REHOUSING PROJECTS FOR SINGLE HOMELESS PERSONS. INNOVATIVE APPROACHES IN GERMANY.

NATIONAL REPORT 1997 FOR THE EUROPEAN OBSERVATORY ON HOMELESSNESS

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1. Abstract

The German National Report for the European Observatory on Homelessness 1997 presents two innovative schemes for reintegration of homeless people aiming at a permanent provision of single homeless people with newly constructed housing. Both schemes have been set up by traditional service providers for the homeless in the voluntary sector and their innovative approaches are turning points in the tradition of concepts of services for the homeless. While the German history of services for single homeless persons had for a long time been predominated by institutions segregating and isolating in particular persons with no fixed abode from the rest of society, the new conception of services assumes that any further integration of homeless persons into society has to be based on their integration into normal, independent and permanent housing, combined, if necessary, with additional care.

One of the schemes described in this report (*Soziale Wohnraumhilfe Hanover*) is the result of a decision of an advice centre for single homeless people in 1989 to contribute actively to the provision of their clients with permanent housing and to organise necessary complementary services. With regard to great problems in providing these people within the existing housing stock, the voluntary organisation took part in the construction of new housing and thus secured allocation rights for themselves to accommodate single homeless persons. By the middle of 1996 114 dwellings had already been realised or were in the stage of construction or concrete planning. One of the construction projects (for 12 single homeless men) will be analysed in detail in this report, as well as the course of tenancies over a period of more than two and a half year.

The second scheme was the dismantling of 24 places in one of the oldest institutions for homeless persons in Germany, a former labour colony (Wilhelmsdorf, Bielefeld), and their replacement by 24 permanent dwellings with normal tenancy agreements and complementary care services for the former residents of this institution who had all been long-term homeless.

Both schemes have tried new forms of cooperation between voluntary service providers and commercial housing enterprises. Both have combined normal housing provision based on normal and unlimited tenancies for homeless persons who have great social difficulties with services of complementary personal care. Both schemes were very successful and have proved that even persons with considerable social and health problems and a long history of homelessness are able to maintain tenancies for a longer period of time if they are supported in cases of need. This support is not free of costs, but it is generally much cheaper than accommodation of homeless persons in institutions.

Both schemes are transferable to other localities and other agents. Another advantage of both schemes is the fact that courses of tenancies, the residents' careers, difficulties and progress of their integration, costs of housing provision and care services etc. were evaluated for a period of more than two years under a research scheme of the German Federal Government. The National Report presents the findings of the studies undertaken under this scheme and also contains a critical assessment of chances and limitations of the approach underlying the pilot schemes.

2. Introduction

For 1997 the European Observatory on Homelessness was commissioned to evaluate select services for the homeless. The focus was on schemes which aim to provide for people in need of housing and social support in order to enable them to stay in housing permanently.

It was relatively easy to make a selection of examples for Germany, as in 1997 an evaluation scheme was just been finished, where pilot schemes for permanent housing provision of homeless persons had been studied for a longer period on behalf of the German Federal Ministry of Housing. Two of altogether seven pilot schemes on which findings of scientific evidence exist will be presented in detail in chapter 5.

Of both schemes background and approach will be outlined, and it will be mentioned which agents took part in the schemes, which target groups were addressed and how residents were selected. Furthermore, the applied methods of evaluation will be described for each scheme separately. The evaluation findings are subdivided into an analysis of required care for rehoused persons and efficiency of complementary care services, courses of tenancies and residents' integration and an analysis of costs and financing of the schemes.

Before a detailed analysis of the innovative schemes is given, chapter 3 will deal with the social context and historical background of services for the homeless. Chapter 4 will present several innovative approaches aiming at reintegration of homeless people into permanent housing in Germany and explain in detail the reasons for the selection of schemes for this report. Chapter 6 will give a final assessment of the results of both innovative schemes, which are described in chapter 5, and will also state chances and limitations concerning transferability and multiplication of the approaches of the schemes as well as consequent demands to housing and social policy and agents involved.

3. Social context and history of services for the homeless

In Germany the service system for the homeless is characterised by a separation of responsibilities and service types between municipalities on the one hand and service providers in the voluntary sector on the other. This separation is deeply rooted in history and also reflected by the German system of law.

There is no legal right to permanent housing in Germany. Rooflessness, however, is traditionally regarded as a danger to public security and order, so municipalities are obliged by police laws to avert this danger by providing roofless persons with temporary accommodation at minimal standards. Until the late 1960s, it was possible to force roofless people into such shelters, but then respective legal provisions were considered as infractions of the constitutional right to individual liberty and thus abolished. What remained was the unconditional obligation of municipalites to provide roofless persons who are not able to help themselves with temporary accommodation. A modern version of this principle emphasises the dangers of rooflessness to the individual rights of the roofless (human dignity, protection of health and life) (Luebbe 1993). Required standards of temporary accommo-

dation are very low (van Aken/Derleder 1994), but there are great differences in practice. Whereas homeless families used to be accommodated in special estates built for the homeless (in suburbs, near railway tracks or refuse dumps etc., consisting of congested dwellings with deliberately designed low standards, e.g. without any inside bathroom or toilet or without central heating etc.), it has by now become more common to provide decentralised arrangements of temporary accommodation in housing which is rented or owned by municipalities. Still, hostels, hotel rooms, shacks, containers, military barracks etc. are used by municipalities for the temporary accommodation of homeless people. Homeless people who are provided with temporary accommodation are still treated as homeless persons. Even if they are accommodated in normal housing, they have no legal rights as tenants. They can be tranferred to other shelters at any time and keep obliged to look for permanent housing.

In the course of the last 20 years many municipal estates for the homeless were demolished, redeveloped or changed into normal permanent rented housing. However, as homelessness increased in Germany at the end of the 1980s, many new emergency shelters were set up. (For further details concerning temporary accommodation of homeless people see Busch-Geertsema 1996). Nevertheless, as early as in the 1980s the head association of German municipalities stated their intention to avoid temporary accommodation as far as possible by a better prevention of homelessness and by arranging normal permanent housing on the basis of tenancy agreements for homeless people (Deutscher Staedtetag 1987).

In many towns temporary accommodation by municipalities on the basis of police laws concentrates on providing evicted families and partly, but not everywhere, on providing single persons evicted from their former dwellings. Persons who are homeless for other reasons, and in particular those who became homeless outside the municipal districts, are referred to institutions in the voluntary sector. The greatest part of these institutions belong to voluntary organisations of the two most important churches in Germany, the Protestant and the Catholic church. Their institutions for "nonlocal" single homeless persons have a tradition of more than a hundred years (see Scheffler 1987, John 1988, Treuberg 1989).

In the beginning, there were institutions for the itinerant poor, which were set up everywhere in Germany by private welfare in the second half of the nineteenth century and above all after 1880. There was a large number of itinerant poor at that time, and Christian hostels and work places for itinerant people were to provide temporary accommodation as well as boarding, for which the poor had to work. Most of the rural labour colonies were to accommodate and board unemployed itinerant workers for a longer time to make them work hard and save them from demoralisation and idleness. Labour colonies served as private unemployment relief and as Christian institutions of moral improvement at the same time. The first labour colony, Wilhelmsdorf, was founded by the most important German protagonist of vagrant welfare in the late 19th century, the Protestant minister Friedrich von Bodelschwingh, in Bethel near Bielefeld. His main maxim was "work in place of alms". A network of institutions for itinerant persons, the enforced introduction of record books for each of them etc. as well as the punishment of "work-shy persons" by the state should ensure a regulated itineracy, while jobs

offered in labour colonies served as "work test" to pick out "honest itinerant workers" from the mass of beggars and vagrants.

During the first decades of this century a view accounting psychic deviations for the main reason of the "unsettled living" of many itinerant unemployed was gaining ground. Welfare institutions for vagrants aimed at permanent "custody" of these men, who were now declared as pathologic and impeded in their ability to work. In institutions for "persons without a settled way of living" in the voluntary sector this approach survived in combination with the original aims of welfare for vagrants until the 1970s, in spite of the brutal practice during German fascism, when thousands of homeless beggars had been arrested and deported to concentration camps, where these "persons without a settled way of living" had been sterilised and exterminated as psychopaths (Ayass 1995). Most of these institutions, including labour colonies, continued to exist, and the national associations to which they belong, too. Supported by scientific research, they still aimed at the "settling down" of "deficitary" persons (Busch-Geertsema 1987). This was to be achieved mainly by internment of the homeless in homes and institutions and by compulsory work for a small allowance. Only in the 1960s and 1970s the most important legal provisions for compulsory action against "work-shy persons", "predelinquents" and vagrants were abolished. The professionalisation of social work led to a modernisation of the still existent idea of a pedagogical and therapeutical rehabilitation of homeless people.

However, at the end of the 1970s and in the course of the 1980s a fundamental change of values took place within the voluntary sector. The idea of integration was being taken seriously. This was also reflected by legislation. Article 72 of the Federal Welfare Act stipulates "assistance in overcoming extraordinary social difficulties" for persons who need such assistance. Demands were made to secure the economic situation of homeless people and to provide them with normal housing. It was accepted that most "persons without a settled way of living" were not as mobile as it is implied by this term. Furthermore, the system of homeless institutions with limits of stay for "short-stay accommodation for people on the move", with social welfare allowances on a daily basis and with benefits intending to drive the homeless out of municipalities (culminating in giving out tickets to the next town) were acknowledged as important causes of their mobility. Homelessness was classified as a structural problem of poverty and lack of housing, and the term "person without a settled way of living" was replaced by the term "single homeless person". "Stationary" institutions were more and more complemented by "ambulant" advice centres which were to help the homeless in realising their claims to legal minimum standards and to further assistance for integration. Their aim was to integrate them as soon as possible into normal permanent housing.

This change of mind within the service system for "persons without a settled way of living" has to be seen in the wider context of criticism against "total institutions" (Goffman 1973). It focussed on the fact that living conditions in an institution and even more in a rural labour colony, including communal accommodation, full boarding and allowances, would teach residents survival strategies completely different from the skills they would need to learn for living in normal housing. The stay in such institutions would systematically make them lose survival skills important for the outside world and replace these skills by strategies to survive inside

institutions and by a growing dependancy on them. The phenomenon of "mobile hospitalism" was discovered in institutions for "persons without a settled way of living" (Marciniak 1977). "Stationary" institutions pretending to aim at a solution of the problem of "unsettled ways of living" were more and more criticised as being part of the problem.

Thus, agents of social work for single homeless persons within the voluntary sector realised rather late that overcoming homelessness and providing permanent housing are basic requirements of an integration of homeless people into society and of successful further social and therapeutical action.

There is something tragic in the fact that at the same time when this idea was gaining ground and when "ambulant" advice centres for single homeless persons were opened everywhere in Germany, the housing shortage was growing worse, so that single homeless people had no chance of finding affordable dwellings within the stock of normal housing, even when they were supported by social workers. Some welfare organisations of the voluntary sector reacted with an increasing commitment to housing policy and appeals to the state to give more importance to the provision of disadvantaged persons with normal housing. A small number of them started to provide permanent housing for the homeless on their own, either as "brokers" or even as builders or purchasers of housing which they then let to homeless persons. If necessary, the rehoused homeless were also offered further individual care. Two examples for this practice will be described in detail later in this paper. However, although the number of "ambulant" advice centres for homeless persons has increased sharply (there were about 280 of such advice centres in Germany in 1995), the number of places in homeless institutions in the voluntary sector is still at about 15,000 (in 270 institutions) (BAG Wohnungslosenhilfe 1997). A considerable part of them belong to former labour colonies with their tradition of more than a hundred years. Finally, with the increase of homelessness and aggravation of poverty at the end of the 1980s there has been a growing number of emergency services like soup kitchens, day shelters and supply points for second-hand clothes.

After highlighting the deeply-rooted separation of services and responsibilities, this argument now has to be qualified. In recent years, German jurisdiction has clearly pointed out that the municipal obligation of accommodating homeless persons on a temporary basis is also applicable to single homeless persons. There is no obligation for municipalities to refer to police laws when accommodating single homeless people. Instead, they are entitled and advised to give priority to such arrangements of temporary accommodation which are based on dwellings rented and sublet to homeless people by municipalities according to the Federal Welfare Act (see Luebbe 1993)[1]. Anyhow agents of social welfare are obliged by the Federal Welfare Act to pay the costs of accommodation and care as well as minimum allowances to homeless persons without incomes, even if they are accommodated in institutions of the voluntary sector. So nowadays institutions of the voluntary

[1] However, temporary accommodation according to police laws is still predominant, as latest research findings from east Germany show. In east Germany this legal instrument was only introduced at the time of the German unification in 1990 (see Busch-Geertsema/Ruhstrat 1997b).

sector are mainly financed by the state. Furthermore agents of social welfare are obliged by the Federal Welfare Act to grant support and assistance "in overcoming extraordinary social difficulties" to all homeless persons with respective difficulties (Art. 72 Federal Welfare Act). This assistance implies for example support in accessing and maintaining housing. However, the implementing regulations of the Federal Welfare Act still distinguish between "persons without a settled way of living" accommodated in institutions at the costs of the Federal State, and other homeless persons who fall under the financial responsibility of municipalities. Though the redefinition of "persons without a settled way of living" into "single homeless persons" has often confused responsibilities it has also enlarged the number of persons for whom institutions in the voluntary sector feel responsible. Finally, the traditionally separated organisation of support for single homeless persons on the one hand and homeless families on the other has been questioned increasingly (see Evers/Ruhstrat 1993).

To sum it up, it can be said that since the 1970s the services for homeless people have been liberated at least in tendency from the outdated view of homelessness as a consequence of individual deficiencies, pathological disposition or offences against public security and order. Furthermore, the traditional division of support into municipal accommodation directed mainly to evicted families, and institutions in the voluntary sector directed especially to nonlocal single homeless people ("persons without a settled way of living") begins to crumble. Whereas punitive and controlling, pedagogical and therapeutical, helping and marginalising approaches used to be mixed, and the accommodation of homeless people in shelters was unfit for any integration into society, this practice has more and more been criticised and replaced by efforts to enable homeless people to lead a life as normal as possible and to integrate them successfully into society. It has been acknowledged that the provision of homeless people with permanent housing is an essential requirement of any possible individual support or care. Next to an improved prevention of homelessness the provision with normal housing has become one of the important aims in this field.

4. Innovative approaches for the reintegration of homeless people into permanent housing

The development towards more support for the reintegration of homeless people into normal, permanent housing met with several practical obstacles. During the past decade, supply and demand in the German housing market were extremely unbalanced, in spite of an enormous housing affluence of the majority of the Germans. Due to their difficult financial situation and their social discrimination homeless people have hardly had any chance in the housing market. They are not only faced with financial barriers, but also with great doubts of landlords concerning their contractual fidelity as tenants (Hubert/Tomann 1991).

Traditional means of housing policy, like housing allowances, subsidisation of housing construction by the state and influence of municipalities in the allocation of subsidised housing are often not enough to grant a sufficient housing provision of homeless people. On the one hand the stock of subsidised housing matches mainly the needs of families. There are not enough subsidised small flats for the

great number of single homeless persons. On the other hand many housing associations reject homeless persons as tenants, even if they are proposed by municipalities, because they fear difficulties within the house community or neighbourhood and higher costs. Many landlords also assume that homeless people need complementary individual care after their rehousing and have doubts whether appropriate care is provided. Often homeless persons are denied their "ability to live in normal housing" altogether.

The housing shortage also diminished chances of renting and subletting housing to the homeless by voluntary organisation. Housing under socio-pedagogical care ("*Betreutes Wohnen*") was a scheme still very close to accommodation in institutions, as several homeless persons were accommodated in furnished rooms within one flat, where they had to share kitchen and bathroom and were given a restricted tenancy agreements containing time limits and the obligation of accepting individual care. "*Betreutes Wohnen*" did not comply with postulations of a far-reaching normalisation of living circumstances. Although this type of accommodation is still rather widespread, many critics complain that residents are forced to share a flat with people they have not chosen to live with (enforced community), so that the normal German standard of housing (in separate and permanent flats) is not achieved. Another problem is a so-called "graduated system" which intends to lead the homeless gradually to normal tenancies in promoting them from one institution to the next. In many cases the homeless do not find access to the normal housing market, and living conditions at the different "steps" of these schemes require different skills from those needed for living in normal housing. Finally, there is a basic contradiction within such a system: It aims at stabilising residents, but whenever this aim has been achieved, a more or less radical disruption and destabilisation is to follow, because the respective resident has to leave the institution and its local surroundings (see also Busch-Geertsema 1997). In contrast to this practice, the accommodation of homeless people in normal housing has the advantage that it is the individual care service which may be removed when a resident has been "stabilised".

So at the beginning of the 1990s, agents of social work for homeless people in many municipalities started to commit themselves to house building for the homeless and to invent schemes which were to provide the homeless with normal, separate and permanent housing at the usual contractual conditions combined with complementary support for integration (see Busch-Geertsema/Ruhstrat 1997c). At the same time, new forms of cooperation developed between voluntary homelessness organisations, building enterprises and state agents. Furthermore, agents of social work for the homeless were asked to increase their efforts to support rehoused homeless people and to improve ambulant services accordingly.

4.1 The research scheme "Permanent housing provision for homeless people"

Housing policy took up these ideas, and the Federal Ministry for Urban Development (*Bundesministerium fuer Raumordnung, Bauwesen und Staedtebau*) set up a research scheme "Permanent housing provision of homeless people", which forms part of the major scheme "Experiments in urban development" (*Experimen-*

teller Wohnungs- und Staedtebau, EXWOST) and supports scientific evaluation of seven pilot schemes in seven municipalities in Germany.

The conception of this research scheme realises that an integration of homeless people is only possible if the homeless are provided with normal and cheap housing at normal building standards, with usual tenancy agreements, situated in non-stigmatised surroundings.

This was one of the basic requirements for the selection of pilot schemes. In addition, the projects were to be of manageable size and combine housing provision with further assistance in social integration. Special housing (like low-standard housing, temporary accommodation etc.) was explicitly ruled out. To be included into evaluation, the pilot schemes also had to present innovative institutional and financial approaches. It was required of all schemes to create new housing either by building, rebuilding or completely renovating old buildings (see EXWOST-Informationen 1993).

From more than 50 proposals the following seven pilot schemes were chosen. Four of them are on the territory of west Germany, three are in east Germany (EXWOST-Informationen 1995):

– One housing construction scheme in Berlin. 25 of altogether 50 to 60 projected housing units in newly-built terraced houses were designed for homeless families. These families were to participate in building of the dwellings. For this scheme the Socio-pedagogical Institute Berlin (an organisation in the voluntary social sector, which for example carries out redevelopment work on behalf of the City of Berlin) cooperated with a municipal housing company, which later is to let the flats. One special feature of this scheme is an intended combination of housing construction subsidies with means of social welfare which are also to be used for financing the construction scheme.[2]

– One building and two rebuilding projects in Bielefeld (North Rhine-Westphalia). It was planned to create altogether 24 dwellings for long-term homeless persons in the oldest German labour colony *Wilhelmsdorf* (see above) as well as 16 further dwellings for other people in need of housing. The rehoused homeless persons were to be provided with special care for a longer time (period of the scheme: 5 years). At the same time the number of places in the institution was to be diminished in proportion to the number of new dwellings. The organisation responsible for this scheme is one of the biggest homelessness organisations in the voluntary sector, the Protestant organisation "*Von Bodelschwinghsche Anstalten Bethel*". *Wilhelmsdorf* is owned by this organisation. For the building scheme a cooperation with two building societies was planned. These building societies should become owners and landlords of the new dwellings. It is remarkable that a transition of financial responsibility from the *Bundesland* to the municipality could be achieved.

[2] This is the only project which could not be realised. The construction of the housing estate was realised but the plans for rehousing homeless families were drawn back for various reasons. See EXWOST 1997

– One construction project (12 dwellings) in Hagen (North Rhine-Westphalia). A mixed accommodation of homeless people, single parents and economically stable households (each group at one third) and the participation of residents in planning and management were to help integrating the homeless into normal housing. A community room was planned as well. The project is organised by a Protestant parish and an organisation for single homeless people in the voluntary sector.

– One building scheme for 12 flats and one redevelopment project (7 flats) for homeless persons in Hanover (Lower Saxony). Both schemes aimed at providing exclusively people from the group of single homeless persons with small flats. The construction project is one of several schemes of a homelessness organisation in the voluntary sector (*Soziale Wohnraumhilfe des Diakonischen Werkes*) which is to improve the housing provision of single homeless people. This organisation cooperates with a commercial housing company, which becomes owner of the building. However, the organisation rents the whole building and sublets it to single homeless people. Social care for residents is provided by the institutions which used to accommodate them. The redevelopment project is organised by a housing company with social purposes. With self-help of the homeless a building which used to stand vacant and was squatted by homeless people is renovated and extended.

– Renovation and modernisation of 13 vacant flats in 4 adjacent old buildings in Jena (Thuringia). The target group of this scheme are families and single persons threatened or affected by homelessness, who took part in the construction works. An organisation especially founded for this purpose is in charge of the scheme and rents the flats. It was intended to integrate residents into planning and management of the flats.

– Construction of 10 flats for young adults who are threatened by homelessness after leaving youth welfare institutions and of 4 flats for small groups of young people in social care ("*betreute Jugendwohngruppen*") as part of a bigger construction scheme of 53 dwellings in Ruedersdorf (Brandenburg). One particular interest of this scheme was the integration of underprivileged young people into the neighbourhood. The scheme is organised by an agent of youth welfare in the voluntary sector, who is also owner and landlord of the dwellings. For financing the scheme, Social Housing Construction funds as well as funds of youth welfare services are used, and a labour scheme for young people provides the outdoor works.

– Construction of 9 flats for homeless ex-convicts in Stuttgart (Baden-Wuerttemberg). It is carried out by a welfare organisation for ex-convicts, which owns and rents the building and is responsible for the management of the flats. One department of this organisation is an employment firm which carried out parts of the building works by order of the head organisation.

There are differences and similarities between the schemes. First of all, it is to be pointed out that every scheme provides social care for the rehoused residents. But there are differences in the type of care as well as in its organisation and financing. Some schemes intended to integrate the future residents into building works, organised either as paid job initiatives or as self-help action, others did not.

All the organisations in charge of projects are non-state, non-profit organisations. Three of them have their origins in the tradition of welfare for "persons without a settled way of living" organised by welfare agencies of the church. Some of the organisations closely cooperate with commercial building societies, which were in some cases to become owners of the flats. Others keep almost all responsibilities to themselves. Most schemes aim at providing single homeless persons and creating housing for single persons, but in some cases homeless families were also provided with dwellings. All schemes used the normal subsidies for social housing and for redevelopment of vacant housing as investments, but they complemented these funds in different ways with necessary means of their own resources.

Between October 1994 and March 1997 these pilot schemes in seven German municipalities were evaluated in detail. Evaluation was carried out locally by different research institutes. It was instructed and complemented by a summarising evaluation surveying all schemes (Greiff/Muehlich-Klinger/Schuler-Wallner 1996, Muehlich-Klinger/Schuler-Wallner 1997, EXWOST 1997). Due to delays at the planning stage, some schemes could only be evaluated in their planning and construction phases. Only 8 of 13 planned construction projects (49 of 109 planned flats) were occupied early enough to study and evaluate the actual rehousing phase[3] (Schuler-Wallner/Muehlich-Klinger/Greiff 1997; 13).

4.2 Other innovative approaches in Germany

The approaches taken within the EXWOST-research scheme are not the only innovative approaches for a permanent integration of homeless persons into normal housing. For example there are schemes attempting at a conversion of traditional estates of temporary accommodation for the homeless into normal housing with tenancy agreements for residents, who had been accommodated there by police law before. In the recent past there were some interesting schemes which effectively integrated residents into the planning of redevelopment measures enabling many homeless families to live in normal housing (Greiff/Schuler-Wallner 1990). Such efforts by some municipalities were particular successful when redevelopment was complemented by integrative social planning to enforce prevention of homelosses and by provision of additional social support for rehoused households. The City of Hanover, for example, has attempted to redevelop and transform shelters for the homeless since 1988. The number of persons accommodated in these shelters was diminished by more than 1,200 until 1996. Over the medium term a further division in half of the number of homeless persons accommodated on the basis of police laws from about 2,450 in 1995 to 1,200 to 1,400 has been targeted (Stadt Hannover/GBH 1997; Busch-Geertsema/Ruhstrat 1997a, 97). Similar schemes can be found in other German municipalities.

Furthermore, there are some interesting innovative schemes linking construction projects for people in urgent need of housing with job schemes or vocational training. For example, the Ministry for Employment, Health and Social Affairs in North Rhine-Westphalia has supported six project managers, an advice centre for

[3] Further 15 flats were only occupied shortly before the period of evaluation ended.

North Rhine-Westphalia and the evaluation of schemes combining "labour and housing construction" as well as improving structures of cooperation between services for the prevention and remedy of homelessness (Busch-Geertsema/Ruhstrat 1996; Schepers 1996). A report on the evaluation of this scheme and the different projects which descended from it will be published at the beginning of 1998. Similar approaches can be observed in other federal states of Germany.

Finally, while there are initiatives aiming at building or redeveloping housing for homeless people there are also efforts to provide homeless people within the existing stock of housing in cooperation of municipalities, building enterprises and organisations of the voluntary sector. The so-called "protected market-segment" in Berlin is one example. According to contractual agreements, an annual contingent of about 2,000 dwellings is allocated to households threatened or affected by homelessness (Spotka 1996). Other examples are so-called "guarantee dwellings" for which municipalities have taken over the right of allocation from building societies and, as an equivalent, are liable for any financial losses (caused by rent arrears or necessary repair works). They are also responsible for the organisation of individual care for residents.

4.3 Reasons for the choice of schemes in this report

For this report two schemes from the research scheme "Permanent housing provision of homeless people described above, will be analysed in detail: activities of "*Soziale Wohnraumhilfe*" ("Organisation for Housing and Social Assistance") in Hanover and the pilot scheme "Stable housing in place of shelters " in Bielefeld. Both schemes aim at providing single homeless persons with normal housing and additional social assistance.

One reason for this choice is that these trend-setting examples are concerned about single homeless persons, a group especially disadvantaged even within the whole group of homeless people, and enable them to find normal, permanent housing. In particular single homeless persons used to be excluded from the housing market with the argument that they were "not able to live in normal housing" and not reliable enough to fulfil obligations from tenancy agreements. Traditional homelessness organisations of the church, in one case even one of the organisers of the oldest institution of this kind, the former labour colony *Wilhelmsdorf*, have opened up new paths to realise the idea of integrating homeless persons into normal life. In doing so, they tried new forms of cooperation with housing enterprises and developed new types of financing. Social care and assistance to rehoused homeless persons is an essential part of their conceptions.

There are some other avantages of the two projects in comparison with other schemes within the research programme. First, it was possible to evaluate the period after rehousing the homeless in both cases for a longer time. Second, there is a special research report on "*Soziale Wohnraumhilfe*", which was drawn up as part of the research programme. It reports on the course of numerous further tenancies (60 altogether), between "*Soziale Wohnraumhilfe*" and single homeless persons. This special research report as well as findings of the evaluation are published in book form (Busch-Geertsema/Ruhstrat 1997a). The results of the Bielefeld

scheme are published in a final report (Kaemper et al. 1997). The following descriptions are based on these sources. Eventually, the approaches of both pilot schemes are transferable to different localities and organisations.

So for the first time there are scientific findings on the course of tenancies of rehoused homeless people for a period of 15 to 28 months, which inform about need of care, costs of care, problems of housing administrations as well as about processes of social integration of the homeless. Although representativity of these results for the whole group of single homeless persons cannot be claimed, they allow important insights helpful for developing integrative action for the homeless.

5. Two examples of innovative approaches

5.1 *"Soziale Wohnraumhilfe Hannover"* - an innovative form of cooperation between voluntary organisations, building societies and the state

All the information given in this chapter on activities of *SWH* and their schemes is based on scientific evaluation, to which the author of this report contributed considerably. The results are documented in a book (Busch-Geertsema/Ruhstrat 1997a), so there will be no further references.

5.1.1 Background and approach

In Hanover, capital of the *Land* Lower Saxony (with about half a million inhabitants) there were about 400 places for single homeless people in different institutions of organisations in the voluntary sector in the 1990s. The greatest part of these institutions belong to the welfare association of the Protestant church, called "*Diakonisches Werk*". This is also true for a *Central Advice Office* for single homeless persons with extraordinary social difficulties, which offers advice and care to the homeless.

In 1989 first plans were made for opening a central housing agency within the voluntary sector in reaction to the trends described above and to difficulties of rehousing single homeless people in normal, permanent housing in Hanover. In the following two years this idea was put into concrete form. Financial means and land of the church were to be invested to incent private investors to procure housing for single homeless persons. This housing was to be administered and managed by a new special department of the *Central Advice Office*, called "*Soziale Wohnraumhilfe*" (*SWH)*, which opened in May 1991. Its main function has been to provide housing to single homeless people by building or rebuilding housing or by extending buildings. As far as possible *SWH* is also to rent existing dwellings and sublet them to homeless persons. Acquisition of housing and administration as well as management are responsibilities of *SWH*, whereas individual care for residents is to be provided by separate agents, for example by those institutions and advice centres which have proposed single homeless people for rehousing.

However, it was not the aim of *Diakonisches Werk* and *Central Advice Office* as supporting agents of *SWH* to create a new housing company of the church. Rather, this pilot scheme limited in time (for a period of 5 years) should prove that

it is possible and sensible to integrate single homeless people into normal, permanent housing. For the period of 5 years a number of 80 flats was targeted.

One special construction project of *SWH* (with 12 individual flats for single households) of the research programme mentioned above was studied in detail. The tenancies were documented for almost two and a half year beginning with first steps of rehousing. The construction project will be briefly called "*H13*" in this paper (abbreviation of street name and house number). It is an example of the approach which *SWH* realises in other schemes as well. As other tenancies of *SWH* were analysed retrospectively, results from that study (concerning the activities of *SWH* as a whole) will occasionally be mentioned.

The approach of *SWH*, which also guided the construction project *H13*, implies that investion interests of building societies and public subsidies were to be brought together with additional resources of the church or with private and additional public resources. By constructional, financial and social preplanning *SWH* develops realistic schemes for the provision of homeless persons with individual, permanent housing. It is the aim of these schemes to create and secure cheap housing, which is available for as long as possible and explicitly reserved for single homeless persons. When the dwellings are occupied, *SWH* takes on the risks of administration and management, which would otherwise prevent building societies from accepting single homeless persons as tenants. Thus, in most cases *SWH* rents the dwellings and sublets them to single homeless persons (with normal tenancy agreements and without any further conditions). The builder-owner is granted regular rent payments by *SWH*. *SWH* also organises social care for tenants if needed. It is part of the conception that staff members of *SWH* do not provide individual care themselves, but cooperate with different services and institutions to keep their role as landlord separate from individual assistance.

The approach of *SWH* guarantees that the organisation itself does not take over all the necessary functions of providing housing to homeless people. It rather follows the maxim "Everybody does what he (or she) knows best". *SWH* tries to raise additional funds (beside the usual subsidies for house building), but does not take over the part of a builder-owner. The required own capital for construction projects has not to be procured by *SWH*, and the organisation is not necessarily owner of the flats, as long as the reservation of these flats for single homeless persons is settled by contract. Neither does *SWH* provide social care. Instead, it functions as a classic intermediate agency mediating between different agents to achieve a certain result: the integration of homeless people into permanent housing.

During the phase of evaluation *SWH* employed an architect, a land merchant and a social worker as well as a book-keeper and a caretaker on part-time. To raise further resources, the organisation could turn to a donation fund of the Protestant church for the promotion of housing for homeless people. Church land, private invested capital or public subsidies were used as additional resources, too.

The approach of *SWH* will become clear by the example of the construction project *H13*: When the City of Hanover offered a piece of land for sale in 1992, *SWH* and 22 other interested parties, bid for contract in order to build a house for homeless people on the land. Because of the social purpose of their plans, *SWH* obtained the contract, and the *Diakonisches Werk* (as head organisation of *SWH*)

purchased the land with means from the donation fund mentioned above. The architect of *SWH* drew up financial and constructional preplannings and showed them to a commercial housing company in Hanover. In 1993, this housing company leased the land from the *Diakonisches Werk* for a cheap leasehold interest rate, and in 1994 a building with 12 small flats was built on it, for which the housing company used their own capital and the usual state subsidies for house building. After the building works were finished in August 1994, *SWH* rented these flats for a period of 25 years (a prolongation is possible) and sub-let them to single homeless persons. Institutions in the voluntary sector which had accommodated the homeless before remain responsible for their social care.

On this model *SWH* created altogether 56 housing units for single homeless persons by April 1996 (some of them were rented from the existing housing stock or created by redeveloping vacant buildings). 58 further flats were already under construction or in concrete planning. These dwellings (114 altogether) were spread on 19 different buildings in Hanover and the surroundings of Hanover.

5.1.2 Partners involved in the scheme

SWH is one department of the *Central Advice Office* for single homeless persons of *Diakonisches Werk* Hanover. Again, this *Central Advice Office* is one of several service providers for single homeless people in the City of Hanover. There is a number of independent institutions for homeless persons in Hanover, among them homes for alcoholics, for homeless women and institutions where homeless persons can stay during daytime. Most of these institutions belong to *Diakonisches Werk*, a big Protestant welfare association acting on a municipal as well as on a national level. Usually it is these institutions and other departments of the *Central Advice Offer* which are responsible for providing social care to the residents in housing managed by *SWH. SWH* makes cooperation agreements with these services and informs them about cases of need for care.

In schemes aiming at permanent housing provision of homeless people, *SWH* cooperates with building societies and other housing owners, for instance with parishes which leave dwellings from their housing stock to *SWH* for renting it to homeless persons. When planning a construction project, cooperation with a housing company is necessary for different reasons. For once, building societies have the practical know-how and infrastructure for building. Secondly, they have the own capital required for financing. Even for publicly subsidised housing 25% of all costs usually have to be procured by the builder-owner himself, and *SWH* can only contribute a small part of the required sum as an incentive for building societies (and relieve building societies of the administration and the risk of tenancies by managing the dwellings). The cooperation partner of *H13* was a medium-sized housing company owning about 4,000 flats in Hanover and its surroundings.

For raising further funds, *SWH* has the advantage of close contacts to the Protestant church. For example, they benefit from donation funds procured by the Protestant church of Lower Saxony for promoting house construction projects (by low-interest loans, contributions to building costs or land purchases, etc.). But even private persons who want to invest their savings into charity have cooperated with

SWH, for example in buying flats which are now being rented to homeless people. For the scheme *H13,* resources from the donation fund have been used to buy municipal land and to lease it for a low price to the housing company.

Other important cooperation partners are municipal and state authorities responsible for building licences and subsidies. They have conceded the right of allocating publicly subsidised flats to *SWH* and cooperate with them in case of problems, like for example when the municipal welfare office has to take on rent arrears of the residents of *SWH* dwellings.

One reason why *SWH* took over administration and management of the flats is their ability of reacting to problems with tenants in a more flexible way and with more alternatives than conventional building societies. They want to make room for an integration of tenants and for social care and form a kind of "buffer" between the tenants' personal capacities and external demands on them. In interviews, building societies which cooperate with *SWH* have underlined that this function of *SWH* is essential to their readiness of providing housing to homeless people. Otherwise they would not feel able to manage administration and care as it is presumedly necessary, neither economically nor technically.

If problems arise, caused for example by rent arrears or noise nuisance, *SWH* first try to find a solution by calling in social workers and arranging personal talks with everybody involved in the conflict. It is part of this moderating process to inform residents that social offices might assume rent arrears and that rent arrears might be paid back by instalments. Only if repeated moderating efforts fail, *SWH* initiates formal action which might include the threat and realisation of notice to quit as well as compulsory eviction. So far, however, there has only been an extremely small number of cases of notice to quit (see below).

5.1.3 Target groups and choice of tenants

The target group consists exclusively of single homeless persons with extraordinary social difficulties. According to article 72 of the German Federal Welfare Act they have a right to assistance in overcoming these difficulties. *SWH* is not responsible for homeless families or for example for young homeless persons who fall under the Youth Welfare Act. This shows again the traditional division of services into those for single homeless persons (provided for mainly by organisations in the voluntary sector) and those for homeless families (provided for mainly by municipalities). For all that, the *Land* Lower Saxony as well as the church and the City of Hanover (together with the rural district of Hanover) contribute to personnel and nonpersonnel costs of *SWH* each taking over one third of the costs. This guarantees that *SWH* is responsible for single homeless persons who became homeless in Hanover as well as for those who travelled to Hanover as so-called "persons without a settled way of living" (who fall under the responsiblity of the *Land*).

There is an agreement between *SWH* and the municipal housing office of Hanover that *SWH* may allocate the flats on their own, as long as the housing office accepts their proposals. It has been contracted that tenants have to be persons

threatened or affected by homelessness. This contractual agreement is valid for 25 years. All tenants get normal, unlimited tenancy agreements.

When the flats of *H13* were allocated for the first time, only such homeless persons were admitted who had been accommodated on a temporary basis in institutions for the homeless before. These were 9 men and 3 women from 6 institutions in total (if possible 2 applicants for rehousing were named by each institution to give them the chance of mutual support). Most of them had spent more than one year in institutions for the homeless (3 of them even more than 4 years). For 3 of them *H13* was their first normal, independently rented housing in their lives.

SWH had asked the 6 institutions for the homeless to make proposals before the construction works of the flats had been finished and had added that there had been some trouble in the neighbourhood during the planning stage of the project, so a certain degree of social control by neighbours had to be expected and should also be considered when choosing applicants. But only half of the institutions seemed to be influenced by this advice. They declared that they had tried to find applicants with good chances of integration. Other institutions named homeless persons who had been accommodated by them for a particular long time, or they even chose persons whose chances on the normal housing market seemed to be exceptionally low. All applicants were persons who had been accommodated in institutions because of individual problems and whose chances on the housing market were low or even nonexistent. In first interviews shortly after residents had moved into the flats, *SWH* and social workers were questioned about expected needs of care and risks of tenancies of each resident. At the end of the evaluation period residents who had been expected to have a considerable need of care and a rather high risk of problems proved to be quite stable and needed only little care, whereas for some other cases the opposite turned out to be true.

When some residents left their flats again, homeless persons were admitted into *H13* who formerly had received only ambulant care and advice (and had not been accommodated in institutions but had found other forms of temporary accommodation). During the two and a half year of evaluation, the 12 flats of *H13* were inhabited by altogether 16 different persons.

SWH does not target a "social mixture" of tenants as it is often propagated in Germany. The residents of all flats had been homeless before, and the structure of households is the same (single households). All of them have separate, individual flats, which is very important to these residents. At the beginning of evaluation, there were voices criticising the homogeneous occupation of the house. In particular the social workers in care of the homeless suspected that residents of *H13* would be stigmatised, and that a "ghetto effect" might follow from the homogeneity of tenants. But these fears have turned out to be unfounded, as by now even social workers have admitted. From the start, the residents themselves have considered the fact of having a similar history and not being able " to fool each other" as positive. However, it must be pointed out that the part of town and the immediate neighbourhood are very good for integration and show no symptoms of a problem area. Finally, the number of 12 housing units is seen as a maximum for tenants of that homogeneity.

5.1.4 Methods of evaluation

As *H13* with 12 housing units is a model scheme easy to survey, the employment of quantitative methods would not have been useful. Instead, qualitative methods, especially pre-structured intensive interviews, are most important. To grasp the perspectives of different persons involved in the scheme, the following participants were interviewed: *SWH* staff, managing staff of the cooperating housing company, the homeless rehoused in the flats of *H13*, social workers responsible for the provision of care, neighbours, and finally authorities of the municipality and the *Land* responsible for social welfare and for the promotion of house building. To document developments after rehousing, these interviews were carried out during the evaluation period of two and a half year at three points of time (always in the last third of 1994, 1995 and 1996) with the same participants. The evaluating researchers were immediately informed about any particular changes in tenancies by *SWH* (changes of residents, rent arrears, admonitions, residents' meetings).

For a special study of all activities and tenancies of *SHW* (beside *H13*) further expert interviews were carried out with other cooperating building societies, the management of the *Central Advice Office* and *Diakonisches Werk* Hanover, with numerous further social workers and staff of authorities of the municipality and the *Land* Lower Saxony. In addition, internal *SWH* data were analysed.

Whereas on the one hand the course of one single scheme has been evaluated during a period of almost two and a half year (longitudinal study), all tenancies of *SWH* in the past have been analysed in cross-section and in retrospective on the other.

All interviews were based on a comprehensive guideline with grouped questions. They were all recorded on tape in full and evaluated and documented afterwards. The interviews were complemented by extensive studies of documents and other sources provided mainly by *SWH*, but also for example by building societies. A series of questions was formulated on a national level and had to be answered by evaluation research for *H13* as well as for the six other model schemes (see Busch-Geertsema/Ruhstrat 1997, p. 239 ff.).

5.1.5 The need of care for rehoused persons and complementary care services

All residents of *H13* were enthusiastic when moving into their flats. As they pointed out, they particularly enjoyed having their own kitchens and bathrooms, being alone responsible for the cleanness of rooms, having a private sphere without any external control and "being their own masters". Living under a normal address was regarded as an advantage for finding a job. But some of the long-term residents of institutions also felt insecure in their new situation. In the beginning, the price for the peace many of the rehoused enjoyed was loneliness and isolation for most of them, especially since relations to friends in institutions were reduced or broken off. However, after their first winter in the new flats some parties in the garden helped the residents of *H13* to establish closer contacts with each other. Two years after rehousing some residents had no other social relations than contacts within the house. But others either intensified contacts with friends outside the house or established new relationships. Contacts with relatives were also revived.

4 of the 12 homeless persons who were first rehoused in *H13* were in vocational training for a longer period of time, but only one of them succeeded in finding regular employment after finishing his training. 5 residents had found temporary jobs, but some lost these jobs for different reasons. At the end of 1996, 3 of the first 12 residents were employed and one further person was at school. But most of the residents (or ex-residents) of *H13* were unemployed or lived on unemployment benefit. So for most of them rehousing put an end to homelessness, but not to poverty and exclusion from the job market.

The daily duties of living alone and looking after oneself did not cause particular problems, once starting problems were coped with. Among personal problems named by residents and social workers, addiction and difficulties with authorities as well as in interpersonal relationships were most frequent. But several residents reported that they overcame relapses into addiction and kept longer periods of abstinence or that they seeked for therapeutical help.

Nobody of the residents regretted his or her participation in the scheme. Beside those who have already moved into other dwellings, about half of the remaining residents want to change flats in the future, mainly because they want to live with a partner or want a larger flat. But these were long-term plans which did not affect their contentment with their present living situation at the time of the final interview.

Only one of the 4 persons who left *H13* during the evaluation stage has ended up homeless again. The other three now live with partner in larger flats. In the running case, however, *SWH* had to give notice to a tenant at the end of the evaluation stage, after rent arrears had cumulated and addiction problems had escalated.

In a larger number of cases the separation of house administration and social care which had been planned could not be maintained. This is a special problem, which affects other schemes of *SWH* as well. On the one hand there are frequent disagreements between *SWH* and social workers on necessity and intensity of social care when problems arise which concern tenancies. On the other hand *SWH* has to bear the economic risk of tenancies and thus often tries to get into contact with tenants in order to settle conflicts and to avoid giving notice to quit. Some social workers criticise this behaviour as an interference into their responsibilities. Finally, it is a disadvantage that social care is often financed only for a limited time and respective institutions do no feel responsible for tenants after the running out of financing. If problems arise later *SWH* have to step in, but they have hardly enough staff. In contrast to the plans of *SWH*, after only one year at least half of the residents of *H13* had no claim to personal care by the institutions which had accommodated them before. At the end of the evaluation stage (end of 1996) only 4 of the 12 first residents of *H13* got social care from outside beside the 4 residents who had moved in later.

As was to be expected, the need of care usually turned out to be higher in the first time after rehousing than later. Furnishing the flat and settling financial affairs were relevant issues in the beginning, while later on residents' job situation and training, social relations, conflicts with other residents and personal problems like addiction became more important. The frequency of contacts was quite different depending on residents and social workers as well as on the personal development of residents. After the first phase of acclimatising with frequent contacts with social

workers 1 to 3 hours of care per month were spent on those residents who still received permanent care if there were no serious problems (4 or 5 residents did not receive any care after only a few months). In cases of crisis the need of care could increase to 6 to 20 hours per month, depending on course and intensity of the crisis. Some social workers called on their clients regularly in their flats, in other cases residents called on the institutions to meet social workers.

Although there is a trend of decreasing intensity of care after one year after re-housing at the latest, needs of care could be very different in kind as well as in time. Usually social workers met residents of *H13* once or twice a month and were available to them in cases of crisis. But even in 1996 and at the end of evaluation several residents still suffered from crises (caused by relapses into addiction or by problems with authorities) which required a more intensive intervention of social workers. First prognoses of social workers on the development of a resident's need of care have often turned out wrong. Some residents who had been expected by social workers to be at a high risk of losing their dwellings again after having lived in an institution for long years had in fact become quite stable, their need of support had decreased and in cases of crisis they contacted the social care service of their own accord. On the other hand, some residents who had been prognosticated very positively in the beginning (small need of care, no special risks) have got several times into situations of crisis which also caused rent arrears and still needed care at the end of the evaluation period. A false prognosis was also made about the only ecivted tenant of *H13*, who had been rated as an applicant with very good chances of integration and little need of care in the beginning and who eventually had to be given notice after several efforts to maintain his tenancy had failed.

Between *SWH* and social workers involved in *H13* as well as among different social workers opinions on the necessary extent, form and contents of social care differ very much. This is not only true for *H13*. Above all, *SWH* expects social care to support residents in maintaining their tenancies. According to them social care has to be active and permanent, and social workers have to call on their clients. They should respond quickly and actively and be ready to invest more time on special clients for shorter periods in times of crisis. In many cases, these requirements cannot be met due to financial and organisational circumstances. Finally, some social workers see themselves as "counsels" who will only take action if explicitly instructed by their clients. The traditional conflict situation between social work and landlords is important in this context. During the whole stage of evaluation there were considerations among the staff members of *SWH* how to deal with respective problems.

The pressure of problems on *SWH* is also obvious by the fact that *SWH* staff members were much more often forced to step in than they had planned to do according to their initial idea of not being responsible for social care themselves. With 60 tenancies directly arranged by *SWH* which have been realised so far, there was regular need of care for about half of all the residents. According to *SWH*, only in few cases this need of care was met by social workers in charge. Normal municipal social services mostly turned out to be unable to provide the necessary personal support, too. In at least 11 cases *SWH* had to step in regularly.

All in all it becomes clear that organisation, financing and quality of social care for rehoused homeless persons has to be improved considerably. Social care has to be flexible and reliable, there has to be appropriate support for rehoused homeless persons who need care for a longer time and for people in acute crises. Despite these deficits, *SWH* have succeeded in protecting their residents from becoming homeless again.

Of course *H13* is not an answer to all problems of the rehoused homeless, but this is no argument against this successful scheme. In fact, the residents of *H13* have problems like hundreds of thousands of other tenants in normal housing. Although these problems are not be belittled, they are taken out of the direct context of homelessness. With one exception, this strategy has been successful in all cases.

5.1.6 Development of tenancy and integration of tenants

During the two and a half years of evaluation there were 4 changes of residents in *H13*. Only one of these changes was caused by *SWH* giving notice to quit. Beside this one case (notice to quit after cumulative rent arrears and severe addiction problems) the other rehoused homeless who left *H13* moved to new flats. This means that 15 from 16 residents of *H13* were successfully integrated into normal housing.

There had been no guarantee for this positive result. Neither were tenancies maintained without any trouble. 9 of the 12 first residents were late with rent payments, however, in 2 or 3 cases this was caused by technical mistakes of the social welfare office. 4 residents caused rent arrears, sometimes more than once, which would have made an immediate notice to quit legally possible. In 3 to 4 cases it would also have been possible to give notice to quit because of noise nuisance.

With one exception of notice to quit and action for compulsory eviction after repeated efforts to maintain the tenancy, existing threats to tenancies could be averted and it was possible to avoid giving notice to quit. Rent arrears could be settled in some cases by the social welfare office taking on rent arrears, in others by requests to a charitable donation funds and in a number of cases by agreements on payment by instalments between residents and *SWH*. However, the income of residents was sometimes reduced to a sum even below subsistence level.

If we consider all tenancies which have been arranged by *SWH* from their foundation until April 1996 in toto, there are 60 tenancies in 41 flats for which *SWH* have the right to allocation. In altogether 9 cases tenancies broke down, only once by *SWH* giving notice to quit (in 5 cases tenants left with unknown destination, in 2 cases they went back to homeless institutions and one resident had to go to prison). 3 residents died and 7 moved into new flats with normal tenancies. In April 1996, 41 residents still had tenancies with *SWH*. Disregarding cases of death, only 9 out of 57 rehousing tenancies (less than 16% of all tenancies arranged by *SWH*) have failed.

There is no formal procedure of dealing with homeless persons who have failed in *SWH* dwellings and relapsed into homelessness again (no follow up and no spe-

cial regulations). They still have a claim to assistance according to article 72 BSGH and are admitted into homeless institutions if they turn to them. It depends on the individual case whether someone in this situation will be accepted as *SWH* tenant again. Probably homeless persons who have failed as *SWH* residents have rather bad chances of being accepted by other landlords if their failure becomes known.

5.1.7 Costs and financing of the schemes for housing homeless persons

H13 consists of 12 housing units with about 30 square meters each in a three-story building. All flats have a living room with an integrated sleeping cabin, a small kitchen, a shower room and a corridor. For each flat there is one small storeroom in the cellar. In addition, the cellar has a washing machine and a drier to be shared by residents of *H13*. 57.8% of the total costs of the building (about 660,000 ECU, without the costs of land) were financed by loans of the *Land* Lower Saxony, 26.2% by own capital of the housing company and 16% by loans from the capital market. In addition there were costs for the purchase of land (about 83,300 ECU) and for planning works of *SWH* (about 18,400 ECU). As the house had to be fit in between two existing buildings and as all the flats are one-person flats of comparably small size (about 30 square meters per flat: so the ratio of costs for kitchen and sanitary area is relatively big), the price per flat is rather high (about 55,000 ECU per flat and about 1,850 ECU per square meter).

In spite of state subsidies for housing and the small size of flats also the rent costs of H 13 flats are rather high. This is even more true if costs for heating and operating costs, the so-called "second rent", are counted in. At the end of 1996 this total rent (including monthly reserves for small repairs) was between 245 and 287 ECU, depending on the size of flats. So rent costs including all ancillary costs amounted to about 8.90 ECU per square meter and were considerably higher than the basic rent of about 5.20 ECU per square meter. However, the rent price conforms with the regulations for subsidised housing in Lower Saxony and it is still clearly below the permissible rent which the Hanover Welfare Office allows to recipients of social welfare. Rent costs inclusive of heating charges of other *SWH* flats (except *H13*) are sometimes even higher because of the size of flats. Taking the average of all these flats, the monthly rent (including all ancillary costs) amounts to 292 ECU per person.

It has already been mentioned that in other housing schemes investments by private persons or public authorities (e.g. by the Ministry of Justice for the provision of ex-convicts) contribute to the additional resources which *SWH* have raised beside donation funds of the church. The ratio of these additional resources is relatively small if compared to the total financial size which *SWH* has acquired so far in form of building investments for single homeless persons by housing schemes that have already been realised or planned by the end of 1996. For altogether 56 housing units that have already been realised by April 1996, and 58 housing units planned to be realised by the end of 1996 (114 flats in all) a total sum of about 7.44 million ECU was invested into house building. These costs were covered at about 52% by state subsidies for housing and at about 40% by builder-owners and banks. Only about 8% are additional church resources.

The operating costs of *SWH* (annual personnel and nonpersonnel costs of about 300,000 DM, that is about 158,000 ECU) used to be assumed by the Protestant church, the *Land* Lower Saxony and the City of Hanover by one third for each party. But the ratio of expenses for the development and management of *H13* by *SWH* can also be calculated for each one-person flat (see below).

One last issue concerning financing is that by 1995 *SWH* could go back on a risk guarantee of the Protestant church of Hanover (of about 10,500 ECU per annum as a maximum), from which irrecoverable financial claims deriving from tenancies could be settled (like for example rent arrears or renovation costs after disappearance or death of tenants). This risk guarantee did not have to be used for *H13*, but for other housing schemes (with a sum of about 14,000 ECU altogether in the years 1993 to 1995). In 1996, at the end of the evaluation stage of *H13* there were first claims against one tenant, who was finally given notice to quit and left the flat. This example shows how fast costs may sum up in such unfortunate cases. This single case caused about 4,600 ECU for rent arrears, lawyer's and court fees and costs for compulsory eviction by a bailiff. However, as the tenant left the flat shortly before compulsory eviction, the advance payment for the bailiff was paid back, and the church assumed the rest of the costs following a request by *SWH* at the beginning of 1997.

5.1.7.1 Costs of long-term housing provision compared with costs of accommodation of homeless persons in traditional homeless institutions

In 1995, the monthly costs for a place in a homeless institution were at about 1,809 ECU in Hanover. These costs usually contain accommodation, boarding and social care within the institution (not included, however, is an additional "pocket money" of about 60 ECU per month to which every recipient of social welfare is entitled). The rather high costs of places in institutions are not least caused by building standards for the operation of homes, which are often expensive (fire protection, escape routes, staff rooms, domestic rooms etc.) and by a high expenditure on staff necessary for the operation of most institutions (for day-and-night care, cleaning, washing, catering, administration etc.).

If these costs are seen against the monthly costs of acquisition and administration of *SWH* flats for single homeless persons combined with the monthly costs for rent and living of welfare recipients in permanent *SWH* housing, it becomes apparent that accommodation of the same person in normal housing costs only little more than half of the costs caused by accommodation in homeless institutions.

For the calculation of costs for providing homeless people with permanent housing organised by *SWH*, the special kind of housing administration and organisation of social care by *SWH* have to be taken into account. For the whole housing stock of *SWH* about half of the total personnel and nonpersonnel costs of *SWH* (about 86,840 ECU) are spent on these tasks. Responsible staff estimate that their present personnel capacity allows to handle 75 tenancies at a maximum. So about 1,158 ECU are spent annually for each housing unit on administration and organisation of social care, that is 96.50 ECU per housing unit and month.

The acquisition of *SWH* flats has caused personnel costs as well as investing expenses. For calculating these expenditures, the period of validity of allocation rights has to be taken into account (on the average of all *SWH* flats it comes to 24 years). On average, special investments and personnel costs for all flats acquired by *SWH* amount to about 366 ECU per annum and housing unit. The monthly expenditure per housing unit is calculated at about 30.50 ECU. This calculation is based on *SWH* personnel costs which have been caused by planning 114 housing units altogether (some of them were still in the stage of realisation or planning in April 1996) (about 421,500 ECU) as well as on investments furnished by *SWH* as special resources to get allocation rights for homeless persons (about 581,580 ECU). The total sum is divided by the number of housing units which may be allocated and the average number of years of allocation rights. Refluxes from investments are not taken into account, neither are interest effects caused by the provision of required means at the outset of the project.

Costs of social care vary greatly, as residents of *H13* have received care at very different degrees of intensity (some residents are without any complementary care). As to the estimated costs of social care of rehoused homeless persons in normal housing, it is possible to refer to the amount which is spent on average on the employment of one social worker with respective tasks in Lower Saxony, that is about 58,580 ECU per annum. Assuming that one social worker is responsible for 20 clients at the same time, the annual costs for social care amount to about 2,929 ECU per client. So the monthly costs for social care for each resident would be at about 244 ECU on average. Starting out on this financial base, a monthly expenditure of 6.5 hours of social care per resident would be possible. Hardly any resident of *H13*, however, received so many hours of social care a short time after rehousing. But if a resident turns out to have great personal and health problems, his or her need of care may be even higher.

The base year for all aforementioned calculations is 1995.

Investments furnished by builder-owners, banks and public funds are not considered. Except for public subsidies, they are repaid by rental payments. Public subsidies, again, are general means for fostering social housing, which however have to be made available to the target group of single homeless people by extra funding through *SWH*.

The average monthly costs of providing housing or accommodation (and the basic support for costs of living for social welfare benefit recipients as it is usual in Germany) for a single homeless person in Hanover are as follows (on the base of 1995):

place in an institution	SWH flat	
	292.00 ECU	rent costs inclusive of heating charges and operating costs
	276.80 ECU	costs of living (social welfare rate)
	30.50 ECU	costs of acquisition of a flat
	96.50 ECU	housing administration
	244.20 ECU	costs of social care
1,809.00 ECU	940.00 ECU	

This calculation is based on average values of all *SWH* flats. Had it been based on the scheme *H13* alone, costs for housing administration and social care would have been definitely lower, whereas costs for housing acquisition (personnel costs and special investments) would have been higher.

The costs for acquisition of a flat and housing administration are calculatory amounts covered by the general annual funding *SWH* and additional subsidies for housing construction. The remaining costs are assumed by social welfare if the persons concerned have no income of their own. Tenants of normal housing have a claim to housing allowance (financed half by the Federal Government and half by the respective *Bundesland*) which is offset against social welfare payments. If tenants have an income of their own or receive unemployment benefit or a pension, they have to contribute to the costs up to a certain limit and the part of social welfare payment is reduced accordingly.

From a fiscal point of view, the outcome of the scheme is clearly positive. Compared to accommodation of homeless persons in institutions, provision with normal housing as practised by *SWH* is much cheaper. In comparison with usual rental costs on the housing market, however, a reintegration of single homeless persons into normal housing turns out to have its price, which is clearly more expensive and has to cover more than just the usual rental costs of housing.

5.1.8 Summary

Taking a general view on the scheme, *H13* and the approach of *SWH* can be assessed as successful examples of permanent housing provision for single homeless persons, which may be and have already been emulated in similar forms. Cooperation with housing companies has proved efficient and has been as profitable to each party involved in the scheme as had been expected. The approach with the maxim "everybody does what he knows best" and the joint aim of permanently providing single homeless persons with normal housing on usual tenancy conditions has been realised to a very high degree. In spite of some shortcomings concerning cooperation of care services and despite jeopardies of tenancies caused especially by delayed rent payments, the tenancies had a positive course, not least due to the *SWH* concept. This is also an impressive example for good chances of reintegration of those homeless persons into permanent normal housing who are often denied their "capacity of living in normal housing". Being rehoused, they have better chances of normal living conditions, although for many

of them the escape from homelessness is not at all an escape from poverty and social exclusion.

In our view, schemes like the one described above and the approaches of *SWH* can be transferred to other schemes and other places. They are to be recommended in particular for the rehousing of homeless persons who need personal care and assistance and for plans aiming at the dismantlement of stationary institutions like in Hanover. Providing homeless people with permanent housing and complementary care as practised by *SWH* is considerably cheaper than accommodating homeless persons in expensive institutions. At present, *SWH* plans to redevelop a former residential home for homeless persons into social housing. Another institution for the homeless will be dismantled, and social workers of this institution are to be employed for the care of residents in *SWH* flats.

In the meantime, *SWH* has realised more flats than the 80 housing units which initially had been planned for the scheme period of 5 years. This period of time beginning with the foundation of *SWH* in 1991 has been exceeded by now, and *SWH* has started attempts of becoming an independent company offering advice and planning work all over the *Bundesland* Lower Saxony.

The sector of social care for residents as well as cooperation between housing administration and social work remain special problem fields. In our opinion it is not advisable to give up the separation of these two sectors. Instead, financing and methods of ambulant care services should be improved to achieve the aim of a better permanent housing provision of homeless persons, which is intended by both parties.

5.2 Stable housing in place of shelters – the case of Wilhelmsdorf

The following description of the “Wohnung statt Heimplatz” project (“Stable housing in place of shelters”) is based almost exclusively on information obtained from an evaluation of this project which is documented in the final report (see Kaemper et al. 1997). For this reason, indication of further sources for Section 5.2 will be dispensed with.

5.2.1 Background and approach

The idea for a “stable housing in place of shelters” project in Bielefeld arose, firstly, from the aforementioned criticism of traditional welfare provision for the homeless in the form of institutional shelters. This criticism was also shared by staff at the former *Arbeiterkolonie Wilhelmsdorf*, an institution that has been providing accommodation to the homeless for more than a hundred years (in the early 1990s “Haus Wilhelmsdorf” had 95 places) as part of a larger complex of institutions belonging to the “*von Bodelschwinghsche Anstalten*“. In the early 1990s staff there saw a need to reduce the number of places at the shelter and to place long-term residents in normal flats with normal tenancy agreements. They also opposed the traditional principle of making housing provision conditional on agreement to undergo therapy and advocated an institutional separation between

flat-letting, on the one hand, and providing care and support to the tenants, on the other.

Secondly, the prospects of furnishing homeless persons living in shelters with long-term tenancies on the housing market were extremely low in Bielefeld at the beginning of the 1990s.

Another factor that led to the project idea was the problem of mounting conflicts between residents in one of the buildings of the "Wilhelmsdorf" shelter – the so-called "Gartenhaus" – which was attributed above all to the high occupancy level (26 places, including eleven double rooms) and lack of intimacy (television rooms, toilets and showers, kitchens, etc. as well as a large number of bedrooms had to be shared by several homeless persons). This resulted in turn in high fluctuation in this particular house, thus exacerbating the problems even further.

This was the context in which the idea developed to convert the "Gartenhaus" into a normal residential building and to create an appropriate number of flats (both in the former "Gartenhaus" and in a new building to be constructed at another site) in order to compensate for fewer places in the shelter. The residents were to receive a normal tenancy agreement for an indefinite period.

Working on the basis that independent living cannot be learned in institutions, but only in normal flats, the "Wilhelmsdorf" shelter developed a concept for reducing the number of places, replacing them with normal flats for former homeless persons and providing aftercare support to help the long-term homeless men to integrate themselves into the wider community.

The total number of places was to be reduced from 95 to 69, which meant that the last of the two-bed rooms had to disappear. To compensate for the loss of 26 places, 24 flats were to be created for 26 homeless people through three construction projects: conversion of a building that previously was part of the institution (the "Gartenhaus") into 10 self-contained flats (all for former homeless persons, two of them for two persons each); construction of a new building with a total of 25 flats, 8 of which were to be made available to homeless persons, and finally the conversion of another older building to create 13 flats, 6 of them one-person flats for former residents of the shelter. The institution is cooperating with housing enterprises in all three construction projects.

Past experience showed that follow-up support and services had often been inadequate, and that intensive client-centred assistance aimed at social integration may be necessary over a long period of time for former long-term homeless persons. Efforts were therefore made, parallel to the reduction in places at the shelter, to provide former residents of the institution with appropriate post-placement support in their new domicile for a longer period of time using state funds originally earmarked for the places in the shelter. The reduction in places at the shelter has resulted in substantial savings for the authorities responsible for financing these places until now. To be able to provide support to the former homeless persons in their new flats and provide the requisite aftercare on an individual basis, an agreement was made that funding would be granted for a further 5 years – until the end of 1999 – and that the staffing level in the shelter would be reduced

gradually over the same period by a total of 6.5 posts. Acceptance of support and assistance is voluntary for the residents.

The principal aims of the project may be summarized as follows: creation of normal housing for long-term homeless persons, parallel reduction in places at the institution, provision of home-based aftercare for those in the flats, institutional separation of flat-letting and support services, cooperation with "conventional" housing enterprises on that basis, and finally the principle of independent living in flats (not in shelters) as a form of learning by doing. The basic principle underlying the support services provided by social workers is to strengthen the existing competencies and resources of former homeless persons, i.e. empowerment of those concerned.

In one of the construction projects, an attempt was made to get the residents involved in the planning of the rebuilding work. In two of the three construction projects, former homeless and non-homeless households live in one building.

A special feature is the location of the three buildings in Bielefeld. The rebuilt "Gartenhaus" is located in the immediate proximity of the Wilhelmsdorf shelter. The proximity to the institution enables residents and support staff to maintain the contacts that have developed over time, but it contradicts the objective of integration into a "normal neighbourhood". The two other buildings are not very far away from the institution either, being located in the same part of the city, where various institutional buildings belonging to the "von Bodelschwingsche Anstalten" played a major role in the past (of the 4000 residents of this district, around 950 live in institutions and shared accommodation mentally ill, handicapped and homeless persons as well as addicts). However, efforts are being made to "open" the district more as a normal residential area for Bielefeld citizens and at least one of the new buildings is part of a new housing estate that has been established in the district as a result of these endeavours.

5.2.2 Target groups and choice of tenants

The project's target group consists of long-term homeless persons with serious personal and social difficulties. Since all those concerned are former residents of a shelter for homeless men, only male homeless people were considered. It was a deliberate policy from the outset to avoid selecting a target group with relatively high prospects of integration. Instead, focus was placed on selecting people who had been in a shelter for an extremely long time, or who were especially disadvantaged – people for whom conventional methods and assistance aimed at integration had not been successful. One of the objectives was to show that extensive social integration is possible even after many years of homelessness, and despite a low capacity for self-help, or a lack of personal prospects.

Of the 21 former residents of the shelter who were able to occupy newly created flats as tenants by the end of 1996, a large portion (nearly 75%) suffered serious damage to their health. The support staff assess more than half of the men to be addicts. Other striking aspects are the high age of the men (more than half aged over 59) and the duration of homelessness (13 years on average). Nearly one fifth of the men had never had a flat of their own.

When the selected candidates were asked in which of the three buildings they wanted to live, most of them answered that they wished to move into the rebuilt "Gartenhaus" (the building that was first ready for occupation and is located very near to the institution). However, none of them wanted to move into the two 2-person flats provided there. These two flats, each of which had to be shared by two residents, could not be occupied until the tenants were assured they would be able to move into a single-person flat after completion of the new building there.

5.2.3 Partners involved in the scheme

Although the "Wilhelmsdorf" shelter (or the "von Bodelschwingsche Anstalten") is itself the builder-owner in the case of the two rebuilding projects, construction of the new building was carried out by a housing company (in which the state of North Rhine-Westphalia has a share) that is also owner and manager of the flats. In the two other construction projects as well, the institution cooperates closely with a housing company (in which the city of Bielefeld has a majority holding); this company manages the flats as well, to ensure that flat-letting and support services are carried out by two separate parties. An agreement has been made with the housing companies (and the tenants) that the Wilhelmsdorf institution staff will be informed of rental problems at an early stage so that they can intervene promptly. However, there were some initial problems with implementation of this agreement.

In addition to the two housing enterprises, major cooperation partners included the local and North Rhine-Westphalian authorities responsible for granting government aid to housing construction and for public welfare assistance.

5.2.4 Methods of evaluation

Various survey instruments were used to evaluate the "Stable housing in place of shelters" project. Special importance was attached here to the application of standardised survey methods (and written questionnaires) and collection of quantifiable data in addition to qualitative methods (such as non-standardised oral surveys of those concerned).

First, the tenants were surveyed. Topics included their biography, assessment of their abilities and assistance needs, satisfaction with their housing situation, etc. (face-to-face interviews with tenants). The social workers providing support were asked to comment on the same topics from their perspective (partially standardised written survey with questionnaires).

In this project, too, several interviews were conducted with the same persons at different points in time. Since the construction projects were completed at different times, the date and number of interviews also varied. In one construction project the tenants could be interviewed in three separate surveys (one each at the end of 1994, 1995 and 1996). In the second project, which was not completed until the end of 1995, there were two survey rounds (in January 1996 and January 1997), whereas the tenants involved in the third project could not be surveyed during the evaluation phase because this construction project had not yet been completed at that time.

Data records kept by the institution were also used to analyse the tenants' biographical data.

The time required and the amount of support services provided to individual clients were documented and listed during the first three months after the tenants had moved into the flats and then six months later again for a month.

On the basis of a partly standardised questionnaire, the main partners in the project were surveyed in summer 1994 on their attitudes towards the project and their assessments of it. The issues raised in this context included the prerequisites and motivational factors for cooperation in and implementation of the project, the anticipated benefits and drawbacks, as well as possible difficulties with implementation. In autumn 1996 the survey was repeated, with additional questions asked concerning assessment of collaborative work, to what extent the anticipated benefits and drawbacks materialised in practice, and to what extent the project was assessed as being transferable.

In some cases, the assessment methods led to very complex quantitative analyses and evaluation procedures, with a large number of tables and charts showing the survey results (for example, on residents' self-assessment of their abilities and need for assistance in various areas of life and on the external assessment of the social workers regarding the same areas at different points in time in each case). On the one hand, the survey methodology enables a differentiated assessment of the project to be made but, on the other, the suitability of these methods is certainly questionable in view of the small number of cases and the disadvantages of standardised procedures in describing social aspects. In some respects, formal methods in which subjective assessments are asked of the interviewees on a standardised basis and then translated into chart form only appear to have an objectifying effect, since the basis for this form of presentation remains a subjective assessment.

5.2.5 Realisation of the construction scheme and central problems to overcome

Initial preparations for implementation of the project idea took place as early as 1991. In July 1992, a hearing of experts was held concerning the conversion of accommodation in shelters into normal rented housing.

In the first half of 1993, the bodies funding and managing the project had to tackle a central financing problem. The crux of the problem was not so much financing the construction work as the fact that responsibility for financing the support services to and the subsistence of the homeless persons would change when the project idea was put into practice. As residents of a shelter, they were regarded as "persons without a settled way of living", and when such people live in institutions with in-house care, the financial responsibility for social welfare services lies in the hands of an authority at the *Land* level (the regional social welfare agency). As soon as people without a settled way of living move into flats, however, they become "normal" residents of Bielefeld, with the result that the city of Bielefeld is then responsible for social welfare services (i.e. welfare benefits and other forms of assistance). This generated fears that savings might be achieved at *Land* level

through a reduction in shelter places, only to reappear as additional costs incurred by the city of Bielefeld (particularly for home-based care). This meant that the distinction between “local” and “non-local” homeless people when determining which authorities are responsible for the relevant costs – a distinction that has attracted a great deal of criticism from experts in the field – was liable to undermine the project. The second problem was that the usual financing of “subsequent support” for former residents of a shelter is frequently limited to a short time only and is inadequate to ensure the provision of support to long-term homeless persons living in flats in a form commensurate with their needs and for a longer period of time. To solve this problem and to avoid jeopardising the city’s readiness to participate in the project, the following arrangement was agreed upon. Dismantling of the 26 places in the shelter will not lead ad hoc to the authority at the *Land* level saving the full amount; instead, the institution’s staff will be linearly reduced by 6.5 posts over a period of 5 years. At the same time, the institution agreed that the costs for providing personal assistance to the former residents of the shelter would not be passed on either to the *Land* authority or to the Bielefeld Welfare Office after the 5 years have elapsed. Responsibility for financing welfare benefit and, for example, medical care in the case of illness is transferred from the *Land* to the city of Bielefeld 30 months after the homeless persons move out of the shelter.

If there is still a need for aftercare services after five years, these must be provided either by the city’s regular social services or by voluntary staff. However problematic this agreement may be, the project would not have materialised otherwise.

The city’s doubts about the project, which persisted after this agreement was reached, were soon dispelled when it became clear that besides the flats for the residents of the shelter an additional 17 publicly subsidised flats would be built in this context for people in Bielefeld seeking housing. This led to a breakthrough in the form of a positive decision in May 1993; construction work could then begin in March 1994 and the necessary contractual agreements on financing the public welfare benefits were concluded in April 1994.

Only two of the three planned construction projects were completed during the evaluation phase. After completion of rebuilding work on the “Gartenhaus”, which involved conversion of a building that was part of the “Wilhelmsdorf” institution into a residential building with ten separate housing units, the building was ready for occupation in December 1994. The two-storey building consisted of 8 single-person flats (with an average area of around 43 m²) and two 2-person flats (with 60 m² each), all of which were occupied by former residents of the shelter.

The new building was completed in November 1995. The 2½-storey house (including living space under the roof) provided 25 publicly subsidised flats of varying size. Eight of the nine single-person flats (with an average area of about 39 m² each) were let to former homeless persons who had been living in the shelter.

The third project, which was initially planned as modification of an existing building, was delayed when it was realised a new building would cost less than the planned rebuilding work. Therefore, the rebuilding plans were discarded and a new building (residential and commercial building) was erected instead. Construction work

started in August 1996, but it was only after the evaluation phase that the homeless persons were able to move into 6 of the 15 total flats as planned in July 1997. The flats for the homeless persons have an average area of 47 m². A chemist's shop is located on the ground floor.

5.2.6 The need of care for rehoused persons and complementary care services

The aim of support services is to make the tenants independent (able to manage their own household, meet their obligations as tenants, etc.), to enhance their capacity to manage their own affairs (handle money appropriately, deal adequately with handicap/illness/addiction, etc.) and to foster the social integration of the tenants (establishing social relationships, contacts with neighbours, etc.). In most cases, support must be given on an individual, client-centred basis. If necessary, social workers can involve nurses, therapists, home economists and administrative staff in the provision of support.

As far as financing is concerned, personnel resources from the shelter will be financed from the social welfare budget of the *Land*-level authority for a period of 5 years after commencement of the project. By 31 December 1999, 6.5 staff positions (for home economics and administration as well as for social work and medical assistance) will be dismantled successively in the Wilhelmsdorf institution. As long as these posts have not been cut, the staff may be assigned to providing support and care to the former residents of the shelter in their flats.

At the time the tenants moved into the flats, as well as one year later, the social workers at the institution were requested to state on the basis of an extensive list of skills whether the individual tenants possessed such skills, were able to learn them in the medium term or whether they required long-term support. The results showed that for most areas of activity more tenants were considered to be in command of the respective skills a year after occupation of the flats than at the time they moved into the flats and the need for support had declined overall. However, there were also areas in which a great need of support was seen. This applies in particular to appropriate handling of (addictive) illnesses, handicaps and preventive health care. This is a reflection of the fact that the health of some residents had worsened. Another area requiring greater support related to the organisation of leisure-time and/or daily routines (hobbies, participation in events and leisure-time activities) a year after moving into a flat. It would appear that certain problems do not become critical until the tenants move into the flats. Finally, even a year after occupation of the flats – similar to the situation immediately after occupation – there was a substantial need for support in dealing with authorities (filling out forms, responding to letters, enforcing legal claims) and in individual crisis situations. About a third of the residents continued to need post-placement care and assistance regarding problems in establishing social relationships and handling money.

An analysis of the skill assessment of individual tenants also shows that the social workers in the survey confirm a growth in skills for the majority of tenants a year after moving into the flats, despite considerable heterogeneity in the tenants' skill profiles. In the overall assessment, a decline in skills was indicated for only two of

18 tenants. In one case, this relates to his inappropriate handling of his poor health, while the problems in the second case are mostly connected with alcohol.

The survey of the tenants themselves indicates that half of them now undertake more activities (gardening work, caring for animals, excursions, walks, etc.) than during their stay at the institution. Many of them frequently have social contacts with people outside the institution and, particularly among the residents of the new building, have developed intensive contacts with neighbours. With the exception of one tenant, all the residents felt that their situation in the flat had significantly improved compared to that in the shelter. In contrast to accommodation at the shelter, where it was not possible to find privacy, where sanitary facilities and nearly all other rooms had to be shared, where little pocket money was provided and the residents could not make up their own minds and were subjected to constant supervision, the independence and freedom as a tenant were emphasised as advantages of having one's own flat. The residents stated that they had become calmer, freer and more independent, had more money and had made new acquaintances. Any deterioration they mentioned related primarily to their state of health.

In general and with only few exceptions, it can be said that the situation for most of the tenants has improved since they moved into the flats and their independence has increased. This result, and the identified need for support, should be seen against the fact that the group consisted of former homeless persons who were in extremely difficult situations at the outset.

Changes in the need for support and care are reflected also in the provision of support services. For example, the amount of nursing care required by the tenants tended to increase, because the state of health of some deteriorated due to their advanced age and damage to their health during the long period of homelessness. The extent of and time expended on social work has declined for most of the tenants in the course of time.

According to an assessment of the need for support at the end of the evaluation phase, five of 18 tenants no longer had need of personal assistance. For 7 tenants the need for assistance may predominantlly be met by voluntary staff. Six tenants require long-term professional assistance, partly with respect to health and in some cases in the form of psychosocial care. Therefore, it is foreseeable that only some of the tenants can be described as being largely independent and that there may even be an increased need of assistance for some of the tenants after the end of the five-year period. This need can be met in part by volunteer workers or by Bielefeld's regular social services. However, even if the need for additional assistance can be met (and financed) by professional staff after the end of the transitional period, there will still be a significant savings effect with respect to the total costs of social support for the former homeless persons.

5.2.7 Development of tenancy and integration of the tenants

It was not necessary for any of the tenants to be given notice by the housing management in the period up to the end of the evaluation phase. However, three tenants in the "Gartenhaus" have died since it was re-opened in December 1994.

In two cases the cause of death was heart failure. The deaths must also be seen in connection with the relatively advanced age of the residents and the damage caused to their health during homelessness.

There was a certain amount of fluctuation in the flats, due particularly to the fact that two tenants in the two-person flats in the "Gartenhaus" moved into single-room flats in the new building when the latter was ready for occupation at the end of 1995. The two 2-person flats posed a problem right from the beginning. At first, none of the residents of the shelter wanted to share his flat there with another resident. When four applicants were prompted to move into the two-room flats – with the prospect of moving into the new building later – considerable conflicts arose after a short period of living together (because of the drinking habits of other residents, because of differing views on standards of cleanliness, etc.). Finally, the flats were "reclassified" as single-person flats, despite their size, after consultation with the funding agency, i.e. they are now occupied by only one person and the rent is, nevertheless, paid through public welfare assistance. One of the conclusions and lessons for similar projects that can be drawn from this and other projects not dealt with here, is that shared flats are not suitable as long-term housing for homeless persons living alone, and that similar problems and conflicts arise there as in the compulsory group accommodation in institutions.

At the end of the evaluation phase none of the residents had a backlog of unpaid rent, and no-one had received notice to leave. However, problems had repeatedly arisen in connection with payment of the rent. At least six of the tenants ran up rental debts that provided legal grounds to terminate the tenancy agreements. In all cases, however, the overdue rent was either paid off by the social welfare department or in instalments by the residents themselves. The matter was usually settled after intervention by the social workers. Irregularities in payment also resulted because in Germany unemployment benefits are paid out every two weeks, and it is difficult for some tenants receiving a low amount of benefit to pay the full rent amount at the beginning of the month. For the majority of the tenants, the rent is now paid through direct debit authorisation and standing orders. In individual cases, the institution manages the money for the tenants, transfers the rent and pays out the remaining money to the tenants little by little.

In addition, there were conflicts with some tenants because of a lack of cleanliness, because of noise and in one case because of the odours caused by keeping a cat. However, most tenants said they were satisfied with their housing situation and with the other tenants in their building.

The evaluation report specifies the following indicators of social integration on the part of the tenants: six residents have acquired their own telephone, one resident has re-established contact to a member of his family after years of searching; many tenants have received visitors in their flats; a former resident of the shelter found a partner in a female tenant in the same building and has established a joint household with her in the meantime. The neighbourhood relations between the former residents of the shelter and other tenants in the new building are also developing in a largely positive direction.

Several residents have undergone one or more courses of alcohol detoxification or in-patient addiction therapies. On the one hand, this indicates the presence of

addiction problems among a number of residents and, on the other, it means that the residents also succeeded in maintaining their tenancy arrangements through these measures.

Many former residents of the shelter are dissatisfied with the poor bus and tram connections (the district is relatively far away from the city centre and public transport runs at relatively long intervals) and with the lack of shopping facilities in the immediate vicinity. This is an illustration of the problems associated with the relatively isolated location within the city.

5.2.8 Costs and financing of the schemes for rehousing homeless persons

The costs (excluding land) for rebuilding the ”Gartenhaus” came to around 695,000 ECU. To finance the construction work, the institution was able to furnish its required capital contribution through the value of the old building and the building land (22.4% of the total costs). 11.5% of the necessary funds had to be procured on the capital market and the remaining 66.2% was financed through loans from the state of North Rhine-Westphalia and the city of Bielefeld.

The costs for the new building with a total of 25 flats (8 of them for former residents of the shelter) amounted to around 2.08 million ECU. The housing enterprise contributed 32% through its own funds, 14.4% was provided through a loan by the institution and 52.7% of the total costs was financed through loans from the city and the *Land* of North Rhine Westphalia.

The project that was first planned as rebuilding work and was finally realised as a new building (with 15 flats, 6 of them for former residents of the shelter) cost around 1.62 million ECU (excluding land) and was financed with funds (monies and land) from the institution itself (28.7%) and loans from the city and the *Land* (71.3%).

For independent bodies with land and buildings at their disposal, two of the three Bielefeld construction projects show that such measures can be financed without the deployment of cash funds by the bodies in question, in that the real estate can be used as the required capital contribution for financing the project, and within the framework of publicly subsidised housing in Germany the rest can be obtained from public funds.

The rent for the flats, i.e. 4.21 to 4.34 ECU per m² and month (excluding ancillary costs and heating), conforms to the permissible rent for subsidised housing in North Rhine-Westphalia.

No additional personnel was recruited to coordinate and implement the project. The management of the shelter estimates that the resources deployed from 1991 to the end of 1994 amount to about half of one staff position. Since December 1994 (residents move into the “Gartenhaus”) the amount of time required came to around 12 hours a month. In addition to that, the project was supported by a project group consisting of eight staff from the Wilhelmsdorf institution, who met every two weeks in 1993 and every 4 weeks from 1994 onwards. Since 1996, the project group has only met every 6 weeks.

The residents of the shelter and future tenants were involved in planning of the project through regular information.

The running costs of the project (costs of rent and social support) are not specified separately in the evaluation report. The rental costs correspond roughly to the amount otherwise paid in publicly subsidised housing in North Rhine-Westphalia (with the exception of the two larger flats designed for two persons and now only occupied by one person). As agreed, the personnel costs for social support are gradually declining in relation to care in the institution because 6.5 staff posts will be cut there in the course of the 5-year project period, although they are initially still responsible for tenant support. Only after this period has elapsed will the full effect of the savings come into play through the reduction of places at the shelter and provision of normal housing to former homeless persons. Up to the end of the evaluation phase, the institution had already cut 1.8 staff posts and has thus met the respective agreements in full.

5.2.9 Summary

The pilot project is successful on the whole, showing that even long-term homeless persons with severe social (and health) problems can manage in normal flats with appropriate support and care, develop new competencies there, establish social contacts to neighbours, partners and members of their family, and they are also generally more independent and satisfied. Although some of the tenants are still dependent on occasional support or professional assistance even 2 years after moving into the flats, this is not particularly surprising in view of the long period of homelessness in the past, their poor health and relatively old age.

The envisaged transformation of institutional places into normal tenancy arrangements was successful, the reduction of 6.5 staff positions within 5 years has been realised in part and is not questioned. This means savings for public welfare assistance. The Bielefeld project may serve as a model for many other institutions in Germany. Efforts to reduce the places offered in institutions for homeless persons are currently being undertaken in a number of German cities, especially since many homeless persons now reject accommodation in traditional shelters and the quantitative scope of homelessness overall is declining, at least in western Germany (this does not apply to eastern Germany, where homelessness is rising rapidly and new shelters and homes are being created, see Busch-Geertsema/Ruhstrat 1997b). The institutions frequently benefit from the fact that they own land and buildings – as in Wilhelmsdorf – with which they can raise the necessary funds of their own to finance the construction of publicly subsidised housing (so that the agencies funding the institutions do not have to deploy cash funds).

On the whole, the partners in the Bielefeld project assess the cooperation and results as positive, and in future would again decide in favour of implementing such a project. The housing enterprises in Bielefeld that were actively involved in creating new normal housing for the former homeless persons have already implemented new cooperation projects with housing relief organisations for the creation of normal housing for homeless persons.

One of the disadvantages of the Bielefeld project is the unfavourable location within the city. Due to the close proximity to the institution for homeless persons and the location in a district which not only has an extremely high proportion of clients in various social and health institutions who require support, but also has significant disadvantages regarding public transport and shopping, one can speak of a normalisation of living conditions for the former homeless persons only with reservations.

Nevertheless, if one looks at the history of German assistance for the homeless and its institutions, the symbolic importance of the Bielefeld project cannot be emphasised enough. The oldest institution providing assistance to homeless persons has reduced the number of shelter places, and is now making an active contribution towards giving former single homeless persons normal housing on the basis of individual and long-term tenancies. It can only be hoped that this example will be emulated in many other cities, so that real progress can be made towards integrating homeless persons into society.

6. Conclusion

We have analysed two pilot schemes of permanent housing provision of homeless people which formally address to the same group of persons (single homeless persons with special social difficulties). It should have become clear that the group of persons that has been rehoused in the Bielefeld scheme is especially affected by old age and health problems and is therefore faced with more difficulties than the majority of homeless persons rehoused by *SWH* within the scheme *H13*.

Although there are some differences in the composition of clientele, localities and surroundings of construction projects as well as financing and organisation of administration and social care, both pilot schemes have many aspects in common.

Both of them have been set up by traditional service providers for the homeless (with a predominant role of the Protestant welfare organisation) and their innovative approaches are turning points in the conception of services for the homeless. According to this new idea of support for the homeless, integration of homeless persons into normal, separate and permanent housing, combined with additional personal care if needed, is a basic requirement of any further integration of the homeless into society. Any obligation of residents to accept personal assistance, which would mean compulsory care, has been explicitly ruled out in both schemes. Both schemes have tried new forms of cooperation with housing enterprises, which have already been emulated by other schemes. Both schemes were very successful and are transferrable to other localities and other agents.

With few exceptions, the schemes have succeeded in securing long-term housing to former homeless persons with special social difficulties and have therefore established an essential basis for their social integration. This is true for all schemes which have been evaluated for a longer period in the aforementioned EXWOST research field "Permanent housing provision for homeless persons".

Nevertheless, there were some few residents who became homeless again despite care and efforts to secure their tenancies. Actually, it is to be supposed that

for some homeless persons a flat in a house with a larger number of dwellings and neighbours is not helpful, although it is for the vast majority of them. But even for these homeless persons accommodation in institutions is not the only possible solution. In Denmark, for example, research on unconventional housing areas like permanently used holiday or garden alottments, illegal self-made housing etc. showed that housing areas of this type are often inhabited by persons who would otherwise be difficult to integrate into normal housing, and that the existing social networks in these housing areas are in many cases better suited to meet the needs of these people than official public or voluntary services. It was concluded in Denmark that despite their illegal status it is necessary to tolerate these forms of living as far as possible and to take them into consideration by social and urban planning (Kristensen 1997). These unconventional housing areas exist in Germany as well, and the Germans would be well-advised to learn from the way of handling and tolerating them in neighbouring countries like the Netherlands or Denmark. Compared with the total group of homeless people, however, the number of homeless persons who are capable and willing to live in this way is very small. When single homeless persons in several German *Bundeslaender* were questioned, the very most of them wanted to move into individual small flats (Ruhstrat et al. 1991, p. 89; Evers/Ruhstrat 1994, p. 241).

One very important requirement of housing schemes like the ones described in this report is availability and financing of personnel for developing and coordinating the schemes. It has proved sensible not to take on all the responsibilites in such schemes, but to make the different parties involved work on what they know best. A comparison of schemes within the EXWOST research field has showed that voluntary organisations with access to additional resources like for example to church funds have a definite advantage over other voluntary organisations in motivating housing enterprises to cooperate. But comparable economic incentives to realise housing schemes for homeless people could also be created by special public or municipal promotion schemes (in some *Bundeslaender* such promotion schemes do already exist, they are also feasible on a European level).

Comparing costs of institutional accommodation of the homeless with costs of providing them with normal housing and complementary personal care shows that this type of housing provision, which is better for integration, is more advantageous from a fiscal point of view, too. This is even more true if it is possible to integrate the homeless into the existing housing stock. These findings are confirmed by a recent and detailed study on the city of Bremen as an example. Costs of accommodation of single homeless persons, ex-convicts and drug addicts were assessed for all the different existing institutions. Provision of these people with normal housing and complementary personal assistance (as already practised in Bremen in some cases) could save more than one and a half million ECU per annum in Bremen (Busch-Geertsema 1997).

On the other hand, schemes aiming at a provision of homeless people with permanent housing have their price. Housing administration by voluntary organisations and provision of social care are not free. Risks of tenancies, which undoubtedly exist, have to be covered. The seven pilot schemes which have been evaluated within the aforementioned EXWOST research field "Permanent housing provision of homeless persons" were all publicly subsidised as construction projects

and depended not only on the usual public subsidies but on additional resources as well. Coordination of the schemes caused further expenditure (see EXWOST-Information 1997).

A trend of great consequence which materialised in all the seven pilot schemes of the research field "Permanent housing provision of homeless persons" is the separation of assistance by social workers from institutional accommodation. For organisations and services for the homeless it is relatively new to acknowledge firstly that assistance by social workers is not necessarily bound to take place within institutions and secondly that being in need of assistance by social workers does not mean to be excluded from living in normal housing at normal tenancy conditions. This approach might also reconciliate two extreme positions which have predominated debates on homelessness for a long time. Whereas some insisted on the point that the only problem of homeless persons was the lack of a dwelling of their own, others stressed their need of personal care and labelled homeless persons as "not being able to live independently". Evaluation findings show that even those homeless persons who need personal care and are considered as "risky tenants" can be provided for with normal housing and are able to maintain tenancies if efforts are made to meet their need of care and to cover possible risks of tenancies. In this respect the decoupling of need of care and institutional accommodation has been successful.

This should not lead to a new implicit coupling of housing provision for homeless persons with assistance by social workers. In contrast, it has to be emphasised that it is not at all the whole population of the homeless who need special assistance by social workers. Often the concrete individual need of assistance by social workers becomes clear only after rehousing and in the course of tenancies. There may be no need at all, or need of care may be high in the beginning and decrease later, but it may also increase after some time of living independently. In other cases it may recur from time to time, or the type of required assistance may change.

In case that a permanent and far-reaching reduction of homelessness were the aim of German housing policy, assessment of the extent of need for advice and care as well as flexibility and reliability of services organised accordingly would be of greatest importance. So the risk of excessive care has to be dealt with, and a combination of housing provision for all kinds of risk groups with obligatory social care has to be prevented. On the other hand, it has to be taken into account that the handling of cases of great need of social care overstrains most of the usual social services: So adequate advice and care services for former homeless persons have to be developed and extended (also with respect to financing and time-limits of care). However, it should be pointed out that a growing number of persons who are not homeless are in need of compensatory support for maintaining independent housing, as social care, housekeeping or nursing and therapeutical care (EXWOST 1997, p. 22). As the number of elderly people rises who want to keep living in their own dwellings there are comprehensive considerations and concrete examples of organising respective services. Some aspects concerning the necessary cooperation between municipalities, housing enterprises and social work might be transferrable to the provision of homeless persons.

The schemes which have been described in this report and evaluated within the EXWOST research field are small construction projects of voluntary organisations which have procured a relatively small number of housing units for homeless persons, mainly by constructing new housing. This practice has to be seen in context with an extreme housing shortage in Germany in the years around 1990. Another shortcoming tackled by the schemes is caused by the traditional family-orientation of publicly subsidised housing: the striking lack of small flats for single persons.

But homelessness in Germany with a housing affluence of the majority of the population and a housing space per person which has been growing for decades is not just a problem of housing shortage or bad housing. It is also a problem of the distribution of housing space and a problem of access to available housing. Eventually, homelessness in Germany is too extensive to be mainly reduced effectively by the construction of new housing. In particular as the housing market has relaxed and the construction of new housing has decreased, the existing housing stock is the most important housing resource. In Germany (like certainly in other European countries as well) the central question is how to secure access to existing housing to homeless or otherwise socially and economically disadvantaged households in spite of reductions in publicly subsidised housing and the purchase of municipal housing stocks. This question concerns allocation rights in the existing housing stock and possible interventions into housing industry. The quantitative dimensions of an approach like this would be very different, and housing schemes of homeless organisations in the voluntary sector could only partly contribute to a solution to the housing problem.

Finally, the schemes described in this report are addressed just to one sub-group of the homeless. Single homeless persons with extraordinary social problems are often at a disadvantage even among the total group of the homeless. In particular the clients of services for the homeless in the voluntary sector have very bad chances of being accepted by municipal housing administrations and landlords. However, they are quite a minority among the homeless. For example in Hanover there were about 2,500 homeless persons in 1995 who were temporarily accommodated in municipal shelters (predominantly, but not exclusively families), but there were "only" about 400 places in institutions for single homeless persons in the voluntary sector. While *SWH* could acquire about 60 tenancies for single homeless persons, the City of Hanover (as mentioned earlier) intended to halve places of municipal temporary accommodation over the medium term from about 2,450 in 1995 to about 1,200 to 1,400 by redevelopment and reconstruction of shelters and by special schemes in cooperation with the municipal housing company. Between 1990 and 1995 in three special estates for the homeless more than 1,200 homeless people had already been provided with normal housing. However, neither this process was evaluated, nor the courses of tenancies of the rehoused.

Housing schemes of voluntary organisations could help in providing homeless persons permanently with housing. In particular they could have an important part in dismantling places in institutions and in providing for homeless persons with special need for care. But their capacities of solving the quantitative problems of homelessness are limited. Housing schemes of voluntary organisations alone cannot improve chances of homeless persons for integration positively enough. Rather, this is the responsibility of big housing companies and municipalities. Vol-

untary organisation, however, could offer certain services in cooperation with housing companies and municipalities for which they possess specific qualifications (like care, advice and if necessary housing administration) which they could extent in quantity.

For tackling the quantitative dimension of housing problems, however, social housing policy, housing enterprises and the state are of greatest importance in future as well as today.

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