

**URBAN FRONTIERS PROGRAMME
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY**

**Research Seminar
27 March, 2001**

**Pathways through homelessness:
towards a dynamic analysis**

Dr Isobel Anderson
Housing Policy and Practice Unit,
University of Stirling, Scotland

Abstract

The notion of pathways through homelessness is central to a full understanding of the nature of homelessness and the possibilities for alleviating homelessness. That is to say, consideration needs to be given to the *processes* and *dynamics* at work in relation to the housing careers and life trajectories of individuals and households who experience homelessness at some point in their lives. These notions of process and dynamics have become central to contemporary analysis of many social issues and to the whole policy agenda associated with social exclusion/inclusion in Britain and much of Western Europe. To date, however, there has been only limited research which has examined homelessness as a dynamic process concerned with how people do or do not gain access to suitable, affordable housing – and how the housing process interacts with other socio-economic processes.

This paper considers whether discrete pathways through homelessness can be identified in relation to key characteristics such as gender, age, race, household type and life experience. The policy implications and practical options for intervention arising from such an analysis are also considered. It is argued that a dynamic, 'pathways' approach to researching homelessness can aid understanding of the complexity of the economic and social processes which create and sustain homelessness. Within the context of the United Kingdom, the approach also raises questions about the effectiveness of policy responses. Further, the paper also argues that appropriate research methods are fundamental to a dynamic analysis of homelessness and that contemporary policy research has often lacked a dynamic approach. The paper concludes by setting out a framework whereby a more dynamic approach to homelessness research could help to provide a better understanding of pathways through homelessness and lead to more effective policy interventions.

PATHWAYS THROUGH HOMELESSNESS: TOWARDS A DYNAMIC ANALYSIS

Isobel Anderson

Introduction

At its most simple definition, a pathway through homelessness would describe the route of an individual or household into homelessness, their experience of homelessness and their route out of homelessness into secure housing. Individuals or households may experience more than one episode of homelessness during the life course. At the most complex level, a unique pathway could be ascribed to all those who have ever experienced homelessness.

Pathways through homelessness must also be understood as a particular dimension of the life-time housing careers (or trajectories) of individuals. The simplest possible housing career would be to reside in one dwelling throughout one's entire lifetime. In reality, individuals experience a variety of housing situations throughout their lifetimes. Changes to housing are associated with key life events such as household formation and dissolution, as well as with employment and choice of location, quality and type of housing. Housing moves are a function of individual choice, within the constraints of the housing system and the resources available to the individual. In addition to these factors, pathways through homelessness may reflect severely problematic life events and associated care and support needs.

This paper seeks to assess the extent to which generalised pathways through homelessness can be identified from the current body of evidence for the United Kingdom. In addition, the paper considers the importance of research methods and the possibilities for future research which might help us to better understand pathways through homelessness and the effectiveness of policy interventions. The paper is based on a review and synthesis of existing research evidence on homelessness in the UK, and some international research.

While a huge volume of research on homelessness in the UK has been published, relatively few studies have explicitly addressed the idea of pathways through homelessness. However, this paper will argue that the notion of pathways through homelessness is central to a full understanding of the nature of homelessness and the possibilities for alleviating homelessness. That is to say, consideration needs to be given to the *processes* and *dynamics* at work in relation to the housing careers and life trajectories of individuals and households who experience homelessness at some point in their lives. These notions of process and dynamics have become central to contemporary analysis of many social issues and to the whole policy agenda associated with social exclusion/inclusion (Room, 1995; Leisering and Walker, 1998; Fitzpatrick *et al*, 2000).

Reviewing the evidence: a systematic approach

Given that such a substantial body of research evidence on homelessness exists, it is important to establish what can (and can't) be said about pathways through homelessness, from this evidence. A series of specific research questions were formulated, with which the existing research base was interrogated:

1. Can 'discrete' pathways through homelessness be identified?
2. How are differing pathways through homelessness associated with individuals/household characteristics of (e.g. household composition, age, gender, race/ethnic group and other characteristics)
3. What are the main routes into homelessness?
4. How do households/individuals move through homelessness into better accommodation (or what barriers prevent them from doing so)?

5. What further information is required to construct a better understanding of pathways through homelessness?

This, focused, review was able to draw on recent broader reviews of homelessness research (Fitzpatrick *et al*, 2000; Third and Yanetta, 2000; and Pawson, 2000). Additionally, a search of key abstracts and databases was undertaken. The review concentrated on substantive pieces of research (e.g. national level studies funded by government departments and major research funding organisations; or more localised studies which were either longer term in nature or particularly robust in design/depth of analysis). Most of the literature reviewed emerged from the United Kingdom. However, where key studies from overseas provided a particularly valuable insight in terms of process or methodology, these were incorporated into the review.

The relevant literature was reviewed in relation to the core research questions set out above. While the review cannot claim to be absolutely exhaustive, coverage was considered to be reasonably comprehensive. The substantive review of single homelessness research (research summaries) by Klinker *et al* (2000) was utilised as a benchmark for 'quality' of much of the research output. The rigour of the studies incorporated into this review should therefore be taken as reasonable for this purpose. That is to say, the key findings could reasonably be substantiated from the empirical research evidence.

Structural homelessness

The root causes of homelessness are commonly analysed in terms of the interaction between structural (macro-level) and individual (micro-level) factors (Fitzpatrick *et al*, 2000). The contemporary body of evidence indicates that structural/ macro-level factors, most particularly poverty, unemployment and the operation of the housing system, underpin all pathways through homelessness. Almost all who experience homelessness are poor, few are actively employed and their exclusion from the main housing tenures is a defining characteristic of their homelessness. Nevertheless, there is a lack of up to date rigorous, quantitative data which has tested for different structural variables, in the manner of Bramley's (1993) statistical analysis of the factors associated with statutory homelessness. However, a quantitative study of structural trends and homelessness in Scotland was underway at the time of writing (Kemp, *et al*, forthcoming).

Homelessness needs to be considered within the wider context of household formation, housing needs and available housing opportunities across the different tenures. The scale of homelessness at any time will be a function of these factors (Anderson, 1994). For example, since the mid-1990s, there has been a notable downward trend in statutory homelessness England (and, to a lesser extent in Scotland). This is consistent with, but not wholly explained by, demographic changes which have produced a reduction in the size of the age cohort associated with household formation (20-29 years). While the demographic shift is similar on both sides of the border, the fall in statutory homelessness has been much faster in England & Wales, possibly linked to a greater vacancy rate in social housing in England (Pawson, 2000).

Numerous studies have shown that the experience of homelessness is very strongly associated with unemployment, low incomes and poverty (Anderson *et al*, 1993; Breugel and Smith, 1999; Burrows, 1997; Craig *et al*, 1996; Evans *et al*, 1994; Fitzpatrick *et al*, 2000). Further, unemployment is often long term (five years or more) while, for those in employment, weekly income is relatively low (O' Callaghan and Dominian *et al*, 1996; Kershaw *et al*, 2000). International comparisons also find a high incidence of unemployment and poverty amongst homeless households (Randall, 1998).

Unemployment and poverty contribute to pathways through homelessness in at least three ways. Firstly, poverty and unemployment contribute to pushing people into homelessness by causing them to lose their current accommodation for example via mortgage default (Ford, 1993; 1997; 1999). Jones (1995) found that family unemployment increases the likelihood of young people leaving home, halves their likelihood of returning home and may reduce family

ability to provide assistance to a young person living away from home. Secondly, low incomes (combined with the costs of accessing or sustaining accommodation and the benefit system), prevent households from rehousing themselves. Thirdly, the economic effects of being homeless make it difficult for households to find employment and get back into independent housing (Anderson *et al*, 1993; Fitzpatrick *et al*, 2000; Kemp, 1997; Klee and Reid, 1998; Randall, 1998). One US study found that the statistical likelihood of an individual 'exiting' from homelessness was well over twice as high for someone who had worked in the 30 days preceding interview than for someone who had not (Piliavin *et al*, 1996).

Pathways into homelessness

While the experience of low incomes, and structural exclusion from suitable, affordable housing are almost universal factors in homelessness, age group was found to be the key characteristic affecting the **different pathways** through homelessness. Pathways fell into three broad groups, categorised by the age at which homelessness began:

1. Youth pathways into homelessness: 15-24 years
2. Adult pathways into homelessness: 20-50 years
3. Later life pathways into homelessness: 50+ years.

There is, however, a degree of overlap between these age categories. For example, a household in their early twenties becoming homeless because of mortgage default could be categorised as following an 'adult' pathway, whereas a person the same age becoming homeless on leaving the parental home would be following a 'youth' pathway. Following age, gender was the second most important variable affecting pathways through homelessness. Third, episodes of homelessness were closely associated with changes in household composition.

Youth pathways

The breakdown of traditional patterns of transition to adulthood mean that leaving home has become an increasingly fractured and risky stage in the life course (Jones, 1993; Fitzpatrick, 2000a). Youth homelessness is closely associated with long term structural changes in the position of young people, particularly in relation employment and social security benefits (Fitzpatrick, 2000b). Young people (usually taken as aged 16-24 years) are significantly overrepresented among statutorily and non-statutorily homeless households¹ (Evans *et al*, 1994; O'Callaghan and Dominian *et al*, 1996) and are increasingly at greatest risk of experiencing rough sleeping (Yanetta *et al*, 1999; Kershaw, *et al*, 2000). Further, youth homelessness often results in an extended pattern of homelessness and repeat homelessness (Piliavin *et al*, 1993; Kershaw *et al*, 2000).

Youth homelessness often starts at a very early age. For example, Breugel and Smith (1999) found that two thirds of their sample of young people who were homeless up to the age of 20 had left home by the time they were 16 years old. Factors associated with youth homelessness included being in local authority care, suffering violence and abuse, being in 'disrupted families' where there has been separation or new relationships formed, moving house frequently as a child, and having problems at school and/or being excluded (Smith *et al*, 1998). Jones (1993; 1995) also found that children from step families leave home much earlier and are more likely to do so because of family problems and notes that: 'Family dissolution and re-constitution appear to create serious problems for some young people' (1995, p.50). Numerous studies have found that people who have spent time in statutory care as children are at much greater risk of becoming homeless compared to the population as a whole (e.g. Anderson *et al*, 1993; Randall, 1998; Fitzpatrick *et al*, 2000; Third and Yanetta,

¹ The terms statutorily and non-statutorily homeless relate to the UK homelessness legislation which places a duty upon local housing authorities to secure accommodation for certain homeless households deemed to be 'in priority need' (statutorily homeless). Those who do not meet the statutory criteria (mainly single people of working age) are commonly termed 'non-statutorily' homeless in the UK (see Burrows *et al*, 1997; Hutson and Clapham, 1999).

2000). Similar results have been found by several US studies (e.g. Keogal *et al*, 1995; Metraux and Culhane, 1999). The influence of being in care as a child on homelessness is long-lasting. The study of hostel residents and rough sleepers using drop-in centres in Glasgow found significant numbers of homeless ex-care leavers now aged in their 30s and beyond (Kershaw *et al*, 2000).

A small number of key studies emerge from the existing literature as particularly helpful in elucidating youth pathways into homelessness. Jones (1993) identified the following types of overlapping youth housing and homelessness careers among her sample of young homeless Scots:

- Involving returns to the parental home – sometimes 2 or 3 times (17%)
- Involving intermediate households – living with relatives or friends (28%)
- Involving partnership homes (couples), often failed (12%)
- Involving living alone or with peers – flat-sharing, living with siblings (in practice, overlaps with intermediate above) (21%)
- Involving hostels – interspersed with all the above (most respondents).

Craig *et al* (1996) interviewed a sample of homeless young people in London, and then re-interviewed them one year later. Just over a third had achieved 'stable' or 'fairly stable' housing' throughout the follow up year. 'Stable' was defined as remaining in an independent tenancy, shared accommodation, long-stay hostel or returned to parental home for at least six months. Some 28 percent of participants had not achieved stable housing and were experiencing continued short stays in various accommodation. A fifth were still sleeping rough and using night shelters. Those who had achieved stable housing were more likely to be female, from black/minority ethnic groups and have educational qualifications. Also, those homeless for less than two years at first interview were more likely to achieve stable outcomes than those with longer homelessness histories (Craig *et al*, 1996).

Fitzpatrick (1999, 2000a) has described different homeless pathways taken by young people in an urban context, which can be summarised in three main pathways:

1. Local youth homelessness. Mainly resulting from structural poverty leading to family friction, alternating between moving around friends' and relatives' houses and sleeping rough locally, with a strong attachment to the local area. Difficult to resolve homelessness without outside help (e.g. assistance and accommodation provided by statutory and/or voluntary agencies).
2. Using 'official' city homeless network. Typically young men who have had very difficult childhoods (e.g. involving physical and/or sexual abuse, the death of a parent, destructive step-relationships, residential care). Little or no contact with families, little attachment to any local area, and social networks may revolve around hostel residents. May have serious personal problems including mental ill health and substance abuse.
3. City centre homelessness. Young people who moved immediately into the city centre on becoming homeless. May already know people homeless in city centre, or fear family or others in the home neighbourhood. Linked to severe family problems in childhood and complex needs. Alternated between sleeping rough for extended periods in the city centre, hostels, prison or drug rehabilitation units.

The severity of the personal circumstances of young homeless people may vary according to the population from which a sample is drawn, as there have been few (if any) studies which can claim to be statistically representative of young homeless people.

Adult pathways into homelessness

Although young people are disproportionately at risk of homelessness, the bulk of the UK homeless population is aged between 25-55 years (O'Callaghan and Dominian *et al*, 1996; Evans *et al*, 1994). The main distinguishing factor of adult pathways through homelessness relates to the fact that these are the main years in which households are forming, changing in size, dissolving and changing tenure. 'Adult' pathways are also strongly mediated by household size and composition, gender and the impact of the homelessness legislation and statutory and voluntary sector practices.

Drawing largely on the work of Angela Evans (1999) and data from the Scottish Executive (1999), the following adult pathways into homelessness were identified:

1. Household formation or expansion, e.g. when children are born or grow older (18 percent of applicants in England).
2. Relationship or marital breakdown without violence (12 percent of applicants in Scotland).
3. Relationship or marital breakdown involving domestic violence (12 percent of all homeless applicants in Scotland).
4. Loss of home following mortgage default or other repossession (four percent of applicants in England and two percent in Scotland).
5. Loss of rented accommodation due to landlord or tenant action (in Scotland: one percent of applications are due to arrears; one percent to end of short assured tenancy; seven percent due to landlord action).

In all five cases homelessness occurs when these factors combine with an inability to access suitable alternative accommodation, when required.

The dynamic nature of households must be recognised. For example, many lone parents applying as homeless following relationship breakdown were recently part of two parent households and may become so again (O'Callaghan *et al*, 1996; Pawson, 2000).

Nevertheless, lone parents make up six percent of all households but 28 percent of homeless presentations and 36 percent of acceptances (Burrows, 1997). Across the European Union lone parents have a 17 times greater risk of homelessness than couples (Fitzpatrick *et al*, 2000).

There has been relatively little UK research on two-parent family homelessness. However, the comments on the changing nature of households (between single and two parent households) apply equally to this group. Nevertheless, the proportion of two-parent family households presenting as homeless in Scotland declined during the 1990s (Evans *et al*, 1994; Third and Yanetta, 2000). Couples with children made up 13 percent of applications to local authorities in England and Wales, while a further five percent were couples where there was a pregnant woman (O'Callaghan *et al*, 1996). The latter clearly are following a pathway into homelessness associated with household expansion.

In the event of adult homelessness, single people and childless couples are least likely to be prioritised under statutory homelessness legislation (Anderson and Morgan, 1997), and single people seem to be at a higher risk of enduring homelessness (Fitzpatrick *et al*, 2000).

Later life pathways

Compared to youth homelessness, much less research has been conducted into pathways through homelessness in later life. The most significant contribution has been the work of Crane (1998, 1999). Crane (1999) argues that individualised factors such as mental illness, vulnerability and other stressors are more likely than structural factors to trigger homelessness in old age. Crane (1998) identified several pathways to later life homelessness, which tended to follow from a single event:

1. Retirement or redundancy and no close family (linked to loss of tied accommodation and not coping with retirement)
2. Loss of parental support in adulthood (often people with special needs who had always lived at home and been cared for by parents).
3. Widowhood (became unsettled and/or developed mental illness and/or began to drink heavily following widowhood).
4. Marital breakdown (some association between mental illness, and some of both sexes experiencing domestic violence).
5. Mental illness (long standing illness and loss of family support, or late onset leading to abandonment or eviction)
6. Life-long homelessness.

In theory, later life homelessness should be mediated through UK statutory procedures, as older people constitute a 'priority need' group. It is clear from the research evidence, however, that a significant proportion of older homeless people are not protected by this safety net.

Gender and pathways through homelessness

Along with age group, gender is one of the most significant factors influencing the experience of homelessness and pathways through homelessness. It is intimately associated with household type and, in the UK, with the operation of the homelessness legislation and definitions of households in 'priority need'. However, there is relatively little UK research on women's experiences of homelessness and even less which compares the experience of both genders. There is however some fairly robust US research on comparative gender patterns in homelessness, discussed below.

Women tend to become homeless at a younger age (North and Smith, 1993; Anderson *et al*, 1993; Randall, 1998). Some 44 percent of homeless single women, compared to 33 percent of homeless men Glasgow hostels first became homeless aged 15-24 (Kershaw *et al*, 2000).

Fitzpatrick (1999) found that many more young men were unofficially homeless locally than young women. Equal numbers of each gender accessed and used the local official homelessness network, while a higher proportion of young women than men used city wide homelessness services. However, all those living in adult city hostels were men. Fitzpatrick speculated that women may be more willing to approach formal agencies and/or feel safe enough outside their local area and/or more mature at this age (under 20 years) to do so. Anwen Evans (1999) has also suggested that young women, in rural areas, are more likely than young men to approach agencies for help, and are more likely to be rehoused once they do so.

Among single homeless people, rough sleepers and hostel residents are overwhelmingly male, although it should be noted that hostel provision has traditionally been heavily geared towards men. Men made up 91 percent of rough sleepers and 77 percent of hostel residents in 1991 (Kemp, 1997). However the proportion of hostel residents who are female increased from nine percent in 1972 to 23 percent in 1991 (Kemp, 1997). Women are much less likely to sleep rough than men. A study of 15,000 presentations at a range of agencies in 7 UK cities found that 53 percent of men had slept rough compared to 33 percent of women (Smith, 1999).

Metraux and Culhane's (1999) New York study found that women were likely to use shelters rather than to use makeshift sleeping arrangements (sleep rough). The reasons included fear of violence, difficulty in caring for children on the street and fear of losing children to forced care. In another US study, which directly compared statistically significant samples of homeless men and women, 179 men – but no women at all - were found in 'street' locations (North and Smith, 1993). Indeed, it appears that homeless women will take every possible measure to avoid sleeping rough (Randall, 1998), and there are very good reasons for this. Kershaw *et al* (2000) found that six percent of women in hostels and sleeping rough in Glasgow had experienced unwanted sexual attention compared to only one percent of men. However men were more likely to have suffered threats of, or actual, non-sexual violence than women (36 percent compared to 23 percent).

Fitzpatrick *et al* (2000) conclude that there is no firm evidence of the relative incidence of 'hidden homelessness' among men and women. These authors suggest that the likely reason for the apparent gender disparity in visible homelessness is the distinction made between single and family homelessness (or non-statutory and statutory homelessness). A high proportion of homeless women are accompanied by children, and therefore, more likely to be accepted as statutorily homeless. Heads of family households accepted as statutorily homeless are often in the same age cohort as the single homeless. This produces a gender effect on homelessness statistics because almost all young single parents are female (Smith, 1999). When homeless families and single people are considered together, gender imbalances in the young homeless population disappear (Smith *et al*, 1996).

US research confirms that the principal difference between the genders is that women commonly take their family responsibilities into homelessness with them (North and Smith, 1993). The same US study also examined the situation of 'solitary' women (unaccompanied by children). On almost all variables, single women fell between homeless single men and women with children (North and Smith, 1993). Compared to women with children, they were

more likely to be white, had been homeless longer, and more often had histories of alcoholism or schizophrenia. Single homeless women had a mean age of 33, compared to 36 for men and 27 for women with children. More than half of men had spent more than 1 year homeless in their lifetime, compared to 42.5 percent of single women and 16.4 percent of women with children. Some 17.2 percent of men had spent most of the last year 'on the street' compared to two percent of single women and no women with children.

Metraux and Culhane (1999) found that a high proportion of homeless women in the US disclosed domestic violence as either a chronic factor in their lives or as an immediate precipitating factor in homelessness. Several UK authors have also reached this conclusion (e.g. Hague, 1999; Tomas and Dittmar, 1995).

Race/ethnic group and pathways through homelessness

This is a key area where there are gaps in the research evidence base in the UK. There have been few studies of patterns of homelessness according to ethnic group (Fitzpatrick *et al*, 2000), although the wider disadvantage associated with being from a minority ethnic group is known to pervade the housing system (Harrison, 1999). Burrows (1997) reported that black heads of household were three times more likely to have experienced homelessness than white. It is also known that people from minority ethnic groups are under-represented among rough sleepers but over-represented among hostel and B&B residents, and particularly so for women. By far the largest ethnic minority groups amongst the single homeless population in England are Black African or Caribbean (Anderson *et al*, 1993). There remains considerable scope for a more rigorous analysis of the influence of race on pathways through homelessness in the UK.

Difficult life experiences

A number of 'life experiences' which impact on pathways through homelessness - such as being in statutory care, or experiencing abuse as a child or domestic violence as an adult, have already been described. These circumstances are perhaps best characterised as key risk factors associated with homelessness. Building on the work of Fitzpatrick *et al* (2000) an extended list of risk and trigger factors were identified:

Risk factors

- ◆ Structural factors:
 - shortage of affordable housing
 - low income and poverty
- ◆ Institutional factors
 - being in local authority care
 - being in the armed forces
- ◆ Family background factors
 - experience of family homelessness in childhood
 - family breakdown and disputes
 - being in reconstituted families with stepparents
 - sexual or physical abuse in childhood or adolescence
 - experiencing premature death of parents or stepparents
 - having parents or stepparents with drug or alcohol problems
 - having a mother aged under 25 years at birth of first child
- ◆ Individual factors
 - using drink or drugs at an early age
 - getting involved with crime at an early age
 - offending behaviour and/or experience of prison
 - having difficulties at school and lack of qualifications
 - lack of social support networks
 - debts, especially rent or mortgage arrears
 - causing nuisance to neighbours
 - drug or alcohol misuse
 - poor physical health or mental health

Triggers (immediate events finally triggering homeless episodes):

- ◆ leaving the parental home after arguments or because of financial problems
- ◆ leaving care
- ◆ running out of friends and relatives willing to accommodate
- ◆ household formation – e.g. when new couples are no longer able to stay with relatives or friends
- ◆ household expansion with birth of children
- ◆ marital or relationship breakdown either violent or non-violent
- ◆ discharge from the armed forces
- ◆ leaving prison
- ◆ widowhood
- ◆ sharp deterioration in mental health or increase in alcohol or drug misuse
- ◆ financial crisis of mounting debts
- ◆ eviction from owned or rented home
- ◆ abandonment of owned or rented home because of financial or other problems (such as racist or other harassment)
- ◆ closure of direct access hostels.

The 'individual' risk and trigger factors mean that particular households are more likely to fall into homelessness. These are almost always combined with:

- ◆ inability to find affordable housing in time
- ◆ the operation of the social security system – particularly for young people.

While many homeless households show a combination of risk factors, there is usually a single event finally pushing them into homelessness. These events vary by age group and gender. For example, young people are more likely to leave home because of disputes with parents or stepparents. Similarly, adult men are more likely than women to become homeless because of marital or relationship breakdown – largely because of the operation of the statutory system but also because of different gender aversions to, and abilities to avoid, sleeping rough.

Pathways out of homelessness?

From the research literature it was possible to identify the three broad pathways into homelessness at different stages in the life course. However, much research (and official statistics which focus on loss of previous accommodation rather than on the subsequent housing careers of households) has led to a conceptualisation of homelessness as being categorically different from other parts of lifetime housing careers. This framework has failed to produce a full understanding of routes **out** of homelessness generally, or according to different household characteristics. There has been very little longitudinal tracking of homeless, and formerly homeless, people and little systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of various interventions to assist people out of homelessness. Therefore it is difficult to extend the analysis of pathways **into** homelessness, to pathways **through** homelessness.

Most information on the duration of homelessness is derived from cross-sectional studies of single homeless people (e.g. Anderson *et al* 1993), due to the lack of longitudinal studies. Research has paid less attention to the duration of 'family homelessness'. Available evidence suggests that the majority of episodes of homelessness last less than one year. However, some people, particularly rough sleepers and hostel residents, remain homeless, or are repeatedly homeless, for much longer. The vast majority of the long-term homeless are men. It would appear that a large proportion of rough sleepers experience a relatively short spell of rough sleeping, but that there is a much smaller number who sleep out for long periods. Women tend to have shorter episodes of homelessness than men.

There is some, limited, evidence on routes out of youth homelessness. Jones (1995) noted that the cheap, furnished, end of the private rented sector is the usual destination of young people leaving home. Access to the social housing sector remains limited, with landlords retaining considerable discretion as to whether to accept young homeless people as statutorily homeless or as a priority for other access routes (Anderson, 1999). Recent

amendments to the homelessness legislation, most notably in Scotland, have extended local authority duties towards young people, but the impact had not been evaluated at the time of writing. Young homeless people may be more likely to access transitional supported accommodation than independent tenancies. During the 1990s, foyer projects were set up as accommodation projects providing support with training/employment, self-development and finding independent accommodation. However, the most recent evidence concluded foyers were no more or less effective than other, similar, models (Maginn *et al*, 2000).

The routes out of homelessness for adult single people and childless couples are more likely to involve them in finding their own accommodation, rather than via being assessed as statutorily homeless and/or in priority need and being subsequently rehoused into social housing. Pathways might include mainstream waiting list and allocation processes into social housing, or finding accommodation in the private rented or owner occupied sectors.

Evidence from the USA suggests that different types of subsidised housing have significant effects on the chances exiting homelessness and avoiding repeat homelessness (Wong *et al*, 1997). An examination of the destinations of 28,000 households leaving homeless shelters in New York found that just under half found accommodation in subsidised housing. A subsidised private rented sector access programme produced the lowest rate of repeat homelessness, just under two percent experiencing repeat homelessness within two years (Wong *et al*, 1997).

For the UK, because of the number of permutations possible, and the serious lack of longitudinal research studies, it was not possible to link specific routes into homelessness with specific routes out of homelessness to produce clear pathways through homelessness. It was possible to identify generalised routes out of homelessness, but their relative significance could not be quantified:

1. Resolving accommodation problems and becoming settled independently without approaching statutory or voluntary agencies
2. Resolving accommodation problems and becoming settled independently after being rejected by statutory agencies, or withdrawing application
3. Acceptance as statutory homeless and obtaining mainstream unsupported accommodation in social housing
4. 'Resettlement' by statutory or voluntary agencies through, or into, accommodation with temporary support, followed by access to mainstream unsupported housing
5. 'Resettlement' by statutory or voluntary agencies into permanently supported accommodation.

The evidence indicated that following initial homelessness, the majority of households attempt to resolve their accommodation problems on their own. A significant minority do so successfully without applying to statutory agencies. Of those who do apply to local authorities, around a third will do so from their original permanent accommodation, prior to absolute homelessness. The other two thirds apply from a temporary address and may have moved several times between such addresses while they attempt to resolve their housing problems independently. The sequence is thus:

- background risk factors
- plus immediate crisis
- plus low income
- plus inability to find alternative accommodation in time
- leading to homelessness followed by a number of temporary arrangements.

This is followed either by independent resolution or by presentation at a local authority or voluntary agency. Thereafter, in the UK, pathways out of homelessness (or otherwise) are almost entirely dependent how the statutory process and particularly the priority need criteria assesses and deals with different household types.

Additional factors which appear to support people moving out of homelessness include:

- the provision of independent, affordable accommodation
- the provision of support services (in supported or independent accommodation)
- transitional accommodation (often with support, sometimes including employment support – e.g. foyers)

- private sector access schemes
- specialist 'Rough Sleeper' initiatives
- other specialist advice and support programmes (e.g. housing education in schools, specialist support for key client groups such as drug users or ex-prisoners).

However, there is a lack of long-term comparative evidence as to the effectiveness of these mechanisms in the UK. In contrast, Harvey (1999) presents evidence of longer term evaluations (over years, rather than months) of resettlement projects in Germany, Austria and Sweden, which demonstrate the relative effectiveness of support in ordinary housing in terms of both costs and successful resettlement of formerly homeless people.

While it can be argued that 'individualised' risk and trigger factors are what ultimately precipitate structural homelessness, the barriers to moving out of homelessness are almost entirely structural. A number of issues emerge consistently from the research evidence:

- Lack of access to secure, affordable housing, of a reasonable quality
- Lack of access to employment opportunities and lack of other structured activities
- Time spent homeless
- Problems with alcohol, drugs and mental ill-health (likely to be rooted in structural factors), including lack of co-ordination between government policy on drugs, criminal justice and homelessness
- Gaps in crisis/temporary accommodation and service provision
- Inadequacy and inefficiency in the structure and delivery of social security (including housing benefit) and the exclusion of some homeless groups from some benefits.

Researching pathways through homelessness

A key contention of this paper is that the substantial body of research on homelessness in Britain tells us a great deal about who becomes homeless and the experience of homelessness, but much less about the crucial process of moving out of homelessness. The approaches to researching homelessness and in particular the research methods commonly adopted (cross-sectional surveys and qualitative interviews focusing on current homelessness) appear to have contributed to this weakness in the evidence base. The state of homelessness is not a given set of circumstances for a fixed population. It is important to know whether the same people remain homeless over the long term; to what extent people move in and out of the state of homelessness; and which factors are associated with moves in and out of homelessness. Such issues have important implications for policy in terms of identifying those most at risk of sustained poverty or social exclusion (Walker, 1995; Goodman, Johnson and Webb, 1997), or long term or repeated homelessness. The adoption of research tools and methods to address these issues could help move this debate forward to an important new stage in our understanding of pathways through homelessness. The remainder of this section draws on the work of Walker and Leisering (1998) in relation to longitudinal research, to suggest possible ways forward for researching homelessness.

An important aspect of the dynamic analysis of any social phenomenon is the relationship between the number of people in a given state at one time (incidence) and the total who experience it over a period of time (prevalence). In Britain, neither the incidence, nor the prevalence of homelessness has been precisely quantified, to date. The 'best estimates' of the prevalence of homelessness in Britain are 4.3 per cent of the total population (Burrows, 1997) and the incidence in Scotland at 1.5 per cent (Yanetta and Third, 2000). Shaw *et al* (1996) attempted to estimate the incidence of rooflessness in Scotland, using 'capture-recapture' methods drawn from biological science. This technique relies on recording how often the same individuals are found in repeated samples. Unfortunately, the technique requires a reasonably 'closed' population to operate successfully, and was found not to be useful in the context of measuring rooflessness in Scotland. Yanetta *et al* (1999) utilised data from frontline agencies, combined with evidence from detailed local surveys to build national projections for the incidence of rough sleeping in Scotland over one year. The resultant figures (up to 11,000 individuals) were proportionately much greater than English (and previous Scottish) estimates based solely on 'headcounts' of people sleeping rough. There remains scope for significant refinement of techniques for quantifying homelessness in the

UK. Arguably, more attention could, and should, be paid to assessing the prevalence of homelessness, as well as estimating the incidence at any one time.

The review of homelessness research in the UK revealed three further key weaknesses. First, there is a lack of longer term longitudinal research which tracks moves out of homelessness for any significant period of time, or monitors the impact of policy initiatives over a significant period of time. This applies to both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Second, there is a lack of robust quantitative research. The published literature contains a large number of 'surveys' which have not paid sufficient attention to issues of sample size and composition. This means that many studies are not sufficiently large to allow meaningful statistical analysis and are not sufficiently representative of their target population to allow meaningful general conclusions to be drawn. The third factor is that the approaches of comparing periods of homelessness with periods of 'being housed', and building in control and comparison groups into research, are not well developed in homelessness studies. This applies to comparing the experiences of those who do and do not become homeless, and to comparing the experience of different groups who do become homeless (e.g. males and females, different ethnic groups, different age groups, etc.). The benefits of incorporating control or comparison groups can be seen in the studies by Bines (1994) which compared the health of homeless and housed populations; and Jones (1995) which compared the experience of young homeless people with that of a representative sample of all young people. Without such comparisons, there is little systematic basis to assess the severity of the experience of homelessness, relative to that of domiciled households. Some of these issues are now considered more fully with reference to the published research evidence.

It is unrealistic to expect to measure the entirety of any housing or homelessness pathway as research would never be able to follow the entire life course of an individual. The robustness of all longitudinal data sets is affected by this censorship of the data (Walker and Leisering, 1998). However, the few longitudinal studies of homelessness which have been conducted in Britain, have tended to focus on periods of only between six months and two years. Vincent *et al* (1995) tracked the progress of homeless men following the closure of Alvaston Resettlement Unit over a year and Fitzpatrick (1999) compared the housing circumstances of young homeless people in Glasgow one year apart. Where spells of homelessness were spread over a much longer time period, the data collected over these time periods would be only partial.

Panel surveys are often considered as the most important tool for longitudinal social research. For example, the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) enabled Jarvis and Jenkins (1998) to identify the dynamics of poverty over two years in terms of 'stayers', 'escapers' and 'entrants'. Potentially, the same approach could be applied to suitable data on homelessness, although there is less consensus as to the definition and quantification of homelessness, compared to poverty. A Scottish Household Survey (SHS) has recently been developed by the Scottish Executive (2000). The SHS interview schedule contains a number of questions about households and their housing situations, including tenure and household composition for immediate previous accommodation. While some evidence of past or concealed homelessness could be gleaned from some of the above questions, a general question on past experience of homelessness or housing problems could help establish the prevalence of homelessness amongst the Scottish population².

It is possible that some homeless people could be selected for the BHPS or SHS, mainly those living care of friends or relatives. However, they might well be the individuals most likely to be lost from subsequent waves. Moreover, those homeless people living in emergency hostels/night shelters and sleeping rough tend to be excluded from large-scale national studies which only draw their sample from the formal housing sector. Consequently, specialist surveys of homeless people are likely to continue to be necessary. Though not a panel survey, the recent survey of the health and well-being of homeless people in Glasgow,

² Following a consultation exercise for additional questions, it is anticipated that key questions relating to homelessness will be included in subsequent waves of the SHS.

conducted by the Government's Office for National Statistics (Kershaw *et al*, 2000) is a good example of what can be achieved with adequate resources and careful survey design.

There have been a number of studies which have attempted to adopt a longitudinal approach to researching homelessness. All have made a significant contribution to our understanding of homelessness, demonstrating the value of a dynamic approach. Jones (1995) utilised a number of data sets to compare the experiences of young homeless people with the broader patterns of young people leaving home. The study included:

- Secondary analysis of data on the birth cohort of 23 year olds in the National Child Development Survey (NCDS), 1981.
- Secondary analysis of the Scottish Young People's Survey, first cohort. This panel survey was conducted biennially from 1985 up to 1993.
- A survey of young homeless people in Scotland.
- Depth interviews with a sub-set of the SYPS cohort and young homeless people.

Vincent *et al* (1995) followed the process of closure of a Resettlement Unit and the subsequent housing outcomes for its (former) residents. Access to agency records and procedures, combined with intensive monitoring allowed a detailed history of the process to be documented. These two studies remain significant contributions to the dynamic analysis of housing and homelessness.

The only study to date which has attempted to track applicants through the statutory homelessness procedures was that by O'Callaghan and Dominian *et al* (1996). A large sample of applicants in nine local authority areas were interviewed early in the application process. A subsequent interview was triggered by one of the following:

- ◆ Becoming permanently housed
- ◆ Withdrawal/rejection of application
- ◆ End of survey period and still waiting decision.

The study achieved 1497 successful first interviews (61% response rate) and 879 successful second interviews (68% response rate). Information was collected on the processes of withdrawal and rejection, and on housing outcomes for different groups of applicants. The approach allowed a more sophisticated analysis of the application process compared to cross-sectional studies.

Craig *et al* (1996) compared the incidence of mental illness among young homeless people with domiciled young people from disadvantaged areas. They were able to retrace a significant proportion of respondents for follow-up interviews after one year. This quantitative study was based on a sample of 161 young homeless people and a control group of 104 domiciled young people. Fitzpatrick (1999, 2000a) conducted depth interviews with 25 young homeless people from a peripheral estate in Glasgow, and was able to reinterview nine, one year later, while collecting some data on a further 13. Along with Crane (1998, 1999), these authors document the possibilities and pitfalls in conducting longitudinal research with homeless individuals. The process of keeping in touch is heavily resource intensive, but the results have added substantially to our understanding of pathways through homelessness.

Quantitative studies of pathways through homelessness, based on larger samples, and controlling for different variables, seem to be much better developed in the United States of America (possibly to the neglect of the qualitative approach which is better developed in British social policy). North and Smith (1993) looked at a randomised sample of 600 homeless men and 300 homeless women in St. Louis shelters, rehabilitation programmes and street locations. Piliavin *et al* (1996) examined 'exits from and returns to homelessness', drawing on a longitudinal study including a two-wave panel design. Data was collected over six months on prevalence and duration of exits and destinations, on a sample of 265 homeless people. Cohen *et al* (1993) conducted a 12 month follow up study on 163 homeless mentally ill people in two towns and provided valuable commentary on the practicalities of doing so, which match closely with those of Craig *et al* (1996) and Fitzpatrick (1999). The most substantial study uncovered for this review was Wong *et al*'s (1997) study of 28,000 hostel users in New York. The data was collected as part of the City's shelter system for recording homelessness applications and placements, but was amenable to longitudinal analysis. The sheer size of the USA does allow for large sample sizes which are amenable to statistical analysis. In the UK context, this would necessitate improved co-ordination of surveys across the UK.

Life history studies represent an alternative approach to recording patterns over time, at lower cost and greater speed than large-scale panel surveys. The technique is predicated on the ability to compile a detailed history of events by careful interviewing (Walker and Leisering, 1998). A good example of this technique is the study of Pakistani housing careers by Bowes *et al* (1998), who also provide a helpful critique of associated methodological issues. The research was able to examine the range of Pakistani housing attitudes, aspirations and intentions; the relationship between strategies and aspirations; and the cumulative consequences of moves. Qualitative interviews with homeless people have been widely used in homelessness research, but relatively few studies have used the life history technique in a rigorous fashion. However, the recent study by May (1999) demonstrated how a biographical approach was able to illuminate housing and homelessness pathways in considerable depth.

A significant proportion of homelessness research relies on administrative data such as statutory homelessness statistics or records of other housing and service providers. Arguably, this is a weakness in research as research design tends to be over-influenced by what can be obtained from agencies, rather than the collection of data direct from the subjects of the research (homeless people). This is particularly problematic where agency records are not sufficiently robust for rigorous analysis. Examples would include the recent evaluations of foyers in Scotland (Anderson and Douglas, 1998) and England (Maginn *et al*, 2000) and the national statistical monitoring for the evaluation of the RSI in Scotland (Yanetta *et al*, 1999). While reasonably useful data was collected from agencies for these studies, it was far from ideal in terms of requirements for rigorous research. A key weakness was the lack of longer term monitoring of outcomes for former clients. Maintaining rigorous monitoring is often considered onerous for agencies, particularly smaller voluntary sector agencies. Nevertheless, where agencies receive public funding for their contribution towards tackling homelessness, data collection and participation in independent evaluation should reasonably be viewed as part of procedures for accountability.

Systematic reviews of empirical evidence can also contribute to our understanding of the dynamics of social change. Systematic reviews are seen as particularly valuable in rigorously comparing empirical evidence on key policy issues (Sheldon, 2000). It must be noted that a systematic review is a significantly more rigorous exercise than a literature review. For example, it might entail further manipulation of data sets in order to draw meaningful comparisons. The added value would lie in, for example, producing a robust, comprehensive analysis of the many surveys of homeless people, which have been published at national and local levels, taking account of quality of data and comparing outputs. To date, the only published systematic review on housing or homelessness related issues is by Quilgars (2000) who examined low-intensity support services for independent living. Unfortunately, a key finding was, again, that the methods used for much evaluative research did not stand up well to such systematic scrutiny, making it difficult to draw firm conclusions from the body of research evidence.

Policy evaluation studies are highly relevant to pathways through homelessness, most particularly in relation to the impact of intervention on pathways out of homelessness. Unfortunately, much evaluative research lacks rigor and the body of completed studies do not constitute a comprehensive overview of the advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to tackling homelessness. The weaknesses in British policy evaluation research partly relate to the failure to adopt some of the key techniques outlined above, combined with a number of other important considerations:

- Lack of clarity of aims, objectives and criteria for evaluation at policy and project level.
- Lack of planning for evaluation. Implementation almost always leads evaluation and mechanisms for evaluation are often constrained by the pre-determined data collection mechanisms set in place by agencies.
- Timing of evaluation. Early/interim evaluations are often too early (and too short) to determine the full impact of a policy initiative. Subsequent evaluations are rarely carried out and policy/practice may be constantly changing in the meantime.
- Rigorous evaluation is expensive and resources are rarely adequate for a comprehensive study.

Fitzpatrick *et al* (2000) also concluded that there are fundamental weaknesses in much of the evaluative research associated with homelessness policy initiatives, which make it very difficult to draw any firm conclusions as to the effectiveness of different approaches. These criticisms are not intended to be entirely dismissive of the findings of evaluative studies. Most provide useful information from which some important conclusions can be drawn. The limitations tend to lie in the lack of clear criteria for measuring effectiveness by monitoring outcomes against aims, and in the high costs associated with collecting suitably rigorous data on a very transient client group. As noted above, longer term, more robust evaluative studies in Germany, Austria and Sweden have provided meaningful conclusions on the relative cost effectiveness of different policy interventions (Harvey, 1999).

Conclusions

A thorough review of the published research evidence on homelessness in the UK was able to identify three broad, age-related, pathways into homelessness. The influence of 'individualised' risk factors and triggers was acknowledged, but macro/structural factors underpinned and structured all pathways. However, data limitations precluded the comprehensive development of pathways *through* homelessness, incorporating how households moved out of homelessness (or experienced repeated homelessness).

It has been argued that gaps in the current knowledge at least partly reflect weaknesses in research methods to date. This critique necessarily raises the issue of the allocation of financial resources for rigorous, high quality research on homelessness. Insufficient resources have been allocated to longitudinal studies and the lack of rigorous evaluative evidence of the effectiveness of expensive policy initiatives is also a key area for concern. Government funded research programmes, in particular, must be underpinned by adequate budgets to fund high quality, scientifically robust studies. This is especially important for policy evaluation and there is an evident need for longer-term evaluations of the impact of policy and practice interventions.

The review also highlighted the limitations of research focused exclusively on particular groups and the need for more work which compares the housing trajectories of different groups. Single and statutory homeless groups tend to be treated separately in research (and practice). There have been very few studies which embrace all households/individuals affected by homelessness.

A great deal of research has been conducted on homelessness. While there is a need to continue to monitor change, it is also important to try to ensure that future research resources are directed towards filling the gaps in the existing research evidence base and providing a more rigorous evidence base for policy decisions. There is scope for improved co-ordination of research within Scotland and across the United Kingdom. There is also a need for improved integration of homelessness research and 'housing' research, rather than homelessness being viewed as a distinct phenomenon. For example, a broad-ranging study of housing careers (incorporating homelessness and a range of difficult housing circumstances) could facilitate a better understanding of homelessness as part of a continuum of housing circumstances.

Similarly, homelessness policy and practice could be better integrated with wider housing policy and practice. For example housing and homelessness interventions need to respond flexibly to trends in household formation if structural homelessness is to be addressed. In order to tackle homelessness effectively, both preventative and responsive policy interventions are required. Policy responses need to acknowledge the complexity and diversity of pathways through homelessness and to provide an appropriate, targeted, range of solutions. Ultimately, the key to eradicating homelessness lies in the eradication of poverty and poor housing conditions. However, a number of specific policy issues arise from this review of the evidence on pathways through homelessness.

First, the evident high risk of extended and damaging homelessness experiences for young people suggests that prevention of youth homelessness is a key area for urgent policy action.

Second, there is clear evidence that UK pathways through homelessness are strongly mediated by the operation of the homelessness legislation, most particularly whether homeless households are considered to be in priority need of housing or not. This distinction between priority need and non-priority need in the homelessness legislation should be removed, so that all citizens are treated on an equal basis in terms of their opportunities to gain access to required housing and support services. Finally, there is virtually no published research evidence on the potential for user empowerment in homelessness policy and practice. Supported by adequate resources, the meaningful engagement of homeless and formerly homeless people in research, policy and practice might be a helpful starting point for improving our understanding of pathways through homelessness.

References

- Anderson, I. (1994) *Access to housing for low income single people*. Centre for Housing Policy, University of York.
- Anderson, I. (1999b) Young single people and access to social housing, pp35-49, in Rugg, J. (ed) *Young people, housing and social policy in contemporary Britain*. London: Routledge
- Anderson, I. and Douglas, A. (1998) *The development of foyers in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Scottish Homes.
- Anderson, I., Kemp, P., and Quilgars, D., (1993), *Single Homeless People*, London: HMSO
- Anderson, I., and Morgan, J. (1997) *Social housing for single people? A study of local policy and practice*. Research Report No. 1, Housing Policy and Practice Unit, University of Stirling.
- Anderson, I. and Quilgars, D. (1995) *Foyers for young people: evaluation of a pilot initiative*. Centre for Housing Policy, University of York.
- Bines, W., (1994), *The health of single homeless people*. Centre for Housing Policy, University of York.
- Bowes, A., Dar, N. and Sim, D. (1998) *Too white too rough and too many problems. A study of Pakistani housing in Britain*. Research Report 3, Housing Policy and Practice Unit, University of Stirling.
- Bramley, G. (1993) Explaining the incidence of statutory homelessness in England, *Housing Studies*, 8(2), pp128-147.
- Breugel, I., and Smith, J. (1999) *Taking Risks: An analysis of the risks of homelessness for young people in London*. London: Safe in the City.
- Burrows, R. (1997) The social distribution of the homelessness experience, in Burrows, R., Pleace, N., and Quilgars, D. (eds) *Homelessness and social policy*. London: Routledge.
- Burrows, R., Pleace, N., and Quilgars, D. (eds) (1997) *Homelessness and social policy*, London: Routledge.
- Craig, T., Hodson, S., Woodward, S. and Richardson, S. (1996) *Off to a bad start: a longitudinal study of homeless young people in London*. London: The Mental Health Foundation.
- Crane, M. (1998), *The Prevention and Alleviation of Homelessness Among Older People*. Centre for Ageing and Rehabilitation Studies, University of Sheffield.
- Crane, M. (1999) *Understanding Older Homeless People: Their circumstances, problems and needs*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Evans, Anwen. (1999), *They think I don't exist: the hidden nature of rural homelessness*. London: Crisis.
- Evans, Angela. (1999), Rationing device or passport to social housing? The operation of the homelessness legislation in Britain in the 1990s, in Hutson, S., and Clapham, D., (eds), *Homelessness: Public Policies and Private Troubles*. London: Cassell.
- Evans, R., Smith, N., Bryson, C. and Austin, N. (1994) *The code of guidance on homelessness in Scotland. Local authority policies and practice*. Edinburgh: Scottish Office Central Research Unit.
- Fitzpatrick, S., (1999), *Pathways to Independence: The experience of young homeless people*. Edinburgh: Scottish Homes.
- Fitzpatrick, S. (2000a) *Young homeless people*. London: Routledge.
- Fitzpatrick, S., (2000b), 'Housing and young single people', in Anderson, I. and Sim, D., (eds), (2000), *Social exclusion and housing: context and challenges*. Coventry: CIH.

- Fitzpatrick, S., Kemp, P., and Klinker, S. (2000) *Single Homelessness: An Overview of Research in Britain*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Ford, J. (1993) Mortgage possession, *Housing Studies*, 8 (4), 227-40.
- Ford, J. (1997) Mortgage arrears, mortgage possessions and homelessness, in Burrows, R., Pleace, N., and Quilgars, D. (eds) *Homelessness and social policy*. London: Routledge.
- Ford, J. (1999) Home ownership, mortgage possession and homelessness: public policies and private troubles, in Hutson, S., and Clapham, D. (eds) *Homelessness: public policies and private troubles*. London: Cassell.
- Goodman, A., Johnson, P. and Webb, S. (1997) *Inequality in the UK*. Oxford University Press.
- Hague, G. (1999) Women and domestic violence policy, pp 131-148 in Watson, S. and Doyal, L. (eds) *Engendering social policy*. Buckingham: Open University.
- Harrison, M. (1999) Theorising homelessness and 'race', chapter six, pp101-121, in Kennet, P. and Marsh, A. (1999) *Homelessness: exploring the new terrain*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Harvey, B. (1999) Models for resettlement for the homeless in the European Union, chapter twelve, pp267-292 in Kennet, P. and Marsh, A. (1999) *Homelessness: exploring the new terrain*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Hutson, S., and Clapham, D., (eds) (1999) *Homelessness: Public Policies and Private Troubles*, London: Cassell.
- Jarvis, S. and Jenkins, S. (1998) Income and poverty dynamics in Great Britain, Chapter Nine, pp145-160, in Leisering, L. and Walker, R. (eds) *The dynamics of modern society: poverty, politics and welfare*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Jones, G. (1993) *Young people in and out of the housing market*. Edinburgh: Centre for Educational Sociology, University of Edinburgh.
- Jones, G. (1995) *Leaving Home*, Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Kemp, P. (1997) Characteristics of single homeless people, England, in Burrows, R., Pleace, N., and Quilgars, D. (eds) *Homelessness and social policy*. London: Routledge.
- Kemp, P., et al. (forthcoming) *Structural Trends and Homelessness: A Quantitative Analysis*. Study for Scottish Executive on behalf of the Homelessness Task Force.
- Keogal, Melmaid and Burnham, (1995), 'Childhood risk factors for homelessness among homeless adults', *American Journal of Public Health*, 84, 1642-1649.
- Kershaw, A., Singleton, N., and Meltzer, H. (2000) *Survey of the health and well-being of homeless people in Glasgow*. London: ONS/HMSO.
- Klinker, S., Fitzpatrick, S., Mitchell, F., Dean, J. and Burns, N. (2000) *A review of single homelessness research: research summaries*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Klee, H., and Reid, P. (1998) Drug use among the young homeless coping through self-medication, *Health*, 2 (2), 115-34.
- Leisering, L. and Walker, R. (eds) (1998) *The dynamics of modern society: poverty, politics and welfare*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Maginn, A., Frew, R., O'Regan, S. and Kodz, J. (2000) *Stepping stones: an evaluation of foyers and other schemes serving the housing and labour needs of young people*. London: HMSO.
- Metraux, S., and Culhane, D. (1999) Family dynamics, housing, and recurring homelessness among women in New York City homeless shelters, *Journal-of-Family-Issues*, 20(3), 371-396.
- North, C., and Smith, M. (1993) 'A Comparison of Homeless Men and Women: Different Populations, Different Needs', *Community Mental Health Journal*, 29(5), 423-31.
- O'Callaghan, B., Dominian, L., with Evans, A., Dix, J., Smith, P., Williams, P., and Zimmeck, M. (1996) *Study of homeless applicants*, London: HMSO.
- Pawson, H. (2000) *A Profile of Homelessness in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Scottish Homes.
- Piliavin, I., Sosin, M., Westerfelt, A., and Matsueda, R. (1993) The Duration of Homeless Careers - An Exploratory-Study, *Social Service Review*, 67 (4), 576-598.
- Piliavin, I., Wright, B., Mare, R., and Westerfelt, A. (1996) Exits from and returns to homelessness, *Social Service Review* 70 (1), 33-57.
- Quilgars, D. (2000) *Low intensity support services: a systematic research review*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Randall, G. (1998) *Rough Sleeping: a review of the research*, London: HMSO.
- Room, G. (ed) (1995) *Beyond the threshold: the measurement and analysis of social exclusion*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Scottish Executive (2000c) Scottish Household Survey, see www.scotland.gov.uk/shs

- Shaw, I., Bloor, M. and Roberts, S. (1996) *Without shelter: estimating rooflessness in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Scottish Office.
- Sheldon, T. (2000) *The use of systematic reviews in health policy research*. Paper presented to the Housing Studies Association conference, University of York, April.
- Smith, J. (1999) Gender and homelessness, in Hutson, S., and Clapham, D., (eds), *Homelessness: Public Policies and Private Troubles*, London: Cassell.
- Smith, J., Gilford, S., and O'Sullivan, A. (1998) *The family background of homeless young people*. London: Family Policy Studies Centre.
- Smith, J., Gilford, S., Kirkby, P., O'Reilly, A., and Ing, P. (1996) *Bright lights and homelessness among young people in our cities*. Stafford University, Housing and Community Research Unit & National Council of YMCAs.
- Third, H., and Yanetta, A., (2000), *Homelessness in Scotland: a summary of research evidence*, Edinburgh: Scottish Homes.
- Tomas, A. and Dittmar, H. (1995) The experience of homeless women: an exploration of housing histories and the meaning of home, *Housing Studies* 10(4), pp493-517.
- Vincent, J., Deacon, A. and Walker, R. (1995), *Homeless single men: roads to resettlement?* Aldershot: Avebury.
- Walker, R. (1995) The dynamics of poverty and social exclusion, Chapter Six, pp102-128, in Room, G. (ed) *Beyond the threshold: the measurement and analysis of social exclusion*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Walker, R. and Leisering, L. (1998) New tools: towards a dynamic science of modern society, Chapter Two, pp17-33, in Leisering, L. and Walker, R., *The dynamics of modern society*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Wong, Y., Culhane, D., and Kuhn, R. (1997) Predictors of Exit and Re-entry among Family Shelter Users in New York City, *Social Service Review*, 71, 441-62.
- Yanetta, A., Third, H., and Anderson, A. (1999) *National Monitoring and Interim Evaluation of the Rough Sleepers Initiative in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive Central Research Unit.

Acknowledgements

This paper draws on work funded by Scottish Homes and published as Anderson, I. and Tulloch, D (2000). *Pathways through homelessness: a review of the research evidence*. Homelessness Task Force Research Series. Edinburgh: Scottish Homes. Financial support from Scottish Homes and the intellectual contribution of Derick Tulloch are gratefully acknowledged. This version of the paper was completed during a period of sabbatical leave supported by Stirling University, the Carnegie Foundation, the Institute for Social Research at Swinburne University of Technology (Melbourne, Victoria) and the Urban Frontiers Programme at the University of Western Sydney. The contents of the paper remain the responsibility of the author.

Correspondence to:

Isobel Anderson
 Housing Policy and Practice Unit
 University of Stirling
 Stirling FK9 4LA
 Scotland, UK

isobel.anderson@stir.ac.uk

Tel: +44 1786 467718
 Fax: +44 1786 466323

6 Anderson, I Dr. Pathways through homelessness: towards a dynamic analysis, Housing Policy and Practice Unit, University of Stirling, Stirling, 2001. 7 ibid. 8 Includes all non-British white ethnic groups. 9 Kemp, P.A et al. Housing advice services prevent homelessness through a number of interventions, including: providing factual and practical information about available services and housing options giving advice on housing and related problems, such as Housing Benefit and rent arrears, and assisting people to find solutions carrying out casework and advocacy on a client's behalf, with landlords and statutory services, and helping people to achieve their legal rights, sometimes by representing them at possession hearings. Isobel Anderson Services for Homeless People in Europe: Supporting Pathways out of Homelessness? 41. Eoin O'Sullivan Welfare States and Homelessness. Deborah Quilgars Youth Homelessness. Andr  Gachet A Service Providers' Perspective on Research on Homelessness. Antonio Tosi Coping with Diversity. Reflections on Homelessness in Research in Europe. We work towards eradicating homelessness in the City of Tshwane. Freedom, we believe, is only as real as the lowest citizen's access to basic health care, education and other basic amenities. Rehana Vally; Department of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Pretoria. Through our teaching, our research and our community engagement we are committed to transform inhumane situations and environments into environments in which all our people, all Africans, can experience their full humanity and life as full human beings. Andrew Phillips; University of South Africa. Pathways out of homelessness is the focus, the interest, and the commitment of the collaborative research project described in this Research Report. It is a research project with a difference.