

## **Myths and Facts about Homelessness**

- **Fact** - The main reasons for people becoming homeless are relationship breakdown and high cost of accommodation.
- **Fact** – The main causes of homelessness cases last year were:
  - Dispute with family/friends/partner 54% of all cases.
  - Loss of accommodation due to Notice or Possession - 19% of all cases.
- **Fact** – Thousands of homeless people are refused housing every year
- **Fact** – Escaping Homelessness is about more than a roof
- **Myth** – If you are homeless and vulnerable there is plenty of support
- **Myth** – If you are homeless you will be automatically housed
- **Myth** - Anyone living in an overcrowded, imperfect housing without a fitted kitchen or patio is homeless.
- **Myth** – "If you are ill, have children, or are old, the council has to house you"

## **Some key facts**

**CRISIS** published, amongst many others, the following statistics in relation to Homelessness:

- Estimates point to around 380,000 single homeless people in Great Britain – staying in Hostels, B&B, Squats and floors.
- Family conflict is the main immediate cause amongst over 60% of homeless young people.
- 69% of the young homeless people aged 16-25 surveyed by the Mental Health Foundation have mental health problems.

## **Some other inaccurate assumptions**

- **“The Council have to find me a house”**

The duty of the Council varies depending on whether an applicant comes into a priority category, and whether the applicant has done anything wrong that has caused the situation. If you do not come into a priority category you will be offered Advice and Assistance. If you do come into a priority category you will be offered temporary accommodation while you wait for an offer of suitable permanent accommodation. If you are found to have done something that has led to you becoming homeless then you will only be offered a short period in temporary accommodation to enable you to look for accommodation for yourself

➤ **“Housing Benefit will pay the rent and I will need money for food”**

Managing a tenancy both in terms of cost, finances and living is difficult and expensive. If you're entitled to claim Housing Benefit this may help to pay for some or all your rent and council tax.

It will not cover the cost for example of:

- Heating.
- Lighting.
- Water.
- Food.
- Living expenses.

➤ **“Housing Benefit will pay for it”**

Actually if you are under 25 years of age you are restricted on the amount of money that you will be able to claim and you may need to top up the rent money. If you get a flat in the Private Rented Sector the average rent for a one bed property is £80 a week, while £45 a week in Housing Benefit is the total amount you can claim if you are under 25 years of age.