

Winter 2016 Directive

Part 1: Homelessness

A task to get you started

What are the first five words that come to your mind when you think of the word 'home'?

Your experiences

Has there ever been a time when you have been without a permanent home, faced the threat of homelessness or experienced homelessness? What about your friends, family, or acquaintances? Have they ever been touched by homelessness? Please give details about the circumstances.

Your local area

Recently there have been a number of news stories about homelessness, with some reports stating that the number of people street homeless has doubled since 2010. Have you noticed any signs of this in your local area?

Causes

What do you think are the causes of homelessness? What are the biggest challenges a homeless person faces?

Policies

As we write this Directive there are a number of news reports about new laws and policies to tackle homelessness:

- It has been reported that a borough council in Nottinghamshire plans to issue £100 on the spot fines to street homeless people
- The Government are currently debating a new law to prevent people becoming homeless. If the law goes ahead in its current format, it will place a duty on local authorities to help eligible people at risk of homelessness to secure accommodation.

We would like your thoughts on these policies.

Are there any other ways that the government, or other agencies, should support those living on the street? Please share your ideas

On the street

What do you think when you see a person who lives on the streets? Does this ever change depending on your circumstances?

Please start each part of your Directive reply on a new sheet of paper with your MO number, sex, age, marital status, the town or village where you live and your occupation or former occupation.

Remember *not to identify yourself or other people inadvertently within your reply*. It is best to use initials instead of real names.

Do you give, or have you ever given money, food or other items to someone who is homeless? Or have you experienced being given any donations when homeless? Please tell us about how this experience made you feel.

Charitable giving – or not?

Do you contribute to any charities that provide support for homeless people, such as Crisis, The Big Issue, The Salvation Army or food banks? Perhaps there are certain times of the year when you are more likely to give to a homelessness organisation? Not everyone feels that giving to charity is worthwhile and many people cannot afford to do so. Please describe your own position on this.

I, Daniel Blake

As we write this Directive, Ken Loach's latest film *I, Daniel Blake* is showing at cinemas across the country. While not about homelessness as such, the film offers a window onto the benefit system and there is a point where it seems that the film's protagonist might lose his home.

What would it take for you to be in a similar situation? Would you be secure/safe if you lost your income? What would you do if you faced the threat of homelessness?

Part 2: Diary - Boxing Day 2016

Please keep a day diary on Monday 26th December 2016 – Boxing Day. It is a national holiday that has never been recorded by the Mass Observation Project

We realise that for many of you it will be a very busy day, but even a brief account would be appreciated.

You may be visiting family or friends, taking part in sporting activities or braving the shopping sales. For some it is a chance to rest and eat up the Christmas leftovers, for others it is just a normal day.

If you cook any meals or dishes that are a tradition for you, we would welcome your recipes!

However you spend your day, please record what you do, who you see, what you eat, and any observations or feelings that you have on the day.

Even if it is just a normal day for you, we still want to hear about it. We look forward to adding your diaries to the Archive.

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Please post your response to: **Freepost: RTGU-AYJE-YSSC, The Mass Observation Archive, The Keep, Woollards Way, Brighton, BN1 9BP** or by email to: moa@sussex.ac.uk
JS/KP Summer Directive/No. 107