

# Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

2018 - 2023



# Contents

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# Foreword

## Councillor Sirajul Islam

Statutory Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing



Welcome to the new **Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy** which sets out the council's priorities for tackling homelessness and rough sleeping over the next five years.

Recent welfare changes against a backdrop of increasing local rents have put increasing pressure on the affordability of housing for residents. This along with a shortage of affordable homes and a range of complex social and health factors have led to an increase in homelessness and rough sleeping over the last five years, nationally, regionally and within the borough.

Locally, we have worked hard with our partners and made good progress in preventing homelessness and alleviating rough sleeping since the adoption of our last Homelessness Statement. However, there is still more to do.

Recent changes in legislation through the Homelessness Reduction Act place additional responsibilities on the council to work with partners to provide appropriate support to prevent homelessness at an earlier stage.

This strategy sets out the council's ambition to meet these challenges, working in partnership with local providers to deliver better outcomes for our households at risk of homelessness and to reduce rough sleeping.

I would like to thank everyone who has helped develop this strategy, in particular those stakeholders and partners who will help us deliver the priorities contained within it to prevent homelessness and eradicate rough sleeping.

# Introduction

**W**hile rough sleeping (those who sleep or live on the street) is often the most visible and concerning form of homelessness, the definition of homelessness extends much wider than this.

It also includes anyone who does not have access to suitable accommodation and may be staying with friends or family (sofa surfing), living in squats or in temporary accommodation provided by the council.

This Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out how we will, over the coming five years, prevent homelessness including rough sleeping and support those who face homelessness or who are at risk of becoming homeless. Our actions are targeted across the following work streams:



**Theme 1 -  
Prevention of homelessness:**

**Priority 1**  
Homeless prevention, tackling the causes of homelessness and implementing the Homeless Reduction Act.

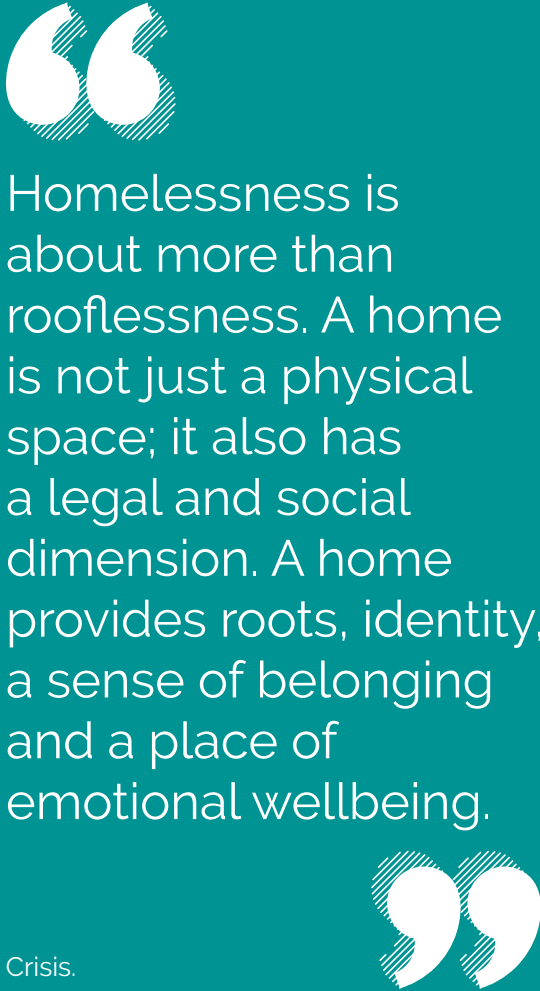
**Priority 2**  
Preventing homelessness by access to affordable and sustainable housing options.



**Theme 2 -  
Response of services to  
homeless households and  
vulnerable people:**

**Priority 1**  
Preventing and responding to rough sleeping.

**Priority 2**  
Supporting children, families and young people and vulnerable adults.



Homelessness is about more than rooflessness. A home is not just a physical space; it also has a legal and social dimension. A home provides roots, identity, a sense of belonging and a place of emotional wellbeing.

Crisis.

# National Picture

The incidence of homelessness and rough sleeping has dramatically increased within the last 8-10 years, with official estimates of rough sleeping indicating an increase of 169% since 2010.

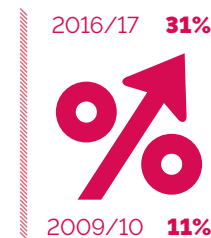
In addition to official estimates, since 2009/10, the number of annual homelessness acceptances by councils has increased by **19,000** across England, a **48% increase** from the 2009/10 baseline.



There are a number of factors which can cause a person to be homeless. These are often complex and can include the lack of affordable housing, family/relationship breakdown, poor mental/physical health, loss of income/poverty leading to an inability to sustain or secure suitable accommodation.

The recent increase in statutory homelessness can, from national and local estimates, be attributed to the sharp rise in numbers made homeless from the private rented sector.

As a proportion of all statutory homelessness acceptances, those stemming from the private rented sector have risen, from **11%** to **31%** between 2009/10 to 2016/17.



Welfare reform and freezing of the Local Housing Allowance since 2011 are key contributing factors, especially in London where private rents have increased substantially.

Reduced income against a backdrop of rising private rents has led to the private rented sector becoming an increasingly unaffordable and unsustainable tenure of housing.

High demand on social housing stock and a limited supply of affordable social housing to meet the need has led to restricted social housing being available, leaving residents with fewer options and leading to homelessness.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government figures, published in 2017, highlight that the number of people sleeping rough in England has increased by 73% over the last three years, and 169% in the last seven years.

This is echoed by regional figures for rough sleeping which highlight that in 2010/11, 3,975 people spent at least one night sleeping rough in London. This has more than doubled in 2017/18 to 8,108.



While rough sleepers are exposed to a greater risk of crime and may be victims of violence, sustained periods of rough sleeping can lead to the development of additional complex needs such as substance misuse and mental and physical health issues. The development of these additional needs can then make the journey to securing sustainable accommodation, through addressing these issues, even more difficult.

# Local Picture & Context



**Tower Hamlets has one of the fastest growing populations in the country.** This increase in population brings with it significant housing challenges concerning demand outstripping supply and a rising cost of living and housing.

The relationship between high housing costs and low incomes is evident. **Tower Hamlets has the 12th highest average monthly rents in London**, and one of the highest levels of poverty in the UK, with **44%** of households in the borough **experiencing income poverty**.

12th highest monthly rents



The combination of these factors can mean people in the borough, particularly those on low incomes, are being priced out with an increased risk of homelessness.

A sustained increase over the medium to long term in the supply of rented accommodation (that is affordable to local residents), could lead to a reduction in homelessness.

Even with the increased funding available to support the delivery of affordable rented housing, it is still unlikely that supply will match the level of need. It is therefore essential for us to increase prevention work and intervene earlier to alleviate homelessness.

One key challenge we are facing is the ability to procure affordable private sector

temporary accommodation to fulfil our statutory duties to homeless households. This is resulting in a substantial increase in the cost of temporary accommodation.

The availability of affordable private rented accommodation is at risk of diminishing further, unless the Local Housing Allowance and temporary accommodation subsidy are increased to more closely match market rents.

As part of this strategy we are taking steps to actively plan for the future by diversifying the supply of temporary accommodation. This is to reduce the dependence on expensive private rented accommodation and achieve an affordable pipeline of homes for the prevention and relief of homelessness.

The lack of affordable housing supply in-borough has led to the placement of families outside of Tower Hamlets in order to fulfil our statutory duty. In these circumstances, those placed out of borough may have left jobs, family and support networks and require additional support to resettle in a different location. We are committed to sourcing accommodation which is local and to work with our neighbouring boroughs to place homeless households within the wider locality.

# Local Picture & Context

Tower Hamlets has one of the youngest populations in the country.

Those who are on lower incomes can struggle to afford local rents, increasing the risk of young people potentially experiencing homelessness.



are available for young people who are entitled to Through Care services. Cases are considered by the Independent Placement Panel prior to the young person reaching the age of 16 and a half.

As part of our Corporate Parenting responsibilities, we are committed to ensuring that the prevention of homelessness among care leavers is managed via support to find and sustain accommodation. Local authorities also now have a duty to provide Personal Adviser (PA) support to all care leavers up to the age of 25, if they want this. Some care leavers may experience continuing challenges, including the risk of homelessness, and they can now return for PA support to help address such issues.

Similarly, those who run away from home, in particular those who are LGBTQI+ are also at increased risk of homelessness with limited practical support from families.

A number of people are also made homeless as a result of domestic violence, especially women fleeing the principal home to escape abuse. In these circumstances homeless women may be concealed as 'hidden homeless', staying with friends or relatives or rough sleeping.

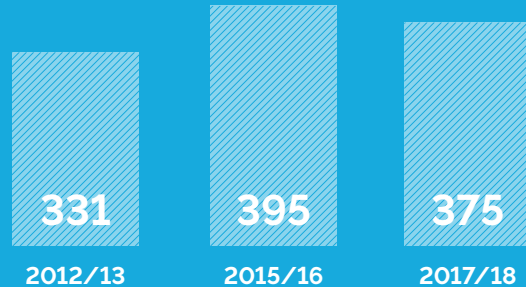
In 2017/18, **168 homelessness preventions were made** where assistance supported residents to remain in their accommodation. **38%** of these cases involved the provision of alternative accommodation **due to domestic violence**.

**16%** of the **168 preventions** involved mediation/conciliation, **17% specific advocacy** to remain in the Private Rented Sector and **14% required financial recourse** to resolve the issue.

A key priority of this strategy is to put steps in place to ensure that we work with partners to deliver a greater focus on the prevention of homelessness. Specific measures are in place concerning key vulnerable groups such as young adults, care leavers, those with substance misuse problems and/or mental health issues as well as victims of domestic violence. These are set out under of this strategy.

# Local Picture & Context

Tackling the issue of **rough sleeping** in the borough is also a high priority. The total number of rough sleepers seen by our commissioned outreach team has increased from **331** in **2012/13** and **395** in **2015/16** to **375** in **2017/18**.



We know that rough sleeping is harmful and dangerous. Recent studies indicate that the average life expectancy for a rough sleeper is **47 years for men** and **42 for women**.



Additionally, rough sleepers (and those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness) are at particular risk of suicide, in part due to high levels of related risk factors such as poverty/debt, mental ill health, drug and alcohol issues as well as isolation.

Rough sleepers in Tower Hamlets often have very complex needs (e.g. people with a triple diagnosis and/or a serious forensic history, co-dependent couples and people with pets) and therefore need very sophisticated and personalised accommodation and support options.

Prolonged periods of rough sleeping can lead to the development of additional complex needs such as substance misuse and poor mental and physical health issues.

Those who are very entrenched in a street lifestyle can often be resistant to taking up offers of support (including health and substance misuse support) and accommodation options. We are committed to never giving up on individuals and will continue to offer support.

There is an increasing need to place rough sleepers in accommodation options out-of-borough due to all options in Tower Hamlets

having been exhausted. Some clients with a local connection to Tower Hamlets are unwilling to access accommodation in another area.

There are a number of people who return to rough sleeping in the borough after a period of time in either temporary or long-term accommodation. We are committed to working with those who return to rough sleeping to identify sustainable housing solutions.

We work with partners to better identify rough sleepers and intervene more rapidly to offer support and provide accommodation as set out under **Theme 2, Priority 1** of this strategy.





# National Policy

Recognising the rise of homelessness as a significant issue, the Chancellor of the Exchequer reiterated a number of the Government's manifesto commitments around homelessness as part of his 2017 Budget speech. These included:

- A commitment to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and eliminate it by 2027.
- The creation of a Homelessness Reduction Taskforce to develop a cross-government strategy to deliver the manifesto commitment.
- £28m investment into 'Housing First' pilot projects which prioritise an individual's need for stable housing rather than the traditional approach of moving them through different 'levels' of supported accommodation.

Since the adoption of the LBTH Homelessness Statement in 2013, the largest change in national policy has been the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act which came into force in April 2018.

## The Homelessness Reduction Act

The Homelessness Reduction Act provides new legislation to prevent homelessness for households and individuals at risk through the following clauses:

- Improved advice and information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness, tailored to individual need and accessible.
- Extension of the period at which a client may be considered as 'threatened with homelessness', and thus potentially owed a duty to be housed, from 28 days to 56 days.
- Introduced new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible people, regardless of priority need and local connection.
- Introduced needs assessments and personalised housing plans, setting out the actions housing authorities and individuals will take to help secure accommodation.
- Encouraging public bodies to work together to prevent and relieve homelessness through a mandatory duty to refer.

## Rough Sleeping Strategy

In addition to policies to prevent homelessness through the Homelessness Reduction Act, commitment is further emphasised through the Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018. In summary, this committed:

- To halve rough sleeping by 2022, and to end it for good by 2027.
- £100m of funding and a three-pronged approach to ending rough sleeping through prevention, intervention, and recovery.
- A wider review of homelessness and rough sleeping legislation, which will include the Vagrancy Act.



# Local & Regional Policy

## London Housing Strategy

Complementing national policy, the London Housing Strategy offers a range of proposals to prevent and address homelessness as well as reduce rough sleeping; these largely fall under the following themes:

### Homelessness Prevention

The Mayor of London will:

Work with partners to support a greater focus on prevention of homelessness, particularly youth homelessness.

Work with partners to ensure those who lose their home are supported into sustainable accommodation.

### Rough Sleeping

Through the GLA Rough Sleeping Plan of Action, the Mayor of London will:

Work with partners to identify and pursue new approaches to tackling rough sleeping in London.

Work with partners to better identify rough sleepers and intervene more rapidly to support them off the streets. This includes providing specialist support for particular groups to help rough sleepers stay off the streets.

Work with partners to improve the provision of accommodation for rough sleepers.

### Tower Hamlets Housing Strategy

Our current housing strategy was adopted in December 2016, and is geared towards delivering a housing offer which best meets the needs of local residents. It set out our commitment to delivering a Homelessness Strategy which:

- Considered other options to prevent homelessness and to meet demand, including ways of reducing the number of homeless households from Tower Hamlets who are currently in temporary accommodation.
- Committed to the continuation of the No Second Night Out objective (and through working with landlords and tenants, ensuring 'No First Night Out' on the street).
- Committed to developing council owned temporary accommodation, and using existing council and Registered Provider properties for short-term homeless housing where appropriate.
- Gave consideration to ensuring the most vulnerable groups can be assisted, linking their support into health, education, employment and wellbeing.

In addition to the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, we have a range of other complementary strategies and plans to address both the root causes and impact of homelessness and rough sleeping on residents. These include:

**Tenancy Strategy.**

**Private Rented Sector Strategy.**

**Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-20.**

**Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2016-19.**

**Suicide Prevention Strategy 2018-21.**

**Substance Misuse Strategy 2016-19.**

**Tackling Poverty Work Programme.**

**Hostels Commissioning Plan 2016-2019.**

**Health Scrutiny Committee Review: Health & Social Care Provision for Homeless Residents.**

# How the 2018–2023 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is set out

## Our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

has two themes; Prevention of homelessness and response of services to homeless households and vulnerable people. Each theme has two priorities.

### Theme 1 - Prevention of homelessness:

#### Priority 1

Homeless prevention, tackling the causes of homelessness and implementing the Homeless Reduction Act.

#### Priority 2

Preventing homelessness by access to affordable and sustainable housing options.

### Theme 2 - Response of services to homeless households and vulnerable people:

#### Priority 1

Preventing and responding to rough sleeping.

#### Priority 2

Supporting children, families and young people and vulnerable adults.



# What we have delivered so far

We have made significant progress in preventing homelessness and assisting the most vulnerable households in the borough through:

- Achieving a **100% reduction** in Bed & Breakfast use for families so that no family is placed in a B&B for longer than the statutory limit of six weeks.
- Successful implementation of the '**No First Night Out Rough Sleeping Prevention**' service and '**No Second Night Out Rough Sleeping**' initiative.
- Successful implementation of the **Safe Connections project** that enabled a notable number of rough sleepers to return safely to their place of origin in the United Kingdom. This model has now been replicated pan-London by the GLA.
- Successful implementation of the award winning **Routes to Roots** project that has enabled a significant number of homeless individuals to be safely discharged from the Royal London Hospital and return to their place of origin in the United Kingdom.
- Successful **procurement of temporary accommodation** within 90 minutes travel to the borough enabling households to maintain ties with their communities while displaced.
- As part of the LBTH Young People's Accommodation Pathway, the council has commissioned four block accommodation based support services contracts offering **14 distinct supported housing schemes** to provide accommodation and support for vulnerable young people (homeless youth and care leavers) between the ages of 16 to 21 (up to 25 depending on needs). This service provides a safe and secure environment for young people unable to remain at home.
- The service also offers a '**Crash Pad Facility**' consisting of emergency bed spaces offering short term accommodation (24-48 hours) to eliminate the need for bed and breakfast and temporary accommodation (in particular for 16 and 17 year olds).
- Embedding links between the homelessness and safeguarding services to identify adult abuse and neglect and take appropriate action. This includes the work of the **High Risk Transition Panel** which considers and supports agencies to manage risk when vulnerable adults are transitioning from one service or situation to another; one risk being the prevention of homelessness amongst vulnerable adults.
- Successfully **rehousing 1,366 homeless households** (bands 1B and 2A) into permanent accommodation under the last Homelessness Statement between 2012 and 2017.
- A successful restructure of the **Housing Options team** to prepare for the Homelessness Reduction Act.
- Continuing to be a key **regional and sub-regional** influential and respected partner.
- Improved conditions in the private rented sector and promoted tenants' rights through our **Private Renters' Charter** and greater landlord licensing.

# Initiatives we will continue to deliver

## Theme 1

### Prevention of homelessness:

**No Wrong Door** - Our Housing Options service will continue its innovative No Wrong Door programme to ensure that customers can access all the services they need to help resolve their housing problems from one point of contact.

**Private Rented Sector Housing Advice Team** - The Housing Advice team will continue to prevent homelessness through giving comprehensive advice and guidance to private sector tenants, registered social landlord tenants and leaseholders. We will continue to try and resolve landlord disputes, disrepair issues, rent/mortgage problems, maximisation of income, security of tenure issues and service charge issues.

**East London Housing Partnership** – We will continue to work with ELHP on the New Leaf project which delivers upstream homelessness prevention advice and support to private rented sector households who are threatened with homelessness.

The **New Routes** project will also deliver rent deposits for 250 non-priority single households (or couples) when homelessness prevention has failed.

**Partnership working with Registered Social Housing Landlords** – We will continue to broker the relationship between Registered Social Landlords and tenants, by intervening early and preventing homelessness caused by rent arrears and anti-social behaviour.

The **Through Care Service** will continue to consider the accommodation needs of eligible care leavers as part of their individual needs assessment and Pathway Plan. Personal Advisers work with the Through Care Housing Support Officer and other professionals to find accommodation options which meet the young person's identified needs.

# Initiatives we will continue to deliver

## Theme 2

### Response of services to homeless households and vulnerable people:

**East London Women's Project** – We will continue to work with East London Housing Partnership to provide supported accommodation for female survivors of abuse who have multiple disadvantages. These include; substance use, mental health issues, history of offending, sex working, no recourse to public funds or other multiple or complex support needs.

**No First Night Out** - We will continue to partner the No First Night Out (NFNO) initiative and provide accommodation for single people who may have otherwise resorted to sleeping on the streets.

The Housing Options Single's Team (HOST) service will continue to employ a **Complex Needs Team** to work more intensively with high support self-referred

and partner agency clients (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Hospital Pathways) who require accommodation and long term support.

**HOST** will continue to work with the most vulnerable single people who approach as homeless. As the Complex Needs Team deals with a high level of complex cases, the collaborative working amongst key partner agencies such as Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol Services, Safeguarding and Adults Services will remain vital in delivering this service.

We will continue to deliver the LBTH **Young People's Accommodation Pathway** to provide a safe and secure environment for young people unable to remain at

home in addition to activities undertaken to facilitate a safe return home where possible.

We will continue to offer a '**Crash Pad Facility**' consisting of emergency bed spaces offering short term accommodation (24-48 hours) to eliminate the need for bed and breakfast and temporary accommodation (in particular for 16 and 17 year olds).

We will continue to embed links between the homelessness and safeguarding services to identify adult abuse and neglect and take appropriate action. This includes the work undertaken by the **High Risk Transition Panel** to ensure the risk of homelessness is mitigated amongst vulnerable adults.

# Theme 1 - Prevention of homelessness



Homeless prevention, tackling the causes of homelessness and implementing the Homelessness Reduction Act.



## In the next five years we will:

### Objective 1:

Provide quality, timely and accessible information and advice focused on homeless prevention and support by:

- **Ensuring that there is clear and consistent information** at all key points of contact for homeless households and those at risk of becoming homeless which is tailored for certain vulnerable groups.
- **Improving** the quality and accessibility of housing and homelessness advice services and pathways.
- **Working** with East London Housing Partnership (ELHP) on the New Leaf and New Routes projects.
- **Meeting our duties** under the Homelessness Reduction Act.

### Objective 2:

Support people to remain in their homes by:

- **Working proactively with social and private landlords** to identify and support people at risk of homelessness and assist tenants to maintain their tenancies.
- **Providing a holistic advice and support** role for people at risk of losing their home.
- **Providing financial inclusion and income maximisation advice and support** for residents, particularly those at risk of losing their homes.
- **Providing targeted support** to broker the relationship between landlords and those families placed in private rented accommodation.
- **Targeted and proactive** use of discretionary housing payments to help people to maintain their tenancy.

# Theme 1 - Prevention of homelessness

## Objective 3:

Address the root causes of homelessness through a partnership approach to tackling worklessness and exclusion by:

- **Mitigating where possible** the impact of welfare reform on homeless and formerly homeless people.
- **Providing pathways and support** to employment for households at risk of homelessness and exclusion.
- **Strengthening our strategic commitment and joint working** on homelessness prevention and exclusion.
- **Making better use of information and intelligence** across partnerships to tackle homelessness and exclusion.
- **Creating specific projects to help key groups**, such as young people, to access and maintain good employment, in particular addressing the specific needs of those that are Not in Education Employment and Training (NEET).

## We will achieve these objectives by:

- Service re-design to meet the challenges of the Homelessness Reduction Act.
- Upskilling our staff.
- Ensuring good practice and high quality services by achieving Gold Standard which is being replaced by the Self-Assessment Homelessness Reduction Act accreditation (SAHRA) and Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA).
- Digital transformation enabling residents to access services remotely and in a way that works for them.
- Briefing partner organisations on all aspects of homelessness.
- Exploring and enhancing a range of preventative measures and best practice models.
- New IT system(s).

## How will we know if our actions are working?

- Increased number of homelessness preventions and a reduced proportion of repeat homelessness cases.
- Increased proportion of personal housing plans which achieve a positive outcome.
- Improved job outcomes achieved by those homeless or rough sleeping.
- Improved client satisfaction with the Housing Options service.



# Theme 1 - Prevention of homelessness



Preventing homelessness by providing access to affordable and sustainable housing options.

## In the next five years we will:

### Objective 1:

Increase the supply of housing across social tenures by:

- Working in partnership with housing providers and developers, to continue to provide new affordable and suitable homes.
- Identifying funding opportunities to develop new council homes.
- Working through our housing companies to secure further housing, both through purchasing of existing market properties and building new homes.
- Bringing empty properties back into use.



### Objective 2:

Develop innovative and sustainable housing options in the private sector by:

- Improving the accessibility of the private rented sector as a continued opportunity to prevent homelessness, recognising that the continuing Local Housing Allowance freeze influences affordability.
- Ensuring that the private sector offers safe and good quality housing options.
- Promoting private tenants' rights and supporting responsible landlords through the ongoing promotion of the council's Private Renters' Charter.
- Making privately rented accommodation more accessible to our residents by bridging the gaps in service, managing expectations and educating on homelessness realities.

# Theme 1 - Prevention of homelessness

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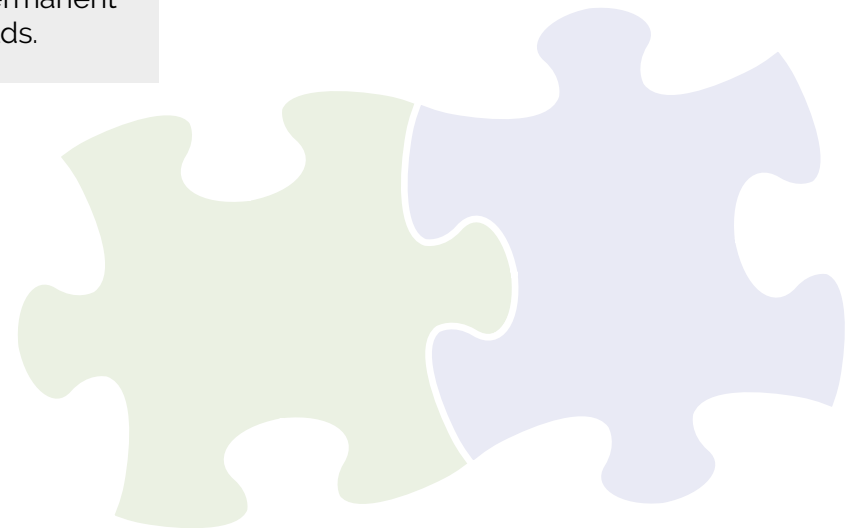
## Objective 3:

Maximise the use of the existing social housing stock by:

- **Implementing changes** within the Allocations Policy to ensure that current resources are used most effectively to reduce homelessness and provide adequate housing to those in need.
- **Providing permanent offers** to house homeless households in discharge of the council's statutory duty and to free up temporary accommodation for other homeless applicants owed a relief duty.

## How will we know if our actions are working?

- Through delivering a pipeline of **2,000 council homes** by 2022.
- **Securing 4,000** socially rented homes through the planning process.
- **Increasing** the number of landlords signing up to the landlord licensing scheme.
- **Increasing** the number of permanent offers to homeless households.



# Theme 2 - Response of services to homeless households and vulnerable people



Preventing and responding to rough sleeping

## In the next five years we will:

- Prevent people from having to rough sleep for the first time in the borough.
- Support new rough sleepers so they don't spend a second night on the streets.
- Assist people to exit the street safely and to sustain accommodation so that no one calls the street their home.
- Help former rough sleepers maintain their independence and accommodation.



## We will do this by:

- Providing services and interventions in partnership with colleagues in Substance Misuse services, Adult Social Care, Integrated Commissioning, Primary Health Care and Mental Health services, Community Safety services, the third sector and many others.
- Participating in forums and implementing models to support rough sleepers and reduce the anti-social behaviour associated with some rough sleepers and sleeping sites.
- Providing a response to the Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy and working closely with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to make most effective use of new funding streams to end rough sleeping.

# Theme 2 - Response of services to homeless households and vulnerable people

## Objective 1:

Provide services and interventions in partnership by:

- Continuing to commission a rough sleeping street outreach service – TH SORT (Street Outreach Response Team).
- Continuing to commission day services for rough sleepers and those who are vulnerably housed.
- Continuing to provide an integrated drug and alcohol service – TH DAAT (Drugs and Alcohol Action Team) which will:
  - Link into the Royal London Hospital Homeless Pathways team and rough sleeping services.
  - Deliver a High Impact Drinkers' Programme which takes a multi-agency approach to engaging alcohol misusing individuals.
  - Commission RESET, an integrated drug and alcohol treatment service with an easy single point of access to treatment.

- Commission a dedicated service at the local homeless health centre, Health E1, to support homeless service users misusing substances.

- Continuing to commission a large variety of hostel services in the borough for those with medium, high and complex support needs including challenging behaviour.
- Continuing to use a range of bespoke accommodation options including those funded by the London Mayor's office (GLA), regional options and inter-borough swaps.
- Continuing to provide support to non-UK national rough sleepers with offers of employment and immigration advice, and supported voluntary reconnections.
- Testing out new partnerships and ways of working with entrenched rough sleepers including a street nurse, street psychologist and a Housing First pilot.

## Objective 2:

Support rough sleepers and reduce the anti-social behaviour through:

### The Support and Enforcement Model

- We will continue to implement a Support and Enforcement model to support rough sleepers and reduce anti-social behaviour.
- Genuine offers of support and accommodation will always be the main approach to end rough sleeping.
- Where this approach is consistently unsuccessful, we will work closely with enforcement agencies and the wider community to reduce anti-social behaviour.

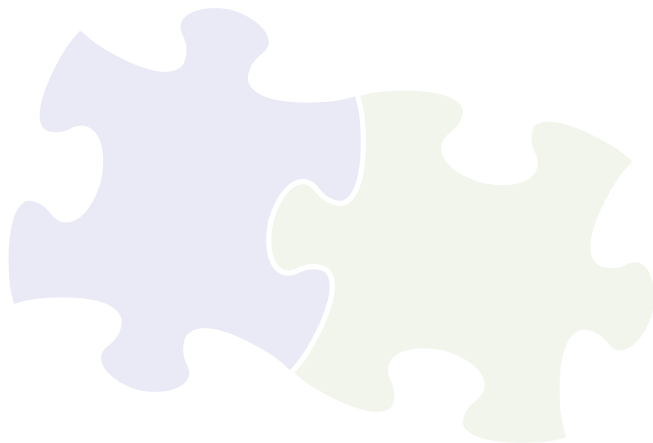
### Forums and Tasking Meetings

- We will continue to chair a monthly Tasking and Care Planning meeting for rough sleepers and those with a street lifestyle. This meeting brings together support and enforcement agencies to case conference and develop plans

# Theme 2 - Response of services to homeless households and vulnerable people

for entrenched rough sleepers and to develop rough sleeping hotspot management plans.

- **We will continue to support** a number of multi-agency panels to support vulnerable clients and/or reduce anti-social behaviours. These include the Community ASB MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference), DV MARAC, TH Prostitution Partnership, Adult Safeguarding High Risk Transitional Panel, and local Ward Panel meetings.



## Objective 3:

**Implement a response to the Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy by;**

- **Collecting and submitting additional data on rough sleepers** as well as reporting progress in delivering the strategy and publishing an annual Rough Sleeping Action Plan.
- **Working with government** in reviewing the issues of LGBTQI+ homelessness.
- **Reviewing our current arrangements and implementing new practises** regarding vulnerable adults who are at particular high risk of homelessness. These include those discharged from hospital, ex-offenders, victims of modern slavery and victims of domestic abuse.
- **Delivering a number of initiatives** in relation to primary, long term and palliative health care for rough sleepers as part of the Government's Access to Health Services Strategy.
- **Implementing a range of 'rapid rehousing' initiatives** as proposed by Government following its review of the Housing First pilots.
- **Exploring new funding opportunities such as:**
  - Specialist personal advisers.
  - Rough sleeper navigators.
  - Somewhere Safe to Stay pilots.
  - Non-UK nationals services.
  - Controlling Migration Fund.
  - Supported Lettings Fund.
  - Private Rented Sector Access Fund.
  - Local lettings agencies.
  - Social Impact Bond.
- **Participating** in the Mayor of London's No Nights Out Sleeping Rough Taskforce, contributing to the GLA's Rough Sleeping Plan of Action and using new funding opportunities to improve the lives of those who sleep rough.

# Theme 2 - Response of services to homeless households and vulnerable people

## Objective 4:

Increase the supply of appropriate temporary accommodation and reduce the time spent in temporary accommodation by:

- **Developing a sustainable approach** to procuring temporary accommodation.
- **Procuring temporary accommodation** both inside and outside the borough and supporting all households who are placed in this accommodation.
- **Providing a bespoke package of support** for those families who are moved out of the borough, their host boroughs, and incorporating any lessons learned from LGA commissioned research into this area.
- **Continuing to work with a range of private sector landlords** across London and the South East to provide temporary accommodation.
- Using some of our general needs **social housing as temporary accommodation** where appropriate.

- **Working with** our partner Registered Providers to use their permanent housing stock for temporary accommodation.

## Objective 5:

Champion innovation by:

- **Continuing to lead on cross borough working** and taking a collaborative approach to acquiring temporary accommodation.
- **Participating** in the pan London Capital Letters programme to provide properties for those families and other households most in need of accommodation.
- **Continuing the £75m PLACE** (Pan-London Accommodation Collaborative Enterprise) programme which procures 'precision-manufactured' family homes.

## How will we know if our actions are working?

- Funds secured to deliver rough sleeping initiatives will be maximised.
- The number of rough sleepers supported through the No Second Night Out project will have increased.
- The number of rough sleepers supported to sustain accommodation will have increased.
- The number of rough sleepers in Tower Hamlets will be reduced over the lifetime of this strategy.
- Increasing the number of homes acquired or delivered for temporary accommodation.
- Reducing the number of households living in temporary accommodation.
- Never placing homeless families in Bed & Breakfast accommodation for more than six weeks.

# Theme 2 - Response of services to homeless households and vulnerable people



Supporting children, families and young people and vulnerable adults.



## In the next five years we will:

### Objective 1:

Prevent homelessness among families and young people as part of an integrated approach to youth and family services by:

- **Improving training and joint working** across agencies to focus on homelessness prevention, identification and early intervention for families and young people.
- **Improving the support offered to eligible care leavers** by appointing a housing officer for children's services.
- **Improving the use of mediation and respite** to address family breakdown as a cause of homelessness.
- Continuing to deliver the **LBTH Young People's Accommodation Pathway** to provide a safe and secure environment for young people unable to remain at home.
- Continuing to offer a **'Crash Pad Facility'** consisting of emergency bed spaces offering short term accommodation to further eliminate the need for bed and breakfast and temporary accommodation (in particular for 16 and 17 year olds).
- Continuing to provide the **HOST Young Persons Social Worker** who sees all homeless clients aged 16 and 17 years, including those who are pregnant, and will undertake Children's Act social work assessments.
- **Supporting homeless young people** to achieve their full potential and positively progress to adulthood, in particular care leavers through the development of a housing options protocol for care leavers.
- **Increasing provisions and support for young people** including tackling worklessness and ensuring strong links with partners including drugs and alcohol services, and mental health.

# Theme 2 - Response of services to homeless households and vulnerable people

## Objective 2:

Support homeless families and young people to be safer, healthier and emotionally resilient by:

- **Improving awareness** of GP registration rights among both primary care staff and service users to ensure better engagement of homeless people to health services.
- **Training front line staff** in dealing with homeless people to better understand behaviours which may be encountered to reduce higher discharge rates.
- **Working towards** ensuring that a person's housing issues are identified and addressed as part of the social prescribing programme in the borough.
- **Providing better support services** for homeless families including our statutory duties concerning the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.

- **Supporting vulnerable adults at risk** of homelessness through bespoke pathways, as well as delivering integrated health provision for those that are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- As part of the **Tower Hamlets Suicide Prevention Strategy (2018-2021)**, ensure that suicide prevention and the support of service users with mental health needs are embedded within the Housing Options service (and other front line services).

## Objective 3:

Provide specialist support to victims of domestic abuse

- In the first instance, we will consider **Sanctuary schemes** to enable victims of domestic violence to remain in their homes.
- We will continue to provide a **multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) approach** which enables a bespoke support response to be provided to each individual household.

- We will continue to **commission independent domestic, sexual and gender-based violence advocates (IDVAs)** to help victims apply for legal remedies such as occupation orders, Non Molestation Orders (NMOs) and coordinate weekly Domestic Violence One Stop Shops.
- Where appropriate and safe to do so, the council would **consider granting a new tenancy** of their existing home to victims of domestic violence.
- We will continue to grant priority need to **victims of domestic abuse** who are housed in refuges.



# Theme 2 - Response of services to homeless households and vulnerable people

## Objective 4:

Better identify the needs of vulnerable people through a personalised, multi-agency approach by:

- Improving the assessment of vulnerable adults, particularly those with multiple needs.
- Ensuring that structures and processes are in place to support a multi-agency approach to assessing vulnerable adults.

## Objective 5:

Address and reduce the support needs of vulnerable homeless people to enable them to live independently by:

- Continuing to embed links between the homelessness and safeguarding services to identify adult abuse and neglect including the work undertaken by the High Risk Transition Panel to ensure the risk of homelessness is mitigated amongst vulnerable adults.

- Continuing to employ the Complex Needs Team to work more intensively with high support self-referred and partner agency clients (MAPPA, IOM, and Hospital Pathways) who require accommodation and long term support.
- Supporting ex-offenders in tandem with the Probation Service to keep their homes or find suitable accommodation on return from prison.
- Ensuring a secure passage for homeless people following hospital discharge.
- Improving move-on options for people in hostel accommodation and independent living skills of homeless people.

## How will we know if our actions are working?

Improved support for vulnerable groups including:

- > Young people.
- > Care leavers.
- > Ex-offenders.
- > Victims of domestic violence.
- > Those with substance misuse issues.
- > Those discharged from hospital.

Greater prevention of homelessness amongst vulnerable groups including:

- > Young people.
- > Care leavers.
- > Ex-offenders.
- > Victims of domestic violence.
- > Those with substance misuse issues.
- > Those discharged from hospital.

# Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

2018 - 2023



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