Acknowledgements

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville would like to firstly acknowledge the forty-four participants who took time to answer the homelessness enumeration survey, sharing their personal story and information in the #ShareYourStoryLG questionnaire. Sharing your personal journey will assist community agencies to better provide services, and meet the needs of persons experiencing homelessness.

A special thank you to the following community organizations that used staff time and resources to participate in and support the enumeration:

Brockville and Area Food Bank
Brockville General Hospital
Canadian Red Cross
Children’s Mental Health of Leeds and Grenville
Connect Youth Inc.
Country Roads Community Health Centre
Employment and Education Centre
Family and Children’s Services of Lanark, Leeds and Grenville
Guthrie House
Homeward Bound
John Howard Society
Lanark, Leeds and Grenville Addictions and Mental Health
Leeds and Grenville Interval House
Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit
Loaves and Fishes
Merrickville District Community Health Centre
Ontario Disability Support Program
Rideau Community Health Services
The Corporation of the City of Brockville - Brockville Memorial Civic Centre
The Corporation of the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, Community and Social Services Division, and Corporate Services Division – Geographic Information Systems Department
The Pier Church
Wall Street United Church
The development of Leeds Grenville’s first homelessness enumeration was a result of a Steering Committee being formed by various community agencies and their staff. Leeds Grenville appreciates the agencies and the staff that took time away from their own work to participate in, and provide their expertise to this project.

The following individuals and organizations contributed in the development and execution of the #ShareYourStoryLG period prevalence count in Leeds Grenville:

Chris Morrison, The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, (Project Leader)
Mandy Abele, Country Roads Community Health Centre
Tanis Brown, Lanark, Leeds and Grenville District Health Unit
Leigh Bursey, Corporation of the City of Brockville
Loretta Corbeil, Homeward Bound/Employment and Education Centre
Tracy Francis, Salvation Army, Gananoque
David Harvey, Salvation Army, Gananoque
Tammy Herbison, The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
Robyn Holmes, John Howard Society
Michelle Malanka, The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
Pam Moore, Interval House of Leeds and Grenville
Caroline Rigutto, The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
Karen Simpson, Lanark, Leeds and Grenville Addictions and Mental Health
Brittany Smith, Youth Connect Inc.
Debbie Tryon, Community Living North Grenville
Mark Turnbull, Ontario Disability Support Program
Executive Summary

As a part of Ontario’s Poverty Reduction Strategy goal to end homelessness by 2025, a province-wide enumeration of homeless persons was undertaken for the first time in Ontario. A period prevalence count was used for Leeds and Grenville’s enumeration during the week of May 13th to 19th, 2018. A total of 44 surveys were completed, with 30 meeting the provincial criteria for homelessness. The majority of respondents (70%) were considered to be the “hidden homeless”, which are those who were staying temporarily at someone else’s place, but did not have their own house or apartment that they could safely return to. Homeless persons tended to live in the larger cities and towns in Leeds and Grenville, such as Brockville (70%), Kemptville (10%), and Gananoque (6.47%), however, the data may also be skewed by the number of survey locations in some municipalities in the County; some municipalities had limited survey locations, while others had numerous, possibly affecting the number of surveys conducted. It is also possible that homeless persons clustered in the larger centers where services were present, versus in the more rural areas that did not have access to shelters and/or no/low cost food programs.

It is apparent from the demographic data collected that homelessness can affect anyone; the youngest survey respondent was 16, and the oldest was 74. While all age groups were affected by homelessness, youth and young adults made up the majority of survey respondents. Respondent’s gender was almost equally split between males (53.3%), and females (40%), trans female/trans woman (3.3%), and two-spirit (3.3%) respondents. The majority of respondents’ sexual orientations were straight/heterosexual (76.7%), with significant representation from bisexual persons (16.7%), and those whose sexual orientation was not listed (6.7%). Very few visible minorities responded to the survey; 90% of respondents were white, 6.7% were unsure of their racialized identity, and 3.3% were aboriginal.

Social assistance/welfare was the primary source of income for the majority of survey respondents (43.3%), followed by disability benefits (26.7); only 13.3% declared that they had no source of income. Seventeen percent of survey respondents indicated that they were self-employed or employed.

The majority of respondents indicated they had a health problem, or a combination of health problems. The most common health issue that respondents reported was a mental health issue (76.7%), followed by addiction (60.0%), and chronic/acute health condition (56.7%). The majority
of respondents reported suffering from a combination of health issues: 53.3% reported having a mental health condition and addiction (concurrent disorder); 50.0% reported having a mental health and chronic/acute health condition; and 33.3% reported having addiction and chronic/acute health problems.

The greatest number of respondents had been homeless from 4 to 6 months (26.7%), followed by those who had been homeless from 10 to 12 month (23.3%). The period of homelessness measured in this survey was up to 12 months; it is possible that some of the respondents had been homeless for longer than one year and it was not captured in this survey. The majority of respondents (76%) had been homeless from 1 to 3 times during the past year, followed by those who were homeless from 7 to 10 times. Addiction or substance use was the most frequent reason respondents cited for their housing loss (33.3%), followed by unable to pay their rent or mortgage (30.0%), and evicted for another reason (not financial) (30.0%).

This report is available to community agencies and the public; it is the hope that moving forward the data collected can assist in service planning, and to improve our community response to homelessness in Leeds and Grenville. The sharing of personal stories of those experiencing homelessness will be of a benefit in understanding what it means to journey through the housing spectrum.
30
Were counted as homeless
#ShareYourStoryLG

Health Conditions
- Mental Health 77%
- Addiction 60%
- Chronic/Acute Health Conditions 57%
- Physical Disability 33%

- provisionally accommodated: 22
- emergency sheltered: 5
- unsheltered: 3

168
Average # of nights spent homeless in the past year

4,202
Total nights spent homeless in the past year

2018 Homelessness Enumeration in Leeds and Grenville

Gender
- 53% Male
- 40% Female
- 7% Non-Binary

Top Reasons for Housing Loss
- Addiction/substance use: 33.3%
- Unable to pay rent/mortgage: 30.0%
- Evicted for another reason (not financial): 30.0%

Source of Income
- Social Assistance: 43%
- Disability Benefit: 27%
- No income: 13%

Age Distribution
- Age 65+: 3%
- Age 56-64: 9%
- Age 46-55: 19%
- Age 36-45: 12%
- Age 25-35: 25%

Homelessness Can Affect Any Age

Times Homeless in Past 12 Months
- 1x to 3x: 76%
- 4x to 6x: 8%
- 7x to 10x: 16%
Background

In January 2015, the Ontario government established an Expert Advisory Panel on Homelessness to provide advice on how to achieve the goal of ending homelessness under the province’s Poverty Reduction Strategy. The Panel made a number of recommendations, including that the province require local enumeration of people experiencing homelessness. The province passed the *Promoting Affordable Housing Act, 2016*, which requires all Service Managers to conduct an enumeration of people experiencing homelessness in their service area; this resulted in Ontario’s first province-wide enumeration of homeless persons. A standardized set of core data was used to collect a consistent data set. Enumeration data will help the province, local service managers, and agencies better understand the scale and nature of homelessness to prevent, reduce, and end it.

Methodology

A local steering committee was formed in February 2018, consisting of various social agencies throughout Leeds and Grenville, to support and guide the enumeration, with The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, Housing Department, taking the lead. The committee provided input into the survey tool, honorarium, training, and community engagement. Committee members also reached out to local community agencies to garner support for the enumeration, and recommend survey locations in Leeds Grenville.

A Period Prevalence Count (PPC) was used during the week of May 13th – May 19th, 2018 to conduct the enumeration in Leeds and Grenville. A PPC is a coordinated, multi-day count, that captures the incidence of homelessness over a period of time. The PPC method is often used in rural areas where homelessness is less absolute, and more often is experienced as “couch-surfing”. This method focuses on counting persons when they access services or agencies during the enumeration week.

The Survey Tool

The Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) provided a sample survey tool for the required data points. This tool is based upon an internationally recognized homelessness Point-in-Time (PiT) Count tool that was modified from versions used by the
Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (COH) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the United States of America. The committee added three additional questions that would gather data on children and persons with intellectual disabilities experiencing homelessness, as well as a clarification question to determine what town in Leeds and Grenville the respondent considered home. The clarification question was necessary as part of conducting the PPC; respondents may access services in the larger towns and cities within Leeds and Grenville, but reside in another municipality. See Appendix A for the #ShareYourStoryLG survey questionnaire used, and Appendix B for the screening page. Written consent was obtained from survey respondents prior to completing the survey. A local resources pamphlet with information on shelters and food banks, as well as a $5 cash honorarium was provided to all survey respondents.

Enumeration Training

The enumeration was conducted at each agency by their staff. In-person training sessions were offered to community agencies participating in the enumeration during the week of April 23rd, 2018. Agencies had the option to send all staff enumerators, or to send one staff who would then train their own organization. This flexibility was introduced to meet the needs of the diverse agencies participating in the enumeration. Resources such as a mock survey package, and a detailed enumeration guide were also provided.

Limitations

The enumeration is not a census, and should not be considered to be a comprehensive count of all persons experiencing homelessness in Leeds and Grenville. The count is dependent upon a person being homeless during enumeration week, who then accesses a community agency that is participating in the enumeration, and is screened into the survey. Respondents had to be homeless that night to be screened into the survey; some persons may have been recently homeless and then stabilized, so could not be counted during the enumeration week. In addition, participating enumeration locations were limited, or not available in all municipalities located within Leeds and Grenville, which could decrease the count in some areas.
**Survey Locations**

Surveys were conducted at a total of 16 locations throughout Leeds and Grenville, and two locations in municipalities outside of Leeds and Grenville that provide services within Leeds and Grenville boundaries. See Figure 1 below, Homelessness Enumeration Locations, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, for a description of the locations. The complete list has been included in Appendix C.

**Figure 1: Homelessness Enumeration Locations within Leeds and Grenville.**

![Map of Homelessness Enumeration Locations](image)

**“Homeless” Criteria Provincially Defined**

Potential survey participants were identified by community agency staff, and were either screened into the survey, or out, according to very specific provincially defined homelessness criteria. Data was only captured on persons that were unsheltered, emergency sheltered, or
provisionally accommodated. Persons who were precariously housed, or at risk of homelessness, were not counted.

Table 1: Provincial Homelessness Definition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unsheltered</th>
<th>Emergency Sheltered</th>
<th>Provisionally Accommodated or “Hidden Homeless”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Public space (i.e. sidewalk, park, forest, bus shelter)</td>
<td>• Emergency shelter, domestic violence shelter</td>
<td>• Someone else’s place*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Vehicle (car, van, truck)</td>
<td>• Transitional shelter/housing</td>
<td>• Hotel/motel*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Makeshift shelter, tent, or shack</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Hospital, jail, prison, remand centre*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Abandoned/vacant building</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Other unsheltered location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Respondent is provisionally accommodated, is living in a temporary situation, and does not have their own house or apartment that they can safely return to.

Persons that are provisionally accommodated are considered to be the “hidden homeless”, because their homelessness is not as apparent as those who are “absolute homeless”, such as those that are living unsheltered or emergency sheltered.

**Period Prevalence Count Findings**

A total of 44 surveys were completed during Leeds and Grenville’s enumeration week, which was from May 13th to May 19th, 2018; fourteen surveys were screened out for not meeting the Provincial homelessness definition. The following tables and figures are based on a population count of 30. See Appendix D for the survey results data tables.

**Current Housing Status**

The majority of survey respondents were “hidden homeless”; as described in Figure 2, seventy percent of respondents were staying at someone else’s place and did not have their own
apartment or house that they could safely return to. The second largest group were those who were staying in an emergency shelter or domestic violence shelter (13.3%). The remainder were living in various unsheltered or provisionally accommodated arrangements.

**Figure 2: Current Housing Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Status</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Someone else's place</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Shelter, domestic violence shelter</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motel/hotel</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional shelter/housing</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public space (e.g. sidewalk, park, forest, bus shelter)</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle (car, van, RV, truck)</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent doesn’t know (likely homeless)</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Home Municipality of the Homeless**

The #ShareYourStoryLG survey included a question to determine where the respondent was staying. Due to the rural nature of Leeds and Grenville, where services tend to be clustered in the larger centers, enumerators tracked where the respondent reported living. As described in Figure 3, it was observed that the majority of survey respondents were living in Brockville (70%), followed by 10% in Kemptville, and 6.7% in Gananoque. Due to the limited survey locations in some municipalities, these numbers are not necessarily representative of the homeless population dispersed in Leeds and Grenville, and should be considered a snapshot of those who completed the survey.
Demographic Information

Household Type

The majority of respondents surveyed were single (76.7%); 12.1% had dependents, and 6.1% indicated they were staying with a partner, other adult or declined to answer.
Age

All age groups experienced homelessness in Leeds and Grenville, ranging from 1.5 years old to 74 years of age. Of those who responded to the survey, youth and young adults comprised the largest cohort of homeless (31.3%), where only 12.5% of older adults aged 56 and older were homeless.

Figure 5: Age of Respondents, including Dependent Children, N=32

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 and under</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 25 - 35</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 36 - 45</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 46 - 55</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 56 - 64</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 65+</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children Affected by Homelessness

Of the four respondents that indicated they had children staying with them, the children ranged in age from 1.5 years old to eighteen.

Youth Survey respondents:

- **18.8%** aged 18-24
- **6.3%** youth <18 alone
- **6.3%** youth <18 living with an adult

Gender
The majority of survey respondents were male (53.3%) or female (40.0%); trans female/trans woman and two-spirit individuals were also represented in the survey.

**Figure 6: Gender of Respondents**

![Circle chart showing gender distribution]

- 53.3% Female
- 40.0% Male
- 3.3% Trans female/Trans woman
- 3.3% Two-spirit

**Sexual Orientation**

The majority of survey respondents indicated that they were straight/heterosexual (76.7%); and 16.7% responded that they were bisexual.

**Figure 7: Sexual Orientation**

![Pie chart showing sexual orientation]

- 76.7% Straight/heterosexual
- 16.7% Bisexual
- 6.7% Not listed
Indigenous Identity and Ancestry

Persons who identified as metis made up the largest portion of survey respondents (13.3%) who identified as indigenous, followed by 6.7% of respondents who said they had indigenous ancestry. In the 2016 Statistics Canada Census profile for Leeds and Grenville, only 2.9% identified as metis, and 0.6% as having aboriginal ancestry, which points to a possible overrepresentation of aboriginal persons in Leeds and Grenville's homelessness enumeration results.

Figure 8: Indigenous Identification

Visible Minorities

The majority of survey respondents identified as being white (90%); the only visible minority group that survey respondents identified as belonging to was from persons with an aboriginal or indigenous background (3.3%).
Language

All thirty survey respondents indicated that English was the language that they best expressed their self.

Income Sources

The majority of survey respondents were in receipt of welfare/social assistance (43.3%), or a disability benefit (26.7%); only 13.3% declared that they had no source of income.

7% of survey respondents indicated that they are employed.
History of Involvement with the Child Welfare System

Eight respondents (26.6%) reported that they had experienced living in foster care. Two of the eight respondents indicated that they had recently lived in foster care (within the past 2-10 years); the remaining respondents had left care anywhere from 23 to 50+ years ago.

Health Conditions of Survey Respondents

The most common health issue that respondents reported was a mental health issue (76.7%), followed by addiction (60.0%), and chronic/acute health condition (56.7%). Twenty percent of respondents indicated that they had an intellectual disability.
Survey respondents frequently reported that they were suffering from a combination of health issues, as described in Figure 12.

- 53.3% reported having a mental health condition and addiction;
- 50.0% reported having a mental health and chronic/acute health condition; and
- 33.3% reported having addiction and chronic/acute health issues.
History of Homelessness

Time Spent Homeless in the Past 12 Months

The greatest number of respondents had been homeless from 4-6 months (32.0%), followed by those who had been homeless from 10-12 months (28.0%). It is possible that some respondents may have been homeless for greater than 12 months, but the MMAH core questions only measured the period in the past 12 months. Persons who had been homeless for less than one month made up 24.0% of survey respondents.

With 28% of respondents reporting that they had been homeless for 10 to 12 out of the past 12 months indicates that there is a significant core group of persons experiencing longer-term homelessness in Leeds and Grenville.

4,202.5 = Total nights spent homeless in the past year in Leeds and Grenville.

168 = Average number of nights spent homeless in the past year in Leeds and Grenville.
Frequency of Homelessness

The majority of survey respondents (76%) had been homeless 1 to 3 times during the past 12 months, followed by those who were homeless 7 to 10 times (16%); eight per cent were homeless 4 to 6 times.

Approximately twenty-five percent of respondents were homeless from four to ten times out of the past 12 months; this indicates that a notable portion of respondents were likely experiencing significant housing instability.
Reason for Housing Loss

Respondents were able to select multiple reasons on the questionnaire for their housing loss; often the loss was as a result of a combination of factors, and not one solitary cause. The most common reason for housing loss was addiction or substance use (33.3%), followed by unable to pay rent or mortgage (30.0%), and eviction for another reason (not financial) (30.0%). Conflict with spouse, and conflict with parent/guardian were also common reasons for housing loss.

Figure 13: Reason for Housing Loss

Looking Forward

Supporting our homeless involves more than just providing housing; addressing the needs of homeless people requires a multi-disciplinary community response. Community agencies throughout Leeds and Grenville, such as food banks, churches, low/no cost meal programs,
mental health and addictions, community health centres, public health, and so on, each provide an essential service towards meeting those complex needs.

Data collected from the #ShareYourStoryLG survey is publically available for community agencies to access when planning for services for persons experiencing homelessness. While the sample size of the survey is relatively small, and is not intended to be a census of all individuals in Leeds and Grenville experiencing homelessness, it does provide a snapshot of the persons who completed the survey during the enumeration week. Data, such as the total count, current housing status, demographics, family type, and medical needs can be used to better understand the scale and nature of homelessness in Leeds and Grenville, and improve our response to homelessness. Agencies are also encouraged to post this report for survey participants to have the opportunity to view the survey response.

The Housing Department, Community and Social Services, will incorporate this information as part of the upcoming Five Year Housing and Homelessness Plan review. In addition to using the enumeration information to initiate a Housing Table that will have a goal to meet the current needs of persons experiencing homelessness, the ultimate goal is to end homelessness in Leeds and Grenville by 2025.

Appendices

- Appendix A - #ShareYourStoryLG Survey Questionnaire
- Appendix B - #ShareYourStoryLG Screening Page
- Appendix C - List of Enumeration Locations in Leeds and Grenville
- Appendix D - Data Tables of Survey Results