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Housing protests

OTTAWA (CUP) — Braving cold September winds, students and the University of Guelph staged a camp-out last week to protest the lack of affordable housing for students.

"We slept in a tent, ate hot

dogs and talked about housing," said Sheena Weir, chair of the Ontario Federation of Students. Weir and 11 other students spent the night in a tent in front of university residence buildings to call attention to 24 Guelph students who still don't have a place to live.

"Students showed up throughout the evening to ask what the

Carleton University in Ottawa, in support of the Guelph students. Guelph is the only city of the five where the housing bylaw is being actively enforced.

"The landlords and police officers are knocking on doors and checking IDs of people with those on the lease," said Monica Kirchmayr, a Carleton student council vice-president who organized the Ottawa tent-in.

In Halifax, city council began looking into limiting the number of non-related people living together a few years ago. Student councils, the Students' Union of Nova Scotia, and other groups protested the action, and as of yet, no bylaw has been passed.

The average cost for rent in the Halifax-Dartmouth area is

Checking IDs of people with those on the lease

housing situation was and how they could improve their situation," said Weir. "It was a visual way of saying to the government, 'yes, we do have a problem'."

Students in Guelph, Waterloo, Kingston, London, and Sudbury now have more difficulty than ever finding affordable housing because of municipal bylaws which limit the number of unrelated people who can share a house.

A tent-in was also staged at

half their annual income on housing

between \$250 and \$300 per month, utilities included.

The situation in Guelph is so bad that neighbours are calling the police if they suspect more than four people living together, said Kirchmayr.

"What we want is to raise the public and media's attention to the lack of student housing," said Kirchmayr.

Ottawa's vacancy rate was 1.5 per cent for 1986 and students spend an average of half their annual income on housing costs.

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