

Report to Community and Protective Services Committee

To: Chair and Members
Community and Protective Services Committee
From: Kevin Dickins, Deputy City Manager, Social and Health
Development
Subject: Data Regarding the Relocation of Homeless Individuals
Date: January 29, 2024

That, on the recommendation of the Deputy City Manager Social and Health Development, that this Data Regarding the Relocation of Homeless Individuals report and the Snapshot of Homelessness in London (attached as Appendix A) **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Executive Summary

That the Municipal Council, meeting held on August 29, 2023, it was resolved;

h) that the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to provide to the appropriate standing committee the existing data that is available with respect to this matter, including the reliability of the information.

Municipal Council Resolution attached as Appendix B to this report.

The purpose of this report is to provide existing data that is available with respect to the matter of relocation of homeless individuals from their home communities under false pretences or against their will, including the reliability of the information.

In addition, this report will present a community homelessness snapshot attached as Appendix A, which gives a preliminary overview of some of the notable components related to homelessness in London. This report will also outline some of the key functions of an active By-Name List (BNL) and the factors that impact and influence frequent changes to the data on the BNL.

Linkage to the Corporate Strategic Plan

This report aligns with the strategic areas of focus in the 2023-2027 City of London Strategic Plan. The City of London Strategic Plan (2023-2027) identifies housing and homelessness as a key area of focus, and housing and homelessness work is identified throughout the Strategic Plan, impacting all areas of life for Londoners.

Some key outcomes that are supported through the investments outlined in this report include:

- The City of London demonstrates leadership and builds partnerships to increase quality, affordable, and supportive housing options.
- London has a robust community system of health, homelessness, housing stability services, policies, procedures and by-laws in place to support individuals and families at risk of or experiencing homelessness or in precarious housing consistent with Council's recognition of the health and homelessness emergency.
- The City of London enhances the confidence of Indigenous Peoples by furthering truth and reconciliation efforts.
- The City of London is a leader in becoming an equitable and inclusive community.
- London is an affordable and supportive community for individuals and families.

- The City of London demonstrates leadership by taking meaningful actions to address and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, gender-based violence, and sexual violence.

Housing Stability for All: The Housing Stability Action Plan for the City of London (2019-2024)

London's Homeless Prevention and Housing Plan, Housing Stability for All: The Housing Stability Action Plan for the City of London (Housing Stability for All Plan), is the approved guiding document for homeless prevention and housing in the City of London and was developed in consultation with Londoners.

Analysis

1.0 Background Information

1.1 Previous Reports Related to this Matter

- Housing Stability for All Plan 2022 Update (CPSC: May 24, 2023)
- Housing Stability for All Plan 2020 Update (CPSC: May 31, 2022)
- Housing Stability for All Plan - Mid-Year Update (CPSC: September 21, 2021)
- Housing Stability for All Plan 2020 Update (CPSC: May 11, 2021)
- Municipal Council Approval of the Housing Stability Plan 2019 to 2024 (CPSC: December 3, 2020)
- Municipal Council Approval of the Housing Stability Plan 2019 to 2024 (CPSC: December 3, 2019)
- Homeless Prevention and Housing Plan 5 Year Review and Update (CPSC: June 17, 2019)
- London's Homeless Prevention System Homeless Management Information System Cargo Management Consulting Inc. Contract Amendment #2 (CPSC: February 21, 2018)
- London's Homeless Prevention System Homelessness Partnering Strategy Homeless Individuals and Families Information System – Data Provision Agreement (CPSC: September 12, 2017)
- London's Homeless Prevention System Contract Amendment Cargo Management Consulting Inc. Homeless Management Information System Implementation Consultant (CPSC: September 12, 2017)
- Homeless Individuals and Families Information System Community Coordinator Funding Agreement (CPSC: March 28, 2017)
- London's Homeless Prevention System Contract Award Request for Proposal 16-56 Homeless Management Information System Implementation Consultant (CPSC: January 24, 2017)

2.1 Data Regarding Homelessness in London

Data about homelessness in London is captured through two separate systems. These systems are the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) and the Customer Relations Management system (CRM). It is noted that this data is not an absolute number identifying people experiencing homelessness. The systems generate data based on someone's active engagement with a service provider or the City and is the most available data that service managers can access. While the total number of people experiencing homelessness at any given time is a number that is informed through the information collected in the system, it is recognized there will always be individuals not captured in the moment. Homelessness data in general is also not reviewed or analyzed in short intervals, but rather over periods of time to monitor trends and track changes. While some functions assist in day-to-day operations for service providers, there larger demographic information is best suited for periodic review. One way to support the understanding of homelessness in a community is through the use of an active BNL and will be discussed later in this report.

HIFIS, developed by the Government of Canada, is a cloud based shared database to support the day-to-day operational activities of the City and City funded service providers who are actively working with people experiencing homelessness. The purpose of the HIFIS database enables participating service providers within the same community to access, collect, and share local real-time homelessness data to ensure individuals and families accessing services are prioritized and referred to appropriate services at the correct times supporting an individual toward achieving housing stability. Data that can be retrieved from HIFIS includes demographic information, move-ins, and service involvement information (example: shelter capacity). Service providers use HIFIS to work with people in a range of locations including on the streets through outreach, in encampments, in emergency shelters and in people's homes.

Customer facing City of London programs including Coordinated Access, Housing Access Centre and Coordinated Informed Response use the CRM system to track contacts and follow up. Contacts in CRM would include members of the public seeking services related to homelessness, housing or making a service request for a response from the Coordinated Informed Response team or complaint. CRM data includes contact tracking for phone and email inquiries as well as mapping of encampment locations.

In both systems there is information that is collected in a standard way. However, this data has limitations which include:

- Data will not appear in HIFIS or CRM for people who have not accessed the service providers who input data into these systems.
- Data points that are not collected as a part of the existing "standard practice" will have limited or no data available.
- People experiencing homelessness may decline consent and/or not disclose information as all information in both systems is self-reported.

A snapshot summary of 2023 homelessness data in London, only using information available through these systems, the Snapshot of Homelessness in London, is attached to this report in [Appendix A](#).

2.2 Data Regarding Relocation of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness to London

CRM data tells us that 663 individuals from outside the City of London contacted Coordinated Access (City of London led service) seeking services in 2023. **There is no reliable data in the CRM system** that corroborates if these individuals actually came to London or that they came to London under false pretenses or against their will. This data simply indicates that people made contact seeking services, and conversely the City of London does not have data on the number of people from London that sought services in other communities.

There is no reliable data available in HIFIS regarding the relocation of these or other individuals experiencing homelessness to London. There is currently not a standard practice used by all agencies for collecting information about people coming into London under false pretences, against their will or details about their relocation from other communities.

The only available data related to length of time in London is through the City funded **Community Outreach Program**. It is noted that this information is not a mandatory requirement and could be a contributing factor to a low response rate to this question in HIFIS at 31%. In 2023, the community outreach program had 4364 interactions with 1357 interactions self identifying a length of time in London.

The Community Outreach Program interaction data, which does not identify the number of unique individuals indicates the following:

Community Outreach Program	2023
Total interactions	4364
Self identified length of time in London	1357
Self identified less than 6 months	55
Self identified 6 months to 2 years	56
Self identified more than 2 years	1246

Based on the outreach interaction data, this tells us that 4% of the interactions indicated they have been in London less than 6 months. Civic Administration has no confidence in this data to be able to determine if individuals who self identified their length of time in London are here against their will or under false pretences.

Civic Administration undertakes a continuous improvement approach to data collection and if directed, can work towards implementing a plan to collect this information in a standard way in HIFIS and/or CRM should council provide direction to do this. These efforts will take time to develop with community partners, implement and monitor before there is a data set to evaluate the impacts of individuals relocating to London under false pretences or against their will. In addition, there will be an unknown administrative burden on existing agencies to collect this information that may impact reliability and timing of data collection.

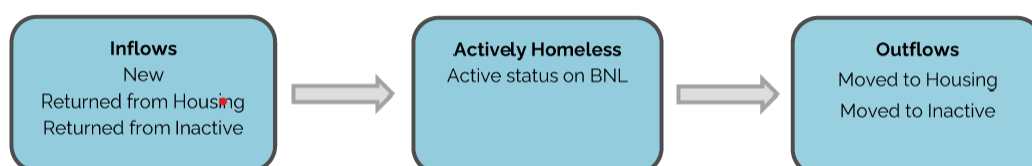
2.3 General Data Related to the By-Name List and Notes from the Homelessness Snapshot

A BNL is defined for the homeless serving sector as a real-time, up-to-date list of all people known to be experiencing homelessness and connecting regularly with available services in the City of London. All Service Managers in Ontario are required to maintain a BNL that meets the provincial requirements. In order to better understand current need in communities, the provincial BNL criteria identifies individuals as being “active” as anyone who has accessed a system service over the past 90 days and individuals who have signed explicit consent to be in the HIFIS system. Should an individual decline consent, they are not included in any of the BNL data.

The objectives of establishing a community BNL are:

- 1) Better understand the characteristics of people experiencing homelessness and pathways into and out of homelessness to identify trends and improve service delivery and effectiveness;
- 2) Connect people experiencing homelessness to services and supports they need;
- 3) Improve access to services and supports including where possible, identifying and addressing barriers experienced by indigenous communities and populations that are at higher risk of experiencing homelessness;
- 4) Monitor progress related to the Homeless Prevention Program outcomes of addressing and reducing homelessness including chronic homelessness.

In order to monitor progress, communities must also track the movement of people on the BNL to better understand the number of people actively homeless. This is done through tracking individuals through inflow and outflow to have an actively homeless list.



An active BNL is made up of several factors including inflow and outflow to homelessness. Individuals who are new to homelessness are one of two criteria used to understand inflow and additions to the BNL for active homelessness in our community. The other

criteria used for inflow into homelessness are individuals who have returned to homelessness from housing and those who have returned from inactive status as they have reconnected with a system service.

Outflow from a BNL is made up of two factors that impact the active BNL. These include removing people who are housed and people who have gone inactive from the BNL.

The ability to track individuals as they progress through their homelessness journey allows a community to more effectively understand and provide access to and support individuals while working to reduce the variety of barriers people experiencing homelessness face.

In completing the data analysis for the snapshot attached as Appendix A, there are a number of pieces of information that Civic Administration is bringing forward of note.

The 350+ individuals identified in Appendix A as experiencing unsheltered homelessness is based on individuals who have actively connected with the system through community reporting and HIFIS. The HIFIS report of unsheltered individuals, is an average from Jan 1 through Dec 31. At this time, data to fully capture unsheltered individuals has its challenges due to a number of factors including those of consent or engagement in services.

The City of London snapshot data is related to the total number of individuals who identified as Indigenous on the BNL. This number in 2023 identifies that 19% of those on the BNL identified as indigenous. This percentage is being noted by civic administration as an underrepresentation of the actual number of individuals who identify as indigenous and who are experiencing homelessness. It is generally accepted that approximately 30%+ of individuals experiencing homelessness identify as indigenous. Some considerations for why this number is lower on the data collected in HIFIS is due to the likelihood of individuals not self-identifying as indigenous. Many factors could prevent someone from identifying as indigenous. These may include past and ongoing experiences of racism, trauma associated with ongoing effects of colonization, etc.

The second note on the snapshot data that civic administration would like to highlight is the age breakdown of individuals on the active BNL. It is noted that 12% of the active BNL are individuals 60+ with the majority of the individuals on the by name list being between 25-39 at 37% and 40-59 also at 37%. This data tells us that most individuals who are experiencing homelessness and regularly connecting with system supports are between the ages of 25 and 59.

The final note on the snapshot data that civic administration would like to highlight is the gender breakdown of the active BNL. It is noted that 61% of the individuals on the active BNL are male with 36% being female. Those who identify as Gender queer, gender non-confirming, trans female, trans male, transgender, and two-spirit represent 2%. Civic administration believes this number is also an underrepresentation. This is likely due to past and ongoing discrimination. Civic administration will be working with the community in 2024 to try and improve the data quality on the gender breakdown in our community.

3.0 Key Issues and Considerations

There are several factors to consider when requesting service providers collect new information from people experiencing homelessness. The HIFIS database is shared across multiple service providers and as such there are time and training considerations when implementing new data requirements. Data quality is reliant on service providers using the HIFIS system and consistently inputting accurate data, as well as individuals who consent to be part of the system self-report this information.

The CRM system is only an internal database that is able to track interactions directly with the Housing Stability programs noted above. Data quality for this system is reliant on individuals contacting the City of London and accurately self-reporting any information being requested.

Further considerations include whether the information is required to support individuals experiencing homelessness to move towards housing stability or to ensure that system planning is meeting the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness in London.

Required data points for either system should align with work underway and consider overall organizations capacity, people with lived experience and the front-line staff. Front line staff often must balance data collection requirements and engaging with individuals in a manner that is trust building and respectful in a range of environments and often during periods of crisis.

In relation to the active BNL, Civic Administration continues to align with the provincial requirements of a BNL as required by the Homeless Prevention Program. These include improving the measurement and understanding of inflow into homelessness and outflow from homelessness to create an active BNL. In understanding these factors that impact the total number of people experiencing homelessness the City of London will be able to assess current supports provided and look for ways to improve and reduce an individuals experience of homelessness by connecting them to the proper available supports, services and housing.

Conclusion

The collection of the Data is reliant on service providers using the HIFIS system and consistently inputting accurate updated information, provided that individuals who consent to be part of the system self-report this information. Civic Administration does not have a high level of confidence in the available data about relocation of homeless individuals from their home communities under false pretences or against their will to London. Should council direct civic administration, a plan can be put into place to collect data regarding this matter and a report brought back to Council once sufficient data is available.

The data provided in Appendix A is a snapshot of some of the available homelessness data and does not reflect any relocation information.

Prepared by: Julia Rennick, Manager Housing Stability Services, Social and Health Development

Submitted by: Craig Cooper, Director, Housing Stability Services, Social and Health Development

Recommended by: Kevin Dickins, Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development

Snapshot of Homelessness in London

Who experienced homelessness in our community?

The City maintains a comprehensive list called a “By-Name List”, of every person in the community actively experiencing homelessness. Using information collected and shared with their consent, each person on the list has a file that includes their name, homeless history, health, and housing needs. Maintaining a by-name list allows communities to track the ever-changing size and composition of their homeless population.

Current active number of individuals experiencing homelessness

We continue to see a range of **1,700 – 2,100**. Approximately **600** of these individuals are “**high acuity**”.



People experience homelessness in different ways, and each individual has different circumstances and needs which can **change** on a day-to-day basis.

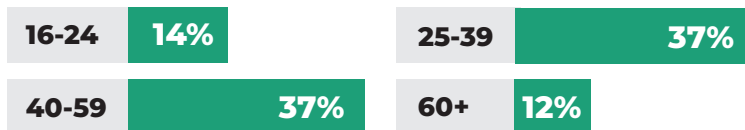


12% were **chronically homeless***

* homeless for at least six months over the past year, or experiencing homelessness intermittently over the past three years, with a cumulative duration of 18 months)



Age



19% identified as **Indigenous**

(this number is known to be higher as reflected by Indigenous agencies and organizations working in the community)



Gender



** Gender queer, gender non-confirming, trans female, trans male, transgender, and two-spirit.
Unknown or didn't respond: 1%



1% were confirmed **Veterans**

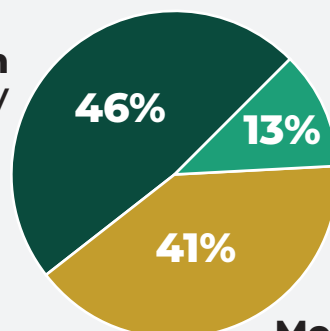
Based on December 31st, 2023 active by-name list data

Support needs



76% of the individuals experiencing homelessness completed an assessment to determine their required level of support to achieve sustainable housing.

High acuity



Low acuity

Moderate acuity

Based on December 31st, 2023 active by-name list data

[“Acuity” refers to the level of supports an individual needs]

Unsheltered Homelessness

People who have **actively connected** with the system.



350+ individuals living **unsheltered** – meaning they did not stay in an emergency shelter at all



103* active **encampments**



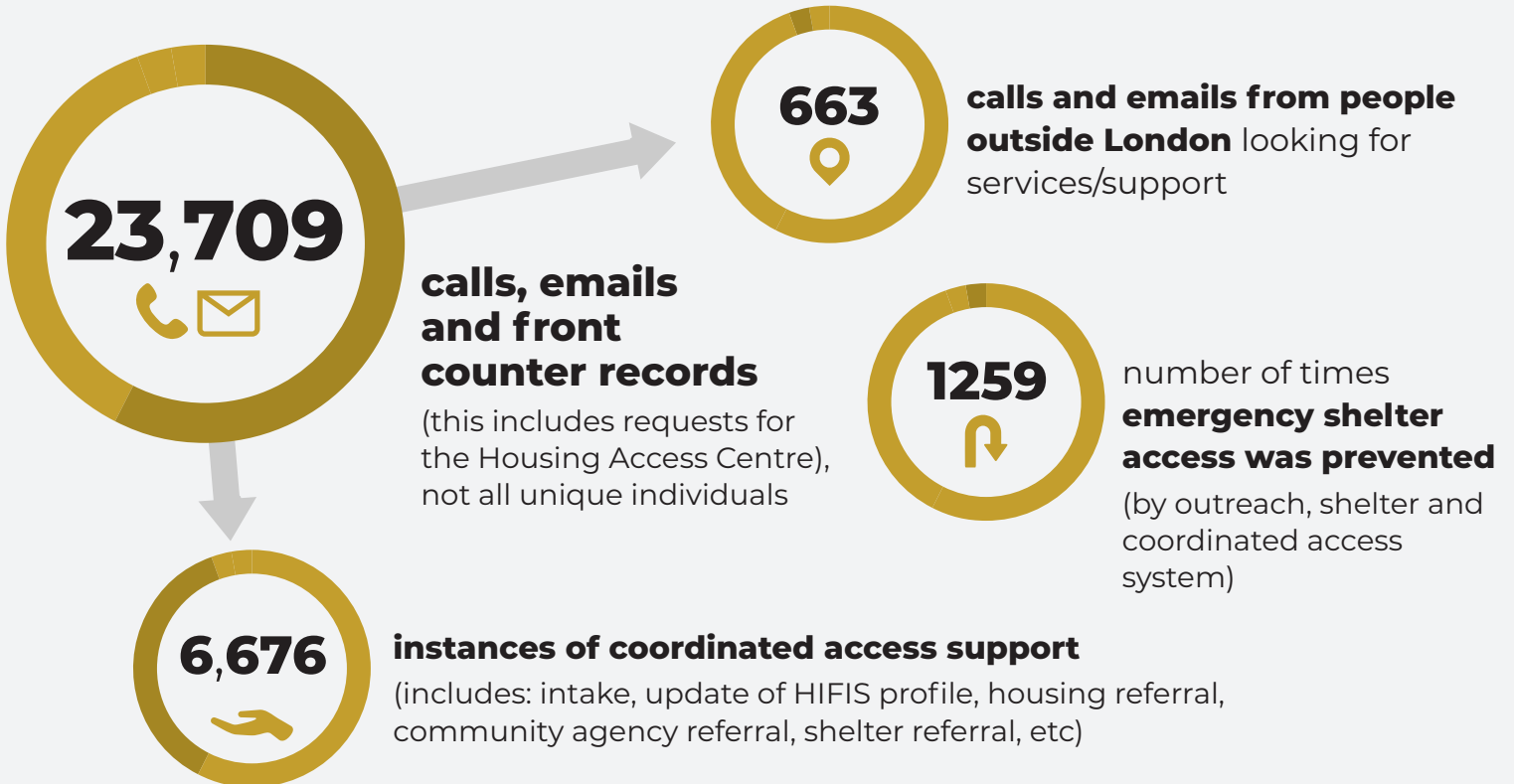
3,527 responses to **encampment complaints**

**This is the highest number of encampments, reported in November 2023, and does not reflect the total number of tents.*

From January to December 2023

Connecting with services and programs

The City operates a coordinated access system, where individuals or organizations can reach services and programs across the city. Through a central intake system, individuals are assessed and triaged to the appropriate supports.



From January to December 2023



Rental Market

1%**vacancy rate**

for units at or below average market rent

2.1%**rental market****vacancy rate**
in London**\$1,584****Average****monthly rental** for
one-bedroom unit

The City maintains a **Rent Geared to Income Wait List**. 



6,982 Number of
active applications
as of **December 31**.



419 households
were housed from the list
as of **December 31**.

For additional information on the City's Coordinated Access process including intake, assessment and resource matching please visit:

https://london.ca/sites/default/files/2023-01/CofL_Housing_CoordinatedAccessSystem_Web%5B11748%5D.pdf



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August 30, 2023

Mayor J. Morgan

K. Dickins
Deputy City Manager, Social and Health Development

I hereby certify that the Municipal Council, at its meeting held on August 29, 2023 resolved:

That the following actions be taken with respect to the Health and Homelessness Whole of Community System Response;

- a) the August Progress Update – Health & Homelessness Whole of Community System Response Report BE RECEIVED for information;
- b) a one-time Single Source contract agreement with Ark Aid Mission Services in the total estimated cost of \$130,000., to support continued services at 696 Dundas from 2:30pm-9:30pm daily from August 1, 2023, through September 30, 2023, BE APPROVED;
- c) a one-time contract amendment agreement to Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) at a total estimated cost of \$70,000. to support the Coffee House drop-in program with additional evening hours per day from August 1, 2023, through September 30, 2023, BE APPROVED;
- d) a one-time contract amendment of existing agreements to London Cares for the continuation of service provision in Encampment Service Depots for a six (6)-week extension from August 14, 2023, to September 30, 2023, the total estimated cost of \$52,000, BE APPROVED as follows:
 - i) for food total estimated cost \$42,000;
 - ii) for water total estimated cost \$5,000;
 - iii) for comfort stations total estimated cost \$5,000;
- e) the Civic Administration BE AUTHORIZED to undertake all administrative acts which are necessary in relation to this project;
- f) the approval given herein BE CONDITIONAL upon the Corporation amending a Purchase of Service Agreement; and
- g) the Mayor and Government Relations staff BE DIRECTED to take the following actions:
 - i) undertake immediate advocacy efforts with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Ontario Big City Mayors Caucus, and the Government of Ontario to develop a united policy condemning the relocation of homeless individuals under false pretense or against their will;
 - ii) further work with those partners to undertake the processes to stop this practice, including the development of proper levels of funding by the senior levels of government for adequate homelessness and supportive housing services, and appropriate consequences for organizations or individuals found to be engaging in such activities;

iii) work with the province to develop a program by which those released from hospitals or detention centres are provided proper discharge planning that includes transportation back to their home communities; and

h) that the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to provide to the appropriate standing committee the existing data that is available with respect to this matter, including the reliability of the information.

it being noted that the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee received a communication dated August 8, 2023 from Deputy Mayor S. Lewis and Councillor E. Pelosa and a communication dated August 14, 2023 from F. Moore, President, M. Rioux, Vice-President and J. Thompson, Executive Director, LIFE*SPIN with respect to this matter. (4.1/21/SPPC) (2023-S14)



M. Schulthess
City Clerk
/hw

cc: F. Moore, President, M. Rioux, Vice-President and J. Thompson, Executive Director, LIFE*SPIN
L. Livingstone, City Manager
S. Mathers, Deputy City Manager, Planning and Economic Development
K. Scherr, Deputy City Manager, Environment and Infrastructure
A. L. Barbon, Deputy City Manager, Finance Supports
B. Card, Deputy City Manager, Legal Services
C. Smith, Deputy City Manager, Neighbourhood and Community-Wide Services
J. Paradis, Deputy City Manager, Enterprise Supports
A. Thompson, Manager, Government and External Relations