

Nowhere to go



The issue of **'move-on'** accommodation is about finding homeless men and women somewhere permanent to live, with an appropriate level of support.

Last year we helped 365 residents make positive moves out of St Mungo's accommodation.

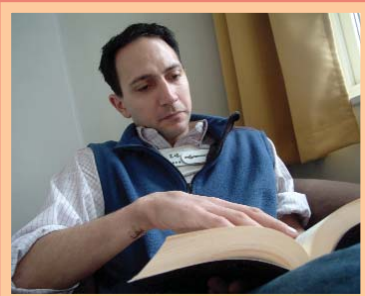
However, despite this achievement, we know that getting people out our projects and into suitable forms of settled accommodation is proving problematic. This means that many more of our residents are ready and waiting to move but have nowhere to go.

'Bed blocking' is a serious and well recognised problem for organisations that work with homeless men and women, particularly in London, where there is a desperate shortage of suitable accommodation.

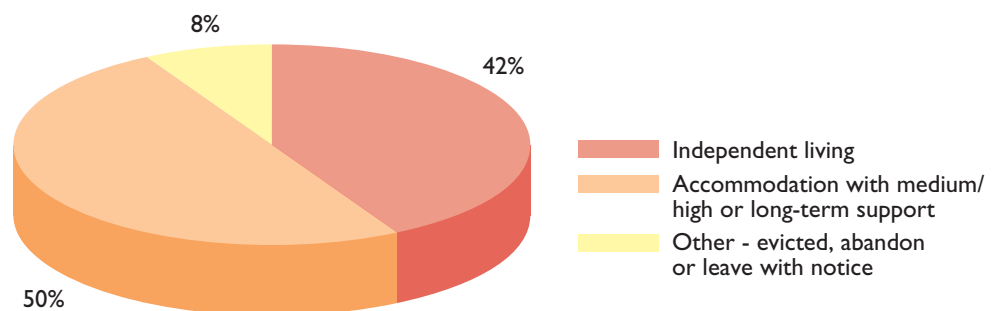
It is extremely costly for local authorities and voluntary organisations alike, as it reduces the number of free bed spaces available for more vulnerable people and demoralises residents who are now ready to move on but have nowhere to go.

A snapshot survey of 1,000 residents (whose 'next step' accommodation need had been identified) showed:

- At least half of the residents (50%) require supported accommodation (medium/high or long-term support); and
- 2 in 5 (42%) are ready to live independently (some will require help to maintain their tenancy)



Move-on accommodation - where will St Mungo's residents go next?





- Based on the data collected, we would expect to see over 900 moves each year from our projects into independent living.
- However last year, only 237 moves were made into Local Authority accommodation, other Housing Associations and accommodation in the private sector.
- This means that over the course of 2007/8, 70% of the residents waiting for accommodation suitable for independent living were unable to find a solution and were therefore 'stuck' in supported accommodation with nowhere to go.

"Finding appropriate move-on accommodation for St Mungo's residents is one of the biggest problems we face."

Charles Fraser CBE, Chief Executive, St Mungo's



- The shortage of supported accommodation particularly impacts upon our hostel residents.
- Based on the needs identified by the survey we would expect to see over 400 moves into other hostels, high support and medium support environments (both internal and external), however only 194 moves were made (141 internal moves, and 53 external moves).
- This means that over the last year, half of the residents surveyed who require supported accommodation (high, medium or long term support) were also unable to find a suitable solution.

The solution

The housing shortage in London and the South East impacts upon the most vulnerable in our society. There is a real need for affordable rented accommodation and for further investment into tenancy sustainment services which allow vulnerable adults to live independently.

However a roof is not enough for St Mungo's residents and many will require intensive support with their health and work issues, either in the short or longer term.

We are calling on the Government and local authorities to work together with St Mungo's to design and provide more supported housing options for homeless men and women.

This will free up bedspaces within hostels and other projects and allow many more of our residents to make positive steps forward towards independent living.



"One of the biggest challenges we face is the lack of suitable move on opportunities for hostel residents who are ready for the next step in their lives."

CLG Policy Briefing, September 2007