

# A new housing strategy for Haringey 2024-2029

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## Introduction

The right to a home is a fundamental human right. A good quality, secure home allows people to put down roots in a community. It gives children a safe place to play and learn. Good housing contributes to good health, both physical and mental. It helps with access to local jobs. And well-designed homes create pleasant, secure neighbourhoods that allow residents to belong and thrive.

### **The Climate Emergency**

We are experiencing a climate emergency. This means we must transform the way we think about housing. Half our borough's carbon emissions come from the homes we live in. To become a zero-carbon borough we have to change that. This is how we will contribute to keeping climate change within limits that allow us to survive. And our homes must be able to cope with the temperature increases that it's now too late to prevent.

### **The Cost of Living Crisis**

The last two and a half years have been marked by rising inflation. And the rapid rises in the cost of essentials – energy, housing, food, and fuel – have outstripped average increases in people's wages and welfare payments. This has hit lower-income households hardest. The gulf between the rich and the rest in the UK has grown wider.

The rising cost of living is a public health emergency. Not being able to afford food, rent, heating or transport has wide-ranging impacts on mental and physical health and well-being.

Private rents are going up at a faster rate than any time since 2012. In Haringey, median rents are now more than 60% of the median salary. While their rent has increased by less than inflation, social renters have faced rent increases of 7% this year. And the cost of borrowing is starting to hit mortgage-holders hard. All of this makes it harder for more and more people to find and keep a home.

We are determined to do all we can to help Haringey residents through these difficult times. But over a decade of funding cuts, inflation and the increased costs of borrowing make it harder and harder for Councils to meet the increasing levels of need.

### **Grenfell Tower and housing safety**

The death in June 2017 of 72 people in the fire at Grenfell Tower – a tragedy that was wholly avoidable - was a rallying moment to demand the safety of all homes in the UK. The subsequent campaign by the tragedy's survivors, the mourners, and their supporters kept that injustice in view, and Government has now legislated to introduce building and fire safety standards and to reintroduce regulation for social landlords.

We acted quickly by identifying structural defects that made two blocks on Broadwater Farm potentially dangerous to residents - and providing new homes for those residents. No Council blocks have cladding that presents a fire risk. But we failed for too long to ensure that every one of our tenants' homes had recent fire and electrical safety checks and Fire Risk Assessments. We are well on the way to fixing that, and this strategy prioritises ensuring that all homes are and remain as safe from fire as they can be.

Everyone in Haringey needs to know that their home is safe – whether they are social tenants, private tenants, leaseholders, or owner-occupiers.

### **Covid-19, housing, and health**

The experience of living with Covid-19 for two years transformed society in many ways. It reset our relationships with our homes: for nearly two years we spent most of our time living, sleeping, learning, playing – and for many people working - in one space.

The Covid pandemic also brought the link between housing and health inequality into sharp relief. There is a clear correlation between higher levels of overcrowding and Covid death rates. Poor housing is linked with poor mental health. The prevalence of asthma is associated with air quality and dampness; overcrowding and cold are associated with physical illnesses including heart disease and hypothermia; and overcrowding increases rates of infectious diseases. This awareness runs through this strategy.

The avoidable and tragic death of Awaab Ishak in December 2020 from a respiratory condition caused by extensive mould in his Rochdale home highlighted the urgent need for landlords to finally take tenants' reports of damp and mould seriously. For far too long, blame has been placed on tenants, and spurious claims that 'lifestyle' is contributing to dampness have been used by landlords to evade their own responsibilities.

So we must face up to the far-reaching impacts on our health and wellbeing that insecure and poor-quality housing causes – and particularly on children, blighting their health, happiness, and educational opportunities.

### **Housing and systemic inequality**

Grenfell, Covid, and the death of Awaab Ishak all highlight the clear link between housing and systemic inequality. We know too that black and minority ethnic communities disproportionately have to endure homelessness and poor housing conditions, that LGBTQI people are more likely to have to sleep rough, and that disabled people are disproportionately living in homes that do not meet their basic needs. Addressing inequality in the UK, and in Haringey, means addressing housing inequality. Our housing strategy is designed to reduce housing inequalities in Haringey.

### **Transforming landlord services for our own tenants and leaseholders**

We have been letting down many of the 20,000 households who are our tenants and leaseholders over many years. 5,000 Council homes do not meet the basic standards of Decent Homes. Our own tenants and leaseholders have faced unacceptable delays getting repairs. We have failed to respond properly to complaints. And we have failed to ensure that all Council homes meet safety standards. We must and will change. This strategy sets out how we will change.

### **Our consultation and changes to the draft Housing Strategy**

We published a draft Housing Strategy in March 2022 and consulted widely. We are grateful to the 706 people and organisations that responded to our formal consultation between September and December 2022. That consultation showed overwhelming support for the draft Housing Strategy. At a high level, 91% agreed with our objectives.

However, responses expressed concern about the poor quality of housing and services to our own tenants and leaseholders. This reflects the deep concerns raised by residents in other recent consultations, and it reflects the same concerns raised by and to the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman. We must and will change. We have significantly revised Chapter 2 of the Housing Strategy to prioritise that change, including by refocusing on improving housing services and housing quality for Council tenants and leaseholders.

The consultation responses also helped us to improve the strategy in other areas, including:

- Clarifying our practical commitments to protecting the existing places and communities that make people proud to call Haringey home, to building Council homes across all of Haringey, and in particular to doing everything possible to prevent residents being 'priced out' of a changing borough
- Strengthening links between the housing strategy and Employment and Skills strategies
- Including a focus on building stronger communities on our estates
- Prioritising a communications campaign to publicise the work that the Council can do to support private renters and address the lack of confidence and knowledge felt by renters, and to publicise the HMO licensing schemes
- Introducing more detail about sustainability and environmental commitments
- Including commitments to Supported Living including for young adults with SEND
- Introducing a commitment to bring forward an Older People's Housing Strategy

Many other detailed responses will inform the delivery of the strategy across a range of areas, including Neighbourhood Improvement when delivering new Council homes, co-production and consultation, and partnership working with Housing Associations.

Our consultees also asked us to ensure that the Housing Strategy achieves its commitments and drives real change in the borough. The Council's formal scrutiny process will be crucial to ensuring that we do deliver. Further to that, key aspects of the Strategy are reflected in the Corporate Delivery Plan and in implementation plans such as the Housing Improvement Plan; and it will inform the development of further implementation plans and strategies across the Council over the next five years. And a full and transparent assessment of our delivery will inform the next Housing Strategy in 2028.

### **The new context and changes to the draft Housing Strategy**

The period since Cabinet approved the draft Housing Strategy for consultation has been one of extraordinary economic challenge: recession, inflation, rising interest rates, and falling real-terms wages have all deepened the longstanding housing crisis. Our Housing Strategy does everything possible to help residents respond to these challenges – including through a renewed focus on moving homeless households from emergency to more settled accommodation. But the impact of those challenges on our own finances mean we have had to make a number of changes to the draft Housing Strategy – including the decision to let some of our newly built Council homes at London Affordable Rent.

We have also ensured that this strategy responds to regulatory and legislative change over the last eighteen months - including to the Government's very welcome adoption in July of the Social Housing Act 2023 which reintroduces proactive regulation for Councils and other social landlords.

### **Our Strategic Objectives**

We want everyone in Haringey, whatever their circumstances, to have a safe, stable, and genuinely affordable home. This housing strategy aims to achieve that through four strategic objectives, which are each accompanied by their own sub-objectives:

- **Strategic objective 1: Delivering the new homes Haringey needs**
- **Strategic objective 2: Improving housing quality and resident services in the social housing sector**
- **Strategic objective 3: Improving the quality of the private rented sector**
- **Strategic objective 4: Preventing and alleviating homelessness**

## **Our fundamental principles**

Running through each of these objectives are fundamental principles which underpin all areas of this strategy.

### **1. Communication and co-production**

We are committed to communicating clearly, transparently, and respectfully with our residents. This means that we will use plain English, deliver information in ways that are accessible, and give residents the right amount of notice when we communicate information. We will make sure that we make best use of digital communication – but always remember that this will not always be the best means of having genuine dialogue with all our residents.

It also means that we will make sure that residents can easily get the right information and advice from us, and that they receive this the first time they approach us as often as possible.

Our residents know their borough better than anyone, and they need to be at the centre of the design of services and of homes. So we will work in partnership with residents to deliver new, better, and healthier homes, places, and services.

We will always adopt a people-first approach that ensures our residents, who know the area best, are at the heart of decision-making and shaping the development of their communities. And we will ask our residents to tell us how they would like to participate in decision-making.

### **2. An active Council**

We face significant challenges in trying to tackle the housing crisis. But we also have real levers at our disposal: we have regulatory and enforcement powers in the private rented sector, we help people avoid homelessness, and we are the largest landlord and now also a major developer of new homes in the borough.

We are actively committed to centring housing as a core part of the Council's work. This is why we have embarked on a major Council Housing Delivery Programme, why we have brought housing management services back in-house, why we buy homes to lease to the Haringey Community Benefit Society, and why we robustly regulate the private rented sector. We will continue to intervene directly and creatively to improve housing in the borough wherever we can.

### **3. Working holistically and in partnership**

Housing is at the heart of what this Council does, but it sits alongside many other important services and areas of work: public health, education, social care, and much more. So when we are implementing our housing strategy, we will make sure that we work in a way that actively and creatively embraces these connections. Bringing our housing management and

maintenance, housing allocations and homelessness prevention services back in-house will also allow to better integrate services across the organisation.

We have significant powers, reach, and resources that we will use to improve housing in Haringey. But we cannot do it on our own – and there are times when the Council is not the best organisation to try to respond to a need.

We know we can only achieve the aims of this housing strategy if residents, community groups, voluntary and private sector organisations, and the Council all work together. It is possible to make a significant impact on some of society's most complex issues at a local level, but this requires a genuine partnership approach with communities, harnessing ideas, connections, and strengths. We will take a lead role in making that partnership work happen.

#### **4. Creating and maintaining sustainable and healthy communities**

We will work with our residents to deliver new, better, and healthier homes and spaces, celebrating, protecting, and enhancing the existing places and the sense of community that make them proud to call Haringey home. We will work within a localities approach that understands and responds to the unique challenges and opportunities in each of our neighbourhoods. Delivering new housing and improving existing housing means also improving public space so that neighbourhoods are healthier places for everyone to live, work and enjoy with good access to open space, play areas and facilities. We will do all we can to prevent residents being 'priced out' of a changing borough.

New housing development also helps to build and retain wealth in Haringey's communities. The Council is committed to a community wealth-building approach which builds the prosperity of local people and businesses and supports and enriches Haringey's residents and communities: economically, through employment, and socially, with an emphasis on those who are struggling. New housing development brings significant investment into the borough, and this helps to support the borough's infrastructure, high streets, and town centres, and grows a good economy in Haringey where everyone benefits.

We also know that good quality housing helps people stay in good health. We know that our Council Housing Delivery Programme will deliver wide health benefits to our residents, by ensuring that more people live in well built homes of the right size. Our programme is leading on building homes that are wheelchair accessible and adaptable. We are also taking an innovative approach to designing homes for some of our residents with complex needs, by integrating their needs early in the design process.

#### **5. Responding to the climate emergency**

The global climate crisis affects and is affected by every aspect of life. It affects all of us, but it disproportionately affects those least able to bear it and with the least responsibility for causing it. Unless we act now, we face a future of intensifying heat waves, worsening floods, power outages, and growing inequality. Our homes sit at the centre of this crisis: unless we change the kinds of homes in which we live, we will not prevent the worst extremes of climate change - or cope with the changes that are already unavoidable.

The Council's 2021 Climate Change Action Plan responds to this crisis and sets out how the borough will become net zero carbon by 2041. We will all have to make fundamental changes in everything that we do; and this will come at a financial cost.

Our Housing Strategy supports and responds to our Climate Change Action Plan, with commitments across each of its objectives - from retrofitting Council homes, improving energy

efficiency in private rented homes, supporting owner-occupiers to make their homes more energy efficient, and addressing fuel poverty, to ensuring that our own and others' new housing developments meet the highest carbon and environmental standards. Responding to the climate emergency will deliver homes that are healthy, comfortable, and affordable places to live, and neighbourhoods that are resilient, greener, and healthier for everybody.

## Housing in Haringey

Each chapter of this strategy contains the information and figures which have informed that chapter. This section provides a snapshot of the borough's people and their homes.

In March 2021, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Haringey's population was 264,200. The population had grown by 3.7% since 2011 – a significantly lower rate than across London which grew in total by 7.7% over the decade.<sup>1</sup> Haringey's population is currently 268,442 and over the next five years is expected to rise by 7,410 people to 275,852 and then to 282,506 by 2033.<sup>2</sup>

Haringey's people live in 105,091 households. 37% of Haringey households are owner occupiers, 35% are private renters, and 25% are social renters. 2% rent as shared owners. 46% of owner occupiers own their home outright and do not pay a mortgage.<sup>3</sup>

Haringey is the twelfth most densely populated of the 33 local authority areas in London, with 89.24 persons per hectare of land: equivalent to around 64 people living on each football pitch-sized area of land – an increase in 10 years from an equivalent of 61.5 people on a football pitch-sized piece of land. Six out of every ten Haringey residents live in a flat. Population density varies considerably across the borough.<sup>4</sup>

Haringey has a young population. However, the number of people aged over 65 is increasing faster than other age groups.<sup>5</sup> There has been an increase of 24% in people aged 65 years and over since 2011, and a decrease of 8% in children aged under 15 years<sup>6</sup>. Despite this, the 36,973 people aged over 65 expected to be living in Haringey in 2030 will still account for only 13% of Haringey's population.<sup>7</sup>

30% of Haringey's households have dependent children: half of those households are headed by a lone parent. 31% are people living alone.<sup>8</sup>

Haringey has an ethnically diverse population. 32% identify as White British, 25% as White from a non-British background, 18% as Black, 9% as Asian, and 7% as mixed race.<sup>9</sup> Within those broad categories, of course, there is considerable diversity. Over the next five years, the number of Black Caribbean and Bangladeshi Haringey residents is expected to decrease by 12% and 8% respectively.<sup>10</sup>

30% of Haringey residents do not speak English as their main language, the sixth highest rate in London. Of those residents whose main language is not English, one in four (24%) either do not speak English well or do not speak it at all – 7% of Haringey's total population and the second largest proportion in London.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics (ONS) – Census 2021

<sup>2</sup> GLA 2020-based Population Projections, updated January 2023, London Datastore

<sup>3</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>4</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>5</sup> GLA 2020-based Population Projections, updated January 2023, London Datastore

<sup>6</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>7</sup> GLA 2020-based Population Projections, updated Jan 2023

<sup>8</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>9</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>10</sup> GLA 2020-based Population Projections, updated Jan 2023

<sup>11</sup> ONS – Census 2021



Haringey has the sixth largest gay and lesbian population in London, and the ninth largest of all local authorities in the country.<sup>12</sup> 6% of Haringey residents aged over 16 identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or pansexual with 83% identifying as heterosexual.<sup>13</sup>

14% of Haringey residents have a disability, including 6% who report that their daily activities are severely limited. 22% of households have one disabled member; 4% of households have more than one disabled member.<sup>14</sup>

An estimated 5,700 Haringey residents aged 14 and over are estimated to have a learning disability, and around 2,100 residents are estimated to have autism. Of these around 1,260 are estimated to have a moderate or severe learning disability are likely to require statutory support.<sup>15</sup>

Measured across a range of indicators, Haringey is among the 10% most deprived Council areas in the country and is the sixth most deprived in London. Nearly one in five Haringey households (approximately 19,800) live in Fuel Poverty, the fourth highest percentage in London and substantially above the London average. People aged 60 or over are more likely to experience income deprivation in Haringey than in 98% of the country.<sup>16</sup>

13% of Haringey households are entirely without paid employment. However, in 61% of households all adults are in work, a significant increase from 49% ten years ago.<sup>17</sup>

Around 15,000 people in Haringey are in receipt of out-of-work benefits, the third highest level in London when taken as a percentage of adult population. The number of people out of work has decreased since the height of the pandemic but is still approximately 50% higher than pre-pandemic levels.

In-work poverty is a significant issue in Haringey. It is increasing in almost all working household types, and 74% of Londoners in poverty live in a working family.<sup>18</sup>

Over the course of 2022 more and more Londoners, particularly private and social tenants, have said they are struggling to make ends meet or to afford basic needs. By July 2022, 9% of homeowners, 27% of private renters and 34% of social housing tenants said they were struggling to make ends meet or pay for basic needs. Those who said they were coping or comfortable were in the minority of both private renters (36%) and social housing tenants (28%).<sup>19</sup>

Haringey residents tend to earn less than average when they are in work: median hourly pay among workers living in Haringey is £19.08 per hour, £1.11 an hour less than the London median.<sup>20</sup> One in five Haringey residents who are working earn less than the London Living Wage.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> GLA 2020-based Population Projections

<sup>13</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>14</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>15</sup> Public Health England Learning Disability Profiles, 2020

<sup>16</sup> Index of Multiple Deprivation, MHCLG 2019

<sup>17</sup> ONS Households by combined Economic Activity Status, October 2022

<sup>18</sup> Trust for London 2020/21 (using figures from the DWP Households below average income dataset)

<sup>19</sup> GLA/YouGov cost of living polling, cited in GLA - Housing in London report, October 2022

<sup>20</sup> Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, 2014-2022

<sup>21</sup> London Poverty Profile (2022)

The number of Universal Credit claimants in Haringey increased by 192% - an additional 27,900 claims - from February 2020 to March 2021. Claimant levels peaked at around 43,000 and have only fallen slightly since the end of the pandemic to a current figure around 37,000.<sup>22</sup>

More than half of all Haringey renters are in receipt of some Housing Benefit. 16% of Haringey housing benefit claimants have outgoings greater than the amount of money that comes to them each month.<sup>23</sup>

Deprivation, like many other characteristics, follows clear geographical lines – broadly, the east and the west of the borough. Deprivation levels are particularly high in the northeast of the borough: three areas within Northumberland Park and West Green wards are amongst the 5% most deprived LSOAs in England. Northumberland Park is the most deprived ward in London.<sup>24</sup>

People living in east Haringey (Tottenham constituency) earn less at work than those in the west (Hornsey & Wood Green constituency). Median hourly pay of residents in the west (£20.71) is in line with the London top quartile, despite falling in the last year, while in the East (£16.77) it remains in the bottom quartile and has not changed in the last year.<sup>25</sup>

Unemployment is highest in the east of the borough, with Northumberland Park, Tottenham Green and Tottenham Hale having the highest percentage of people in receipt of out of work benefits.

The proportion of households in fuel poverty is highest in the east of the borough - particularly in Noel Park and Bruce Grove.<sup>26</sup>

The gap in healthy years of life between richest and poorest groups in Haringey is 15 years for men and 17 years for women.<sup>27</sup>

Although a quarter of land in Haringey is open space, this varies significantly across the borough. Just two fifths of homes in West Green and Noel Park have good access to green space.<sup>28</sup>

Home ownership is highly concentrated in the west of the borough.<sup>29</sup>

London's home ownership rate has fallen in recent decades, but there are stark differences in the trends for different age groups. Homeowners tend to be older.<sup>30</sup>

The cost of buying a home continues to increase faster than pay. The median house price rose 89% in the last ten years to £587,000 - more than the London average. The median household income in the borough is £35,769 – less than the London average.<sup>31</sup> Haringey's median house price to earnings ratio is 18.03, significantly above the London average.

Owning a home does not necessarily mean that people have a high income – especially for people who bought their home several decades ago, or more. Around 8% of homeowners is

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<sup>22</sup> UC claimants by LSOA

<sup>23</sup> LIFT data, Policy in Practice

<sup>24</sup> Index of Multiple Deprivation, MHCLG 2019

<sup>25</sup> ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020

<sup>26</sup> Fuel Poverty by LSOA, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

<sup>27</sup> Inequality in life expectancy at birth LA 2017-19, Public Health Outcomes Framework

<sup>28</sup> Greenspace Information for Greater London, GLA 2014

<sup>29</sup> 2011 Census

<sup>30</sup> London's Poverty Profile, Housing tenure over time, Trust for London

<sup>31</sup> ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020

either unemployed or economically inactive due to long-term sickness or disability<sup>32</sup>. The proportion buying a home with a mortgage fell in the early half of the decade but has been relatively stable since 2015. 72% of home sales in Haringey are to people buying without the need for a mortgage.

More than 2,600 Haringey households who became homeless are now provided with temporary accommodation by the Council. This represents 24.5 per 1,000 Haringey households, the third highest rate in London and 50% higher than the London average. 40% of residents accepted as statutory homeless are black, while 25% of youth homeless are LGBT, an overrepresentation compared to the wider borough population.<sup>33</sup> More than 11,000 households, including those homeless households, are currently waiting for social housing on Haringey's housing register.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>33</sup> Haringey Council data, January 2022

<sup>34</sup> Haringey Council data, January 2022

## Strategic objective 1: Delivering the high quality and sustainable new homes Haringey needs

### **In numbers – the need for high quality and sustainable new homes**

During the five years of this strategy Haringey's population of 268,442 is expected to increase by 7,410 people to 275,852; and then to 282,506 by 2033.<sup>35</sup>

Haringey is the twelfth most densely populated of the 33 local authority areas in London, with 89.24 persons per hectare of land – equivalent to around 64 people living on each football pitch-sized area of land.

Six out of every ten Haringey residents live in a flat. Population density varies considerably across the borough.<sup>36</sup>

A quarter of land in Haringey is open space. However, access to green space varies significantly across the borough, with just two fifths of homes in West Green and Noel Park having good access to green space.<sup>37</sup>

Haringey's people live in 105,091 households. 30% of Haringey's households have dependent children: half of those households are headed by a lone parent. 31% are people living alone.<sup>38</sup>

37% of Haringey households are owner occupiers, 35% are private renters, and 25% are social renters. 2% rent as shared owners. 46% of owner occupiers own their home outright and do not pay a mortgage.<sup>39</sup>

Many Haringey residents will never be able to buy a home in the borough. The median house price rose 89% in the last ten years to £587,000 - more than the London average. For households in work, the median household income in the borough is £35,769 – less than the London average.<sup>40</sup> Haringey's median house price to earnings ratio is 18.03, significantly above the London average.

Just 37% of Haringey households own their own home – less than the London borough average of 45% - and that proportion is decreasing.<sup>41</sup> Nearly 13,500 households currently resident in Haringey cannot afford to own their own home but hope to do so; and fewer than 3,000 of these households would be able to afford even shared ownership or other forms of discounted market sale.<sup>42</sup>

Private rents are out of reach for many people in Haringey. Haringey rents had been on average cheaper than the London average – they are now equal to it. The median monthly rent in Haringey is £1,300 for a one-bedroom flat – nearly half the median pre-tax income

<sup>35</sup> GLA 2020-based Population Projections, updated January 2023, London Datastore

<sup>36</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>37</sup> Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL), GLA 2014

<sup>38</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>39</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>40</sup> ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020

<sup>41</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>42</sup> Haringey Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2021

for working people. The median private rent for a two-bedroom home is £1,578, and £1,850 for three bedrooms.<sup>43</sup>

Over the last ten years, the number of Council homes has decreased by nearly 1,400 because of the Right to Buy.<sup>44</sup> Nearly half of the homes sold under Right to Buy are now owned by private landlords and let at market rent.<sup>45</sup>

Nearly 11,300 households are waiting for social housing on the housing register. 2,000 of those households have told us that they are living in overcrowded homes, and 2,600 households are living in temporary accommodation. The Census has shown us that 3,641 Council tenant households are living in overcrowded homes. 35% of all households in bands A and B on the housing register need a three-bedroom home; 12% need a home with four or more bedrooms.<sup>46</sup>

Excluding housing specifically for older tenants, just a third of the Council's 14,000 rented homes have three or more bedrooms. Overall, more than a third of the Council's homes have one bedroom.<sup>47</sup>

23% of Council tenant households – 3,641 - live in a home that is smaller than their basic needs. 2,858 overcrowded Council tenants need one extra bedroom; 783 need two or more bedrooms. 2,090 Housing Association tenants are living in overcrowded homes.<sup>48</sup>

24% of Council tenant households – 3,820 - live in a home that is larger than their basic needs. 2,757 Council tenants have one spare bedroom. 1,063 have at least two spare bedrooms. 2,523 Housing Association tenants have spare bedrooms.<sup>49</sup>

In addition to households currently living in unsuitable homes and unable to afford to buy or rent privately, around 350 new households unable to afford market housing will form in Haringey every year.<sup>50</sup>

Although three quarters of households on the housing register are aged under 50, nearly a third of those in the most urgent need are over 60 years old. A third of households in the most urgent housing need have a disability.<sup>51</sup>

14% of Haringey residents have a disability, including 6% who report that their daily activities are severely limited. 22% of households have one disabled member; 4% of households have more than one disabled member.<sup>52</sup>

An estimated 5,700 Haringey residents aged 14 and over are estimated to have a learning disability, and around 2,100 residents are estimated to have autism.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Private rental market summary statistics in England, ONS December 2022

<sup>44</sup> Haringey Council data; Local authority housing statistics data returns for 2020 to 2021, DHLUC

<sup>45</sup> Right to Buy to Let, Inside Housing research August 2015

<sup>46</sup> Housing register data, January 2022

<sup>47</sup> Locally held data, Haringey Council

<sup>48</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>49</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>50</sup> ORS Housing Model, Haringey Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2021

<sup>51</sup> Locally held data, Haringey Council

<sup>52</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>53</sup> Public Health England Learning Disability Profiles, 2020

There is a housing shortage in Haringey, and a chronic shortage of homes that residents can afford – as there is across the whole of London. We will do everything in our power to address this. We will work with partners to deliver new homes, with the right mix to meet our communities' diverse needs and to prevent residents being priced out of our changing borough. And we will continue to deliver a new era of Council homes in Haringey, building on the achievements of the past four years, with 3,000 new Council homes delivered by 2031.

**We have three objectives in this area:**

- 1.1 Supporting the delivery of 1,592 new homes every year in Haringey
- 1.2 Ensuring the right mix of homes for our communities
- 1.3 Establishing a new era of Council home building

## 1.1. Supporting the delivery of 1,592 new homes a year in Haringey

### **1,592 new homes a year**

There is a housing crisis in Haringey, as there is across London, and the UK. For many years as a country, we have simply not built enough homes.

The Greater London Authority has assessed the need and capacity for new homes across the capital, and the resulting 2021 London Plan sets out the framework for London's development over the next 20 years. The London Plan identifies capacity for more than 52,000 new homes per year in London and sets targets for the number of homes that each borough should deliver.

Haringey's ten-year housing target is 15,920 new homes as set out in the London Plan. We will deliver at least 3,000 of those homes ourselves as Council homes – nearly 20% of the overall target. We also have a crucial role facilitating the delivery of the remaining homes. We will do this by working with the Mayor of London, Housing Associations, private developers, construction companies, and other partners, and by adopting an approach to planning and policy that will create the environment in which these new homes can be built in Haringey. We are proud to contribute towards London's housing need and are clear about the shared responsibility of London's boroughs in meeting this.

### **Small, medium, and large sites and developers**

To meet our community's diverse needs, we need many homes. This means we need many housing developers working in Haringey, building on large, medium, and small sites across the borough.

Large private developers bring financial investment, expertise, and economies of scale, as well as local jobs and training. We know that there are sites and opportunities in Haringey that are well suited to large-volume providers, and we encourage their investment.

We will work with developers to ensure that their advantages are shared across the construction sector, by supporting the participation of smaller, local firms in their supply chains.

We will actively build supportive relationships with local small and medium sized construction firms so that they can thrive and deliver homes in Haringey.

Delivering more homes will require more capacity in the construction sector. We will build on existing partnerships with contractors and local education providers to increase the number of skills training and apprenticeships across the construction sector in Haringey. We are

committed to supporting local people to enter and progress within the wide range of jobs and careers in the construction sector at all levels, and to helping the sector become more diverse and inclusive.

We will look to bring forward more small sites for housing. These sites are likely to be less attractive to larger construction firms. Small sites' contribution to housing supply is critical, and in Haringey small sites have delivered a substantial number of new homes. However, the smaller builders specialising in these sites now face a number of obstacles. We will work with local partners to help them to overcome these obstacles.

We need to make more effective use of land in Haringey. This includes careful building at higher densities, diversifying the size and location of sites, and promoting more carefully designed co-location and integration of housing with other types of buildings and uses.

We will work with other public sector landowners – including the NHS, Network Rail, and the emergency services – to release more land for housing, putting in place clear plans to bring forward sites for housing and developing partnership approaches to developing such sites. We will encourage and support different models of private and public sector delivery.

Modern methods of construction allow high quality, comfortable homes to be built rapidly. We want to see a significant increase in the share of new homes delivered using Modern Methods of Construction, particularly utilising capacity to precision manufacture homes and significant parts of homes offsite. We will work with the Mayor of London and other Councils to develop the capacity, pipeline and consistency required for this new sector to make the impact it is capable of.

### **The Housing Strategy and the Local Plan**

All Local Planning Authorities maintain a Local Plan which guides development in the borough. Haringey has a Local Plan and is currently developing a new Local Plan. It will identify locations in the borough where many new homes will be built. The London Plan already identifies Wood Green and Tottenham Hale as areas with the potential to deliver a substantial amount of these new homes. We want the housing that will be built in these areas to revitalise high streets, create new employment opportunities, and improve the public realm, as well as delivering the homes our communities need.

We will identify and bring forward opportunities for greater intensification of land uses through measures such as the use of masterplans, planning policy documents, and brownfield land register.

We will work with residents to protect and enhance the character and amenities of existing places and communities that make people proud to call Haringey their home. We will ensure that any intensification improves the health and wellbeing of local residents by delivering improved community space, green space, public realm, and better use of underutilised land as the basis of additional homes.

The New Local Plan will set out detailed strategies for ensuring that all new homes are supported by the infrastructure they need, including health centres, schools, parks and play areas.

When developers bring forward proposals for new homes, we will as the Planning Authority consider those proposals in light of that Local Plan and of the Council's policy positions set out in this Housing Strategy and associated policies including the Intermediate Housing Policy.

Homes built specifically for private renting increase the diversity and for some tenants the security and quality of the private rented sector. Build to Rent developments can also help increase housing delivery through additional supply beyond what would be delivered through a housing market largely reliant on build for sale-led developments. We encourage the delivery of Build to Rent homes in Haringey, including to diversify and improve the private rented sector. But we do not view Build to Rent as a substitute for affordable housing and so will require the specific provision of affordable homes within those developments. During 2024 we will bring forward a new Intermediate Housing Policy that specifically sets out our requirements for affordable housing delivered within Build to Rent developments.

We are committed to new homes in Haringey that are high quality, the right size, and that will both last and prove adaptable to the changing needs of our communities. There is no identified need for more Purpose-Built Student and Co-Living Accommodation in Haringey and consequently we do not encourage these schemes being brought forward where this would be at the expense of conventional housing for which there is a significant demonstrated need. We do not view co-living schemes as a substitute for affordable housing.

The New Local Plan will set our policies in regard to the delivery of high-quality self-build housing and Warehouse Living. While 90% of respondents to our Housing Strategy consultation think community-led and self-build housing is a good idea, more than two thirds of those respondents also think the Council should not sell or give land to groups wanting to develop community-led and self-build housing.

Solving the housing crisis will depend not just on building the right number of homes, but also on building homes of the right type, mix and quality. It is the Local Plan that sets targets for the delivery of affordable homes and the mix of new homes, and it will set standards for the quality of new homes we will allow in Haringey including their size, and energy efficiency and how safety will be ensured. Alongside that, this Housing Strategy sets out the Council's policy positions on those issues.

### **An inclusive construction economy for all**

We want Haringey to have a fairer, greener economy that builds on local creativity to unlock and harness the strengths of our residents and businesses. To achieve this ambition we are creating Opportunity Haringey, an Inclusive Economy Plan for the borough. It will set out how residents, businesses and the community can benefit from, and contribute to, local economic success and prosperity.

Construction is as a key growth area for our Inclusive Economy Plan. We are committed to supporting local people to enter and progress within the wide range of job and career opportunities the construction sector offers at all levels, and to helping the sector become more diverse and inclusive.

We will continue to provide support, training, and access to good work opportunities across the sector for local residents, including through dedicated construction advisers. During 2024 we will pilot a programme raising awareness of the sector to young people, including schools and college students.

We are now a major housing developer in Haringey. Alongside the major works and improvement projects planned for our existing homes, this gives us a real opportunity to shape the local construction sector. We are committed to taking this opportunity so that we help to build an inclusive and diverse construction sector that really benefits local people.



We will continue to work closely with developers in the borough and with our contractors to achieve this, ensuring that local people – and especially those who are currently excluded from employment - benefit from training, apprenticeships at all levels, and good jobs including those within green and digital technology fields. We will ensure that all our contractors provide work that is safe and secure and pay at least London Living Wage.

Over the next five years we will build on our approach to procurement so that all the construction contracts we award achieve tangible social as well as financial value.

### **Housing and the climate emergency**

The Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and has set out a route map for the borough to become Net Zero Carbon by 2041. Half of all Haringey's emissions come from the way we heat and power our homes, so we will require developers of new homes in the borough to contribute to this Net Zero Carbon objective by only building homes that are sustainable and energy efficient.

Our Local Plan will set out how we will ensure that all new homes in Haringey will be constructed to zero-carbon standards, and that larger schemes are developed in line with 'circular economy' principles, which will minimise demolition waste and mean that new buildings are designed so they can be disassembled, and the materials re-used at the end of the building's life.

### **High-quality Design**

We want all new buildings in Haringey, including new homes, to be well designed. This means that they respect and enhance the existing built and social environment. Our Local Plan will set out in detail how we require good design to ensure that all new homes in Haringey do this. A design-led approach is crucial to achieving this, and we will require through our Planning Powers that all larger developments adopt this principle.

We will also take the opportunity offered by new housing development to improve the environment and public space for existing residents so that it retains the character of existing places and communities that residents value.

We will work with housing developers to support design quality including through our Quality Review Panel, where independent professionals scrutinise major development proposals, and through the Haringey Design Awards which celebrate good design and conservation.

## **1.2. The right mix of homes for our communities**

Alongside the failure to build enough homes, our housing crisis stems from a failure to deliver enough affordable homes. This is a national crisis, but it has deep local impacts and we are committed to doing everything possible to prevent residents being 'priced out' of our changing borough. New housing in Haringey must meet the needs of all our residents, including those who need more affordable homes. We also need to ensure that we are building homes that are the right size for our current and future households. We will use the framework of the New Local Plan to ensure that the right mix of homes is built in Haringey. The New Local Plan will also look to protect the existing supply of larger family homes in the borough. Our Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2021-2036 sets out the kinds of homes the borough will need and informs this objective as well as the Council's policy positions on new developments in the borough.

## **Genuinely affordable homes**

We need to increase the number of genuinely affordable homes in Haringey, and we are committed to doing this. Our New Local Plan will set out in detail how we will use our planning powers to maximise the supply of affordable housing. When developers bring forward proposals for new homes, we will as the Planning Authority consider those proposals in light of that Local Plan but also of the Council's policy positions set out in this Housing Strategy and associated policies, including the Intermediate Housing Policy.

## **An overwhelming need for affordable housing**

The systemic housing crisis means that our overall need for affordable housing is itself greater than our target of 1,592 new homes of all kinds a year. This presents an enormous challenge to us and it is why we will push hard for as many of our new homes as possible to be genuinely affordable.

## **Types of affordable housing**

Many kinds of home are now officially classed as 'affordable'. Until recently, even homes let for 80% of market rent – far beyond what most people in need can afford - were counted as 'affordable'. Homes for shared ownership, for social rent, and for intermediate tenures such as London Living Rent all count as affordable. But not all of these are genuinely affordable to most people in housing need.

Of our households in housing need, only 19% could afford a home for shared ownership or discounted market sale. 81% of people in housing need could not.<sup>54</sup>

So where affordable housing is built in Haringey, we want the vast majority of it to be built for rent.

Of our households who can afford affordable rented homes, only 17% could afford to pay London Living Rent. 83% could not.<sup>55</sup>

Our consultation showed that there is overwhelming support for using planning powers to prioritise homes let through the housing register at social rent over other kinds of housing.

When other kinds of affordable housing are proposed, our consultation showed there is clear preference for London Living Rent over Shared Ownership and Discounted Market Sale homes.

So where homes are built for affordable rent in Haringey, we want the majority of them to be built for social rent.

## **Delivering affordable housing in Haringey**

Our first preference is that the Council delivers new homes directly. Where there are opportunities to build homes on Council land, the Council will deliver these directly. Where we have leased our own land for purposes that no longer meet our communities' needs, we will look to regain control of it. We will also look to acquire land on which to build Council homes.

We will continue to ensure that private development in the borough delivers new affordable homes.

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<sup>54</sup> Haringey Strategic Housing Market Assessment, ORS 2021

<sup>55</sup> Haringey Strategic Housing Market Assessment, ORS 2021

Where private developers are proposing to develop new homes on land they have acquired, and where it is financially viable to do so, the Council will seek to acquire homes before they are built so that they are built as Council homes for Council Rent. We will look to secure first refusal on affordable housing negotiated through Section 106 planning agreements.

Housing Associations will continue to deliver a large proportion of affordable homes in Haringey. We will work closely with them to support their delivery of homes that are genuinely affordable, with a strong preference for social rented homes or, where GLA funding has already been obtained on that basis, for London Affordable Rent.

We welcome the contribution that community land trusts make in delivering new housing and will actively work with community land trusts who share our vision of delivering genuinely affordable housing for Haringey residents. We particularly welcome the knowledge and understanding of local areas, local needs and local communities that community land trusts bring.

### **Intermediate housing in Haringey**

The category of intermediate housing includes homes for sale below market prices and homes for rent at a cost above social rent but below market levels. These are very important affordable options for some of the many households who are either not eligible or have no priority for social rented housing but for whom the market does not provide a solution. The London Plan requires that at least 30% of Affordable Housing is delivered as intermediate housing, and we will support providers' proposals for intermediate housing at that level.

Shared ownership at current prices meets the needs of only a small group of people. We therefore have a strong preference that new intermediate housing in Haringey should deliver homes for rent at London Living Rent levels: this is the most genuinely affordable intermediate tenure for Haringey residents.

We want to make sure that there are routes to an affordable home for as many Haringey people as possible. For some this will be a secure home with an affordable rent; for others it will be a form of intermediate home ownership. We want any shared ownership homes built in Haringey to help stop residents being priced out of a changing borough, so we want them to be genuinely affordable to as many people as possible, and we want Haringey households on median salaries to get priority access to them. In line with those objectives, we welcome alternative models of shared ownership such as 'rent to buy' if they make homes affordable to more Haringey residents on median salaries. During 2024 we will bring forward a new Intermediate Housing Policy to support these objectives.

### **Meeting the needs of all household types**

We want to make sure that there are enough homes for households and families of all kinds and all sizes. However, the shortage of affordable homes for larger families is particularly acute.

Our priority is to meet the most pressing need for each household size on our housing register. We have compared that demand with the number of lets expected in each size category across the next five years and accordingly set our target dwelling mix for **Social Rent** and other low cost rented housing as:

- 10% one-bedroom homes
- 40% two-bedroom homes
- 40% three-bedroom homes
- 10% four-bedroom homes

The target dwelling mix for partners delivering homes for **London Living Rent** and other intermediate rented housing is:

- 10% one-bedroom homes
- 25% two-bedroom homes
- 45% three-bedroom homes
- 20% four-bedroom homes

The target dwelling mix for **affordable home ownership** reflects the capacity of households in housing need to afford this tenure and therefore prioritises homes with one or two bedrooms:

- 65% one-bedroom homes
- 30% two-bedroom homes
- 5% three- or four-bedroom homes

### **Supported housing, sheltered housing, and homes for older people**

We want the right mix of supported housing to meet the needs of all our residents.

Although we have a substantial existing stock of supported housing for older people, it no longer provides the right mix of homes for older people. And we have very little supported housing of our own for residents with other needs who require it.

We will rebalance our existing stock where possible to better meet the needs of our vulnerable residents. When we embark on this we will work in partnership with older residents, care and support providers, and across the Council to determine what is needed to ensure the right mix of safe and supportive homes for older people.

However, it is clear that we also need to build new homes for older, disabled, and vulnerable people. We are developing a detailed needs analysis and design specification to guide and inform this work.

During 2024 we will bring forward an Older People's Housing Policy and Strategy to drive the delivery of the right number, mix and quality of homes for older people in Haringey.

The design and delivery of new supported housing will always be co-produced with the resident groups who will live in it.

We will use our planning powers and existing partnership arrangements to work collaboratively with Housing Associations and other partners seeking to deliver new supported housing schemes in Haringey that meet our residents' needs. Our supported housing needs assessment sets out our communities' most pressing needs, and we will keep this assessment under review to ensure it informs our actions with the most accurate information.

Some residents with support needs will also be offered homes through social lettings quota arrangements to the Housing Register, set out in our Annual Lettings Plan. These residents will be offered visiting support in their homes, including through services such as Housing First.

### **Adults and Young Adults with Learning Disabilities and Special Educational Needs**

Our vision is that adults with learning disabilities live in suitable accommodation that encourages independence with appropriate support and a choice of where and whom to live with.

We are working with adults with Learning Disabilities, their advocates, and carers to coproduce an Adult Learning Disability Strategy that we will bring forward in 2024. We want that strategy to ensure that:

- Information and advice on housing and support are consistent, available, transparent and accessible.
- The Housing and Support options available are of a quality standard, are flexible and are developed to meet people's individual needs.
- Fewer people live outside of the borough or in hospital placements.
- Housing and support provision enables inclusion and supports quality of life.

Those commitments include commissioning housing options and support to meet the needs of young Adults with Learning Disabilities, including those with complex needs, carers, mother and baby placements, and those needing emergency accommodation.

We will develop and publish a Position Statement setting out a clear picture of the supply and demand of Residential, Supported Living, Help to Live at Home and Day Opportunities for adults with learning disability and Autism in Haringey. This will set out the direction we will take to meet those residents' needs and ensure that there is a choice of distinct types of services and support available.

We will continue to commission and provide Residential Care, Shared Lives, Community Support, and Respite services. We will continue to promote Supported Living as our preferred model of accommodation and support. Evidence shows that moving away from traditional residential care improves well-being, as it is more person-centred. We will bring forward a Learning Disability Strategy to set out our commitments here.

The Adult Learning Disability Strategy links to and supports our SEND Strategy and SEND Pathways Action Plan.

We will produce and publicise new and genuinely accessible information about housing options including in video format, and easy read versions and videos of key documents such as Council tenancy agreements and tenant handbooks.

### **Affordable homes for disabled residents**

42% of social renting households include at least one person who is limited in their day-to-day activities by disability or serious illness. 32% of those in the most urgent need on the housing register have a disability.

We will ensure that more than 10% of all new affordable homes built in Haringey will be wheelchair adaptable. We will ensure that 20% of the Council homes we deliver will be wheelchair adaptable. We will actively encourage other housing developers to meet this higher standard.

Through our Bespoke Homes Programme, we will ensure that those new wheelchair adaptable Council homes are designed and built from as early a stage as possible around the individual needs of their future tenants. To achieve this, we will over the next two years develop a better and more detailed overview of complex housing need on the housing register and put in place processes that ensure the right households can be identified at the right stage of the development process. We will review the Allocations Policy so that it supports the aims of the Bespoke Homes programme.

We will work with Housing Associations so that the same approach is adopted over the next five years to all wheelchair adaptable affordable homes in the borough.

### **The Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller Community**

Prejudice, discrimination, and social exclusion severely affects the Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller community's access to services, jobs, and housing security. Across London, many Council sites have closed, and no new sites have been built for the past 20 years.

Over the next five years, we will increase the number of pitches for the local Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller community to help meet the need of their overcrowded households. Our consultation showed that Haringey residents support this commitment, and we will meet it in partnership with our communities.

## **1.3. A new era of Council house building**

Building high quality Council housing is one of the most important things we can do. For many people, a Council home offers the only real chance of putting down roots in Haringey.

Our consultation showed that there is overwhelming support for the Council housing delivery programme set out in the Strategy.

### **A growing programme**

After 40 years during which Councils were stopped from building, in 2018 we started a new era of Council home building in Haringey. We have already completed and let more than 200 new Council homes. We have started construction work on more than 2,000 new Council homes on sites right across the borough. We will continue to build up the Council's capacity to deliver the Council homes Haringey needs, and we will make sure our Council Housing Delivery Programme is financially viable in the long term. By the end of this strategy we will have completed 1,500 new Council homes. By 2031, we will have completed more than 3,000.

### **Financing the programme**

We will ensure that we have a programme that is sustainable for the long-term, including by borrowing prudently against future rental income and working closely with the GLA to ensure the maximum capital grant support for our programme.

The cost of building new homes is largely determined by the cost of materials and the cost of borrowing. Both have increased to an unprecedented extent.

The cost of building materials increased by 25% during 2021. Haringey's Cabinet adopted the draft Housing Strategy for consultation in March 2022. In the twelve months since, costs of building materials rose again, by another 10.4%.

Since March 2022, and especially since the September 2022 mini-budget, the cost of borrowing has risen at its fastest rate since the 1990s. The interest rate for Local Authority borrowing is now more than twice its rate in December 2021.

Alongside similar pressures on the Council's housing budget across other areas of this strategy, the impact on the finances of the housing delivery programme has been very significant.

But we remain absolutely committed to delivering new Council homes for rent, and making sure that they are homes of the highest quality. The thousands of families on our housing register need and deserve this commitment.

Though we have had to pause progress on some schemes, we remain committed to completing 3,000 new Council homes for Council rent by 2031.

In order that we can afford to keep building those Council homes through this extraordinarily challenging period, we will charge London Affordable Rent rather than the standard social formula rent on the remaining homes being built under the GLA's 2016-2022 Building Council Homes for Londoners grant programme. Those homes would otherwise not have been financially viable.

London Affordable Rent (LAR) was developed by the GLA to balance genuine affordability for tenants with the financial viability of delivering Council homes in a relatively low government grant environment. LAR is around 8% more than the social formula rent cap. The GLA allocated Building Council Homes for Londoners grant on the basis that Council rents for homes funded under the programme would be set at LAR. In spite of that expectation, the first 187 homes Haringey Council competed under the programme were let at standard Council rent, otherwise known as 'formula' or 'target' rent.

We will return to letting council homes delivered under the GLA's 2021-2026 Homes for Londoners Affordable Homes Programme at standard social rent levels set within the relevant statutory Rent Standards.

Borrowing and current grant levels alone will not currently fully support a financially viable programme. We will therefore cross-subsidise the delivery of homes for social rent by directly developing some homes for sale, investing all profits through the HRA in building homes for social rent. We will build as few homes for sale as possible – only as many as are required to make the programme viable. The proportion will be guided by the availability of grant subsidy and other economic factors assessed within the HRA Business Plan's Medium Term Financial Strategy which is under annual review.

With the support of the GLA, we have proud to have been able to significantly reduce the number of homes for sale in our programme since the draft strategy was approved. This work means, for example, that we are now able to deliver all 272 of the high-quality, zero-carbon homes at the former Ashley Road Depot site as homes for Council rent.

Any Council developments that include homes for market sale will be tenure blind in design and appearance. Blocks will never have segregated access to facilities such as playgrounds.

### **Residents and neighbourhoods**

We will ensure that our residents, who know the area best, are at the heart of decision-making and shaping the development of new homes in their communities. Our consultation showed that residents are genuinely interested in helping shape the delivery of new Council homes.

We will follow a clear process to co-produce change with the community: first listening to communities, and clearly defining those elements of a project that the community can influence and those which it can coproduce; then developing the project through engagement, testing and refining design proposals with the local community; actively listening to and communicating with residents during the delivery process; and finally monitoring, reviewing, and reflecting on lessons learnt.

We will work with residents to protect the existing places and communities that local people value. We will develop a Neighbourhood Approach to respond to the particular contexts of neighbourhoods that residents relate to, and we will develop strategies to deliver improved community space, public realm, and better use of underutilised land as an intrinsic part of delivering new Council homes. And we will make sure we maintain and look after these new spaces.

We will continuously learn how to improve the homes we build. We will seek feedback and measure the satisfaction of new residents with their new home over the first five years. We will build in learning reviews after set stages of each project and post-completion.

### **The right homes for our residents in housing need**

There is a real need for one- and two-bedroom Council homes, particularly amongst those who currently have the highest priority on the housing register. And they provide valuable opportunities for people whose children have left home to move into smaller new homes that suit their needs better – and that release larger homes for overcrowded households. So we will continue to build them – but not bedsits or studios.

But the shortage of Council homes for larger households is particularly acute. Our consultation showed that most people think the Council should prioritise building larger family-sized homes over building as many homes as possible.

Half the Council homes we start developing between 2024 and 2029 will therefore have three or more bedrooms. Our design-process is always site-specific: some sites will not lend themselves to larger homes, so we will aim to achieve our target across the overall programme rather than on each site.

### **Design and quality**

Our new generation of Council homes will have the highest standards of design quality – so that homes are well-designed, but also safe, comfortable, and accessible. This means:

- Design and architecture will respond to and enhance the area's character
- We will actively involve residents in the design process, including in decision making around design
- Internally, homes will be well-lit, private, comfortable, safe, and welcoming
- Wherever possible, homes will have their own private outdoor space as well as direct access to communal open spaces
- Outdoor areas and entrances will be well-lit and overlooked to promote safe spaces
- Facilities such as bin stores will be convenient and secure
- Our new homes will meet all the requirements of the Mayor of London's 2023 Housing Design Standards and aim always to meet its good practice standards

### **Sustainable homes**

Climate change, carbon management, and sustainability will be integral to the design of our new generation of Council homes. The Council has ambitious targets around all these areas to ensure sustainability standards for new Council homes. This means:

- New Council homes will achieve net zero-carbon and exceed Building Regulation requirements for reducing on-site carbon dioxide emissions.



- Our developments will meet Passivhaus Classic standard. In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible, we will ensure that the development achieves as close to those standards as is possible.
- Homes will be built using environmentally sustainable materials to reduce carbon emissions associated with the sourcing and production of materials
- Homes will be positioned to make maximum use of sunlight in the winter to reduce energy demand
- The design of homes will promote affordable energy costs and use sustainable energy sources such as solar panels, air-source heat pumps, and district heat networks. No new Council homes will use gas or oil - except where homes are waiting to be linked to the zero-carbon District Energy Network (DEN), in which case communal gas heating will be installed on an interim basis.
- Homes will manage the risk of excess heat including through orientation, shading, insulation, green roofs and walls, ventilation, and future retrofit plans
- Our new Council homes will result in a net increase in biodiversity by conserving and extending existing habitats and creating new ones to strengthen local ecological networks – for example through the provision of artificial nesting sites such as those provided by swift bricks.
- Our new homes will meet all the sustainability and biodiversity requirements of the Mayor of London’s 2023 Housing Design Standards and aim always to meet its good practice standards
- New Council homes will support safe and active travel including cycling and walking for all, including cycle storage
- Where we provide car-parking for our new Council homes, one in five car parking spaces will have electric vehicle charging points; and we will put in place infrastructure for additional future charging points.
- We will continuously review our Employers Requirements to ensure that the standards and specifications we require of our building contractors are responsive to developing regulation, legislation, and best practice on carbon management and sustainability

Our new generation of Council homes will be easy and affordable to look after – for the Council and for the tenant. This means:

- Homes will be built with high-quality materials that are simple to maintain and repair, and that stand the test of time by ageing gracefully
- Homes will use fittings and materials which are easy to replace

### **Supported housing and bespoke housing**

Although not all potential housing sites are suitable for the delivery of supported housing, we will always explore this as an option on every Council housing delivery site. We will aim to bring forward 10% of proposed new Council homes as supported housing.

Building new Council homes gives us the opportunity to design some homes specifically around the individual needs of households on the housing register who, because of the nature of their additional support needs, cannot be adequately housed either through relets of existing social rent homes or in the new Council homes we are building.

20% of our new Council homes will be wheelchair adaptable. We have an opportunity to adapt those homes to meet the individual needs of disabled households well in advance of letting them.

Through our Bespoke Homes Programme, we will ensure that those new wheelchair adaptable Council homes are designed and built from as early a stage as possible around the individual needs of their future tenants.

### **Sites for housing development**

Inequality in Haringey is very often reproduced geographically: in simple terms, the east side of the borough tends to be much more deprived than the west. This division is evident across a number of measures: on average, people in the east of the borough are more likely to be unemployed, to earn less when they are in work, and to have worse health and educational outcomes. This division maps starkly onto the structural inequalities coded into race. And it maps onto the kinds and tenure of the housing people live in. Addressing inequality in Haringey means addressing housing inequality. Good Council homes are a direct challenge to that inequality. We are proud of Council housing and the diversity of Council tenants. Most of our new homes will be built on Council land – and most of that land is in the east of the borough. But we are committed to rebalancing the borough by building Council homes right across Haringey and will prioritise opportunities to do that in the west of the borough.

Most of our new homes will be built on Council land – including land currently occupied by garages or car parking spaces, or land between existing blocks. We will make the most of sites' capacities, and we will look at sites that currently have other land uses than housing. The benefit of new homes will sometimes have to be balanced against the loss of amenities. These are challenging trade-offs that we will always approach with residents openly and honestly. We will always seek to ensure that new homes improve the area for existing residents. We will ensure construction has minimal impact on residents, and we will integrate repairs and improvement works to existing buildings with our delivery of new homes. However, our absolute commitment to building the homes that all our communities need will sometimes require difficult decisions. There may be occasions where the demolition of existing homes is one option for delivering new ones. No Council homes will be demolished unless this is what most existing residents want, and unless more Council homes of a better quality will be delivered on the site: our consultation showed strong support for this commitment. And if demolition is proposed as an option at any site, those proposals will be subject to extensive consultation and in some circumstances to a ballot of residents. Our existing Estate Renewal Rehousing and Payments Policy and the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme guarantee a right of return to any secure tenants and residential leaseholders whose homes will be demolished.

As an integral part of the programme, we will also actively seek out opportunities to acquire homes to let at Council rents. In some cases, this will mean acquiring homes being developed by private developers that will become affordable housing under existing s106 agreements. The Council aims to acquire homes at as early a stage as possible in order to ensure that the homes meet its standards and the needs of Haringey's communities. Wherever possible, this means acquiring before building has started.

## Strategic objective 2: Improving housing quality and resident services in the social housing sector

### In numbers – social housing in Haringey

A quarter of Haringey households live in a home rented from a social landlord. This is only very slightly higher than the proportion across London as a whole. 15,630 Haringey households rent from the Council<sup>56</sup> and more than 12,000 rent from a housing association.<sup>57</sup>

33% of Council tenant households and 30% of households renting from a Housing Association have children.<sup>58</sup>

15% of Council tenant households are single people. This proportion increases to 22% for those aged over 55.<sup>59</sup>

Social housing tenants in Haringey tend to be considerably older than the rest of the borough's population. More than one in five Council tenants and just less than one in five Housing Association tenants are aged over 65. Only 11% of Council tenants and 13% of Housing Association tenants are younger than 35.<sup>60</sup>

Social housing tenants in Haringey are much more likely to be restricted by disability and poor health. 43% of Council tenant households and 41% of Housing Association households have at least one disabled adult whose day-to-day activities are limited by long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses. 26% of Haringey households have at least one disabled member. 1,149 Council tenant households and 671 Housing Association households have two or more disabled adults.<sup>61</sup>

Around 40% of Haringey's disabled children live in social rented housing. More social housing tenants have disabled children than parents in other tenures.<sup>62</sup>

15% of Council tenant households and 13% of Housing Association households have at least one member who is an unpaid carer.<sup>63</sup>

A third of social housing tenants in Haringey are either unemployed or economically inactive due to long-term sickness or disability. This proportion is twice as high as in the wider Haringey population.<sup>64</sup>

Across London, more than a third of social housing tenants said they were struggling to make ends meet or pay for basic needs<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> ONS - Census 2021

<sup>57</sup> Haringey Council data

<sup>58</sup> Labour Force Survey household data, 2020

<sup>59</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>60</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>61</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>62</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>63</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>64</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>65</sup> GLA/YouGov cost of living polling, cited in GLA - Housing in London report, October 2022

36% of social housing tenants define themselves as Black. 22% of social housing tenants define themselves as ethnically White British, 14% as White with a non-British heritage, and 7% as Asian. On in ten households renting from the Council or a Housing Association are made up of more than one ethnicity.<sup>66</sup>

Council tenants who are young, Black, Bangladeshi, or women are much more likely to live in overcrowded households than other Council tenants. 60% of severely overcrowded households are Black.

~~55 of the Council's 1,612 Council blocks have six or more storeys.<sup>67</sup>~~

**79 Council blocks are at least 11 meters or 5 storeys high.**

30% of the Council's homes do not yet meet Decent Homes standards. This compares poorly with the 12% of social rented homes across London that failed to meet the standards in 2020.

Homes rented from the Council or from Housing Associations have enabled tens of thousands of people to put down roots, flourish, and contribute to the Haringey community.

The Council currently has a stock of 20,000 homes. Three quarters are home to Council tenants; a quarter are owned by leaseholders and are home either to those leaseholders or to private renters.

We know how important these homes are to our community, so a key part of our strategy is to deliver more Council homes designed and built to the highest standards: over the next five years, we expect to increase our stock of Council homes for rent by more than 1,500. By 2031, we will have completed 3,000. Alongside that, we will support Housing Associations wanting to develop genuinely affordable homes and we will make sure that when we give planning permission for private developments they provide as many homes for social rent as possible.

Between 2006 and 2022, our 20,000 tenants' and leaseholders' homes were managed for us by Homes for Haringey, an independent 'Arms-Length Management Organisation'. In June 2022, with overwhelming support from Council tenants, we brought our housing management services back under our direct control. We then actively sought external, independent views on the performance of those housing services. The results of this scrutiny and of subsequent reports by the Social Housing Regulator and the Housing Ombudsman were sobering. It is clear that we have been letting down many of our tenants and leaseholders over many years.

Over the next five years we will transform the housing services we now directly provide to our tenants and leaseholders, and we will bring all their homes up to at least a decent standard.

This process will be helped by recent reports from the Housing Ombudsman and Social Housing Regulator, and by the Social Housing Act's welcome reintroduction in July 2023 of active regulation for social landlords across clearly-defined standards.

We are just one part of the social housing sector in Haringey. Together, the many housing associations working in Haringey provide secure and genuinely affordable social homes to more than 12,000 households. We will collaborate with all those housing associations to build a stronger social housing sector and ensure that we can all meet and aim to exceed regulatory

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<sup>66</sup> Locally held data, Haringey Council

<sup>67</sup> Locally held data, Haringey Council

standards. Although we are one of many social landlords in Haringey, we are the largest in the borough; and as the Local Authority we are in a unique position to bring others together to learn from each other and to work together to improve the quality of life for all our residents. We will make full use of that position over the next five years – not only to support improvements across the housing associations with homes in Haringey, but also to support our own journey of transformation.

**We have four objectives in this area:**

- 2.1 Transforming services to our tenants and leaseholders, and designing those services with them
- 2.2 Ensuring and improving the quality of our Council housing
- 2.3 Embedding these functions into the Council's core business
- 2.4 Collaborating to help drive improved services in the sector across the borough

**2.1 Transforming services to our tenants and leaseholders, and designing these with them**

We have been letting down many of our tenants and leaseholders over many years.

After bringing our housing management services back under our direct control in June 2022, we found consistent and unacceptable failures to meet basic standards in key areas. In many areas our performance was below the bottom quartile of other Council landlords. Our own tenants told us how unhappy they were with our services. Subsequent reports by the Social Housing Regulator and the Housing Ombudsman only confirmed and extended those findings.

We must and will change.

Alongside the Social Housing Act's new consumer standards framework, the Housing Ombudsman's and Social Housing Regulator's recent reports give us a clear set of actions and objectives that we are committed to achieving.

We have adopted a comprehensive Housing Improvement Plan as one major step in our journey to transform housing services to our tenants and leaseholders. That Housing Improvement Plan forms the basis of this area of our Housing Strategy.

We have set aside a significant budget to fund improvements to services over the next two years and are committed to continuous improvement over the course of this strategy.

Overseeing the turnaround in services is a new cross-party Housing Improvement Board chaired by the Chief Executive. In addition, we will establish a new residents' forum to hold the Housing Improvement Board to account and to ensure it is informed by the views and experiences of tenants and leaseholders.

New Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) on key issues such as repairs, safety checks, and complaints are another crucial part of this accountability. Produced and scrutinised by the Regulator of Social Housing, the TSMs set tenants' views at the heart of service improvement and delivery. We will publish them for all residents to see so that they can readily scrutinise and hold us to account for our performance as a landlord. The TSMs will also ensure that the Regulator focuses on Council tenants' views when making their own assessments of how we are performing as a landlord.

The Council wants residents to be at the heart of everything it does. To ensure that happens, we will strengthen community engagement and involvement in decision-making, service design, and service delivery.

We will completely overhaul our repairs service so that residents no longer face unreasonable delays for issues to be inspected and resolved; and we will improve the quality of those repairs.

We will ensure that we provide landlord services that are empathetic, fair, responsive, and sensitive. We will improve the way we provide services to our vulnerable residents.

Where things go wrong, we will be open about it. We will recognise complaints as learning opportunities through which we can focus on resolving problems and preventing them from reoccurring.

Dealing with the issues which led us to bring housing management services back under our direct control has been made more difficult because far-reaching systemic and cultural changes are needed; and because of a legacy of poor records and information. Over the next five years we will instil a performance-driven culture and a data-led management culture within which all staff are supported to feel ownership, accountability, and intrinsic motivation in their roles.

Other major priorities include dealing with damp and mould in our residents' homes and ensuring that all homes are safe, with improved performance in respect of building safety compliance.

To achieve these priorities we will:

- Improve tenant involvement in decision-making and service delivery to deliver a resident-focussed housing service and greater transparency with tenants and leaseholders
- Improve resident satisfaction levels.
- Improve our ways of working and our performance by developing and embedding new staff structures, reviewing policies, processes, and procedures, and developing a strong culture of both collaboration and performance management.
- Improve the customer experience by making best use of current communications and information, digital and website systems, delivering opportunities to improve the customer experience and minimise failure through improved, modern ways of working for staff.
- Improve compliance and make resident safety our number one priority by ensuring the Council is compliant with all legislative and statutory standards, including but not only the Fire Safety Act 2021, the Building Safety Act 2022, and new Social Housing Regulator Standards, to ensure that our homes and estates are safe for our residents. Crucially, we will implement all of our commitments to the Social Housing Regulator and Ombudsman.
- Improve complaint handling, leading to a significant reduction in numbers of complaints, and a reduction in complaints which escalate to Stage 2 and the Housing Ombudsman.
- Deliver Value for Money by prioritising expenditure that best meets the needs of our tenants and driving efficiencies.

- Invest in the quality of our homes through our planned maintenance programme, ensuring all the Council's homes meet Decent Homes standards and meet high standards of energy efficiency.
- Ensure that more visible and locality-based teams are on estates more frequently.
- Upskill staff and deliver better, more attractive jobs.

Our Housing Improvement Plan sets out how we will deliver those objectives and transform our performance across thirteen key priority areas, each with measurable objectives that will drive sustainable and lasting improvements to our tenants' and leaseholders' services:

- Resident-led improvement, with residents at the heart of decision making
- Void management
- Repairs service
- Income management and collection
- Homeownership and Leaseholder Services
- Estate and Neighbourhood Management standards
- Better Neighbourhood and Tenancy Management
- Statutory Compliance with Property Services
- Compliance and planned maintenance performance improvements
- Improved complaints handling
- Updated Policies and Procedure
- Sheltered Accommodation
- Culture Change – including steps to ensure we re-establish ownership, professional pride, and accountability in our staff

We are already adopting a range of new policies and procedures to support this transformation and we will prioritise their effective implementation over the course of this strategy. These include:

- A new Vulnerable Tenants Policy, vulnerability strategy, and vulnerability and safeguarding procedures
- A new Unacceptable Behaviour policy to ensure we deal with residents fairly, proportionately, impartially, and in an open manner
- A new policy for leaseholder complaints, including a defined process for leaseholder repairs and improved processes around insurance claims
- An updated complaints process
- A new Compensation Policy compliant with key guidance

One of the strong messages from consultation on our draft Housing Strategy was that our residents really value their neighbours and communities on their estates. We are committed to supporting and building on that sense of community and will take clear steps to achieve that. We want residents to feel more connected to their neighbours and that they live in an area where people help each other.

We will improve highspeed internet connectivity by connecting our estates and council homes with full fibre high-speed broadband.

## **2.2 Ensuring and Improving the quality of our Council housing**

We have a wide range of housing stock, from high rise blocks and large housing estates to street properties. Council homes are located right across Haringey. We are proud of Council housing, and we want residents to be proud as well.

Over the next five years we will invest heavily in improvements to our housing stock. That investment will include improvements to communal areas and wider estate improvements. But we must recognise how urgently we need to ensure that basic decency and safety standards are met in all Council homes. So over the next five years, we will prioritise achieving the Decent Homes standard for all our tenants' homes and ensuring that building, fire safety, and other safety standards are met across our housing stock.

### **Ensuring Fire Safety**

We will ensure that all our tenants' and leaseholders' homes meet fire safety standards - and that our tenants and leaseholders know their home is safe.

In March 2023 we identified that some homes had not had recent fire and electrical safety checks, that many of our residential blocks did not have a current Fire Risk Assessment, and that many fire remediation actions were overdue.

We have urgently remedied this. All our housing blocks now have Fire Risk Assessments and communal Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR). By December 2023, all our tenants' homes will have had a domestic EICR completed within the last ten years; and we will have completed all fire remediation actions.

During 2024, we will provide all our tenants and leaseholders with fire safety information specific to their homes. We will provide residents with updated information after that at least every three years – and sooner if there is any significant change. This information will include key contact details, the type of fire safety equipment fitted in the block, and their fire evacuation plan.

From 2024, we will visit all Council homes once a year to make sure that front doors are in good working order.

We will investigate all fire incidents and feed back to the residents of the block about what controls have been put in place to prevent a recurrence for all Fire safety or Health and Safety failings that could have resulted in an incident or an incident which was attended by two or more of the Emergency Services.

### **Decent Homes**

The Decent Homes Standard sets the minimum basic standards for social homes: being in a reasonable state of repair; having a reasonably modern kitchen and bathroom; having adequate noise insulation; and having effective insulation and efficient heating. A decent home must not present any serious risks to its residents' health or safety: it must have no 'category one' hazards such as damp and mould.

Those standards are absolutely fundamental. In March 2023 we reported to the Regulator of Social Housing that nearly 5,000 of our tenants' homes - 30% of the homes we let - did not comply with the Decent Homes Standard. More than one hundred of those homes had 'category one' hazards.

This is not acceptable. We must and will change. We will make sure that all our tenants' homes meet the Decent Homes standard by 2028.



To achieve this, we need to prioritise basic decency works over other improvements – and we will do this until all our tenants’ homes meet standards. By May 2024 we will complete a full condition survey of all our tenants’ homes and put in place a comprehensive works programme and budget to ensure that all our tenants’ homes meet the Decent Homes standard by 2028.

### **Dealing with Damp and Mould**

The avoidable and tragic death of Awaab Ishak in December 2020 from a respiratory condition caused by extensive mould in his Rochdale home highlighted the urgent need for landlords to finally take tenants’ reports of damp and mould seriously. For far too long, blame has been placed on tenants, and spurious claims that ‘lifestyle’ is contributing to dampness have been used by landlords to evade their own responsibilities.

We must and will change. We have started to implement that change. Over the last year we have visited all known Category 1 cases of damp and mould and offered remedial works including dehumidifiers and mould washes; and visits to new cases and all potential category 2 cases are well underway. We have reviewed all our processes and procedures relating to damp and mould to ensure they address those concerns and recommendations. We have developed a new process to ensure that we temporarily rehouse tenants while we deal with the most severe cases of damp and mould. We adopted a Damp and Mould Policy in April 2023 setting out the steps we will take in adopting a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould in our tenants’ and leaseholders’ homes by being proactive in identification, prevention, and resolution.

But we recognise that is just the start.

We will ensure over the next five years and beyond that the way we manage damp and mould in our own housing stock responds in full to the Coroner’s recommendations following Awaab Ishak’s death and to the subsequent recommendations of the Social Housing Regulator and the Housing Ombudsman.

In the next few months, we will issue new guidance to staff to support our Damp and Mould Policy.

By the end of 2024 we will have contacted all tenants who have raised repair requests in the last three years where damp and mould could be an issue, and we will have put in place improvements in the homes of all existing reported cases of condensation, damp, and mould.

We will put in place new technology and equipment which detects or reduces the impact of damp and mould whilst we are resolving the root cause of the problem.

We will ensure that our residents are always properly listened and responded to when they have damp and mould issues in their homes.

We will continue to improve the way we train staff on identifying and responding to the early signs of damp and mould and respond quickly.

Our work on retrofitting Council homes so that they are more energy efficient, on ensuring that all homes meet the Decent Homes standard, and through the Housing Improvement Plan will also help to ensure that our tenants no longer have to endure homes blighted by damp and mould.

### **Our housing and net zero**

Housing is a major contributor to the borough's carbon emissions. As well as ensuring that our new homes are energy efficient, we also have ambitious objectives for our existing housing stock.

Over the next five years we will begin retrofitting our existing stock. Installing new insulation, energy efficient doors and windows, and heating systems will make sure that our tenants' homes become energy efficient and can be heated in a cheaper and more sustainable manner – which is better for households and for the borough as a whole. We aim to retrofit 2,500 Council homes by 2028 and are committed to bringing our stock to Energy Performance Rating Band B by 2035.

### **2.3 Embedding these functions into the Council's core business**

Providing homes to our tenants and leaseholders is a core part of the Council's business. And as we continue to grow our housing stock, and our number of Council tenants, this is even more important.

After an extensive consultation with tenants and leaseholders, we have brought our housing management services back under the direct management of the Council. We will take this opportunity to make sure that housing services are fully integrated with all other Council services.

We are our tenants' landlord, but we also have wider responsibilities towards them as Haringey residents. So as well as ensuring that their homes are well maintained and managed, we will also make sure that we are helping our tenants live healthy lives and access the best employment opportunities, that we are supporting children and young people living in Council homes in their education and in accessing training and employment opportunities, and that we are providing broad and targeted support to vulnerable households. We will build stronger links between our housing services and the other services provided by the Council, both statutory and non-statutory, in order to provide our residents with a better all-round service.

Our tenants and leaseholders deserve to be listened to and actively involved in service delivery and decisions about their homes. We are particularly clear that bringing our housing management services under direct management will give us the opportunity to rethink how we strengthen our residents' voice, centre residents in our decision-making and genuinely co-produce and co-design services with them.

Our repairs, retrofit and other major improvement works to Council housing give us a real opportunity to support local people to enter and progress within the construction sector at all levels, and to help the sector become more diverse and inclusive. We are committed to taking this opportunity so that we help to build an inclusive and diverse construction sector that really benefits local people. We will work closely with our contractors to achieve this, ensuring that local people – and especially those who are currently excluded from employment - benefit from training, apprenticeships, and good jobs. We will ensure that all our contractors provide work that is safe and secure and pay at least London Living Wage.

Over the next five years we will build on our approach to procurement so that all the contracts we award achieve tangible social as well as financial value.

### **2.4 Collaborating to help drive improved services in the sector across the borough**

Alongside more than 15,000 households renting homes from the Council, there are more than 12,000 social tenants and their families living in homes owned and managed by housing associations in Haringey. All social tenants should expect the same high-quality service and

well-maintained homes, whether their landlord is the Council, a large housing association with stock across the country, or a small, local housing association.

As a sector, we are bound by the same regulatory frameworks which set the baseline for our responsibilities. After a decade of deregulation in the social housing sector, the six years following the fire at Grenfell Tower have seen the introduction of new legislation including the Fire Safety Act 2021, the Building Safety Act 2022, and the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. New organisations and frameworks have been put in place to reintroduce active regulation of social landlords. Beyond this, we are also bound by a shared commitment to residents and to the borough: to making sure not only that our homes are good quality, well maintained and managed and that residents are provided with a good service, but also that we are contributing to the wider Haringey community and environment.

The housing associations working across Haringey provide excellent services in most cases. All have particular strengths. There is much we can all learn from each other. This process of learning is especially important for the Council on its journey to transform the services it provides to Council tenants and leaseholders.

This is why we are committed to forging a genuine partnership with all housing associations in Haringey: to work not only towards our shared aspirations and challenges as landlords, but also to create our shared vision of our borough.

## Strategic objective 3: Improving the Quality of the Private Rented Sector

### In numbers - private renting

More than a third of the Haringey population - 37,400 households - live in homes rented from a private landlord.<sup>68</sup> This is more than the London average, and more than the number renting from a social landlord in Haringey.<sup>69</sup>

Haringey families with children are more likely to live in the private rented sector than in any other form of tenure: 37% of Haringey households with children rent privately. 31% of private renting households in Haringey have children – a similar proportion to social renters. 41% of owner-occupiers with a mortgage have children – and only 12% of those who own their home outright.<sup>70</sup>

27% of private renting households in Haringey are single people.<sup>71</sup>

35% of Haringey private renters are aged less than 35. Nearly nine in every ten renters are younger than 55: 9% are aged between 55 and 65; 4% are older than 65.

39% of private renters define themselves as white and not British and 27% as White British. 11% of private renters define as Black, 6% as Asian, 6% as mixed and 11% as another ethnicity.<sup>72</sup>

18% of households in Haringey's private rented sector have at least one adult whose day-to-day activities are limited by long-term physical or mental health conditions or illnesses. This is a lower proportion than the wider Haringey population.<sup>73</sup>

15% of Haringey households renting privately are either unemployed or economically inactive due to long-term sickness or disability – a higher proportion than owner-occupiers and a lower proportion than social renters.<sup>74</sup>

Rising rents mean that private renting puts enormous pressure on many who rent – and is now out of reach to many people in Haringey. By the mid-2010s, median private rents in London were already 53% higher than that in the mid-1990s. Those rises mainly occurred in the late 1990s and early 2000s.<sup>75</sup> Median rents in Haringey rose by 58% between 2011 and 2019.<sup>76</sup>

Figures from Rightmove show that the average advertised rent in London rose by 15.8% between July 2021 and July 2022. This represents the highest ever annual growth in any

<sup>68</sup> Tenure of Households by Borough, ONS 2020; Subnational estimates of dwellings by tenure 2012 to 2020, ONS 2022; and research for Haringey Selective Licensing Evidence Base, Metastreet 2019

<sup>69</sup> Tenure of Households by Borough, ONS 2020 and Subnational estimates of dwellings by tenure, ONS 2022

<sup>70</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>71</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>72</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>73</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>74</sup> ONS – Census 2021

<sup>75</sup> The cost of housing for low-income renters, Institute for Fiscal Studies 2017

<sup>76</sup> VOA

region since their records began. Rightmove figures show that rents in Haringey rose by 19.1% in the 12 months to October 2022.

Haringey private rents that had been on average cheaper than the London average are now equal to it. The median monthly rent for a one-bedroom flat in Haringey is £1,300 – nearly half the median pre-tax income for working people. The median private rent for a two-bedroom home is £1,578, and £1,850 for three bedrooms.<sup>77</sup>

The availability of private rented homes has fallen sharply over the last two years. The number of people looking for a room in a flat-share in London rose to a record high in summer 2022, while the number of rooms available fell to its lowest summertime level since 2013. There were seven people searching for every available room, up from a pre-pandemic peak of four in Autumn 2014.<sup>78</sup>

London's private renters broadly reflect the income distribution of the wider population. 58% of private tenants are in the top two fifths of the national household income distribution and 14% are in the bottom fifth.<sup>79</sup>

The number of Housing Benefit and Universal Credit recipients in London rose sharply during the pandemic and has fallen only slightly since. The vast majority of the increase during the pandemic was among private tenants: there are 49% more private renters relying on Housing Benefit and Universal Credit than before the pandemic. Over the same period the already much larger number of social renting recipients rose by 4%.

16% of private renters in Haringey – more than 6,056 households - are in receipt of Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit. 116 households renting privately are benefit capped.<sup>80</sup>

Fewer than 9% of properties listed for rent in London are affordable on Local Housing Allowance. That figure falls to just 1.3% of properties in central London. This means that renters reliant on benefits will face significant shortfalls and will find it even more challenging to find somewhere to rent.<sup>81</sup>

More and more private renters are struggling to make ends meet or to afford basic needs. By July, 27% of private renters in London said they were struggling to make ends meet or pay for basic needs. Just 36% of private renters said they were coping or comfortable.<sup>82</sup>

In 2021-22, just over a quarter of private renters nationally said they found it difficult to afford their rent. Half of all private renters reported having no savings. Four in ten private renters do not expect to ever own a home.<sup>83</sup>

The quality of private rented homes varies enormously. But more than one home in every four rented from a private landlord in Haringey - nearly 12,000 homes - is in such poor condition that it presents a risk of harm to the health or safety of its tenants. One in twenty does not meet minimum legal requirements for energy efficiency. Our own data shows that

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<sup>77</sup> Private rental market summary statistics in England, ONS December 2022

<sup>78</sup> Figures from SpareRoom, cited in GLA - Housing in London report, October 2022

<sup>79</sup> English Housing Survey 2019-20

<sup>80</sup> Council data

<sup>81</sup> August 2022 research undertaken by Savills commissioned by London Councils

<sup>82</sup> GLA/YouGov cost of living polling, cited in GLA - Housing in London report, October 2022

<sup>83</sup> English Housing Survey 2021-22

homes in the worst condition tend to be in the east of the borough, with particular concentrations in Bruce Grove, St Ann's, and Tottenham Green.<sup>84</sup>

The private rented sector is overwhelmingly dominated by small-scale landlordism: mainstream commercial property investors account for just over three% of residential rental stock.<sup>85</sup>

Though it remains a proportionally small part of the private rented sector, Build to Rent is growing. Since January 2009, 46,750 Build to Rent homes have started construction in London and 35,556 have been completed.

In the last five years the number of homes standing empty for more than six months has doubled from 732 in 2017 to 1,468 in October 2022.

More than a third of Haringey's residents rent their home from a private landlord. Private renters are as much a part of the Haringey community as owner-occupiers and social tenants.

Everyone in Haringey who rents privately should live in a home that is decent, safe, and secure, and should be treated fairly under the law. Most landlords ensure this. But more than a quarter of privately rented homes in Haringey do not meet decent standards - often because their landlord does not understand their responsibilities, sometimes because their landlords deliberately break the law.

Working in partnership across the borough, we will do everything in our power to ensure all privately rented homes are decent and safe, and that privately owned homes contribute positively to the borough's environment. And we will make sure that private renters understand their rights and know how to exercise them.

### **We have three objectives in this area:**

- 3.1 Setting clear standards for the private rented sector and supporting landlords to meet those standards
- 3.2 Enforcing those standards and taking decisive action against landlords who will not provide their tenants with a home that is decent, safe, and secure
- 3.3 Empowering and supporting private renters to hold their landlords to these standards

Our consultation showed almost universal support for our proposed approach to private renting.

### **3.1 Setting the standards and supporting landlords to meet them**

Law and regulation governing private renting have evolved over many years and as a result are complex, multi-layered, and inconsistent. Most landlords only let one home, and some use an agent to manage their property. This means that it can be confusing for landlords to understand the standards required to let a home. Not only does this confusion account for a lot of poor practice, it also helps to create conditions that make it possible for criminal landlords to get away with deliberately providing unsafe accommodation.

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<sup>84</sup> Analysis of Private Rented Sector, Metastreet – commissioned by Haringey Council, 2021

<sup>85</sup> *The Evolving Private Rented Sector: its Contribution and Potential*, Dr Julie Rugg, 2018

Our objective is for all landlords and agents in Haringey to understand their basic obligation to provide decent, safe, and secure homes for their tenants, and to treat renters fairly under the law.

### **Provide a responsive service**

We will continue to provide a responsive service to private renters who seek our help because their landlord or agent is not providing them with a decent, safe, and secure home.

Using a risk-based approach, in all but the most urgent cases our first response is to work with the landlord, providing advice and guidance to ensure they understand their responsibilities under the law, and that they can meet those responsibilities. Our consultation strongly supported this approach.

### **Use licensing powers to include private rented homes**

We know that most renters with poor conditions in their home will never contact the Council. That means that through a responsive approach alone we would have no contact with the vast majority of landlords or renters in the borough.

Licensing gives the opportunity to educate and improve the professionalism of landlords, allowing the move from a reactive to a strategic approach. so that all landlords and agents in Haringey understand their basic obligation to provide decent, safe, and secure homes for their tenants, and to treat renters fairly under the law by setting our clear standards and allowing landlords to receive support. Licensing allows us to identify good landlords, to support inexperienced landlords, and to challenge those that fail to improve.

Licensing also gives us the opportunity to engage with and educate renters, so that they understand their rights and responsibilities.

### **Houses in Multiple Occupation**

Many thousands of people in Haringey live in a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO), renting a room and sharing facilities such as bathrooms and kitchens with other people. Unless they are very well-managed, HMOs present greater risks to renters' health, safety, and welfare than other kinds of rented housing. These risks are greatest in larger, multi-storied HMOs and those in properties converted from their original purpose. This is why converting any property to a HMO for seven or more occupants requires planning permission in all parts of Haringey, and for three or more occupants in the east of the borough, where there is a greater concentration of HMOs. And by law, landlords must get a licence from the Council for any HMO they manage that is occupied by five or more people who are not all related.

We will align our licensing and planning policies including around bedroom sizes and adequate provision of kitchens and bathrooms.

We want to prevent an overconcentration of larger HMOs because of the potential impact on neighbourhood amenities. We will develop specific planning requirements for these because the intensity of the use needs to be very carefully managed. We want large HMOs to provide adequate cycle storage, to be car free wherever appropriate, and to provide adequate bin storage.

But smaller HMOs also present particular risk and management issues. So in 2019, we put in place an additional licensing scheme. Under that scheme, landlords and agents of HMOs where three or more separate households rent rooms must also apply for a licence and follow very clear standards so that all HMOs are decent, safe, and secure. The Council will only grant a HMO licence where the landlord can show that the HMO is safe and well-managed.

Evidence shows that the additional licensing scheme has been effective. It has allowed us to ensure that many substandard HMOs are brought up to a decent and safe condition. We will therefore consult residents on proposals to renew our additional licensing scheme.

### **Selective Licensing**

Too many renters in all kinds of housing have to endure poor conditions in their home.

When private renters seek our help because of poor conditions, we make sure their landlords understand their responsibilities under the law and we support them to meet those responsibilities. In most cases, this improves conditions for the tenant. And where guidance and support are not effective, we can take enforcement action.

We know that this responsive approach reaches only a fraction of those landlords who do not provide decent homes. This is for three key reasons. Firstly, insecure tenancies mean that many renters do not feel able to take action. Secondly, when renters do contact us, we necessarily take a risk-based approach. Thirdly, our enforcement powers under environmental health and building safety legislation are narrowly defined.

We want to reach the tens of thousands of landlords we cannot reach through responsive interventions.

As well as their effects on tenants, poor housing conditions and poor housing management can undermine community relations. In the worst instances, they are a cause of crime. We want to ensure that decent housing management standards are met so that poor housing conditions are never a cause of friction between neighbours.

We know that poor conditions and poor housing management align with those parts of the borough where deprivation and poverty are worse. We know that poor property conditions make deprivation worse as tenants have fewer choices about where they can live. Fuel poverty, overcrowding and poor living conditions have a detrimental impact on the lives and health of those living in sub-standard accommodation

For all these reasons, in November 2022 we brought in a new selective licensing scheme for all homes rented from a private landlord in the east of the borough, where housing conditions for private renters tend to be worst.

The scheme sets out very clear standards for landlords and agents including in relation to fire safety, gas and electrical safety, energy efficiency, and professional housing management.

We will ensure that the cost of obtaining a licence is fair for landlords. We believe that selective licensing will support good landlords by driving out criminal competitors.

We will use our licensing schemes to create a dialogue with local landlords so that we can provide advice, guidance, and support on improving conditions for renters.

We will monitor the impact of the selective licensing scheme. If it is effective in raising standards, we will consult residents in 2027 on proposals to renew the scheme.

### **Provide a proactive service**

We will support landlords and their agents across the borough to understand and meet their responsibilities and more broadly to develop good practice. We will use regular landlord forums, training events, the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme, our own web pages, and other online channels to underpin this.



We will make sure that letting agents operating in Haringey understand the regulations governing their businesses. In particular, agents must know that it is unlawful to discriminate against people receiving benefits, that almost all fees for tenants are banned, and that agents must belong to an independent redress scheme with powers to resolve disputes between letting agents and their customers.

### **More sustainable homes in the private rented sector**

We will raise standards of energy efficiency in private rented homes by ensuring that EPC requirements are met, including as part of the licensing process. We will commission a service to identify the causes of poor energy efficiency in low-performing homes and propose solutions. We will actively direct landlords to grants for improving energy efficiency – including our own Green Homes Grant. We will also support owner occupiers to make their homes more energy efficient.

### **Clearer communication to tenants and landlords**

We will bring our licensing, planning, trading standards, and other interventions in the private rented sector into better alignment, making sure that all our processes support each other and that together they set standards that are easy for landlords, agents, and renters to understand.

We believe that communicating these standards well is a fundamental part of improving the quality of private rented housing in the borough.

We will make sure that landlords and their agents can access information on licensing, planning, and other standards from a single point of contact.

### **Our role in the PRS**

We will continue to improve conditions for the most vulnerable renters by taking an active role in the provision of privately rented accommodation. We will directly procure good quality privately rented homes for residents who are homeless and at risk of homelessness. And we will continue to acquire homes to lease to the Haringey Community Benefit Society, for households in housing need.

We know that many of our own leaseholders are now private landlords. We will develop approaches to ensure that they understand and meet their responsibilities so that private renters on Haringey estates have homes that are decent, safe, and secure, and that housing conditions for private renters do not undermine community cohesion on those estates.

### **Empty homes**

We are committed to bringing empty homes in the borough back into use.

Empty homes blight neighbourhoods and attract antisocial behaviour and crime. Developing an environment that is safe, clean, and green is a priority for the Council and our residents. Bringing empty properties back into residential use helps to create a safe and pleasant environment for all.

1,468 homes in Haringey have been empty for more than six months. Most are empty due to temporary circumstances which their owners are actively resolving – for example, they are selling, or are temporarily out of the country, or are seeking planning permission or funds for development or renovation. However, too many homes remain empty on a long-term basis. 197 homes in Haringey have been empty for more than two years; 53 of those have been empty for more than five years - including 23 that have been standing empty for more than ten years.

Our consultation strongly supported using Council resources to bring privately-owned empty homes back into use by providing help and support to owners before considering using our enforcement powers.

We will take a risk-based approach to tackling empty homes. We will do everything we can to help and encourage owners of empty homes to bring them back into use. Advice and assistance will always be offered first, and in the vast majority of cases this will be sufficient.

However, where owners of empty homes cannot be traced, or they are unwilling to work with us in a meaningful way towards bringing their property back into use, we will not hesitate to use the range of enforcement powers available to us. These include Empty Dwelling Management Orders, enforced sale, and compulsory purchase.

### 3.2. Enforcing the standards

We will take decisive action against the minority of landlords and agents who refuse to meet those responsibilities. We expect all landlords and their agents to provide their tenants with a home that is decent, safe, and secure, and to treat their tenants fairly under the law.

Many landlords already meet these standards. We will support landlords who want to improve. But there is no place in Haringey for landlords who deliberately flout the standards. So where landlords or their agents will not comply with standards, including those set out in their licenses, we will take decisive action.

We will provide responsive enforcement for private renters who report that their homes are not decent or safe.

We know that renters in vulnerable positions often find it extremely difficult to complain. The private rental market serving low-income Londoners is characterised by dangerously poor physical standards and low or non-existent security of tenure. This is part of the reason we have introduced additional licensing for HMOs, and it is part of the reason we will seek to introduce selective licensing. We will use licensing powers to enforce standards without waiting for complaint. And we will take a smarter, more proactive approach to enforcement, based on robust risk assessment.

We believe that landlords who deliberately fail to license their properties where it is required are most likely to let homes that do not meet standards. We will enforce fines of up to £30,000 against landlords who try to evade licensing.

Where landlords will not bring tenants' homes up to standards, we will use our licensing schemes alongside the range of our environmental health, trading standards, and other legal powers to force them to do so.

We will fine and prosecute criminal landlords who will not comply with standards, including the criminal minority who evict tenants without following due process.

We will use trading standards powers to crack down on letting agents who cheat their customers and fail to meet standards.

We will also use trading standards powers to enforce against landlords who refuse to meet energy performance requirements.

We believe that communicating well is a fundamental part of improving the quality of private rented housing in the borough.

We will publicise our work against criminal landlords and agents, warning off prospective tenants and creating a culture of accountability. We will use external media as well as our own web pages and other online channels to underpin this.

### 3.3 Empowering private renters

We want all renters to know their rights, and to be able to hold landlords to account where those rights are not respected.

The complexity of housing law and regulation means that many renters do not understand their rights. A substantial minority do not know that they have rights.

Even where renters know their rights, many are unable to exercise them. London's housing crisis means that many renters, especially those with low incomes, have very limited choices. A third of private renters live in poverty and poor housing makes deprivation worse. In a market that aims to meet the fundamental need for shelter, this lack of choice translates into a lack of power.

We want renters in Haringey to understand their rights and to be able to enforce them. Where renters are unable to enforce rights on their own, we want them to have the support they need to act.

We will continue to provide specialist advice and support directly to private renters on issues ranging from the threat of eviction to disrepair through our Housing Needs service.

Making Every Contact Count, we will over the next five years equip all Council workers who work with, or meet, private renters to give basic initial advice on housing rights and to signpost to specialist services.

We will support private renters to access Council and voluntary services. We will continue to advise renters on a range of issues including housing rights, benefits, debt, adult learning, parenting, and childcare. We will focus on fuel poverty by identifying households at risk and providing targeted advice and support both to tenants and landlords.

We know that some people live in HMOs run by criminal landlords where illegal evictions, overcrowding, and unsafe conditions are common. These are among the most vulnerable renters, and their living conditions are often too precarious to act without support. We will provide dedicated support to these renters so they can resist illegal evictions, negotiate better conditions in their homes, and leave on their own terms, with compensation whenever possible. We will build on our existing partnership with Safer Renting to achieve that.

We can in most cases only take enforcement action against landlords and agents where they have contravened the conditions of a licence, where living conditions are detrimental to health and safety, or where a landlord has threatened or carried out an unlawful eviction.

In providing a responsive service to private renters who report that their homes are not decent or safe, we will be clear about the limits of our enforcement powers. Where we are not best placed to help through our enforcement powers, we will provide initial housing advice and signpost renters to specialist legal, advice, and support organisations.

We will establish a Private Renting Forum to bring together Council services, local support services, advice agencies, and renters' groups to develop best practice and a shared commitment to supporting Haringey's private renters.

We believe that communicating well is a fundamental part of improving the quality of private rented housing in the borough. Most private renters in our consultation do not feel confident asking the Council for help about problems in their home or would not know how to. We will run campaigns to build renters' awareness of and confidence in our licensing schemes and other relevant services. We will promote private renters' rights using targeted campaigns in the areas and to the groups most affected. We will use external media as well as our own web pages and other online channels to underpin this. We will continue to work with Home Connections to provide online training for homeless people looking for private rented accommodation.

## Strategic objective 4: Preventing and alleviating homelessness

### In numbers – homelessness in Haringey

The country's housing crisis continues to evolve and to have deep impacts on Haringey residents. Simply, there are not enough homes, and for most people they are too expensive.

London's home ownership rate has fallen in recent decades. Homeowners tend to be significantly older.<sup>86</sup>

The cost of buying a home continues to increase faster than pay. The median house price rose 89% in the last ten years to £587,000 - more than the London average. The median household income in the borough is £35,769 – less than the London average.<sup>87</sup> Haringey's median house price to earnings ratio is 18.03, significantly above the London average.

Over the last two years, the number of homes of all kinds available to rent privately has fallen very sharply. The number of people looking for a room in a flat-share in London rose to a record high in summer 2022, while the number of rooms available fell to its lowest summertime level since 2013. There were seven people searching for every available room, up from a pre-pandemic peak of four in Autumn 2014.<sup>88</sup>

Availability is even more restricted for low-income households. Just 1.3% of properties listed for rent in central London are affordable to people reliant on Local Housing Allowance.<sup>89</sup>

Rising rents mean that private renting puts enormous pressure on many who rent – and is now out of reach to many people in Haringey. Median rents in Haringey rose by 58% between 2011 and 2019,<sup>90</sup> and again by 19.1% in the 12 months to October 2022.

16% of private renters in Haringey – more than 6,056 households - are in receipt of Housing Benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit. 116 households renting privately are benefit capped.<sup>91</sup>

12,480 households are waiting for an offer of social housing on Haringey Council's housing register. 720 of those households are in critical need in Band A. More than 3,000 are in Band B – 2,600 in Temporary Accommodation and others living in severely overcrowded social housing tenants. 8,770 households in less severe housing need are placed in Band C and under current conditions would be very unlikely to ever to get an offer of social housing.

There is not enough social housing in Haringey to offer an affordable home to everyone who needs one. In 2021/22 the Council let 341 homes. This is especially an issue with larger homes with 132 families waiting for a five-bedroom home but only one property becoming available in the last two years.

<sup>86</sup> London's Poverty Profile, Housing tenure over time, Trust for London

<sup>87</sup> ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020

<sup>88</sup> Figures from SpareRoom, cited in GLA - Housing in London report, October 2022

<sup>89</sup> August 2022 research undertaken by Savills commissioned by London Councils

<sup>90</sup> VOA

<sup>91</sup> Council data

More and more Londoners, particularly private and social tenants, are struggling to make ends meet or to afford basic needs. By July 2022, 9% of homeowners, 27% of private renters and 34% of social housing tenants said they were struggling to make ends meet or pay for basic needs. Those who said they were coping or comfortable were in the minority of both private renters (36%) and social housing tenants (28%).<sup>92</sup>

After the moratorium on evictions during the pandemic, more and more tenants are now losing their home. Compared to the previous year, the three months to December 2022 saw an increase of 56% in landlord claims, of 177% for possession orders and 105% in landlord warrants. Two thirds of these actions were against private renters, and around a third against social renters.<sup>93</sup>

Homelessness figures over the last 12 months TBC

More than 2,600 Haringey households who became homeless are now provided with temporary accommodation by the Council. This represents 24.5 per 1,000 Haringey households, the third highest rate in London and 50% higher than the London average. 40% of residents accepted as statutory homeless are black, while 25% of youth homeless are LGBT, an overrepresentation compared to the wider borough population.<sup>94</sup> More than 11,000 households, including those homeless households, are currently waiting for social housing on Haringey's housing register.<sup>95</sup>

Nearly two thirds of households living in temporary accommodation are black, Asian or from another community of colour. Four in every ten households needing help from the Council for homelessness are black.<sup>96</sup>

A quarter of young homeless people identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Trans.<sup>97</sup>

304 people were seen rough sleeping in the borough in 2022/23. This represents a 13% increase when compared to 2021/22. 67% of people seen rough sleeping in the borough during the year were new rough sleepers (flow), while 19% fell into the stock category, and 14% were returners. 65% of people seen rough sleeping in the borough during 2022/23 who were new to the streets were seen rough sleeping just once.

86% of Haringey rough sleepers were men. Women are often hidden in rough sleeping statistics because they seek protection from gender-based harm on the streets by sleeping in squats, buses, and sex-working for accommodation. The average age of death for women who experience rough sleeping is 42 years; for men it is 44.<sup>98</sup>

5% of people sleeping rough in Haringey were under 25; 9% were over 55. The largest age cohort – 35% - were between 26 and 35 years old.

39% of Haringey rough sleepers were British nationals. 36% were EU nationals, 15% African and 7% Asian.

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<sup>92</sup> GLA/YouGov cost of living polling, cited in GLA - Housing in London report, October 2022

<sup>93</sup> Ministry of Justice - Mortgage and landlord possession statistics: October to December 2022, published February 2023

<sup>94</sup> Haringey Council data, January 2022

<sup>95</sup> Haringey Council data, January 2022

<sup>96</sup> Locally held data, Haringey Council 2021

<sup>97</sup> Sexuality of Youth Homeless, locally held data, Haringey Council 2017

<sup>98</sup> CHAIN (Combined Homelessness and Information Network) data

25% of people rough sleeping in Haringey were Black, 16% were White British, and 35% White and not British.<sup>99</sup>

A third of rough sleepers in Haringey had been renting from a private landlord before sleeping rough. The proportion was slightly higher – 37% - for new rough sleepers. 5% - four people – had been social housing tenants.

54% who sleep rough in Haringey have mental health problems. 38% have a combination of alcohol, drugs, and mental health support needs. 30% have neither mental health problems, drug dependence nor alcohol dependence.<sup>100</sup>

Having a safe, stable place to live is a universal human need. Working with partners across the borough, we will prevent people from becoming homeless wherever possible. Where residents do find themselves homeless, we will offer a range of housing and support options to meet their needs. We have placed 2,600 homeless Haringey households in temporary accommodation because they could not find a home in the private sector: this is a key driver of our Council Housing Delivery Programme which will deliver 3,000 secure, affordable, and good quality Council homes by 2031.

**We have four objectives in this area:**

- 4.1 Preventing homelessness whenever possible
- 4.2 Ensuring that we have the right accommodation and support for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- 4.3 Supporting people who are, or who are at risk of, rough sleeping
- 4.4 Ensuring that we are making the best and fairest use of our housing stock

## 4.1 Preventing homelessness whenever possible

Homelessness is traumatic, so our first priority is to prevent homelessness whenever we can. By doing this we also prevent the devastating effects that homelessness has on people's lives, and the financial costs that stem from people losing their home.

We will work directly with those at risk of homelessness, intervene early, and take a personalised and targeted approach to prevention. There are often interlinked causes and triggers to homelessness, so we will take a personalised and holistic approach to assessing and responding to individual housing needs and circumstances. That means offering as much choice as we can about how residents communicate with us, about the housing and support options available, and about assistance on connected issues such as debt, employment, health, and social care needs.

We will continue to provide a dedicated service to work directly with people at risk of homelessness. But preventing homelessness is the responsibility of the whole Council, and something which our partners across the borough help us achieve. So we will work in partnership across the Council and the borough.

We will set up a Homelessness Reduction Board to drive that partnership work by bringing together principal officers from the Council – including from housing and social care – with

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<sup>99</sup> CHAIN (Combined Homelessness and Information Network) data

<sup>100</sup> CHAIN (Combined Homelessness and Information Network) data

other public services, social landlords, and the voluntary sector in order to ensure a joint approach and hold each party accountable for preventing and reducing homelessness and rough sleeping. Alongside homeless people themselves, our new Homelessness Reduction Board will play a key role in developing a new Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan for the Council during 2024, and thereafter to overseeing its delivery. That Homelessness Strategy will develop and extend the commitments in this Housing Strategy.

Residents approach the Council for a variety of reasons, and many may be at risk of homelessness. We will equip and support all Council services to give relevant information to people at risk of homelessness, and to be able to link them to specialist services if needed.

We will ensure that anyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness can contact the Council easily, and that they will receive the help they need quickly – whichever department they contact, and whether that help is best provided by the Council or by another organisation. Housing officers will sign post and refer residents on our own estates and housing to other services to support health, wellbeing, and financial resilience.

We will ensure that our early intervention work supports tenants to sustain their tenancies and prevent them from becoming homeless. We will work with housing associations and other partners to do the same. Our strategic approach to the private rented sector, underpinned by landlord licensing and partnership work, will help to prevent private renters becoming homeless. We will work strategically with landlords in the borough so that they can support us in preventing homelessness.

We will bring housing providers, statutory services and third sector organisations together to work on joint initiatives, such as safeguarding vulnerable tenants, because we know that working in partnership is crucial to ending homelessness in Haringey.

We will carry out targeted interventions on some of the root causes of homelessness.

The loss of a tenancy in the private sector is the biggest cause of homelessness. We will use landlord licensing to increase our engagement with private landlords and their tenants. We will use that opportunity to ensure that both parties understand tenancy rights, that landlords are able to consider options such as mediation or financial assistance rather than eviction, and that private renters can access support at an early stage to prevent homelessness.

Issues such as domestic violence, family and relationship breakdown, health problems and financial difficulties also put people at risk of homelessness. We will carry out targeted work to address the multiple causes and triggers of homelessness.

We will build on our strategic approach to supporting residents who face financial hardship and are at risk of finding themselves in unmanageable debt.

We will take the opportunities presented by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 to shape the provision of safe accommodation for victims and survivors of domestic abuse and other forms of gendered and sexual violence.

We will continue to build our relationships with partners across the borough – including homelessness, health, criminal justice, advice, and advocacy organisations - so that we work together toward the shared goal of preventing homelessness for vulnerable single adults.

We will continue to commission specialist support services for people affected by homelessness with our statutory partners in the NHS, criminal justice agencies, and neighbouring local authorities, to improve the holistic outcomes of people experiencing homelessness.



Structural inequality means that black, minority ethnic, and LGBTQI+ people are much more likely to become homeless. We will ensure that our policies, services, and the approach of our workforce responds to the specific assets, needs and barriers experienced by these residents. This is a part of our ongoing commitment to developing our practice and listening to our communities.

We will continue to support access to the free, independent advice that all people need to avoid homelessness. We will do this by commissioning a borough-wide information, advice and guidance service as well as providing funding for small specialist organisations working with specific communities who are at higher risk of homelessness.

## 4.2 Accommodation and support for people presenting as homeless or at risk of homelessness

Our second objective is to ensure that we have a range of good accommodation options for people who are at risk of becoming homeless or have already become homeless. These options include short-term emergency accommodation, longer-term Temporary Accommodation, and homes to provide settled accommodation to households who have just become homeless or are moving on from placements in Temporary Accommodation.

Most of the housing we use for homeless households, or those at risk of homelessness, is sourced from the private sector. Unprecedented rent increases in the private rented sector over the last two years and the collapse in the supply of homes to rent have put this approach under intense pressure.

We will ensure that all accommodation we provide for homeless households is decent quality and stable. All accommodation will be affordable for the household – but it will also need to be affordable for the Council.

Our first preference is to use homes for settled accommodation sourced by directly leasing housing from private landlords, or through the Haringey Community Benefit Society. The Haringey Community Benefit Society is a not-for-profit organisation whose aim is to provide good quality homes for Haringey people nominated by the Council in housing need. The Haringey Community Benefit Society currently has just under 300 homes to let to these households on long-term tenancies which will generally last seven years at rents set at or below local housing allowance levels.

We will also support homeless households to find a new settled home of their choosing through our 'Find Your Own' scheme.

Where we are unable to find a settled home for a homeless household, the Council will place them in Temporary Accommodation. Some of this accommodation will be in housing owned by the Council; most will be sourced from the private sector. Our preferred source of private sector Temporary Accommodation is housing that we have leased from private landlords: this allows us to give homeless households the security of knowing they will be settled in the same home for a significant period of time; and it gives us the assurance that Temporary Accommodation provides the best value and quality. Our strategic approach to the private rented sector, underpinned by landlord licensing, will give us new opportunities to engage with landlords to increase the supply of this kind of housing option.

We want to minimise the use of nightly-paid accommodation: it tends to be more expensive for the Council, and, although many of nightly-paid homes have been used by the Council for many years, it offers less sense of stability for residents and little scope for a planned approach. But we will continue to use nightly-paid accommodation where we have to, both for emergency accommodation and for longer-term Temporary Accommodation, because it gives us the flexibility we need to respond to housing emergencies. We will ensure that nightly-paid and emergency accommodation is of a decent standard through our partnership work with other councils in initiatives such as 'Setting the Standard'.

In emergency situations when people come to us with nowhere to stay, we aim to accommodate them in our lodges - which have private bathrooms and shared kitchens - while we carry out the required assessments and find more settled accommodation.

The collapsing availability and increasing costs of privately rented homes in London led us during 2023 to place more and more homeless households with children as a last resort in hotels and B&Bs.

We are committed to stopping the use of B&B accommodation altogether for families with children. We have consulted widely, including with central Government, on a detailed action plan that will achieve that commitment from 2024.

We will both commission and directly deliver new purpose-built Temporary Accommodation lodges in the borough, along with other safe and affordable supply. We will look for opportunities to convert underused Council-owned property into temporary and settled housing options.

We remain committed to finding suitable accommodation for homeless households that whenever possible is located in Haringey – and where that is not possible, that is as close as we can find to where they were previously living. But we recognise that while the supply of affordable privately-rented homes in London remains at a crisis level, we will inevitably have to place some households further away. During 2024 we will work with homeless households to co-produce and bring forward a new Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy to define the parameters and processes within which we will do that.

Our commitment to reducing and sustaining the reduction in the length of time it takes us to refurbish and relet vacant Council homes will play a key role in ending the use of hotels and B&Bs.

We are committed to providing the broad range of support that households living in Temporary Accommodation need to enable them to move to settled accommodation. This includes providing support around education and training, employment, and housing options. We will ensure that every household living in Temporary Accommodation has their own personalised plan to help them to understand and access longer-term housing options.

### 4.3. Supporting people who are, or who are at risk of, rough sleeping

Our third objective is to offer support to people who are, or who are at risk of becoming, street homeless. Our vision is for a borough in which nobody needs to sleep rough, because they have been provided with the right support, at the right time, to prevent this from happening. Any period of rough sleeping represents a failure to safeguard and protect vulnerable people. Our target – and the only acceptable target - is that nobody is street homeless.

Over the last four years, this is something that we have moved closer to achieving. Our partnership of housing, health, social care, and support services reduced the number of people on our streets by more than 75%. And in 2020/21 we were extremely close to achieving our aim: the unique circumstances created by Covid-19 led to a situation where we had access to the funding needed to offer everyone a route off the streets and to mobilise a broader range of partners. Critically, we had support from all levels of government to offer this help to everyone who needed it, regardless of immigration status, priority need or other criteria.

This demonstrates that with the political will, and the right resources, nobody needs to be street homeless.

When government funding was withdrawn in July 2021, we committed our own resources to sustain the accommodation and support we had provided to ensure that everyone who was offered emergency accommodation during the pandemic could be supported to find somewhere long-term to move on to. As a result, the number of individual people sleeping rough in Haringey during 2021-22 reduced by more than a third compared to 2020-21.

Our challenge now is sustaining this during a period of economic crisis. That crisis has led to a collapse in the availability of affordable privately rented accommodation and more limited emergency and short-term accommodation. The impact of economic conditions on our own budgets has been severe. The number of people contacted during our bi-monthly street counts rose dramatically from March 2022, from 6 in January to 26 in November 2022.

We are taking forward the learning from the pandemic. This confirms the benefits of focusing on service delivery rather than establishing eligibility; and it highlighted the challenges facing migrant communities and people with insecure immigration status. Learning from our Covid-19 homelessness response has strengthened our partnership working and highlighted the crucial role of health, social care, and public health partners at both strategic and operational levels within our work. The end of Everyone In, and continuing concerns about collusion with immigration enforcement teams create significant barriers to successful outcomes with this group of people. We are committed to utilising all available resources and lawful avenues to address the housing and health needs of this vulnerable group and would welcome further national initiatives that support this effort. As a borough, we are committed to enabling all those who are entitled to apply for EU Settled Status, but we remain concerned about the number of people met by our outreach team with pre-settled status or no recourse to public funds. Despite this, and through building on the strengths of our partnership, we are ambitious about achieving a sustained reduction in rough sleeping in Haringey. We will focus on at-risk groups such as people affected by immigration control, women, and LGBTQ+ people who have the most limited options and the poorest outcomes.

Our Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out in detail how we will achieve four core commitments:

- To ensure that rough sleeping is prevented where possible and that where it does occur, that it is rare
- To ensure that where rough sleeping does occur, that it is brief
- To ensure that rough sleeping is nonrecurrent
- To exhaust all options to secure routes off the street for people who face immigration restrictions

Key actions to achieve those commitments include:

- working with partners to minimise evictions that lead to street homelessness
- commissioning and delivering suitable supported accommodation

- co-locating within services that interact with those at highest risk of rough sleeping and will improve accessibility
- providing suitable 'off the streets' accommodation – including a 20-bed night shelter for those experiencing rough sleeping in the borough
- delivering in-person support services and outreach including through the Haringey Street Outreach Team and Mulberry Junction
- responding to and prioritising hidden homelessness
- improving multi-agency working
- increasing the supply of affordable supported accommodation available long term for those who need it to sustain recovery
- embedding new ways of working with people facing multiple disadvantage
- jointly commissioning ambitious and integrated health and care services focussed on equity of access and outcome

#### 4.4 Ensuring that we are making the best and fairest use of our housing stock

There are a number of triggers for all kinds of homelessness. But at its root is always the shortage of suitable housing: housing which is affordable, stable and which meets its residents' specific needs. An offer of social housing is the only realistic long-term, secure solution for many of our households in temporary accommodation. That is why we have an ambitious Council housing delivery programme and why we will use our planning powers to maximise the supply of affordable housing and in particular new homes for social rent.

We are committed to ensuring that social housing in the borough goes to those who need it the most; and that it is allocated quickly and effectively. We do this through our housing allocations policy.

We have begun a process of engagement and coproduction with people on the housing register, and during 2024 we will bring forward a new housing allocations policy to ensure that it continues to meet these overall objectives.

Our new allocations policy will build on our current policy. In order to ensure that we continue to make the best and fairest use of our housing stock, and with a 20% increase in Council housing projected by 2031, we will also ensure that the new allocations policy:

- Has a clear interface with the Council housing delivery programme, so that the programme takes a needs-based approach
- Continues to help and incentivise existing tenants who want to move to a smaller home – and in doing so allows their larger homes to be allocated to the larger households who need them
- Ensure that those who in the most severe housing need are able to access suitable housing quickly and efficiently
- Supports the Bespoke Homes Programme

## Glossary

**Affordable Housing** is a broad category covering all homes for rent or sale below market rates. This includes homes let at Social Rent, London Affordable Rent, and Intermediate Rent. It also includes homes for sale on a Shared Ownership basis or as Discounted Market Sale.

A **Community Benefit Society**, or **CBS**, is a business run for the benefit of the wider community, re-investing any profits in the community. It is governed by the terms of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and registered either with the Financial Conduct Authority or the Charity Commission. The **Haringey CBS** was created by the Council to provide affordable homes to people nominated by the Council because they are homeless or in housing need, with rent set at, or below, the local housing allowance level. The **Haringey CBS** is a private company, separate from the Council and with an independent board.

**First Homes** are new homes sold with a discount of at least 30 percent. They will be prioritised for first-time buyers, serving members and veterans of the Armed Forces, and key workers such as nurses, police, and teachers. The government has said that at least 25% of all homes delivered through section 106 agreements must be sold as First Homes.

**Houses in Multiple Occupation**, or **HMOs**, are buildings or flats in which two or more households share a basic amenity such as bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities. The Housing Act 2004 also classifies other categories of buildings as HMOs: buildings that have been converted into flats that are not all self-contained; and converted block of flats where the conversion does not meet building standards and fewer than two-thirds of the flats are owner-occupied. Landlords must get a licence from the Council for any HMO that is occupied by three or more separate households. Converting any building to a HMO for seven or more occupants requires planning permission, and in the east of Haringey planning permission is required for HMO conversions for three or more occupants.

**Intermediate Rent** is set above Social Rent but below the rents charged by private landlords. New intermediate rent homes funded by the GLA must since 2016 be let at London Living Rent which is set at a third of local household median incomes and adjusted for the number of bedrooms in each home. Tenants are expected to use the savings made against market rents towards a deposit for a Shared Ownership home. Like Shared Ownership homes, London Living Rent homes are not let through a local authority's housing register. The Council does not currently deliver any homes of this kind.

**The Local Plan.** All Local Planning Authorities must produce a Local Plan. The Local Plan is a document that sets out the vision and objectives for future development of the borough. It provides a positive strategy and policies to enable significant growth such as new homes, employment, leisure and cultural facilities and infrastructure, while protecting and enhancing heritage and natural environment. The Local Plan is used to decide planning applications for new buildings and changes of use in the borough. In London, the Local Plan must be in 'general conformity' with the London Plan, ensuring that the planning system for London operates in a joined-up way and reflects the overall strategy for how London can develop sustainably.

**London Affordable Rent** was introduced by the Mayor of London in 2016 for new affordable homes in London and is set at the Social Rent Cap increased every year by one percentage point more than inflation. It aimed to replace the delivery of Affordable Rent homes in London. The 2021 GLA funding round no longer refers to London Affordable Rent, so the tenure will slowly be phased out for new homes.

**Registered Provider.** Any organisation that provides social housing must be registered by the Regulator of Social Housing. This includes Councils, housing associations, and housing co-operatives: if they provide social housing and are registered with the Regulator, they are a registered provider. In this context, **social housing** means any low-cost rental accommodation and low-cost home ownership accommodation as defined by the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008. The Regulator of Social Housing sets consumer and economic standards for social housing providers and can take action if these are breached.

**Section 106** of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 gives Local Planning Authorities powers to make developers provide affordable housing as part of their developments. They are reached through a process of negotiation that takes into account the financial viability of each scheme. They are commonly known as s106 agreements or planning obligations.

**Social Rent** can be charged by Councils or housing associations. Since 2002, Social Rents have been calculated using a statutory formula that works out individual rents in relation to the relative value of the home, relative local earnings, and the number of bedrooms. There is a nationally set cap above which Social Rents can never go. The Council is committed to delivering its new Council homes at Social Rent. Social Rent is sometimes also known as Formula Rent, Target Rent, or Council Rent.

**Statutory homelessness** – Councils have a duty under the law to ensure that advice and assistance is available free of charge to households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. Within this, Councils have a statutory – or legal - duty to provide accommodation to some homeless people. Homelessness where a Council has this duty to provide accommodation is described as ‘statutory homelessness’. The statutory duty only exists when a Council is satisfied that a homeless person is eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and falls within a specified priority need group. Eligibility for assistance depends largely upon immigration status. Priority need applies when an applicant has dependent children or is in some way vulnerable.

**Supported Housing** is specially designed and designated housing where support is provided by trained staff to residents who have a range of different housing support needs. Unlike residential or nursing care, residents of supported housing will not require on-site personal or nursing care and will not always be in receipt of an adult social care package. Supported housing includes, for example, sheltered housing, which is specifically for older people with additional needs; hostels, which are for people experiencing homelessness; refuges, which are for people fleeing abuse and violence; supported living, which is for learning disabled adults and those with complex mental health needs; and foyers for homeless young people and care leavers.

**Temporary Accommodation** is a category of housing provided by a Council either while it investigates a homelessness application, or when it has confirmed that it has a duty to provide settled housing under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. That legal duty applies then somebody is homeless but has not made themselves homeless deliberately and is also in priority need because they have dependent children or are in some way vulnerable. Temporary accommodation can be far from ‘temporary’: many people live in it for many years until suitable settled accommodation becomes available. Temporary accommodation provided on an emergency basis while a homeless application is investigated is also called ‘interim’ or ‘emergency’ accommodation, and it might include hostel or hotel accommodation. Once the Council accepts a duty to provide housing temporary accommodation is usually self-contained.