

SDR 94/2008

25 June 2008

Homelessness (January to March 2008)

This Statistical First Release presents summary information, collected via the quarterly statistical return, on local housing authorities' actions under homelessness legislation.

A household is accepted as statutory homeless by a local authority if it is eligible, unintentionally homeless and falls within a defined priority need category such as households with dependant children. The release includes information on households accepted as homeless, reasons for homelessness and households in temporary accommodation. The information presented covers the period January to March 2008, together with comparisons with figures for earlier quarters.

Key points

- There were 1,694 households accepted as homeless by local authorities during the January to March 2008 quarter.
- The number of households accepted as homeless during January to March 2008 was 14 per cent higher than the previous quarter and 2 per cent higher than the same quarter a year earlier.
- The number of households accommodated temporarily at the end of March 2008 was 2,880. This was 11 per cent higher than the previous quarter and 9 per cent lower than the same quarter a year earlier.
- By the end of March 2008, there were 282 households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation, a fall of 25 per cent since the same quarter the previous year.
- Of those households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation, 13 per cent were families with children.

Contact: Tel: 029 2082 5055 **E-mail:** stats.housing@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Next Update: 24 September 2008

Cyhoeddwyd gan Y Gyfarwyddiaeth Ystadegol
Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru, Parc Cathays, Caerdydd, CF10 3NQ
Ffon - Swyddfa'r Wasg **029 2089 8099**, Ymholiadau Cyhoeddus **029 2082 5050**
www.cymru.gov.uk/ystadegau

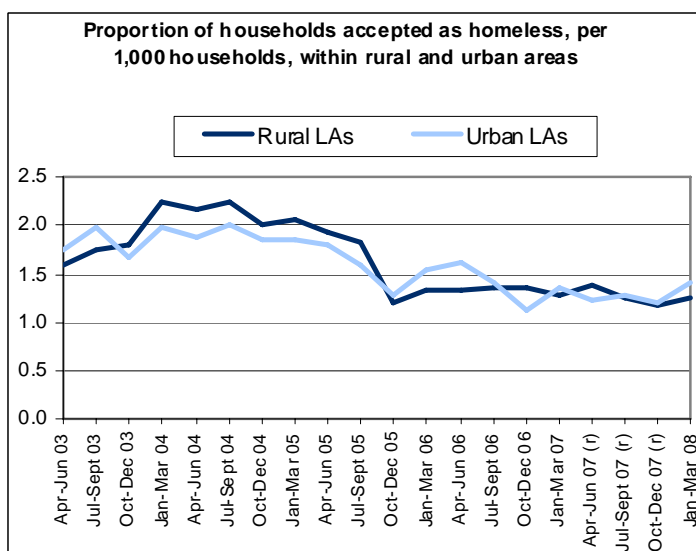
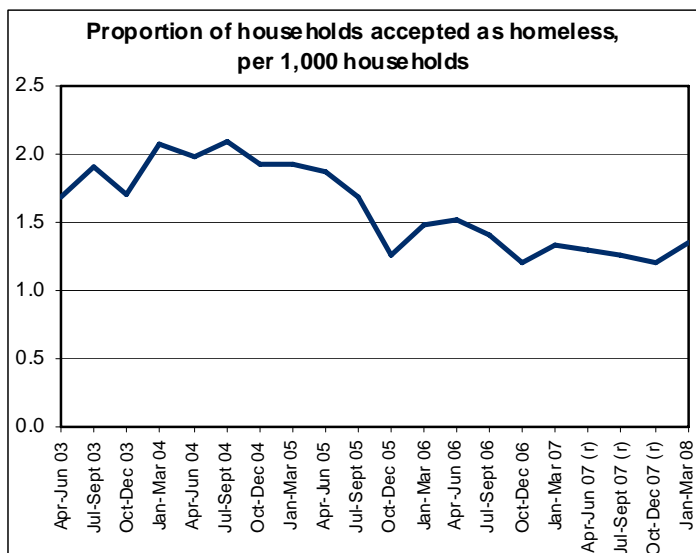
Issued by Statistical Directorate
Welsh Assembly Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ
Telephone - Press Office **029 2089 8099**, Public Enquiries **029 2082 5050**
www.wales.gov.uk/statistics



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Household acceptances (Annex A - table 1)

- During the January to March 2008 quarter there were 1,694 households accepted as homeless (eligible, unintentionally homeless, and in priority need), 2 per cent higher than for the same quarter in 2007.
- The proportion of applications resulting in acceptances has increased from the same quarter in the previous year from 48 per cent to 51 per cent.
- In general homelessness applications and acceptances fell between 2004 and 2006, and have steadied since.
- Homeless households in rural¹ areas and in urban areas rose during the January to March 2008 quarter. The proportion of homeless households in rural areas was lower than in urban areas.



Acceptances by age and gender (Annex A - table 2)

- During the January to March 2008 quarter there were 1,824 applications from women and a further 1,492 applications from men. Of these applications 59 per cent and 41 per cent were accepted respectively.
- Of all applications, 1,282 were from applicants aged under 25, a further 2,034 were from people aged 25 or over. This resulted in 666 acceptances for applicants aged under 25 and 1,028 acceptances for people aged 25 or over (52 per cent and 51 per cent respectively).

¹ These proportions are based on mid-year household estimates. Figures for 2004 onwards are based on the mid-2004 household estimates.

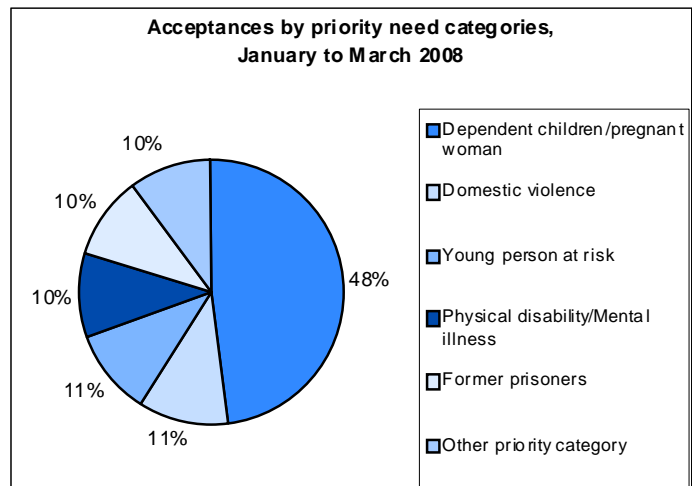
¹ Rural areas are the nine local authorities identified as being rural based on their population density. These authorities are Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Powys, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and Monmouthshire. All other authorities are classed as urban.

Acceptances by ethnicity (Annex A - table 3)

- During the January to March 2008 quarter there were 248 applications (7 per cent of all applications) received from black and minority ethnic (BME) applicants. Of these applications 189 (76 per cent) were accepted, accounting for 11 per cent of all acceptances.
- Almost all applications from BME applicants were from Cardiff, Swansea and Newport, which are the local authorities within Wales with the highest proportion of BME residents.

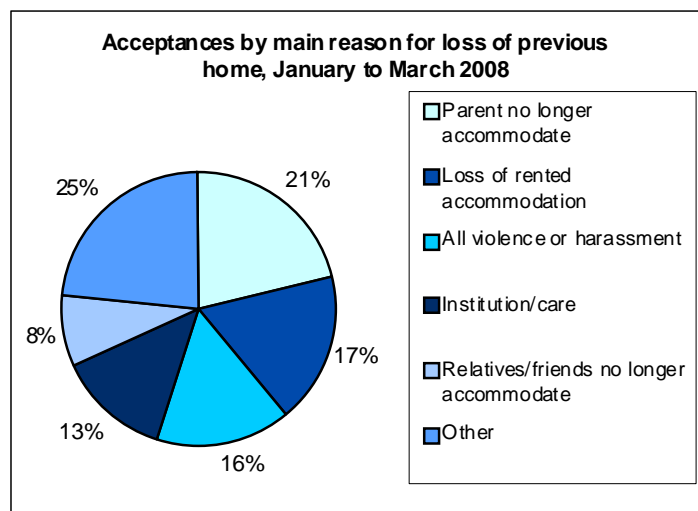
Acceptances by priority need category (Annex A - table 4)

- During January to March 2008, in 41 per cent of acceptances (696 households) the presence of dependent children in the household was the primary reason for priority need. A further 7 per cent of acceptances (118 households) had priority need because the household included a pregnant woman.
- Additionally, 182 acceptances (11 per cent) had priority need due to actual or threatened domestic violence and 178 acceptances (11 per cent) because applicants were young people (16 or 17 year olds or 18 to 20 year olds formerly in care).
- 174 acceptances (10 per cent) were former prisoners and a further 171 (10 per cent) were vulnerable due to mental illness or physical disability.
- Of those within the 'Other' priority need categories, the majority of acceptances were vulnerable due to old age (33 households). 18 acceptances were for emergency homeless households and a further 6 acceptances were households who were homeless after leaving the armed forces.



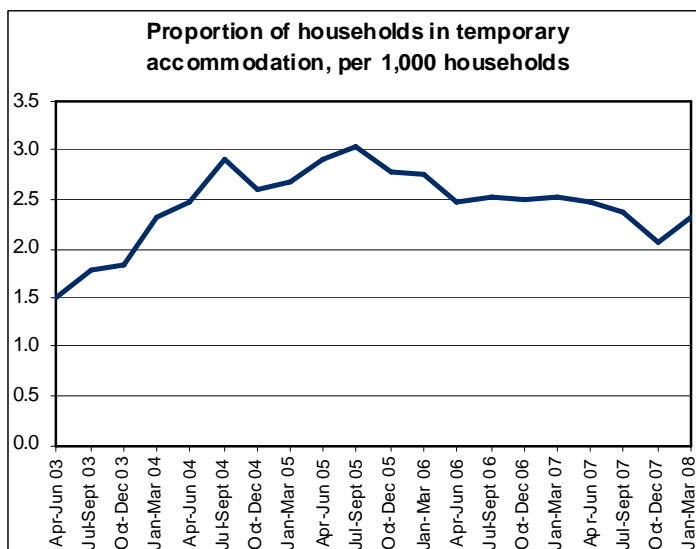
Reasons for homelessness (Annex A - table 5)

- During the January to March 2008 quarter, in 29 per cent of all acceptances the reason for homelessness was because parents, relatives or friends were no longer able or willing to accommodate.
- In a further 17 per cent of acceptances the loss of rented accommodation was the reason given whilst in 16 per cent the reason was violence against members of the household, most of which arose from the violent breakdown of a relationship.
- Leaving institution or care was given as the reason for 13 per cent of acceptances.
- Additionally, non-violent breakdown of relationships with former partners and mortgage or rent arrears each accounted for 6 per cent of all acceptances.

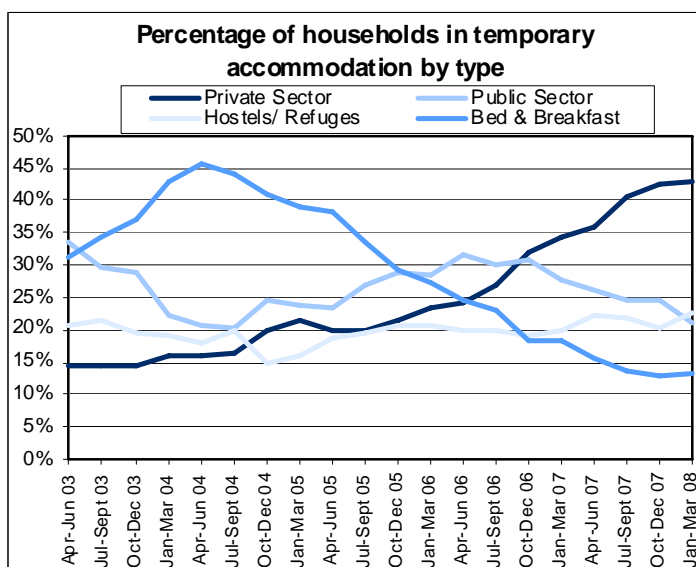


Households accommodated temporarily (Annex A - table 6)

- The number of households accommodated temporarily at the end of March 2008 was 2,880. This was 9 per cent lower than the same period a year earlier and 11 per cent higher than the previous quarter.
- At the end of March 2008, the proportion¹ of households in temporary accommodation increased from the previous quarter.
- Of the 2,880 households accommodated temporarily, 47 per cent were living in self-contained properties, 26 per cent in hostels, refuges and bed & breakfast, and 27 per cent were classified as other or were homeless at home.



- By the end of March 2008, there were 282 households in bed and breakfast accommodation, a fall of 25 per cent since the same quarter the previous year, and a rise of 18 per cent from the end of the previous quarter.
- Of those households in bed and breakfast accommodation, 13 per cent were families with children.
- Of the four main types of temporary accommodation used, private sector accommodation provided the highest percentage (43 per cent). Since June 2004 the use of bed and breakfast has fallen sharply whilst the use of private sector accommodation has increased.



Length of stay in temporary accommodation (Annex A – tables 7 & 8)

- At the end of March 2008, 20 per cent of households in temporary accommodation have been living in temporary accommodation for over a year, more than half of which were families with children.
- Of the 1,001 households that left temporary accommodation during the January to March 2008 quarter, 800 had been in temporary accommodation for less than six months.
- Of all those that left temporary accommodation during the quarter, 56 per cent accepted an offer of accommodation through the local authority's allocation scheme.

¹ These proportions are based on mid-year household estimates. Figures for 2004 onwards are based on the mid-2004 household estimates.

Notes

Coverage of the figures

The figures in this Statistical Release are based on Welsh local authorities' actions under the homelessness provisions of the Housing Act 1996 (for further detail, see the section on legislation below).

This covers the decision as to whether or not there is an obligation under the Act for the local authority to help the household. That is whether the authority accepts that the household is "eligible, unintentionally homeless and falls within a priority need group". In this case the household is accepted as statutory homeless.

Extra information is collected about "acceptances" of these statutory homeless households.

This includes information on the different types of homeless households, which are known as priority need groups, and also the reason why households lost their last settled home.

The Welsh Assembly Government introduced secondary legislation (starting from 1st March 2001) extending the priority need categories. The figures from October to December 2001 onwards cover the new priority need categories.

This release shows information about statutory homeless households that are in temporary accommodation; sometimes referred to as "households in accommodation arranged by authorities under homelessness legislation". Temporary means that they have not been found suitable accommodation in a settled home. In other words the accommodation can still be in a self-contained dwelling (for example with a private landlord, or in registered social landlord or local authority owned properties) as well as in non-self contained accommodation (for example hostels, refuges and bed and breakfast).

Legislation

Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, which came into force in January 1997, places a statutory duty on local authorities to provide assistance to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Authorities must consider all applications from people seeking accommodation or help in getting accommodation. The local authority owes a main homelessness duty where it is satisfied that the applicant is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a priority need group.

The priority need groups include:

- Households with dependent children;
- Households with a pregnant woman; and
- People who are vulnerable in some way, for example through mental illness or physical disability.

The Assembly introduced secondary legislation (starting from 1st March 2001) extending the priority need categories to include, specifically:

- Applicants aged 16 or 17;
- Applicants aged 18 to 20 who were previously in care;
- Applicants vulnerable because of domestic violence or the threat of violence, or
- Applicants vulnerable as a result of leaving the armed forces, or leaving prison.

Where a main homelessness duty is owed, then the authority must ensure that suitable accommodation is available for the applicant and his or her household until a settled home becomes available for them. Where households are found to be intentionally homeless or not in priority need, then the authority must make an assessment of their housing need and provide advice and assistance to help them find accommodation for themselves.

Source of statistics

The figures in this Statistical Release are based on a quarterly statistical return completed by local authorities in Wales. From April 2002 onwards the return was revised and extended to collect information about the age and ethnicity of applicants, the types of household accepted as homeless and the length of time households stay in temporary accommodation. It also collects information about enquiries for help, which is not shown in this release.

This Statistical Release will be produced each quarter as information becomes available from Welsh local authorities.

Quality Information

1. The mid-year household estimates used within this release are the revised estimates, which were published as at 30th October 2006.
<http://www.wales.gov.uk/statistics>
2. Where proportions are based on mid-year household estimates, figures for 2004 onwards are based on the mid-2004 household estimates.
3. Figures shown for the period October to December 2005 show a substantial drop in the number of homelessness applications and households accepted as homeless. It should be noted that prior to this period a number of the local authorities introduced homelessness prevention officers.
4. The ethnic categories used within the homelessness return have been amended and now comply with those outlined in the National Statistics classification of ethnicity data. This should not affect the figures quoted for applicants of minority ethnic backgrounds.
5. Cardiff was unable to provide a breakdown of households leaving temporary accommodation by all reasons apart from those who 'accepted an offer of accommodation through the allocation scheme'. All other households are reported in 'Total' reasons. The totals shown in table 8 will therefore not equal the total of the reasons for leaving.

Further information

Further information is available from the Housing Statistics web site:

<http://www.wales.gov.uk/statistics>

The full homelessness dataset for this quarter is published on the Internet at:

<http://dissemination.dataunitwales.gov.uk/webview/>

If you require any further information regarding the full dataset published by the Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales, please contact:

Wesley Harris, Data and Information Services

Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales

3 - 7 Columbus Walk

Cardiff, CF10 4SD

Tel: 029 2090 9500

E-mail: housing@dataunitwales.gov.uk

Annex A

Table 1: Decisions taken on applications (a)

Number of households

	Ineligible household	Eligible, but not homeless	Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	Eligible, homeless and in priority need but intentionally so	Eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need	All Households
2001-02:						
Apr-Jun	7	943	891	148	1,298	3,287
Jul-Sept	9	1,195	1,033	116	1,413	3,766
Oct-Dec	5	943	925	137	1,208	3,218
Jan-Mar	12	1,059	1,116	110	1,414	3,711
2002-03:						
Apr-Jun	6	1,181	1,071	136	1,537	3,931
Jul-Sept	19	1,213	1,121	181	1,764	4,298
Oct-Dec	5	1,102	1,117	181	1,722	4,127
Jan-Mar	8	1,281	1,303	155	1,952	4,699
2003-04:						
Apr-Jun	14	1,148	1,242	190	2,087	4,681
Jul-Sept	17	1,465	1,270	153	2,363	5,268
Oct-Dec	19	1,445	1,280	159	2,110	5,013
Jan-Mar	10	1,594	1,577	205	2,587	5,973
2004-05:						
Apr-Jun	18	1,548	1,359	219	2,459	5,603
Jul-Sept	28	1,476	1,369	231	2,603	5,707
Oct-Dec	16	1,729	1,314	270	2,391	5,720
Jan-Mar	19	1,618	1,277	233	2,403	5,550
2005-06:						
Apr-Jun	28	1,609	1,181	244	2,319	5,381
Jul-Sept	28	1,537	1,157	278	2,094	5,094
Oct-Dec	19	1,373	821	221	1,560	3,994
Jan-Mar	34	1,161	920	171	1,838	4,124
2006-07:						
Apr-Jun	25	1,160	763	224	1,898	4,070
Jul-Sep	13	1,135	802	250	1,741	3,941
Oct-Dec	14	1,043	600	220	1,497	3,374
Jan-Mar	8	1,032	584	200	1,666	3,490
2007-08:						
Apr-Jun (r)	5	891	534	220	1,605	3,255
Jul-Sep	20	950	536	199	(r) 1,577	(r) 3,282
Oct-Dec (r)	10	896	509	178	1,491	3,084
Jan-Mar	21	913	545	143	1,694	3,316

(a) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

(r) Revised June 2008

Table 2: Decisions taken by age and sex of applicant, January to March 2008 (a)*Number of applicants*

	Ineligible household	Eligible, but not homeless	Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	Eligible, homeless and in priority need but intentionally so	Eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need	All Households
Male:						
16-17	1	21	.	10	66	98
18-24	2	97	112	17	123	351
25 and over	8	304	277	33	421	1,043
All ages	11	422	389	60	610	1,492
Female:						
16-17	0	43	.	8	115	166
18-24	5	191	80	29	362	667
25 and over	5	257	76	46	607	991
All ages	10	491	156	83	1,084	1,824
Persons:						
16-17	1	64	.	18	181	264
18-24	7	288	192	46	485	1,018
25 and over	13	561	353	79	1,028	2,034
All ages	21	913	545	143	1,694	3,316
Age & sex not recorded	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	21	913	545	143	1,694	3,316

(a) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

Table 3: Decisions taken by ethnic group of applicant, January to March 2008 (a) (b)*Number of applicants*

	Ineligible household	Eligible, but not homeless	Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	Eligible, homeless and in priority need but intentionally so	Eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need	All Households
White	15	851	498	130	1,423	2,917
Mixed	0	5	2	0	11	18
Asian or Asian British	3	12	3	1	42	61
Black or Black British	1	5	11	0	100	117
Chinese or any other ethnic group	2	9	3	2	36	52
Ethnic origin not known	0	31	28	10	82	151
Total	21	913	545	143	1,694	3,316

(a) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

(b) See 'Quality Information' section

Table 4: Households accepted as homeless by priority need (a) (b)

	<i>Number of households</i>									
	2006-07	2007-08	2006-07:				2007-08:			
			Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan - Mar
Household with dependent children	2,772	2,687	781	734	591	666	(r) 654	(r) 679	(r) 658	696
Household member pregnant and no other children	540	486	146	142	121	131	136	130	102	118
Household with vulnerable member due to:										
Old age	189	154	50	43	38	58	43	40	38	33
Physical disability	271	290	101	61	50	59	62	72	70	86
Mental illness/learning disability	350	305	79	90	82	99	78	65	77	85
Young person at risk 18-21	142	125	39	41	24	38	26	33	31	35
Young person at risk 16-17	686	550	171	190	164	161	154	121	(r) 132	143
Domestic violence or threat of domestic violence	746	719	206	175	179	186	187	185	165	182
Homeless after leaving the armed forces	29	35	12	7	4	6	12	15	2	6
Former prisoner with no accommodation to return to	796	656	228	181	190	197	185	175	122	174
Other	240	299	78	68	43	51	55	46	80	118
Households homeless in emergency	41	61	7	9	11	14	13	16	14	18
Total Households	6,802	6,367	1,898	1,741	1,497	1,666	(r) 1,605	(r) 1,577	(r) 1,491	1,694

(a) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

(b) A homeless household is one that is eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need

Table 5: Main reason for loss of last settled home (a)

	<i>Number of households</i>									
	2006-07	2007-08	2006-07:				2007-08:			
			Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar
Parents no longer able/willing to accommodate	1,490	1,337	427	394	326	343	348	322	(r) 304	363
Other relatives/friends no longer able/willing to accommodate	603	525	157	158	128	160	136	130	(r) 119	140
Breakdown of relationship with partner: non violent	482	428	131	131	98	122	97	119	110	102
Breakdown of relationship with partner: violent	925	876	245	251	202	227	218	226	208	224
Violence/harassment	209	183	66	50	44	49	55	38	43	47
Mortgage arrears	207	250	59	37	60	51	61	59	54	76
Rent arrears	102	67	38	32	12	20	21	14	13	19
Loss of rented/tied accommodation	1,340	1,230	381	333	306	320	333	(r) 330	273	294
Institution/care	966	807	269	228	222	247	218	214	151	224
Other	478	664	125	127	99	127	(r) 118	125	216	205
Total	6,802	6,367	1,898	1,741	1,497	1,666	(r) 1,605	(r) 1,577	(r) 1,491	1,694

(a) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

(r) Revised June 2008

Table 6: Homeless households accommodated temporarily at the end of the period (a)

	<i>Number of households</i>									
	2006-07	2007-08	2006-07:				2007-08:			
			Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar
Placed directly with a private sector landlord	44	90	20	29	40	44	66	93	65	90
Private sector accommodation leased by LA	600	744	416	491	553	600	609	642	665	744
Private sector accommodation leased by RSL	65	64	55	64	59	65	70	63	60	64
Local Authority stock	485	332	566	589	562	485	449	388	354	332
RSL stock on assured shorthold tenancies	89	113	81	58	64	89	96	97	105	113
Hostels	342	382	344	359	325	342	372	358	314	382
Women's refuges	65	95	64	73	69	65	91	73	66	95
Bed and breakfast	378	282	498	497	376	378	321	268	240	282
Other	229	192	267	218	242	229	199	217	182	192
Homeless at home	855	586	769	766	814	855	816	756	536	586
Total	3,152	2,880	3,080	3,144	3,104	3,152	3,089	2,955	2,587	2,880

(a) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

Table 7: Homeless households at the end of the quarter by length of time spent in temporary accommodation, January to March 2008 (a)

	<i>Number of households</i>						
	Couple with dependent children	Single parent household with dependent child(ren)		Single person household		Other household groups or not recorded	Total
		Male applicant	Female applicant	Male applicant	Female applicant		
0 to 6 months	288	76	592	462	295	124	1,837
6 to 12 months	88	10	185	96	60	29	468
Over 1 year	92	19	233	103	77	49	573
Length of time not known	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Total	468	105	1,010	663	432	202	2,880

(a) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

Table 8: Households leaving temporary accommodation by length of time and reason for leaving, January to March 2008 (a) (b)

Number of households

	Under 6 months	6 months to under 1 year	1 year to under 18 months	18 months to under 2 years	2 years or more	Length of time not known	Total
Ceased to be eligible	59	4	6	3	4	0	76
Became homeless intentionally	68	6	3	1	1	0	79
Accepted an offer of accommodation through the allocation scheme	436	82	16	14	15	2	565
Voluntarily ceased to occupy accommodation	158	4	6	2	1	0	171
Refused an offer of accommodation through the allocation scheme	19	5	2	1	0	0	27
Total	800	111	36	27	25	2	1,001

(a) Under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996

(b) Cardiff was unable to provide a breakdown of households leaving temporary accommodation by all reasons apart from those who 'accepted an offer of accommodation through the allocation scheme'. All other households are reported in 'Total' reasons. The totals shown will therefore not equal the total of the reasons for leaving