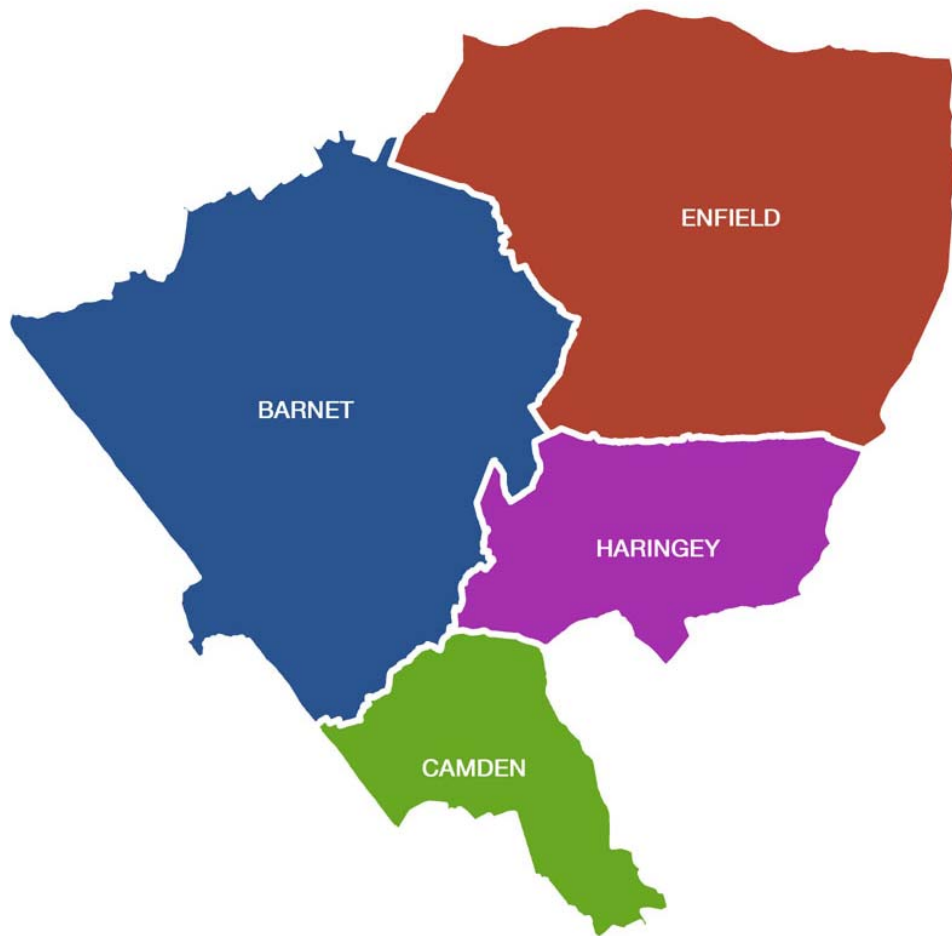


Joint Agreement on the Procurement of Temporary Accommodation in Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden



1 August 2011

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BACKGROUND

Temporary accommodation in North London

At the end of March 2011, Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden had a total of 8,208 homeless households living in temporary accommodation.

This represents 23% of the homeless households living in temporary accommodation in London and 17% of all homeless households living in temporary accommodation in England.

Although Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden have a total stock of 1,362 units of out-of-borough temporary accommodation, only 6% of their total stock of temporary accommodation is situated outside the area covered by the boroughs.

Based on a survey carried out by Haringey in 2010/11, it is estimated that the other 29 London boroughs may have a total of about 500 units of out-of-borough temporary accommodation in Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden.

Changes to the housing subsidy regime

In April 2010, a new housing subsidy regime was introduced, establishing a link between the amount that local authorities can claim towards the cost of temporary accommodation and the relevant Local Housing Allowance (LHA):

(90% of Local Housing Allowance) + £40 per week (Management Fee)

For larger homes, the amount of subsidy that can be claimed is 'capped' at £375 per week for Outer London and £500 per week for Central London.

Since April 2011, housing associations providing temporary accommodation have been subject to the same housing subsidy regime as local authorities.

As well as making it more difficult to procure alternative temporary accommodation, these changes have left local authorities and housing associations with no option but to hand back their most expensive properties.

From 1 April 2011 until 31 March 2013, the housing subsidy regime will continue to be based on the existing formula: 90% of LHA + £40 per week. For these two years, housing subsidy will be based on the LHA rates (calculated using the median of local rents) that applied in January 2011.

Imbalance between demand and supply

During the last twelve months, the demand for temporary accommodation in London has increased but, in common with the rest of the private rented sector, the supply of good quality temporary accommodation has reduced.

This imbalance is expected to grow, due to the increased levels of homelessness and the 'outward migration' from Central London resulting from the April 2011 changes to the Local Housing Allowance (see **Appendix A**).

DETAILS OF THE JOINT AGREEMENT

Scope of the Agreement

Initially, the Joint Agreement will cover all nightly-purchased temporary accommodation (self-contained annexes) that is situated in Haringey, Enfield, Barnet or Camden and is procured by Haringey, Enfield, Barnet or Camden Councils on or after 1 August 2011.

As well as agreeing a common set of housing standards, the four boroughs will adopt a common pricing structure and work collaboratively and proactively to maximise the supply of suitable temporary accommodation and ensure that it is let equitably and in accordance with the terms of the Joint Agreement.

Subject to the agreement of all four boroughs, the Joint Agreement may be extended, in future, to include temporary accommodation that is leased and situated in Haringey, Enfield, Barnet or Camden. Consideration may also be given to extending the Joint Agreement to include other local authorities.

Purpose of the Agreement

The purpose of the Joint Agreement is to create a framework within which Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden Councils can work more effectively with one another to increase housing supply and influence the price and standard of nightly-purchased temporary accommodation within the four boroughs.

From 1 August 2011, all nightly-purchased temporary accommodation that is newly procured by the four boroughs in Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden must meet the agreed standards and be let at the agreed nightly charge.

It is hoped that, by ensuring that all suitable nightly-purchased accommodation in Haringey, Barnet, Enfield and Camden is let on the day that it becomes available, the Agreement will encourage suppliers to increase their procurement activity and offer the four boroughs all of their properties in Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden, including those previously let to other London boroughs.

It is hoped, also, that the Joint Agreement will enable Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden to share good practice, maximise their joint market share of nightly-purchased temporary accommodation in North London, attract new housing suppliers and create the necessary market conditions to increase overall supply.

Where a housing supplier is willing to offer their accommodation exclusively to the four boroughs, the Joint Agreement will ensure that the host borough is always offered 'first refusal' and that, where a property is not needed by the host borough, it is offered in an agreed manner to the other three boroughs.

By sharing information about any temporary accommodation that falls below the agreed standards and is either rejected or needs to be handed back, Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden will make it increasingly difficult for housing suppliers to let sub standard accommodation to local authorities.

The existence of a well-publicised common pricing structure will ensure that other London boroughs do not pay housing suppliers more than Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden for nightly-purchased temporary accommodation situated within the four boroughs. This will complement the Pan London Agreement on Inter-Borough Accommodation Placements (see **Appendix B**).

HOW THE JOINT AGREEMENT WILL OPERATE

Common standards and pricing structure

All nightly-purchased temporary accommodation procured by Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden Councils must be let at a nightly charge that is in accordance with the common pricing structure (see **Appendix C**) and the property must be free of disrepair, clean, safe and habitable (see **Appendix D**).

Securing the support of housing suppliers

From 1 August 2011, all nightly-purchased temporary accommodation that is procured by the four boroughs in Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden must meet the agreed standards and be let at the agreed nightly charge.

Unless the accommodation has more than 3 bedrooms (or it is situated in the Central London BRMA and has more than one bedroom), the nightly charge for this type of accommodation will normally be equivalent to one seventh of the relevant Local Housing Allowance rate as at January 2011.

Although housing suppliers will be prevented from obtaining a higher nightly charge from other London boroughs – because the Pan London Agreement on Inter-Borough Accommodation Placements expressly states that boroughs must avoid offering a supplier more money than the host borough – housing suppliers are obviously free to let their properties to any London borough(s).

It is hoped, however, that housing suppliers with properties in Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden will find it easier and more convenient to deal exclusively with the four boroughs, rather than with a larger number of London boroughs.

Through the effective co-ordination and deployment of staffing resources across the four boroughs, Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden will be well placed to maximise their joint market share of nightly-purchased temporary accommodation in North London, attract new suppliers and create the necessary market conditions to increase supply.

Where one of the four boroughs has no option but to pay a nightly rate that is higher than the amount specified in the common pricing structure, the placement should last no more than 7 nights and urgent steps must be taken to move the household out of the over-priced accommodation as soon as practicable.

The common pricing structure is attached (**see Appendix C**).

Advertising nightly-purchased temporary accommodation

From 1 August 2011, housing suppliers that have suitable nightly-purchased temporary accommodation (self-contained annexes) available in Haringey, Enfield, Barnet or Camden will be able to advertise their vacancies to all four boroughs, simultaneously, by completing a pro forma and e-mailing it to:

- annexes@barnet.gov.uk
- annexes@camden.gov.uk
- annexes@enfield.gov.uk
- annexes@haringey.gov.uk

For each property advertised, the supplier must confirm that it meets the required standards and provide details of the property and the nightly charge.

The supplier must provide the full postal address of the property, the name of the borough in which it is situated, the number of bedrooms it has and the number of adults and children it can accommodate.

Booking nightly-purchased temporary accommodation

Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden have agreed that the host borough (the borough in which the accommodation is situated) should always be offered 'first refusal' on any property that becomes available.

They have also agreed that meeting the boroughs' immediate, day-to-day need for accommodation – and moving households out of over-priced annexes that are procured in an emergency, on or after 1 August 2011 – should be prioritised over their need to procure an alternative supply of accommodation into which they can decant households from their stock of more expensive accommodation.

It is proposed, therefore, that bookings are made in five distinct stages:

- **Stage 1** – the host borough will have 'first refusal' to book the accommodation to meet its housing obligations under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.
- **Stage 2** – all four boroughs will have the chance to book the accommodation for the purpose of decanting a household from an over-priced annex that was procured on or after 1 August 2011.
- **Stage 3** – the other three boroughs will have the chance to book the accommodation to meet their housing obligations under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.
- **Stage 4** – the host borough will have 'first refusal' to book the accommodation for a 'planned move'. This will normally involve transferring a household to more suitable (and/or less expensive) accommodation.
- **Stage 5** – the other three boroughs will have the chance to book the accommodation for a 'planned move'. This will normally involve transferring a household to more suitable (and/or less expensive) accommodation.

Lettings will be overseen by a co-ordinator whose responsibility it will be to ensure that, when they are not the host borough, each borough has fair and equitable access to vacancies in accordance with the lettings agreement.

To persuade housing suppliers to offer their nightly-purchased temporary accommodation exclusively to Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden, the four boroughs have agreed to work collaboratively to ensure that any property that is advertised by 10.00am is let by the end of the same working day.

Responsibility for checking the standard of the accommodation will, of course, rest with the borough that makes the booking.

Rejecting and handing back sub standard accommodation

The onus is on the housing suppliers to ensure that all nightly-purchased temporary accommodation they supply meets the minimum standards set by Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden (see **Appendix D**).

Unfortunately, there will be occasions when the temporary accommodation that is supplied is found to be below the minimum standards, either at the time it is offered for letting or when it is occupied.

If the accommodation does not meet the required standards and the housing supplier is unwilling or unable to rectify the situation very quickly, the property will be rejected and, if it is already occupied, it will be handed back.

Where a property is rejected and/or handed back because it is considered to be sub standard, the borough making the decision will send a short report (including photographs) to the other three boroughs, informing them of the full address of the property, the name of the housing supplier, and the reasons why the property has been assessed as being sub standard.

If a housing supplier fails to ensure that the nightly-purchased temporary accommodation they advertise meets the minimum standards, the four councils will review the performance of that supplier and decide whether or not to stop using them or introduce a system of pre-inspection.

Details of all sub standard properties that are rejected and/or handed back will be held centrally and will be shared with other London boroughs, as appropriate, in order to prevent them from unwittingly taking sub standard and/or unsafe accommodation in Haringey, Enfield, Barnet or Camden.

OTHER BENEFITS OF THE JOINT AGREEMENT

The adoption of common standards and a common pricing structure – together with the practice of offering the host borough ‘first refusal’ of the accommodation that becomes available – will support the four boroughs’ efforts to reduce the amount of out-of-borough temporary accommodation in North London.

By exchanging their out-of-borough accommodation for the in-borough stock of nightly-purchased temporary accommodation held by the other three boroughs, Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden will be able to reduce the amount of nightly-purchased temporary accommodation that is situated out-of-borough.

The potential for such exchanges will be highlighted by a GIS ‘mapping’ exercise (showing the location of all nightly-purchased temporary accommodation in Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden) that will be done in September 2011.

Improved information sharing and more collaborative working will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the procurement and lettings activities in relation to Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden Councils’ use of nightly-purchased temporary accommodation in the four boroughs.

It is hoped that, in time, it may lead to the development of shared services.

APPENDIX A

April 2011 Changes to the Local Housing Allowance

In April 2011, changes were made to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) paid to private tenants whose benefit entitlement started on or after 1 April 2011.

For all new claims (and most existing claims, following a period of transitional protection), the Local Housing Allowance is based on the 30th percentile – rather than on the median – of rents in the local market area. The weekly LHA is also ‘capped’ at a rate that is based on the size of property:

- £250 per week for a 1-bedroom home
- £290 per week for a 2-bedroom home
- £340 per week for a 3-bedroom home
- £400 per week for a 4-bedroom home (or larger)

‘Outward migration’ from Central London

As the rents charged for private rented accommodation in Central London (including Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham and Tower Hamlets) are substantially higher than the Local Housing Allowance ‘caps’, low income households are likely to migrate from Central London to Outer London boroughs – including Haringey, Enfield and Barnet – where private rented accommodation is not as expensive.

The Local Housing Allowance changes will increase the demand for private rented accommodation in Haringey, Enfield and Barnet. This will inflate rents, exacerbate the shortage of affordable housing and lead to increased use of poorly managed, unsafe and sub standard accommodation, including the unauthorised conversion of large homes to smaller units.

The pace and extent of this ‘outward migration’ is expected to increase as Central London boroughs procure an increasing proportion of their temporary accommodation in the Outer London boroughs – including Haringey, Enfield and Barnet – where housing costs are lower. This will lead to increased concentrations of temporary accommodation and private sector placements.

Although these changes will have an impact on the levels of deprivation, health inequality, child poverty, environmental crime and overcrowding, it is their impact on vulnerable households’ demand for social care, health care and housing-related support that is of the greatest concern.

Any significant increase in the number of homeless households placed (by other boroughs) in temporary accommodation in Haringey, Enfield and Barnet will disrupt their schooling, healthcare and support, and place considerable pressure on local social care, mental health and support services. This will, in turn, give rise to concerns about the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children.

APPENDIX B



Pan London Agreement on Inter-Borough Accommodation Placements

Date of agreement: 8th March 2011
Date agreement starts: 1st April 2011

Excerpts from the Pan London Agreement that are relevant to the Joint Agreement on the procurement of TA in the boroughs of Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden.

Aims of the agreement

To ensure that where placing boroughs or their agents procure properties in receiving boroughs they do not offer the landlord or agent for the property more than the receiving borough would. This is to prevent boroughs acting in competition with each other, a situation which could lead to price escalation.

To assist receiving boroughs, in which households previously living in other local authorities are housed in accommodation placements. These boroughs are to be informed of every placement made in their area.

To ensure that information is shared between the placing and receiving boroughs each time an accommodation placement is made.

Principles for agreement

This agreement is based on four core principles which boroughs agree will shape and inform the way they undertake and manage cross borough accommodation placements. These core principles are:

- **Not to 'out-bid'**: All boroughs agree not to offer a landlord or supplier more than the host borough offers for a property in its area.
- **Presumption to inform**: All boroughs placing a household in another borough will inform the host borough of the placement.
- **Safeguard vulnerable households**: Boroughs will avoid placing the most vulnerable households in other boroughs.
- **Host borough – first choice**: RSLs procuring HALS and HALD will offer these properties to the host borough in the first instance.

Not to 'out-bid'

Boroughs agree to avoid offering any landlord or agent more than a receiving borough would offer for the same property procured for the same purpose.

BABIE rates (which cover the procurement of Bed & Breakfast Accommodation) are collectively agreed by boroughs. This agreement does not affect the existing arrangements over BABIE rates.

Presumption to inform

All cross-borough placements of households in temporary accommodation should be tracked using the NOTIFY system. This arrangement will continue.

Where a placing borough is making a preventative placement in rented housing in another borough, the placing borough will inform the receiving borough of the placement.

Safeguard vulnerable families

Boroughs agree to avoid making accommodation placements of these families in other boroughs.

A protocol already exists between boroughs to ensure that any movement of such children across borough boundaries in temporary accommodation is tracked using the NOTIFY system. Movement of such children in preventative placements is currently not tracked using the NOTIFY system. This agreement does not affect the existing child protection protocols.



APPENDIX C – COMMON PRICING STRUCTURE

Common pricing structure for nightly-purchased Temporary Accommodation (self-contained annexes) procured within the boroughs of Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden

KEY OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the common pricing structure is to enable local authorities to procure good quality nightly-purchased accommodation in Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden, from housing suppliers, at agreed nightly rates from 1 August 2011 until 31 March 2013.

The proposed pricing structure will increase transparency, prevent local authorities from out-bidding one another and enable housing suppliers to make informed decisions about future supply. It will also support the Pan London Agreement on Inter Borough Accommodation Placements (see **Appendix B**).

Under this Agreement, the nightly rate paid for one bedroom homes and small family homes will normally be equivalent to one seventh of the weekly LHA rate payable for that size of home in the relevant Broad Rental Market Area.

Where the LHA rate is higher than the amount that can be claimed in subsidy, a lower nightly rate may be paid. A lower nightly rate (equivalent to 90% of the one-bedroom rate) will be paid for studio accommodation.

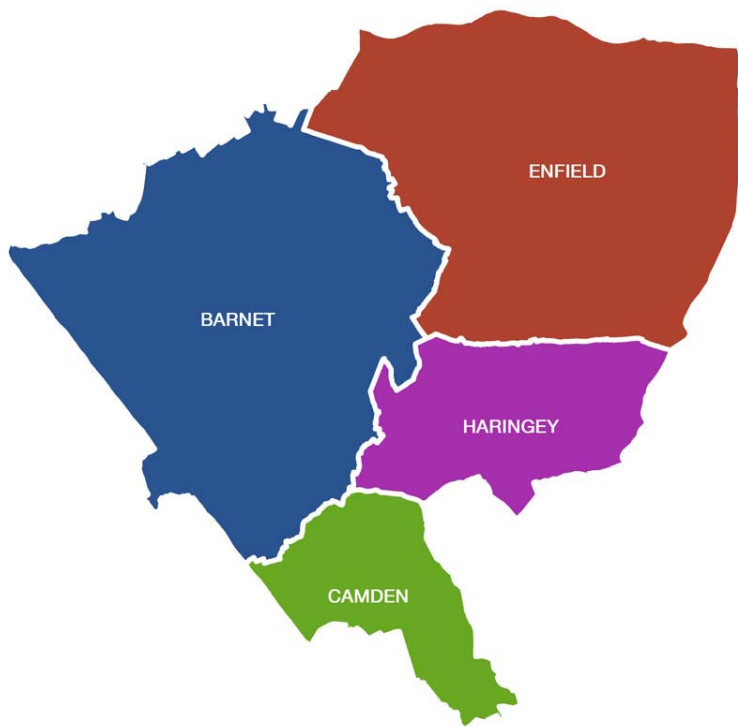
No additional payment will be made for any utilities (such as gas, electricity and water) that are paid by the housing supplier.

Details of the proposed nightly rates (for each Broad Rental Market Area) are set out on Pages 13 – 16.

DEFINITION OF THE LHA RATE

For the purpose of this Agreement, the LHA rate will be the January 2011 LHA rates used to calculate the housing subsidy that local authorities can claim towards the cost of providing homeless households with temporary accommodation in 2011/12 and 2012/13.

To avoid any confusion, we will call this the **TA Subsidy LHA Rate**.



Broad Rental Market Areas

BRMA	Camden	Barnet	Haringey	Enfield
Central London	✓			
Inner North London	✓	✓	✓	
Outer North London		✓	✓	✓
North West London		✓		

CENTRAL LONDON BRMA Covering part of Camden

TA Subsidy LHA Rates in this BRMA are: £370 for a 1-bed; £548.10 for a 2-bed; £775 for a 3-bed; £1150 for a 4-bed; £2000 for a 5-bed.

Homes that will be procured at the published TA Subsidy LHA Rate

As the housing subsidy regime places a £500 per week 'cap' on the amount that can be claimed in subsidy (including the £40 Management Fee) – and the rate for a two-bedroom home is £548.10 per week – it is proposed that only one-bedroom homes are procured at the published TA Subsidy LHA Rate:

Size of home	Weekly LHA	Nightly Equivalent	90% LHA plus £40	Surplus for each unit
1 bedroom	£370	£52.86	£373	£2.98 per week

Homes that will be procured at less than the published TA Subsidy LHA Rate

It is proposed that studios are procured at 90% of the £370 one-bedroom rate:

Size of home	90% of Weekly LHA	90% of Nightly LHA	90% LHA plus £40	Surplus for each unit
Studio	£333	£47.57	£373	£40 per week

INNER NORTH LONDON BRMA
Covering parts of Camden, Barnet and Haringey

TA Subsidy LHA Rates in this BRMA are: £260 for a 1-bed; £340 for a 2-bed; £450 for a 3-bed; £600 for a 4-bed; £700 for a 5-bed.

Homes that will be procured at the published TA Subsidy LHA Rate

As the housing subsidy regime places a £500 per week ‘cap’ on the amount that can be claimed in subsidy (including the £40 Management Fee) – and the rate for a four-bedroom home is £600 per week – it is proposed that only homes with one, two or three bedrooms are procured at the published TA Subsidy LHA Rate:

Size of home	Weekly LHA	Nightly Equivalent	90% LHA plus £40	Surplus / (deficit) for each unit
1 bedroom	£260	£37.15	£274	£13.95 per week
2 bedrooms	£340	£48.57	£346	£ 6.01 per week
3 bedrooms	£450	£64.29	£445	(£5.03 per week)

Homes that will be procured at less than the published TA Subsidy LHA Rate

It is proposed that studios are procured at 90% of the £260 one-bedroom rate:

Size of home	90% of Weekly LHA	Nightly Equivalent	90% LHA plus £40	Surplus for each unit
Studio	£234	£33.43	£274	£39.99 per week

OUTER NORTH LONDON BRMA
Covering parts of Barnet and Haringey, and all of Enfield

TA Subsidy LHA Rates in this BRMA are: £178.85 for a 1-bed; £231 for a 2-bed; £300 for a 3-bed; £375 for a 4-bed; £529 for a 5-bed.

Homes that will be procured at the published TA Subsidy LHA Rate

As the housing subsidy regime places a £375 per week ‘cap’ on the amount that can be claimed in subsidy (including the £40 Management Fee) – and the rate for a four-bedroom home is £375 per week – it is proposed that only homes with one, two or three bedrooms are procured at the published TA Subsidy LHA Rate:

Size of home	Weekly LHA	Nightly Equivalent	90% LHA plus £40	Surplus for each unit
1 bedroom	£178.85	£25.55	£200.97	£22.12 per week
2 bedrooms	£231.00	£33.00	£247.90	£16.90 per week
3 bedrooms	£300.00	£42.86	£310.00	£9.98 per week

Homes that will be procured at less than the published TA Subsidy LHA Rate

It is proposed that studios are procured at 90% of the £178.85 one-bedroom rate:

Size of home	90% of Weekly LHA	Nightly Equivalent	90% LHA plus £40	Surplus for each unit
Studio	£160.97	£23.00	£200.97	£39.97 per week

Having regard to the £375 per week ‘cap’ on the amount that can be claimed in subsidy – and taking into account the £400 per week LHA ‘cap’ that is applied to private rented accommodation with 4 or more bedrooms – it is proposed that larger family homes in this BRMA are procured at the following rates:

Size of home	Weekly Charge	Nightly Charge	Max Subsidy Income	Surplus / (deficit) for each unit
4 bedrooms	£360.01	£51.43	£375.00	£14.99 per week
5 bedrooms	£410.06	£58.58	£375.00	(£35.06 per week)
6 bedrooms	£460.11	£65.73	£375.00	(£85.11 per week)

Given the large differential between the weekly charge and the maximum weekly subsidy that can be claimed, it is envisaged that homes with 5 or 6 bedrooms will only be procured in this BRMA on a short-term basis, pending the household’s move to alternative, less expensive temporary accommodation.

NORTH WEST LONDON BRMA Covering part of Barnet

TA Subsidy LHA Rates in this BRMA are: £173.08 for a 1-bed; £219.23 for a 2-bed; £288.46 for a 3-bed; £357.69 for a 4-bed; £461.54 for a 5-bed.

Homes that will be procured at the published TA Subsidy LHA Rate

As the housing subsidy regime places a £375 per week 'cap' on the amount that can be claimed in subsidy (including the £40 Management Fee) – and the rate for a four-bedroom home is £357.69 per week – it is proposed that homes with up to four bedrooms are procured at the published TA Subsidy LHA Rate:

Size of home	Weekly LHA	Nightly Equivalent	90% LHA plus £40	Surplus for each unit
1 bedroom	£173.08	£24.73	£195.77	£22.66 per week
2 bedrooms	£219.23	£31.32	£237.31	£18.07 per week
3 bedrooms	£288.46	£41.21	£299.61	£11.14 per week
4 bedrooms	£357.69	£51.10	£361.92	£ 4.22 per week

Homes that will be procured at less than the published TA Subsidy LHA Rate

It is proposed that studios are procured at 90% of the £173.08 one-bedroom rate:

Size of home	90% of Weekly LHA	Nightly Equivalent	90% LHA plus £40	Surplus for each unit
Studio	£155.77	£22.26	£195.77	£39.95 per week

Having regard to the £375 per week 'cap' on the amount that can be claimed in subsidy – and taking into account the £400 per week LHA 'cap' that is applied to private rented accommodation with 4 or more bedrooms – it is proposed that larger family homes in this BRMA are procured at the following rates:

Size of home	Weekly Charge	Nightly Charge	Max Subsidy Income	Deficit for each unit
5 bedrooms	£390.04	£55.72	£375.00	(£15.04 per week)
6 bedrooms	£440.02	£62.86	£375.00	(£65.02 per week)

Given the large differential between the weekly charge and the maximum weekly subsidy that can be claimed, it is envisaged that homes with 5 or 6 bedrooms will only be procured in this BRMA on a short-term basis, pending the household's move to alternative, less expensive temporary accommodation.



APPENDIX D – MINIMUM STANDARDS

Minimum standards for nightly-purchased Temporary Accommodation (self-contained annexes) procured within the boroughs of Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden

This document sets out the minimum standards required by the London boroughs of Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden for nightly-purchased accommodation. Any repairs or improvements must be completed before the accommodation is let.

1. SUMMARY OF CONDITION

- 1.1 The property must be safe and habitable, wind and weather tight, free from disrepair and have no category one hazards under the Housing, Health and Safety Rating System.
- 1.2 All facilities (including plumbing, drainage, ventilation, heating and lighting) must be in full working order, and all decorations, floor coverings, fixtures and fittings must be clean and hygienic and free from damage.

2. LOCATION OF THE PROPERTY

- 2.1 The property must be situated within Haringey, Enfield, Barnet or Camden.

3. TYPE OF PROPERTY

- 3.1 The property must be freehold or leasehold and must be self contained.
- 3.2 In the case of new build and converted flats, Planning and Building Control Consents must be obtained and adhered to.
- 3.3 Any conversions of self contained accommodation carried out before the Building Regulations 1991 is a S259 HMO and must conform to the LACORS Guidance on Housing Fire Safety.
- 3.4 Any properties that have been structurally altered (such as the removal of a chimney breast removed or the creation of a through-lounge) must have been approved as being completed in accordance with the Building Regulations.
- 3.5 Properties where the entrance is above the 3rd floor must have a lift.
- 3.6 All properties must have their own metered supply of water, gas (if any) and electricity which must be accessible to the tenant without them needing to enter another unit of accommodation.
- 3.7 All properties must be registered with Council Tax

- 3.8 The room layout must be suitable for safe and comfortable occupation. We will not accept any properties that have rooms (such as a bedroom or lounge) that are accessed via the kitchen. No WC should open directly into a kitchen.

4. ACCESS TO THE PROPERTY

- 4.1 Properties must be accessed directly off the street. We do not accept any properties that are accessed via external metal staircases, across flat roofs or through a rear or side access via an unlit alley or backway.
- 4.2 Any property that is adjacent to a social venue will not be considered.

5. STRUCTURE OF THE PROPERTY

- 5.1 The structure of the property must be sound and in good repair, with no evidence of ongoing structural movement, damp or rot.
- 5.2 Brickwork: Crumbling, cracked or loose brickwork must be repaired.
- 5.3 Pointing: Defective pointing must be repaired.
- 5.4 Dampness: Damp-proof works must be carried out by a company registered with a trade association – BWPDA (British Wood Preserving Damp proofing Association) or the BCDA (British Chemical Dampcourse Association). Any work that is undertaken must be guaranteed, and both injection and plastering must be conducted by the same company.
- 5.5 Roofs: Roofs must be fully watertight and any missing or loose tiles must be replaced. Flashing and flat roofs must be free from leakage. Roofs must be stable; if old slate tiles are replaced with modern heavier tiles, the roof must be checked for bowing. All new type replacement roofs must have Building Regulations approval.
- 5.6 Balconies: In order to be secure, the perimeter of the balcony must be at least 1000mm in height and any gaps in the perimeter must be less than 100mm. Balcony safety may be considered as a Category One hazard. Balconies must have adequate drainage, preventing any water ingress to the accommodation.

6. EXTERIOR OF THE PROPERTY

- 6.1 Waste Water Goods: Gulleys, gutters, access chambers, drains and waste water pipework must be clear, free of leaks and in good working order. All guttering and downpipes must be secure.
- 6.2 Exterior decorations: All paintwork must be in good condition and free of cracking and flaking.
- 6.3 Gardens: Gardens must have a secure perimeter and should be cleared of rubbish and overgrowth. All ponds must be drained and filled in.

- 6.4 Gardens: Any changes of level within gardens must be assessed as a hazard for trips and falls, and action taken to eliminate any Category One hazard.
- 6.5 Gardens: All gardens must be for the exclusive use of the occupier, unless the dwelling is within a purpose built estate with use of communal gardens.
- 6.6 Gardens: All sheds, ancillary buildings and garages provided with the accommodation must be structurally sound and cleared of all contents. Greenhouses must be removed.
- 6.7 Drying facilities: A washing line or tidy spin must be supplied.
- 6.8 Boundaries: All boundary walls, fences and gates must be in good repair.
- 6.9 External gates: Any external side gates must be fitted with locks.
- 6.10 Rubbish: All rubbish must be disposed of and the occupier provided with bins. This is a key management issue for S257 HMO's.

7. INTERIOR OF THE PROPERTY

- 7.1 Internal Doors: All internal doors must be in sound condition and must open and close freely. No cylinder or mortice locks must be fitted, and all internal keys must be removed. Bathroom(s) and toilet(s) to be fitted with appropriate locks. Any glazed door must have toughened glass.
- 7.2 Stairs: Gaps between spindles must not exceed 100mm and any missing risers must be replaced. Horizontal slat style banisters on landings must be boarded. A two-way switch must be provided in stairwell. This is a key area for assessment for Category One hazard taking into account the incline, location, fall hazard and surrounding area in case of fall.
- 7.3 Walls and ceilings: The plaster on the walls and ceilings must be sound and not show any movement when examined.
- 7.4 Floors: All floors must be level, sound and free from rot. Uneven floorboards must have hardboard fitted.
- 7.5 Flooring: All flooring must be properly fitted, clean and free from damage or excessive wear. Reception rooms and bedrooms must be supplied with carpets and fitted with underlay. Kitchens and bathrooms must be supplied with a hygienic washable surface such as tiles or sheet vinyl.
- 7.6 Condensation: The property must be free from damp, mould, condensation and peeling paper, paint etc. Adequate ventilation and heating is essential. Condensation should be dealt with by additional ventilation, such as dehumidifier or mechanical extractor.

- 7.7 Decorations: Surfaces must be painted or papered. Paint must be clean and free from obvious marking, peeling, dirt etc. Wallpaper must be in good condition and free from defects.
- 7.8 Woodwork: Woodwork must be free from rot and painted to a reasonable standard with gloss paint.
- 7.9 Open fireplaces: Fireplaces must be boarded and an air vent provided.

8. SERVICES

- 8.1 Electrical Installation: This must comply with the requirements of the current edition of the "Requirements for Electrical Installations (BS7671: 1992)." To show this, a valid NICEIC Electrical Safety Certificate must be provided
- 8.2 Gas installation(s): These must comply with the requirements of the "Gas & Safety (Installations & Use) Regulations 1998". A valid Gas Landlord Safety certificate (CP12) must be provided by a Gas Safe registered engineer.
- 8.3 Electric key / Gas card meters: If prepayment meters are installed in the property, it must have (at the time it is let) £10 credit in summer and £15 credit in winter. Keys and cards must be left at the property.
- 8.4 Energy efficiency: Energy Performance Certificates must be provided.
- 8.5 Gas central heating (preferred): Boilers should be less than 10 years old. Boilers in bedrooms must be fitted with a Carbon Monoxide Detector. Heating must operate independently from the hot water system and must have a timer / thermostat. Any new boilers newly fitted must be condensing boilers. All exposed low level pipe work should be boxed in. Radiators and pipework to be securely fixed to walls. Valves and thermostats to be in full working order. Boiler and timer controls to be freely accessible to the tenant. Radiators to be adequately sized to heat unit of accommodation.
- 8.6 Electric Economy Seven (night storage) heating: accepted in purpose built blocks only. If this type of system is supplied, it must be wired into a spur and operate on the Economy 7 night-time electric tariff.
- 8.7 Under Floor Heating: This is not ideal, as it can prove expensive to run. It may be acceptable if the floor is heated by gas.
- 8.8 Thermal Insulation: Lofts and pipework must be insulated to current standards. All hot water tanks should be foam lagged or have a good quality cylinder jacket, which has been properly fitted. All water pipes that are considered vulnerable to damage by frost must be adequately protected with lagging. All doors, windows, letterbox etc, to be draught proofed.
- 8.9 Energy Efficiency (SAP) Rating (EPC): All properties must meet a minimum SAP rating of 56.

8.10 Electric wiring: The fuse box must be housed in a cupboard (with a childproof latch on the door to prevent it being accessed by children) and the cables under the meter must be covered. All surface mounted wiring must be enclosed in suitable plastic conduit. The fuse box / consumer unit must be located in place that is accessible to the tenant.

8.11 Lighting: Ideally, basic pendant light fittings should be used, with strip lighting or other appropriate light fittings being used in the kitchen and bathroom. All light fittings must be fitted with working light bulbs and/or strip lights that are of the correct voltage

8.12 Minimum Number of Electrical Sockets:

Living room: Three double sockets minimum

Double bedroom: Three double sockets

Single bedroom: Two single socket

Kitchen: Four sockets (Two double at worktop height, one for fridge and one for washing machine)

Boiler: to be on spur

Landing: One socket

No sockets must be fitted directly over the cooker or hob

8.13 Energy Performance Certificate: All properties must be a valid Energy Performance Certificate.

9. HOME SECURITY

9.1 External doors: External doors must be hardwood or UPVC and must not be fully glazed, (top half glazing is acceptable). Doors must be in sound condition, in good working order and with adequate handles, locks and bolts. All doors should be fitted with Yale type lock and 5 lever mortice lock, with internal thumb lock release. A bell and letter box must be fitted. All external doors (and entrance doors for flats) must be correctly numbered / identified.

9.2 Windows: All windows must be sound, in working order (sash cords must be working, for example), with adequate levers, handles, locks and bolts.

9.3 Keys: Two full sets of keys must be provided to external door locks, and at least 1 set of keys must be provided for all other locks. All keys must be labelled.

10. FIRE SAFETY

10.1 Dwelling entrance doors to flats: These doors MUST be half hour fire doors to meet Building Standards 476 Part 22. The entrance door must be factory made with glazing in a small area only (a vision panel, for example) and glazing must be in wire cast glass.

- 10.1 Kitchen doors: These doors must be a half hour ,self-closing fire resistant internal door that meets Building Standards 476 Part 22.
- ❖ For three storey properties, all kitchens must be provided with a half fire resistant internal door with an approved self-closer and housed within an acceptable door frame with adequate intumescent strip and cold smoke seal.
- 10.2 Glazed doors, and panels above fire doors: These must be fitted with 6mm wire cast glass. Perco door closers **MUST** be fitted on fire doors.
- 10.3 Smoke alarms: Grade D LD3 electrical operated smoke alarms with battery back up must be fitted at ground floor level. In certain cases we may require additional heat detectors in kitchen (inspecting officers will advise).
- ❖ For single storey property, mains powered smoke alarms (with battery back up) must be provided.
 - ❖ For two storey properties, two mains powered and interlinked smoke alarms (with battery back up) must be provided and fixed to the ceilings of (a) the ground floor hallway and (b) the first floor landing.
 - ❖ For properties over two storeys, a proportionate number of mains powered and linked smoke alarms (with battery back up) must be provided, at each building level including cellar.
- 10.4 Fire blanket: A fire blanket must be fitted in the kitchen.
- 10.5 Fire escapes: All fire escapes must be secure and in a sound and safe state of repair. Any fire escapes must be locked only in accordance with Building Control Regulations and Fire Officer and HHSRS guidance / assessment.

11. WINDOWS AND GLAZING

- 11.1 All glazing, which is under 800mm/ 2.8 feet from the floor (greater than 25cm in any direction) must be glazed with toughened glass.
- 11.2 All first floor windows must be fitted with opening restrictors. Window must not open more than 100mm on first opening.
- 11.3 Windows in bathrooms and toilets must be glazed with obscure glass.
- 11.4 New or replaced windows installed after April 2002 should be energy saving, sealed double-glazing or equivalent sash style, with trickle vents to all windows, and comply with the Building Regulations, notwithstanding any Conservation Area restrictions.

12. VENTILATION

- 12.1 The general requirements for ventilation is that the main habitable rooms (living rooms and bedrooms) should have the equivalent of at least one twentieth of the floor area available as windows that can open. This also applies to kitchens, bathrooms and WC cubicles if they rely on natural ventilation. Depending on the construction, permanent vents may need to be installed.
- 12.2 If a kitchen, bathroom or WC is an internal room, it should have mechanical extract ventilation capable of three air changes per hour. A light switch should activate the fan, which should have a twenty minute overrun when the light is switched off.

13. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- 13.1 Cooker: A gas hob is preferred. All rings must be fully operational. If the cooker is free standing, it must be chained to wall. The oven must be clean and have shelves and a grill pan. Hobs and cookers must have a minimum of 300mm of worktop on either side of cooker. If a free standing cooker is below the worktops, metal end plates must be fitted to the edge of the worktop. Cookers must not be located too close to doors, near curtained windows, or in an area where there are draughts. .
- 13.2 Sinks, Basins & Bath: The tiling of splashbacks around the sink, wash hand basin, bath and all kitchen work surfaces must be at least 300mm (two tiles) in height. Shower cubicles or shower attachment areas must be tiled to a height of 1.8m. Sinks, baths and worktops must be sealed around edges with silicone sealant. Waste pipes must be sealed so as not to allow ingress of vermin. Showers in baths must be capped or a solid waterproof screen fitted. Plugs must be provided to all sinks, baths and wash hand basins.
- 13.3 Kitchen units: Should be clean, modern, damage free and sound and secure. There must be adequate wall and base units for the size of the property (persons per household); there should be at least one drawer pack or two drawers per unit. Fitted worktops must cover all low floor units and must be hygienic and free from damage.
- 13.4 Washing machine: All properties should be plumbed for provision of washing machine.
- 13.5 Mice and vermin: Any infestation must be treated and eradicated. Any gaps or holes that allow the ingress of vermin must be filled, and all ventilation points covered with secure grills.

14. FURNITURE

- 14.1 All furniture must comply with the Furniture and Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1993.
- 14.2 All mattresses should be new.
- 14.3 All furniture must be clean, in good repair and full working order
- 14.4 All windows must be fitted with curtain rails.
- 14.5 All windows should be fitted with net and heavy curtains. All curtains within the same room should be matching.

15. GRADING OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION

- 15.1 All nightly-purchased temporary accommodation (self-contained annexes) used by Haringey, Enfield, Barnet and Camden will be graded according to the following definitions:

EXCELLENT: New build or new conversion / full refurbishment, “as new” standard of repair. All decorations, fixtures and fittings new. Meets Decent Homes standard. (Category A licence)

GOOD: Property in excellent standard of repair, all decorations, fixtures and fittings clean and modern, only minor imperfections. Meets Decent Homes standard. (Category A licence)

FAIR: Property in good or excellent standard of repair, all decorations, fixtures and fittings clean with only minor imperfections. May not meet Decent Homes Standard e.g. not double glazed. (Category B licence)

- 15.2 Properties assessed as meeting Decent Homes standard will:

- Be safe with no major areas of disrepair
- Have modern fitted kitchens and bathrooms
- Will be warm and energy efficient including central heating, double glazing and thermal insulation
- Be secure

- 15.3 Properties which do not meet Fair standard will not be procured. Existing properties which do not meet this standard will be handed back.