

**HOMELESSNESS SEASON HOMELESSNESS SEASON**

# Britain's shame

**NEW**

**More than 130,000 children in this country are homeless...**

**EVICTED**

**BBC1 Wednesday**

'Life here is not very nice,' writes 15-year-old Sarah in her diary. 'The shower doesn't work and there's no way of heating up food. We have to put tins of beans on the radiator in the morning so they're warm enough to eat by tea time.'

Meanwhile, another family with four children huddle together in a bus shelter on a freezing evening, with no idea where they'll sleep that night.

These aren't scenes from years ago or an impoverished country far away – they all take place in the UK in 2006. BBC1's new documentary, *Evicted*, looks at the problems faced by homeless families through the

eyes of the children, who suddenly find themselves in a strange and scary world of dingy hostels.

The film is one of several programmes about homelessness that the BBC is showing over the next two weeks to mark the 40th anniversary of the

landmark 1966 drama *Cathy Come Home*. The shocking story of a young woman made

homeless through no fault of her own and its devastating consequences helped promote the homeless charity, Shelter, which coincidentally launched a few days after the drama aired.

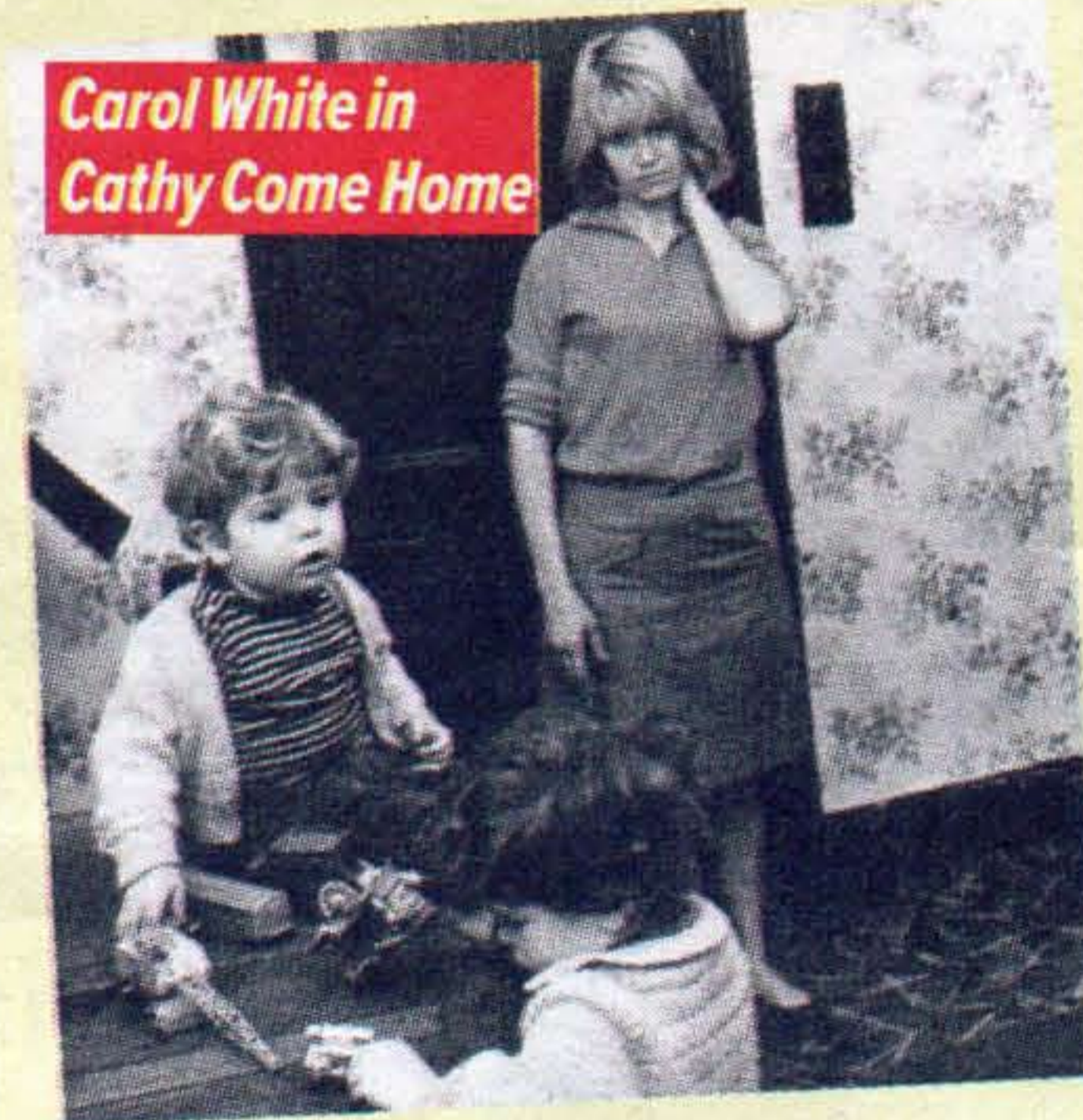
Sadly, it seems little has changed. There are still over 130,000 homeless children in

**'I hear my dad crying every night'**

*No way to live... Charlotte (second left) and family*



*Carol White in Cathy Come Home*



Britain today. Perhaps the most shocking aspect of the film is how easily families can find themselves without a home.

Charlotte Walker, 13, and her three younger siblings found themselves on the streets after their landlord decided to sell their parents' rented home. Their dad had left his job when his wife became ill and was unable to afford to rent a new place.

'I hear my dad crying every night and I cry myself to sleep, too,' reveals Charlotte, as she unpacks her small bag in yet another B&B hostel.

'My little brother is always asking if we'll go into care and I worry that they can just come in and take me. My dad says they can't, but my head of year at school says they can. I don't know who to believe.' ■

**● Cathy Come Home will be shown on BBC4 on Sunday.**