



Searching out the cause of the stranger

Understanding (a little bit about)
homelessness in Cambridge

Session objectives

- Look at the homelessness situation in Cambridge
- Explore some of the support that's available for people to move away from rough sleeping and housing insecurity
- Think about some of the ways we can take up the cause of those facing homelessness in our city



4 reasons why you are some of the best people to do something about homelessness

- You believe everyone is valuable and bears the image of God
- You want to love your neighbour
- You are realistic about sin
- You believe in redemption and transformative grace

Some of this is borrowed from a blogpost by Jon Kuhrt - What does the Bible say about homelessness? February 16, 2022 <https://www.psephizo.com/life-ministry/what-does-the-bible-say-about-homelessness/>

Emphasis on grace

Unconditional acceptance

Giving another chance

Showing compassion

Providing support and care

Upholding legal rights

Voluntary and charitable

Emphasis on truth

Enforcement of rules

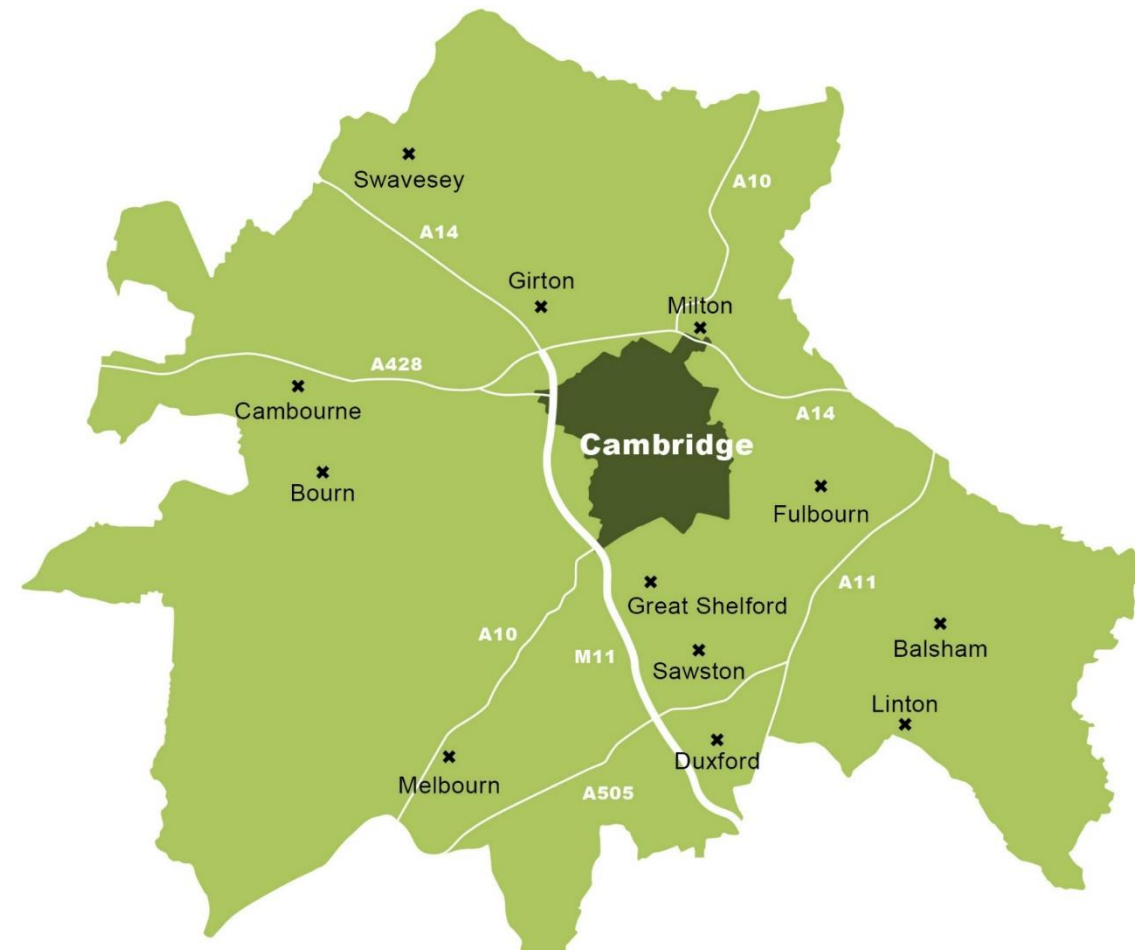
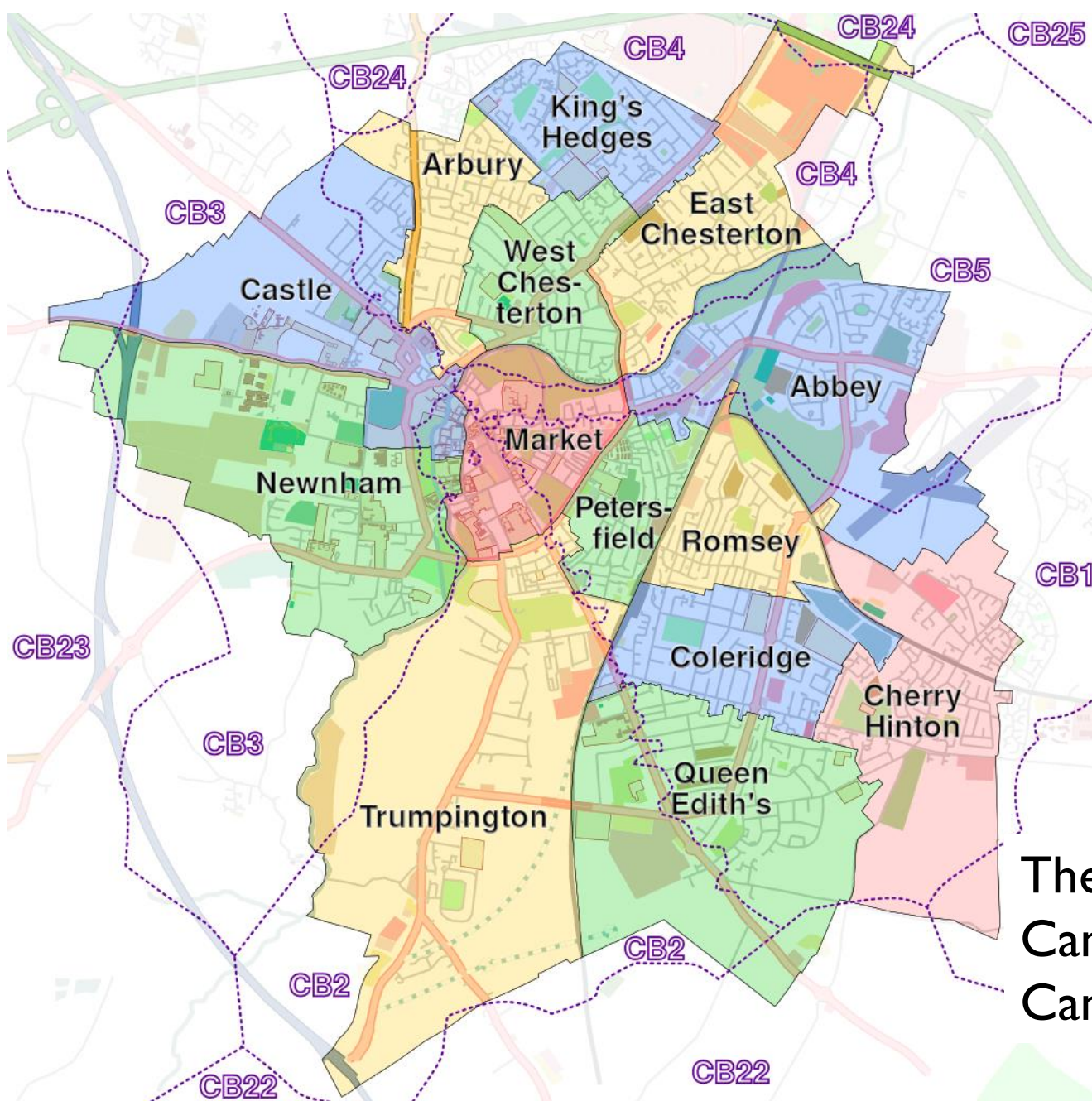
Maintenance of boundaries

Administering justice

Challenging and empowering

Encouraging personal responsibility

Professional and statutory services



These areas have two local authorities. South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridge City Council.

How many people are homeless in Cambridge?

- Cambridge City population was 145,700 in 2021 census.
- South Cambridgeshire was 162,100.
- We have around 25.6 people per football pitch-sized piece of land. In the top 20% most densely populated English local authority areas. South Cambridgeshire has 1.3 people.
- 31.4% of households in privately-rented homes. This was 26.2% in 2011.

How many people are homeless in Cambridge?

- 2262 people sought city council advice related to “housing stress” April 2022 – March 2023.
- 841 homelessness applications where the applicant was initially assessed as being owed a statutory duty April 2022 – March 2023.
- Approximately 270 people living in hostels and supported accommodation in Cambridge.
- 23 recorded rough sleepers in the city of Cambridge in Nov 2022.

The Street Outreach Team's count of individuals verified as sleeping rough

Date	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2018- 2019	22	31	51	37	47	36	41	41	28	37	28	28
2022- 2023	67	108	77	73	122	71	113	74	77	55	37	66

Loss of last settled home

- Loss of privately rented accommodation
- Family and friends no longer able to accommodate
- Relationship breakdown
- Lack of affordable housing or not being able to access private rental
- Benefit sanctions
- Leaving institutions



If someone becomes (or is
about to become)
homeless in Cambridge
they have to contact
Cambridge City Council's
Housing Advice Team

01223 457918

Mon-Fri 9am-5:15pm



Street Outreach Team



**Change
Grow
Live**

- In the city and at Wintercomfort
- Advice and information about immediate help (showers, food, clothes) and help to get housing
- 01223 366292 (8am – 4pm)
- sot.cambridge@cgl.org.uk
- thestreetlink.org.uk

Wintercomfort

- Offers showers, laundry, clothing, breakfast, housing advice, mental health support, wellbeing, training and learning.
- Drop-in 8:30-2pm (12 noon weekends)
- Supports 800 individuals each year.
- 22,000 visits to the centre. Average daily attendance of 65 people.
- wintercomfort.org.uk



winter
comfort
opening doors

Cambridge Cyrenians

- Oldest homelessness service in the city (started in 1970)
- Supported accommodation in small shared houses.
- 100 bed-spaces in 21 houses dispersed around Cambridge.
- Mix of short-stay, move-on, and long-stay shared houses.
- Project Workers work with residents to develop skills for independent living – helps them to engage with other services, apply for benefits, pay rent.
- 45 people supported by the Older Homeless Service.
- Cambridgecyrenians.org.uk



Jimmy's Cambridge

- 1995 first all year round night shelter.
- 20 bedrooms in the main East Road hostel.
- 9 bedrooms in 451 hostel
- 30 bedrooms in 10 shared houses across Cambridge.
- 22 single-occupancy modular homes
- jimmyscambridge.org.uk

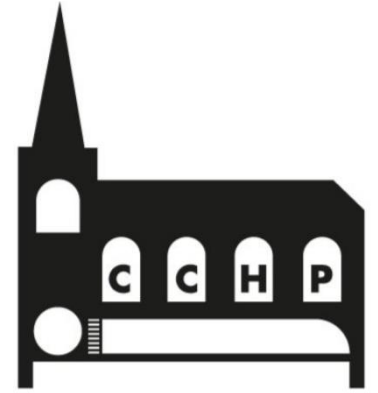


Riverside: The Victoria Project / 222 Victoria Road / The Twos / TVP / and The Springs

- National social housing provider.
- TVP has 34 rooms for people with high-needs.
- The Springs has self-contained flats for people with low support needs.
- Willow Walk – now closed.
- riverside.org.uk



Cambridge Churches Homeless Project



- Started in November 2017
- Winter shelter project with 15 beds in 11 churches and the Beth Shalom Synagogue.
- Now supports It Takes a City to run the Crossways Winter Provision
- Also facilitates and funds accommodation for people with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF).
- Registration for volunteers will open again in the autumn
- cchp.org.uk

It Takes a City (ITAC)



- Cambridge Summit on Homelessness November 2018
- “Everyone In” March 2020
- Crossways has 20 beds
- 1 November – 31 March
- Beds, hot evening meals, food during the day, laundry, and support.
- ittakesacity.org.uk

Hope into Action

- 11 churches in Cambridgeshire.
- Supporting tenants in 2-3 bed houses.
- Individuals or groups buy houses and lease them to Hope into Action for 5 years.
- cambridge.hopeintoaction.org.uk



- Bookmark streetlink.org.uk
- Download What3Words app



WHAT3WORDS



- Recommend overstreamclean.co.uk at your workplace
- Follow some local homelessness services on social media
- Get involved in your workplace's CSR / ESG stuff
- Support Cambridge City Food Bank
- Volunteer with Cambridge Churches Homelessness Project
- Get some socks from Beth

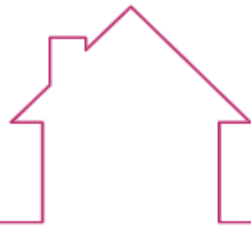
Useful links

- [Streetsupport.net/Cambridgeshire](https://streetsupport.net/Cambridgeshire)

Street Support Cambridgeshire provides details on over 380 offers of help for rough sleepers and people at risk of homelessness across the county. You'll also find information on ways to support these services through volunteering, donating items or funds.

- [Graceandtruth.blog](https://graceandtruth.blog)

Jon Kuhrt's blog. Jon is CEO Hope into Action.

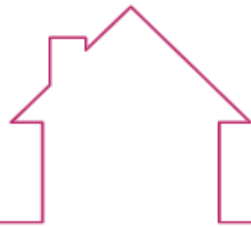


The Haven Pilot

It Takes a City's Women's Homelessness Action Group is looking for a space to pilot the 'Haven', an overnight drop-in space for homeless and vulnerable women. In order to run the project, we are looking into options for spaces that we can use for a trial phase. We have received funding to pilot the project from Spring 2024 for up to a year, although we would consider shorter periods.

Essential Requirements:

- Within 1 mile of the city centre, for easy accessibility on foot / by public transport
- Available in the evening and overnight, although timings can be flexible during trial phase
- Available for at least two nights per week
- A separate entrance which can be securely staffed (bell and lockable door)
- A space that can be made welcoming with sofas, cushions and tables
- Small storage space for the WHAG to keep items needed for the Haven
- Toilets including accessible toilet
- Facilities to make hot drinks and heat up food or space for a kettle and microwave



The Haven Pilot

Desirable:

- An inviting building with a warm vibe that can be made to feel un-institutional
- A shower / washing facilities
- A washing machine and dryer (or space for installation)
- A kitchen
- An additional room for private meetings and / or consultation
- Access to wifi and a computer

The Haven is not:

- A night shelter with beds
- An assessment space for homeless women
- A drug and alcohol treatment service



**For further information on the Haven or our work, please get
in touch with Alice at alice@itac.org.uk**