

24th November 2025 Written Council Questions - Responses

Cllr da Costa to Cllr Chandwani

Question 1

In the current financial year, how many households have been issued with revised bills, retrospectively removing a single-occupant discount, without first giving residents notice of this intention and waiting 28 days for the resident to provide evidence of continued entitlement to this discount?

Response

Only one, which was due to officer error. We apologised to the affected resident, rectified the mistake, and training has been provided to the staff to prevent this from happening again.

Cllr Cawley-Harrison to Cllr Williams

Question 2

How many people have been placed in unlicensed Houses of Multiple Occupation (including those pending a license) by Haringey Council either directly or through the private housing team, since Haringey introduced its landlord licensing scheme?

Response

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are not used for placing families who are owed an accommodation duty. They are only ever used for single homeless adults.

There are distinct legal requirements in relation to temporary accommodation placements in the private rented sector (PRS) or where we are discharging housing duties into the PRS. These vary depending on the applicant's circumstances, as outlined in The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012.

We help many residents find housing in the private rented sector, even when we have no legal duty to do so, including rooms in HMOs. In these instances we work with residents to ensure we do all we can to prevent homelessness or rough sleeping.

Sometimes this will be in properties that are pending a licence. This is generally because the landlord has submitted an application that is awaiting approval. In such cases, the Council monitors compliance closely and takes enforcement action where necessary. The Council competes with local authorities across London and further afield for all available private rented sector properties. Decisions in relation to private rented sector tenancies are required within hours of the property becoming available.

Where we do not act quickly and dynamically, properties will be let to individuals and families being placed into the borough by another local authority.

We are committed to driving up standards across the private rented sector so that residents can live in homes that are decent, compliant, and fit for purpose.

Cllr Barnes to Cllr Williams

Question 3

In light of the National Audit Office's report that 98% of homes with external wall insulation installed under the government's ECO scheme require work to correct major issues that will cause problems such as damp and mould, can you confirm what steps is the council taking to identify and rectify this type of problem in its own housing stock, including the number of properties affected?

Response

The Council has not delivered any retrofit works under the ECO scheme. The Council's retrofit programme is delivered through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) Wave 2.2, grant funding of £1.7m and the Wave 3 Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund (SHF) under which we secured funding of £3.3m.

Based on completed PAS 2035 retrofit assessments, which identify the most appropriate solution for each home, we have identified:

- Works to be undertaken on 154 properties for Wave 2.2
403 potential properties with EPC D or lower initially identified for potential retrofit works under the Wave 3 programme.

All works are carried out by TrustMark-registered installers, certified to British Standards (PAS 2030 and PAS 2035) and to maintain quality and impartial oversight, we appoint independent Retrofit Designers and Coordinators to check designs, oversee installations, and verify that all work meets required standards.

Cllr Rossetti to Cllr Arkell

Question 4

The recent budget papers highlight an additional staffing budget pressure from the new hours of operation for Libraries. With this in mind, can you confirm the realised library savings compared to the estimated library savings from the recent changes to our Library services.

Response

The £675k savings from the library restructure and new opening hours will be delivered in full.

The temporary budget pressures we've seen this year are one-off costs from delayed implementation and redundancies — not a failure of the restructure itself.

The additional costs flagged in the budget papers stem from wider policy changes to staff terms and conditions, not from the library service. Those pressures have been recognised, and a modest £45k growth bid has already been built into the 26/27 MTFS.

The library savings are real, the restructure is delivering, and the financial plan is transparent about the challenges and how they're being managed.

Cllr Isilar-Gosling to Cllr Williams

Question 5

What estimate has the council made of the loss in Community Infrastructure Levy payments and affordable housing as a result of the Government's recent announcement to reduce obligations on developers?

Response

At the current time, it is not possible to accurately estimate the potential change in community infrastructure levy (CIL) receipts and affordable housing delivery resulting from the proposals. Future CIL receipts are difficult to forecast as build out of approved development schemes is unpredictable.

Furthermore, the exact level of emergency CIL relief to be granted to specific schemes will depend upon the level of affordable housing that they are providing. The impact of the proposals on affordable housing delivery is hard to estimate. The reduced targets could allow some schemes to get built that wouldn't otherwise be built or allow some schemes to get built quicker thereby boosting supply in the short-term. The proposals will shortly be subject to public consultation, and the Council will respond as part of this.

Cllr Emery to Cllr Chandwani

Question 6

Can the Cabinet member outline what percentage of recyclable material collected by the council is deemed unfit for recycling due to contamination, including what happens to this material?

Response

- In 24/25 around 15.4% of the waste the council collected as recycling was rejected. This includes either incorrect items/materials put into recycling containers in error (eg. non-recyclable plastics) or contaminated recycling (eg. when food waste or black bags are put in with dry recycling).
- Virtually all of this rejected/contaminated material is from our mixed dry recycling stream (i.e. the weekly collections of recycling wheelie bins or from the large recycling containers on estates - as distinct from our green or food waste collections for example).
- It is the Material Recovery Facility (or 'MRF', operated under a contract that North London Waste Authority holds) that screens out this unwanted material, leaving clean recycling separated into its different types for supply to the reprocessing industry.
- In general the non-recyclable material is processed into a fuel for energy recovery or industry.

Cllr Connor to Cllr Arkell

Question 7

Given the council's financial pressures can you provide an update on how much the council's budgeted spend is for the Borough of Culture, including providing assurance that this won't remove budget from other services or provisions?

Response

Despite the financial pressures facing councils everywhere, Haringey is proving that ambition and responsibility can go hand in hand. We have already secured £2.165 million in external funding from the Greater London Authority and Arts Council England, with the Council committing £820,000 over five years — largely from existing cultural budgets and staffing.

Through the Haringey Culture Collective, we are delivering on one of its main purposes and unlocking new streams of sponsorship, earned income, and Trusts and Foundations, aiming for a total budget of up to £7 million. This model ensures that every £1 invested by the Council is already generating £2.60 in return with projections showing that figure rising to at least £3 for every £1 as further fundraising succeeds. Our Borough of Culture status is more than a title. It is a lever for additional earmarked funds, such as the £500,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for Bruce Castle Museum, and a gateway to long-term partnerships that will benefit our communities well beyond 2028.

This investment for Haringey's future does not come at the expense of frontline services. Instead, it strengthens community cohesion, supports diversity, and contributes directly to our Haringey Vision 2035, a borough where we can all belong and thrive. Culture is not a drain. Instead, it is a multiplier, delivering pride, prosperity and resilience for our residents.

Cllr Collett to Cllr Williams

Question 8

We are concerned that so called 'affordable rents' are out of reach of the majority on the council waiting list and are not affordable to most people on Universal Credit or Pension credit.

Please inform us of the percentage of families and individuals on the Housing Waiting List who will be able to afford to pay the 'affordable rents' in new builds?

Response

London Affordable Rent is a social housing product which was introduced by the Mayor of London in 2016 and formed the basis of the GLA's funding package in its 2018-23 Building Council Homes for Londoners programme. It is significantly below local housing allowance. This means that London Affordable Rents are covered for those in receipt of housing benefit or the housing element of Universal Credit.

Cllr M Blake to Cllr Das Neves

Question 9

A recent Guardian article reported 1, 100 adult safeguarding emails have gone unanswered

Please can you outline the number of other complaints that relate to delays in adult service provision with safeguarding concerns

Response

We have received a small number of safeguarding-related complaints where families felt more timely action would have been helpful. We continue to review and strengthen our processes so residents can feel confident in the support we provide.

We have a new Management Team in place, and a number of new protocols have been established including strengthened governance, clearer lines of accountability and daily oversight of the inbox.

Adult Social Care have also commissioned an Independent Review of Safeguarding – to review structures, protocols, and practice, and to establish; how we can further strengthen the role of the multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Board and look at best practice from elsewhere.

Additional staff has been agreed to increase the capacity within the central safeguarding team and localities are also undertaking safeguarding enquiries for cases allocated to named social workers.

Cllr Paton to Cllr Gordon

Question 10

Community spaces are fundamental to the success of the Local Plan. Please can you tell us the number of current centres which are under threat of closure.

Response

The council have no current plans to close community spaces. The council have actually been proactive in this area. Cabinet adopted its Community Assets Social Value Policy in April 2025, to help ensure a workable and long term sustainable model to support our VCS sector, in recognition of the fantastic work these groups deliver in our community.

We are progressing well with our two selected pilot sites and engaging on a regular basis with Haringey Community Centres Network, in relation to this important work.

Our community Assets Social Value Policy is vital, given the challenges our communities and lease holders are facing and we are of course aware that some of these groups may no longer be able to operate their facilities. The council will support these groups and work in partnership, as shown by the recent joint press release between the council and Bridge Renewal Trust on Chestnuts Community Centre.

Importantly the policy provides a framework for other community groups to express an interest and for the council to advertise these opportunities, in a fair, open and transparent way; to ensure continued community access to these important facilities.

Question 11

Cllr Mary Mason to Cllr Williams

A recent Guardian article exposed the squalid and unfit for habitation living conditions at 105 Middleton Road, N22, a known HMO which the council's legal team prosecuted the landlord over three times during the 2010s. The Guardian article reported that a homeless resident was still placed in this property by the Council's housing team.

When will Haringey use the powers it has to close this HMO and claim back the tens of thousands of pounds it has paid through Housing Benefit and housing element of UC to this illegal landlord?

Response

An application for a Mandatory HMO licence for this property was made in November 2024. Following ongoing legal considerations (as this property has been going through probate), the Council is not yet legally permitted to grant or refuse a licence for this property.

Following reported concerns about poor standards in this HMO, our teams inspected the property. We made it clear that several improvements were needed and these were carried out. Officers have had reason to investigate again and an improvement notice was served in August 2025.

Should there be a failure to comply with what is required, we will not hesitate to take further enforcement action, including prosecution. Our priority is to raise standards in the private rented sector across Haringey to ensure tenants live in healthy, safe and well managed homes.