
Kilkenny County Council  
Enniscorthy UDC  
Galway Corporation  
Meath County Council  
Mayo County Council  
Athy UDC  
Kilrush UDC

Wicklow UDC  
Waterford Corporation  
Cork Corporation  
Killarney UDC  
Monaghan UDC  
Carlow County Council  
Ballina UDC  
Naas UDC  
Sligo County Council  
Clare County Council  
Skibbereen UDC  
Castleblaney UDC  
Cork County Council  
New Ross UDC  
Cork County Council  
Sligo Corporation  
Drogheda Corporation

## B.9 Adult Hostels in Dublin: Additional Figures

The following tables present the total number of hostel beds in the adult hostels from 1986 to 1988 and from 1991 to 1993. These are presented separately as figures for individual hostels were not available for 1986 and 1988.

**Table B3: Adult Hostels in Dublin: Bedspaces (March 1986-1988\*)**

		1986	1988
Women	Regina Coeli	170	170
	Women's Aid		
	Bru Chaoimhin	68	68
	Missionary Sisters		
		238	238
Men	Morning Star		
	Model Lodging		
	Back Lane	647	622
	Dublin Night Shelter		
	Salvation Army (York House)		
	Teach Mhuire		
		647	622
Mixed	Simon		
	Dublin Central Mission	47	47
Total		932	907

\* Focus Point (1988)

**Table B4: Adult Hostels in Dublin: Bedspaces (March 1991-1993)**

		<b>1991**</b>	<b>1993***</b>
<b>Women</b>	Regina Coeli	84	120
	Haven House	30	30
	Aoibhneas	4	15
	Missionary Sisters	15	13
	Women's Refuge	29	29
		<b>162</b>	<b>207</b>
<b>Men</b>	Morning Star	60	68
	Model Lodging	84	84
	Back Lane	75	77
	Army Hostel	-	35
	Salvation Army (York House)	92	93
	Iveagh Hostel	135	155
		<b>446</b>	<b>512</b>
<b>Mixed</b>	Simon Night Shelter	30	31
	Dublin Central Mission	30	31
<b>Total</b>		<b>668</b>	<b>781</b>

**\*\* Focus Point (1992)**

**\*\*\* Focus Point (1993)**

## Appendix C: Tables for Chapter 6

**Table C1: Family Units**

Type of unit	Number	%
Female single adults-no children	4	10
Male single adults with children	3	8
Female adults with children	17	42
Couples no children	3	8
Couples with children	13	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C2: Family Status**

Status	Number	%
Single	16	40
Married/cohabiting	17	42
Separated/divorced	5	13
Widowed	1	3
Deserted Wife	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C3: Origin**

Origin	Number	%
Dublin	25	62.5
Co Dublin	3	7.5
Outside Dublin urban	3	7.5
Outside Dublin rural	4	10
U.K.	3	7.5
Elsewhere	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C4: Time Spent in Dublin**

Time	Number	%
Less than 1 week	4	10
1 week to 1 month	1	3
Over 1 month-3 months	2	5
From 3 months-6 months	2	5
1-5 years	10	25
5 years +	6	15
Always	15	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C5: First Reason Given Why Out-of-Home**

Reason	Number	%
Landlord/flatmate Problems	8	20
Family relationships	7	18
Family violence/assault	5	12
Eviction	2	5
Arrears	2	5
Returned immigrant	2	5
Partner Problems	2	5
Over crowding	2	5
Unemployed	1	2.5
Leaving psych care	1	2.5
Pregnancy	1	2.5
Fire	1	2.5
Addiction	1	2.5
Problems with neighbours	1	2.5
Long term homeless	1	2.5
Drinking	1	2.5
Other	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>



**Table C6: Reasons Why Out-of-Home (R=97)**

Reason	Number	%
Family relationships	18	19
Landlord/flatmates problems	10	11
Family violence/assault	7	7
Overcrowding	6	6
Returned immigrant	6	6
Partner problems	5	5
Arrears	4	4
Eviction	4	4
Addiction	3	3
Problems with neighbours	3	3
Other social/personal problems	5	5
Leaving prison	2	2
Poor housing standards	2	2
Child abuse	1	1
Other (varied)	21	22
<b>Total Reasons</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C7: Length of Time Out-of-Home**

Time	Number	%
Less than 1 week	18	45
+ 1 week - 1 month	8	20
+1 month - 3 months	7	17
+1 year - 5 years	5	13
+ 5 years	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C8: Previous Experience of Other Homeless Settings**

Experience	Yes	%	No	%	Total	%
Hostel	20	50	20	50	40	100
Squat	14	35	26	65	40	100
Sleeping Rough	15	38	25	62	40	100
B & B	13	32	27	68	40	100

**Table C9: Most Recent Accommodation Type**

Type	Number	%
Local authority	14	35
Hostel	8	20
Other	5	12
Private rented	4	10
Dossing	3	8
B & B	2	5
Caravan	2	5
Sleeping rough	1	2.5
Squatting	1	2.5
Total	40	100

**Table C10: People in Last Accommodation**

People	Number	%
On own	10	25
On own with children	9	23
Sharing with others	8	20
With partner	5	12
With friends	4	10
On parents/family	4	10
Total	0	100

**Table C11: Length of Time in Last Accommodation**

Time	Number	%
Less than 1 week	10	25
+ 1 week-1 month	3	8
+ 1 month-3 months	5	12
+ 3 months-6 months	5	12
+ 6 months-1 year	---	
1-5 years	8	
5 years +	7	
Missing	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C12: Number of Places Lived in Last 5 years**

Number	Number	%
1-5	16	40
6-10	12	30
11-15	7	18
16-20	3	7
Don't Know	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C13: Reasons for Placements in B&B**

Reason	Number	%
No space in hostels	13	32
Family could stay together	8	20
Would drink/go to prison	4	10
Would not go to a hostel together	2	5
Because of children pregnancy	2	5
Partner would find me	1	2.5
Barred	1	2.5
Don't know	9	22.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C14: First Thing People Liked About The B&B**

Thing liked	Number	%
Privacy	7	17.5
Food	4	10
Nothing	4	10
Friendly staff	3	7.5
Clean	3	7.5
Roof Over my head	3	7.5
Safe	3	7.5
Location	2	5
Other	7	17.5
Not known	4	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C15: Percentage Agreement with Aspects of B&B**

Aspect	No.	% Agreement	No.	% Disagreement	*
Enough privacy	28	70	7	18	
Clean & tidy	27	67	9	23	
Comfortable	27	67	10	25	
Safe for children	24	60	14	35	
Other residents are friendly	21	52	7	18	
Argue more than usual	10	25	13	32	
Overall I like it here	17	42.5	15	38	
Services needed are in local area	16	40	21	52	
Friends/relatives live nearby	11	27.5	13	32	

\* This table omits the number who neither agreed nor disagreed with these aspects

**Table C16: Reasons for Preference of B & B  
(up to 2 reasons per person given)**

Reason	Number	%
Able to stay together	8	18
Cleaner	8	18
Hostel no place for children	6	13
Privacy	5	11
Better treatment	5	11
Hostels have drunks & crazy people	5	11
Can come & go in B & B	3	7
Other	5	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>

\* These are all the reasons given, and not individuals.

**Table C17: First Thing People Disliked about B & B**

Thing Disliked	Number	%
Out all day	8	20
No Access To Kitchen	7	17.5
Cramped/confined	5	12.5
Noise	5	12.5
Not Allowed Visitors	3	7.5
Not clean	2	5
Attitude of staff	2	5
Other	5	12.5
Nothing	3	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C18: Children In Care**

Care	Number	%
Yes	5	12
No	35	88
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C19: Children in School**

School	Number	%
In school	3	7.5
Out of school	3	7.5
Not applicable	34	85
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C.20: Use of Crèche**

Children	Number	%
Yes Focus Point	8	20
No - could not get place	1	2.5
No - don't want one	6	15
No - looking for one	4	10
No - child sick	1	2.5
Not applicable	20	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C21: Minding Children in the B&B**

Minding Children	Number	%
Not A Problem	6	15
Difficult - feeding children	2	5
Difficult - confined to room	6	15
Difficult - worried about neighbours	5	12.5
Difficult - staff give out	2	5
Difficult - children run around	2	5
Other difficulties	10	25
Not applicable	7	17.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C22: Ways in Which Treated Differently from Tourists (N=16)**

Ways	Number	%
Tourists could stay in/out get away	5	31
Tourists get treated better by staff	5	31
Segregated at breakfast	3	19
Tourists rooms nicer	3	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C23: Ways to spend the day**

Ways	Number	%
Walk around town	26	23
Focus Point	21	19
Other	19	17
Park	13	11.5
Sit in cafe	11	10
Visit relative	7	6
Eastern Health Board	6	5
Stay in B&B	6	5
Visit Friend	4	3.5
<b>Total Activities</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C24: Current Feelings While Staying in B&B Accommodation**

Feeling	More than usual		Same as usual		Less than usual		Missing	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Hopeful	14	35	7	17	16	40	3	8
Lonely	19	47	11	28	6	15	4	10
Happy	9	22	11	28	17	42	3	8
Stressed	25	62	3	8	9	23	3	7
Tired	26	65	4	10	7	18	3	7

**Table C25: Type of Accommodation Wanted**

Type	Number	%
1-2 bedroom house	17	42.5
3-4 bedroom house	12	30
5 + house	1	2.5
Flat with family	4	10
Flat with friends	2	5
Flat in shared house	1	2.5
Supportive accommodation	1	2.5
Caravan site	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C26: Area Would Like to Live**

Area	Number	%
Northside	7	18
No specific areas	6	15
City centre	5	12
Southside	4	10
Tallaght	2	5
Fairview	2	5
Sandyford	2	5
Swords	2	5
Ballymun	1	2.5
Santry	1	2.5
Clontarf	1	2.5
Co Dublin	1	2.5
Other areas	6	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>



**Table C27: On Waiting List**

List	Number	%
County Council	5	12
Corporation	21	52.5
Homeless list	5	12
Don't know	3	8
Not on list arrears	1	2.5
Not on list other	3	8
Missing	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C28: Length of Time on Waiting List**

Time	Number	%	Valid
Under 1 month	9	22	31.1
+ 1 month-6 months	3	8	10.3
+ 6 months-1 year	2	5	6.9
+ 1 year-2 years	9	22	31.1
+ 2 years-4 years	3	8	10.3
+ 4 years	3	8	10.3
Not applicable	11	27	100
<b>Total</b>		<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table C29: Preferred Tenure**

Tenure	Number	%
Local authority	22	55
Private rented	13	32.5
Owned	1	2.5
Transition unit	1	2.5
Traveller	1	2.5
Other	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100</b>

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# Focus Point



## Bed & Breakfast Questionnaire

### A. B&B INFORMATION

Form Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Can you tell me what B & B you are staying in?  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Place of Interview:

- |    |             |    |        |
|----|-------------|----|--------|
| 01 | B&B         | 02 | Hostel |
| 03 | Focus Point | 04 | Other  |

3. B&B Information from:

- |    |                      |    |                         |
|----|----------------------|----|-------------------------|
| 01 | Resident/Interviewee | 02 | Manager                 |
| 03 | Owner                | 04 | Other resident in B & B |
| 05 | Other _____          |    |                         |

Do you know how much it costs to stay here?

4. Adult \_\_\_\_\_

5. Child \_\_\_\_\_

6. This Family \_\_\_\_\_

7. What of the following are not included in the cost of the B&B?

- |    |               |    |                |
|----|---------------|----|----------------|
| 01 | Heating       | 02 | Hot water      |
| 03 | Cleaning room | 04 | Full breakfast |

15. What laundry facilities do residents have access to?

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 01 | Local commercial laundry                 |
| 02 | Washing Machine and Drier on site        |
| 03 | Washing Machine on site                  |
| 03 | Wash manually in own kitchen/bathroom    |
| 04 | Wash manually in shared kitchen/bathroom |
| 05 | Wash manually in own bedroom/living room |
| 97 | Other _____                              |

16. What cooking facilities do residents have access to?

- |    |                                      |
|----|--------------------------------------|
| 01 | Kettle in room                       |
| 02 | Breakfast cooker in room             |
| 02 | Exclusive access to kitchen          |
| 03 | Shared access to kitchen - anytime   |
| 04 | Shared access to kitchen - set times |
| 05 | None                                 |
| 97 | Other _____                          |

17. On what floor is your room(s) located?

18. How many bedrooms do you and your family have to yourselves?

19. How many beds do you and your family have to yourselves?

05 Towels  
07 Laundry-other

06 Laundry-bed linen

8. How many floors are there in the B&B? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do residents have to leave the B&B during the day?

01 Yes-Every Day      02 Yes-Monday to Friday  
03 Yes-Weekends      04 Yes-A few hours a day  
05 No      06 Don't Know

10. Are there any fire alarm/smoke alarms on the premises?

01 Yes      02 No      03 Don't know

11. Is there a fire escape?

01 Yes      02 No      03 Don't know

12. Are visitors allowed in the B&B?

01 Yes, anywhere and anytime  
02 Yes, anytime, but not in my room  
03 Yes, anywhere, but only at certain times  
04 Yes, at certain times and not in my room  
05 Not usually  
06 Never  
07 Don't Know

13. What bathroom facilities are there for each family unit?

01 Own bathroom and toilet  
02 Own toilet, shared bathroom  
03 Own bathroom, shared toilet  
04 Shared bathroom and toilet  
97 Other \_\_\_\_\_

14. Are there wash-hand basins in the rooms?

01 Yes      02 No      03 Don't know

20. In addition, how many rooms do you share with other people (not counting toilet/bathroom)?

21. How satisfied are you with the facilities for cooking (if any)? (Show Card)

01 Very satisfied      02 Satisfied  
03 OK      04 Not Satisfied  
05 Very unsatisfied

22. How satisfied are you with the access to bathrooms? (Show Card)

01 Very satisfied      02 Satisfied  
03 OK      04 Not Satisfied  
05 Very unsatisfied

23. Do you have many belongings with you

01 A lot      02 Some  
03 Not much      04 None

24. Do you have enough storage space for items in regular use?

01 Yes  
02 No  
97 Other \_\_\_\_\_

25. Do you have enough storage space for other belongings?

01 Yes  
02 No  
97 Other \_\_\_\_\_

## B. INDIVIDUAL INFORMATION

1. How many nights have you spent in this B & B?

---

2. Age -----

3. Sex            Male 01            Female 02

4. Number of Adults Accompanying -----

5. Number of Children Accompanying -----

6. Family Status  
Are you single.....married?

- 01 Single
- 02 Married/Cohabiting
- 03 Separated/Divorced
- 04 Widowed
- 05 Child
- 06 Other \_\_\_\_
- 99 Not Known

7. Presently caring for Children

- 01 Yes
- 02 No
- 98 Not Applicable
- 99 Not Known

8. Are any of your children in care?

- 01 Yes
- 02 No

## BACKGROUND TO PLACEMENT IN B & B

26. Who made your referral to this B&B?

- 01 Hostel- Haven House
- 02 Charles Street
- 03 Voluntary Agency
- 04 Self
- 05 Local Community Welfare Officer
- 06 Other \_\_\_\_\_

27. Can you tell me briefly how you got booked in here?  
(Length of time from first approach to helping agency  
to approval at placement, No. Places Approached,  
Travel Involved; Time/Day of Week)

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28. What is your main source of income at the moment?

29. Any before coming here?

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| 01 Wage                                | 28. [   ] |
| 02 Self Employed                       | 29. [   ] |
| 03 Training Allowance                  |           |
| 04 Unemployment Benefit                |           |
| 05 Unemployment Assistance             |           |
| 06 Supplementary Welfare               |           |
| 07 Lone Parent's Allowance             |           |
| 08 Deserted/Prisoners Wife's Allowance |           |
| 09 Deserted/Prisoners Wife's Benefit   |           |
| 10 Widows Pension (Contributory)       |           |
| 11 Widows Pension (Non-contributory)   |           |

9. Age of oldest child: 10. Sex:  
 11. Age of second oldest child: 12. Sex:  
 13. Age of third oldest child: 14. Sex:  
 15. Age of fourth oldest child: 16. Sex:  
 17. Age of fifth oldest child: 18. Sex:  
 19. Age of sixth oldest child: 20. Sex:  
 21. Age of youngest child: 22. Sex:

**23. Employment Status Are you unemployed?**

- |                                |                |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 01 Unemployed                  | 07 Retired     |
| 02 Employed full-time          | 08 Ill/Invalid |
| 03 Employed part-time          | 09 Houseperson |
| 04 Casual Work                 | 10 Other _____ |
| 05 Student /School             | 11 Child       |
| 06 Training /Employment Scheme | 99 Not Known   |

**24 Origin Where are you from originally?**

- |                          |                |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| 01 Dublin City           | 06 UK          |
| 02 Dublin County         | 07 Europe      |
| 03 Outside Dublin -Urban | 97 Other _____ |
| 04 Outside Dublin -Rural | 99 Not Known   |
| 05 Northern Ireland      |                |

**25. Length of Time lived in Dublin How long have you been in Dublin? (This Time)**

- |                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 01 Less than 1 week        | 06 1 year to 5 years  |
| 02 1 week to 1 month       | 07 More than 5 years  |
| 03 1 month+ to 3 months    | 99 Not Known          |
| 04 3 months+ to 6 months   | 98 Not Applicable     |
| 05 Over 6 months to 1 year | 08 Always/since birth |

- 12 Old Age Pension (Contributory)  
 13 Old Age Pension (Non-contributory)  
 14 D.P.M.A/ Disability Pension  
 15 Other allowance/benefit  
 16 UK income  
 17 Separate Unemployment Assistance  
 18 Disability Benefit  
 19 No income  
 97 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 99 Not Known

**30. What other financial help/special needs payments have you recently received? 31. For how much?**

- 01 B&B Voucher \_\_\_\_\_  
 02 Direct Booking of B&B by EHB/Hostel  
 03 Cash for B&B \_\_\_\_\_  
 04 Food \_\_\_\_\_  
 05 Clothing \_\_\_\_\_  
 06 Transport \_\_\_\_\_  
 07 Diet money  
 08 None  
 97 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**32. Where did you receive them? \_\_\_\_\_**

**33. When did you receive them? \_\_\_\_\_**

- 34. Since you have been in the B&B how often do you have you seen a:**
- EHB Social Worker
  - Community Welfare Officer

**35. Where do you see him/her?**

- 01 B & B  
 02 Charles Street  
 03 Other \_\_\_\_\_

## CHILDREN

36. Since you arrived here, are your child(ren) generally going to school? If this varies for each child, code for each one. *If all the same, code the same*

- 01 Yes, same school (as prior to becoming out-of-home)
- 02 Yes, new school (since becoming out-of-home)
- 03 Out of School -looking for other school
- 04 Out of School- old school too far away to get to
- 97 Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 98 Not applicable

(i) [ ], (ii) [ ], (iii) [ ], (iv) [ ], (v) [ ], (vi) [ ]

37. Are your younger children at a creche at the moment?

- 01 Yes - Local Creche
- 02 Yes - Focus Point Creche
- 03 No - Don't know of any
- 04 No - Couldn't get a place
- 05 No - Don't want one
- 06 No - Looking for one
- 07 No - Other
- 98 Not applicable

38. If you have a young baby (under 1 yr), which of these are provided in the B&B for your use?

- 01 Steriliser
- 02 Bottle warmer
- 03 Baby's bath
- 04 Cot
- 05 Play pen
- 06 Don't Know

## C. EXPERIENCE OF ACCOMMODATION

41. What do you do most days? Select up to 4 activities

- |    |  |   |     |
|----|--|---|-----|
| 01 | Walk the streets/stay outside              | 1 | [ ] |
| 02 | Sit in a cafe/restaurant                   | 2 | [ ] |
| 03 | Visit a friend                             | 3 | [ ] |
| 04 | Visit a relative                           | 4 | [ ] |
| 05 | Sit in a library                           |   |     |
| 06 | Sit in a Church                            |   |     |
| 07 | Sit in a Public Park                       |   |     |
| 08 | Go to a day centre                         |   |     |
| 09 | Go to Focus Point                          |   |     |
| 10 | Go to Eastern Health Board, Charles Street |   |     |
| 11 | Go to Dublin Corporation                   |   |     |
| 12 | Go to a dinner centre                      |   |     |
| 13 | Go to a pub                                |   |     |
| 14 | County Council                             |   |     |
| 15 | Other _____                                |   |     |

42. What did you do yesterday?

- |    |  |   |     |
|----|--|---|-----|
| 01 | Walk the streets/stay outside              | 1 | [ ] |
| 02 | Sit in a cafe/restaurant                   | 2 | [ ] |
| 03 | Visit a friend                             | 3 | [ ] |
| 04 | Visit a relative                           | 4 | [ ] |
| 05 | Sit in a library                           |   |     |
| 06 | Sit in a Church                            |   |     |
| 07 | Sit in a Public Park                       |   |     |
| 08 | Go to a day centre                         |   |     |
| 09 | Go to Focus Point                          |   |     |
| 10 | Go to Eastern Health Board, Charles Street |   |     |
| 11 | Go to Dublin Corporation                   |   |     |
| 12 | Go to a dinner centre                      |   |     |
| 13 | Go to a pub                                |   |     |



- 07 None  
08 Other  
98 Not applicable

39. Since you have been here where do your children play? Select up to 4.

- |    |                |    |     |
|----|----------------|----|-----|
| 01 | Bedroom        | 1. | [ ] |
| 02 | Playroom       | 2. | [ ] |
| 03 | Common Room    | 3. | [ ] |
| 04 | Hall/Landing   | 4. | [ ] |
| 05 | Stairs         |    |     |
| 06 | Kitchen        |    |     |
| 07 | Outside-garden |    |     |
| 08 | Outside-yard   |    |     |
| 09 | Outside-street |    |     |
| 97 | Other          |    |     |

40 Are you happy with this or not?

- 01 Yes  
02 No-not safe  
03 No-complaints from B&B staff  
04 No-no space  
05 No-other  
97 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Probe on general experience of minding children in a B&B

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- 14 County Council  
15 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Would you agree or disagree with the following statements describing this B&B?

*1= Strongly Agree; 2= Agree; 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree; 4= Disagree; 5= Strongly Disagree*

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 43. The other residents in the B&B are friendly.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 44. There is little privacy for our family in this B&B. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 45. This B&B is safe for the children                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 46. The staff/owner here keeps the B&B clean and tidy.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 47. Friends/relations can visit us in our room(s).      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 48. We argue more than usual in this room.              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 49. The room is comfortable.                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 50. There is enough heating in our room.                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 51. Some friends/relations live nearby.                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 52. I know the local area quite well.                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 53. The local area is quite rough.                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 54. Most of the services I need are in the local area.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 55. Overall, I like staying in this B&B.                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Explain

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**Would you know how to get to the following from here?**

**1= Yes, 2= Vaguely, 3= No, 4 = not applicable List**

- |                             |   |   |   |   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 56. Local shops             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 57. Local public houses     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 58. Nearest Labour Exchange | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 59. Local Hospitals         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 60. Local Doctors           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 61. Local Churches          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 62. Meal Centres            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 63. Focus Point             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 64. Job Centre              | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 65. Creche                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 66. Day Centres             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 67. City Centre             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 68. Homeless Unit           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

**69. What are the main things you like about staying here?**  
**Probe...general experiences**

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**70. What are the main things you dislike about staying here? Probe...general experiences**

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**71. What facilities would be of help to you and other families staying in B&B? (Inside/Outside) What improvements could be made?**

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**79. Are you registered with a GP/Doctor?**

- |    |            |
|----|------------|
| 01 | Yes        |
| 02 | No         |
| 03 | Don't Know |

**80. Have you got a transferable Medical Card?**

- |    |            |
|----|------------|
| 01 | Yes        |
| 02 | No         |
| 03 | Don't Know |

**81. How often do you eat out?**

- |    |                     |
|----|---------------------|
| 01 | Twice or more a day |
| 02 | Once a day          |
| 03 | Every other day     |
| 04 | About once a week   |
| 05 | A few times a month |
| 06 | Never/Rarely        |

**82. How satisfied are you with this? If not, why not?**

---

- |    |                  |
|----|------------------|
| 01 | Very satisfied   |
| 02 | Satisfied        |
| 03 | OK               |
| 04 | Not Satisfied    |
| 05 | Very unsatisfied |

**83. How easy do you find it to make ends meet (budget/meals etc.) in the B&B? Explain.**

---

- |    |           |
|----|-----------|
| 01 | Very easy |
| 02 | Easy      |

- 03 OK
- 04 Difficult
- 05 Very Difficult

84. What do you get for breakfast usually?

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85. How satisfied are you with this?

- 01 Very satisfied
- 02 Satisfied
- 03 OK
- 04 Not Satisfied
- 05 Very unsatisfied

86. Do you feel like you are being treated any differently to tourists?

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## HEALTH

72. Would you say that in general, your physical health is better, worse or about the same since moving into a B&B? If worse, explain. \_\_\_\_\_

- 01 Better
- 02 About the Same
- 03 Worse

73. Would you say that in general, your childrens' health is better, worse or about the same since moving into a B&B? If worse, explain. \_\_\_\_\_

- 01 Better
- 02 About the Same
- 03 Worse

Since moving into a B&B, would you say you feel ?  
*1= More than usual; 2= Same as usual; 3= Less than usual*

- |     |          |   |   |   |
|-----|----------|---|---|---|
| 74. | Hopeful  | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 75. | Lonely   | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 76. | Happy    | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 77. | Stressed | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 78. | Tired    | 1 | 2 | 3 |

## D. HOUSING INFORMATION & ACCOMMODATION HISTORY

87. Altogether, how much time have you spent in B&B's in the last 2 years?

- |    |                           |    |            |
|----|---------------------------|----|------------|
| 01 | Less than 1 week          | 06 | 1 year+    |
| 02 | 1 week to 1 month         | 97 | Other      |
| 03 | Over 1 month to 3 months  | 99 | Not Known  |
| 04 | Over 3 months to 6 months | 98 | Not Applic |
| 05 | Over 6 months to 1 year   |    |            |

88. Altogether, how much time have you spent in hostels in the last 2 years?

- |    |                           |    |            |
|----|---------------------------|----|------------|
| 01 | Less than 1 week          | 06 | 1 year+    |
| 02 | 1 week to 1 month         | 97 | Other      |
| 03 | Over 1 month to 3 months  | 99 | Not Known  |
| 04 | Over 3 months to 6 months | 98 | Not Applic |
| 05 | Over 6 months to 1 year   |    |            |

89. Previous Accommodation Type - Most Recent  
Where were you staying before this place?

- |    |                     |    |                  |
|----|---------------------|----|------------------|
| 01 | Haven House         | 22 | B&B              |
| 02 | Regina Coeli        | 23 | Squatting        |
| 03 | Women's Aid         | 24 | Supp.Accomm      |
| 04 | Aoibhneas           | 25 | Social Housing   |
| 05 | Missionary Sisters  | 26 | Psychiatric Care |
| 06 | Simon Community     | 27 | Hospital         |
| 07 | Iveagh              | 28 | Prison/Detention |
| 08 | Salvation Army      | 29 | Child Care       |
| 09 | Model Lodging House | 30 | Family/par: YP   |
| 10 | Morning Star        | 31 | Private Rented   |
| 11 | Back Lane           | 32 | Local Authority  |
| 12 | York House          | 33 | Owned House/Flat |

92. Number of Places Have Lived In in Last 5 Years  
(can include the street): How many places have you lived in, in the last 5 years?

- |    |                   |
|----|-------------------|
| 01 | 1 - 5             |
| 02 | 6 - 10            |
| 03 | 11 - 15           |
| 04 | 16 - 20           |
| 04 | 21 or Over        |
| 05 | Too Many To Count |
| 06 | Don't Know        |

93. Main Reason(s) Out-of Home  
Why are you out-of-home?

- |    |   |     |                        |
|----|---|-----|------------------------|
| 01 | Eviction/Threatened Eviction              | [ ] | 1st Reason             |
| 02 | Problems with Landlord/Flatmates          | [ ] | 2nd Reason             |
| 03 | Poor Housing Quality/Standards            | [ ] | 3rd Reason             |
| 04 | Overcrowding                              | [ ] | 4th Reason             |
| 05 | Unemployed                                |     |                        |
| 06 | Arrears                                   | 19  | Leaving Psychiatric    |
| 07 | Money Problems                            | 20  | Leaving Hosp/Instit    |
| 08 | Mortgage Difficulties/Threatened Property | 21  | Run away from home     |
|    | Reclamation                               | 22  | On the run             |
|    | House Reclaimed/Reposs                    | 23  | Run away from Care     |
| 09 | Returned Immigrant                        | 24  | Pregnancy              |
| 10 | Stranded                                  | 25  | Behavioural Problems   |
| 11 | Problems with Partner                     | 26  | Psychiatric Problems   |
| 12 | Family Violence/Assault                   | 27  | Addiction              |
| 13 | Family Relationships                      | 28  | Other Pers/Social Prob |
| 14 | Child Abuse                               | 29  | Other Practical Prob   |
| 15 | Sexual Abuse                              | 30  | Other                  |
| 16 | Leaving Child Care                        |     |                        |
| 17 | Leaving Prison                            |     |                        |
| 18 | Not Known                                 |     |                        |
| 99 |   |     |                        |

- 13 Army Hostel  
14 Eccles Street  
15 Sherrard House  
16 Off the Streets  
17 Young Traveller  
18 ISAAC'S  
19 Kinlay House  
20 YMCA  
21 Cardijn House

- 34 Caravan  
35 Streets  
36 Dossing  
97 Other  
99 Unknown

**90. People In Accommodation Type  
Who were you living with?**

- 01 On Own/Alone  
02 On Own with Children  
03 With Parents/Family  
04 With Partner/Children  
05 Sharing With Friends  
06 Sharing With Others  
97 Other

**101. How Long Stayed In Most Recent Type of  
Accommodation How long did you stay there for?**

- 01 Less than 1 week  
02 1 week to 1 month  
03 Over 1 month to 3 months  
04 Over 3 months to 6 months  
05 Over 6 months to 1 year  
06 Over 1 year to 5 years  
07 More than 5 years  
99 Not Known  
98 Not applicable

**Explain**

**94. Length of Time Since Out-of-Home  
How long have you been out-of-home?  
(on this occasion)**

- 01 Less than 1 week  
02 1 week to 1 month  
03 1 month+ to 3 months  
04 3 months+ to 6 months  
05 6 months+ to 1 yr  
06 1 year+ to 5 yrs  
07 More than 5 years  
99 Not Known  
98 Not applicable

**95. Previous Experience If Any : Squats  
Have you had any previous experience of squatting?**

- 01 Yes  
02 No  
99 Not Known

**96. Previous Experience If Any: Sleeping Rough  
Have you slept rough before?**

- 01 Yes  
02 No  
99 Not Known

**97. Previous Experience If Any: Hostels  
Have you been in a hostel for people out-of-home  
before?**

- 01 Yes  
02 No  
99 Not Known

**98. Previous Experience If Any: B&B Accommodation**  
**Have you been in a B&B while homeless before?**

- 01 Yes
- 02 No
- 99 Not Known

**99. Would you prefer to be in to a B&B than a hostel?**

- 01 Yes
- 02 No
- 99 Don't Know

**100. If yes, why?** \_\_\_\_\_

**101. If no, why not?** \_\_\_\_\_

**102. Did you ask for a B&B rather than a hostel?**

- 01 Yes
- 02 No
- 99 Don't Know

**103. If you hadn't been placed in a B&B, would you have gone to a hostel?**

- 01 Yes
- 02 No
- 99 Don't Know

**104. Why were you placed in B&B, do you think?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**105. Previously Out-of-Home?**

**110. Looking to the future, would you prefer to:**

- 01 Be rehoused
- 02 Return Home (when things have been sorted out)

**111. Roughly, how far is this B&B from your last settled address (In miles)?** \_\_\_\_\_

**112. If you would like to be rehoused, what kind (of tenure) would you prefer to have?**

- 01 Private Rented
- 02 Local Authority
- 03 Owned-Own
- 04 Owned-Shared
- 05 Other \_\_\_\_\_

**113. If you would like to be rehoused by the Local Authority, are you on a housing waiting list?**

- 01 Dublin County Council
- 02 Dublin Corporation
- 03 Dun Laoghaire Corporation
- 04 Housing Association
- 05 Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 06 Don't Know

**114. If you are on a list, how long ago did you apply?**

01 [                      ], 02 [                      ], 03 [                      ]

**115. If you would like to be rehoused, what type of accommodation would you prefer (Ideally)?**

- 01 Yes
- 02 No
- 99 Not Known

**106. What happened to end your previous out-of-home experience?**

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## **E. FUTURE ACCOMMODATION PREFERENCES**

**107. How long do you expect to stay where you are now?**

- 01 A few days
- 02 A week
- 03 A few weeks
- 04 About a month
- 05 Don't know

**108. Why do you think this?**

---

**109. When you leave this B&B, do you expect to be:**

- 01 Rehoused straight away
- 02 Placed in a hostel
- 03 Return Home
- 04 Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 05 Don't Know

- 01 1-2 bedroom house
- 02 3-4 bedroom house
- 03 5+ bedroom house
- 04 Flat to share with family
- 05 Flat to share with friends
- 06 Flat or bedsit in shared scheme
- 07 Single bedsit
- 08 Double bedsit
- 09 Supportive Hostel/Sheltered Accommodation
- 10 Supportive Accommodation
- 11 Digs
- 12 Serviced Caravan Site
- 13 Other accommodation
- 14 Not sure

**116. Is there a particular area in which you would like to be rehoused (Ideally)?**

- 01 Tallaght
- 02 Ballymun
- 03 South Inner City
- 04 North Inner City
- 05 Darndale
- 06 Dublin South
- 07 Neilstown
- 08 Inchicore
- 09 Clondalkin
- 10 No specific Area
- 11 Outside Dublin
- 12 Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 99 Not Known

**117. Is there anything else you would like to add?**

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## B&B IN FOCUS

"After leaving the B&B at 9.30am, I walked around in despair, trying to think of something to do for the next seven and a half hours"

"Having to eat out...means I keep buying meals until he eats one...there just isn't the option to feed him when he is hungry"

This report paints a vivid picture of what it is like for people who are homeless in Dublin and staying in B&Bs. The number of families in this situation has risen greatly over the last four years, with over 400 households being placed in B&B in the Eastern Health Board area alone in 1993.

By including interviews with policy makers, service providers, B&B owners and the residents themselves, this report makes clear recommendations in relation to the use of B&B accommodation as emergency accommodation for homeless people. Though focusing largely on Dublin, this report offers a unique overview of the issues involved in the use of this form of accommodation for homeless people across the country.

### **Focus Point**

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