

# Summary Hillingdon Housing Strategy 2021/22 to 2025/26



**HILLINGDON**  
LONDON

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## Foreword

The timing of this strategy comes as we begin to regain some normality following the Covid-19 epidemic. Some of the impacts are still to be felt and some are still unknown. With the ban on evictions lifted, we expect the number of homelessness applications to increase. The construction industry is back at work and new homes are being completed following an extremely quiet year in 2020. The virus has changed the way that we work and has reshaped housing markets. It remains to be seen the extent to which these are permanent or temporary changes. Covid-19 has also exposed inequalities and highlighted the importance of space inside and outside our homes. Existing trends towards greater use of technology have taken a leap forward and are continuing to dramatically change how we communicate and process information. This has been evident across our housing services and is a key part of how we are reviewing our relationship with our tenants. The Charter for Social Housing Residents sets out a number of promises which will reset how the housing sector listens to and acts on the voice of their tenants and leaseholders. We will fully embrace the Charter marking a step change in how we meaningfully involve our residents from policy making to front line service delivery.

Hillingdon Council understands the importance of a good quality affordable home and the impact that it can have on many aspects of our lives including our physical and mental health, our education and our employment prospects. We want to see all residents in Hillingdon treated fairly and have the same life chances as others. That is why we are focussing on increasing investment in our existing council housing. Our primary objective is to ensure that our properties are safe, but we also want to make sure that properties are well managed, warm and comfortable to live in with good insulation, double glazed windows and efficient heating systems.

We will align our priorities to achieve maximum effect with the resources we have available. The Council has declared a climate emergency and the carbon emissions from housing in the borough will need to reduce considerably. We will prioritise those works to stock that can cut heating costs and reduce fuel poverty at the same time as helping to reduce carbon emissions.

As well as addressing the standard of homes we will turn our attention to wider neighbourhood issues. The quality of communal areas and the wider neighbourhood environment form an extension of how we view where we live and links to our sense of community and belonging as well as to our experience and perception of crime and anti-social behaviour. Hillingdon Council aspires to lead the way on housing standards to ensure a positive experience of our homes, our neighbourhoods and our management practices.

The private rented sector in Hillingdon has grown and is home to higher numbers of residents and a wider range of households than previously, including many with

children. Many landlords provide good homes, managed well, but there are also private rented homes where standards are poor. We will set out our expectations of landlords and will continue to use available remedies to drive up standards in the private rented sector. Landlords rightly also have expectations of tenants to behave in a reasonable manner and the council will do more to make clear our expectations of tenants as well as those of landlords.

There has been substantial progress in tackling rough sleeping with annual rough sleeper counts between November 20 and November 21 showing a greater reduction in Hillingdon than any other area. We will continue to build on our pathway to support and house homeless people.

We know that the cost of housing to rent or buy continues to be a significant problem. As well as investing in existing homes we will make sure that additional affordable homes are available. We will do this by providing new council housing ourselves as well as continuing to work with other Registered Providers and securing affordable housing through planning contributions. Affordable homes will meet the needs of a range of households and will include low-cost home ownership as well as rented options. The primary need in the borough is for low-cost rented homes but we also want to assist the many households that aspire to home ownership. Our aims include providing more affordable homes, for more of that housing to be at low-cost rent levels and for more to be family homes of three bedrooms or more.

Increasing investment in both existing and new council housing will require significant resources. The council continues to place importance on investing wisely, maximising outcomes and getting good value for money. We will analyse intelligence to identify which types of investment are best placed to deliver our housing objectives. This will include looking at how we can use our existing housing better and identifying areas suitable for future regeneration. We are reviewing how we incentivise the release of larger family homes and how we can increase provision for overcrowded families, including extending some properties.

We have received the go ahead from residents of Avondale and Hayes Town Centre Estates to proceed with regeneration proposals in their areas and look forward to being able to welcome residents back to their brand-new homes. We see this regeneration as the beginning of a longer-term programme to bring forward proposals to improve housing in the borough.

**Councillor Eddie Lavery**

**Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration**

## Introduction and Context

1. This is a summary document of Hillingdon’s Housing Strategy which includes our priorities aims and key actions. The [full strategy](#) is available on our website.
2. This Hillingdon Housing Strategy sets out our priorities for housing and our key aims for the next five years. The council has responsibilities for housing both as a landlord and in relation to its strategic housing role. This includes assessing needs, identifying priorities and planning for the delivery of affordable housing; standards of housing and management across both the social sector and the private rented sector; homelessness and housing advice; housing support and aids and adaptations. The Housing Strategy identifies key challenges and sets out priorities for the coming 5 years. It takes account of and is compliant with national policy and legislation and the London Housing Strategy 2018: Homes for London.
3. This Housing Strategy sets out five strategic priorities for the delivery of housing services over the next five years. Two driving issues cut across the various service areas and priorities; these are **Normalising Service Delivery following the Covid-19 Pandemic** and **Addressing Climate Change**. These are issues for the council as a whole and form the backdrop for the first priority, Place Shaping, which considers how housing contributes to the wider aims for Hillingdon as a whole and works with other services and partners within and beyond the council. Climate change and Covid-19 also provide the setting for aims and actions under the other four priorities.

<b>Strategic Priorities</b>	
<p><b>Priority one</b>  <b>Priority two</b>  <b>Priority three</b>  <b>Priority four</b>  <b>Priority five</b></p>	<p><b>Place Shaping</b>  <b>Increasing Access to Affordable Housing</b>  <b>Leading on Improving Housing Standards</b>  <b>Embracing the Charter for Social Housing Residents</b>  <b>Supporting Independent Living</b></p>

4. The place shaping priority is concerned with looking at the needs of an area as a whole. A key theme is the relationship between housing and health, which has been brought into sharper focus by Covid-19 which revealed an unequal impact related to housing circumstances. Housing is recognised as a key determinant of health outcomes. Other issues relate to the climate and sustainability agenda

including issues around flooding, designing out crime and using data to better understand local issues.

5. We aim to increase access to affordable housing in both the social and private rented sectors. There is a need for more affordable housing and in particular larger family homes for rent. A relatively small but steady supply of four-bedroom homes is needed and a much larger regular supply of three-bedroom homes. While demand for single bedroom properties is numerically the largest, supply of these homes in both the social and private sector is also more prevalent and the mismatch is therefore not as great as with larger dwellings. There is not one single initiative that will achieve the required increase in supply, but a concerted approach, looking in detail at the methods deployed and stages involved to maximise delivery by the council and partner organisations. As well as new development, this includes making best use of existing social housing and accessing properties in the private rented sector.
6. A central commitment of this strategy is to address housing standards. There will be more investment in existing council housing and in particular those elements that relate to safety, compliance and works to address climate change and fuel poverty. The council is ambitious and seeks to set an example in responding to climate change. A council regeneration programme is underway and further housing led regeneration is expected to follow. We are also determined to tackle poor standards in the private rented sector. We will focus efforts on higher risk properties and will consider options for introducing further licensing arrangements, where required.
7. The Charter for Social Housing Residents provides an opportunity to renew our relationship with tenants and leaseholders. We are undertaking a fundamental review of how we engage and what we engage about. In doing this we will be informed by our residents, aim for open communication and take full advantage of new digital methods while taking care to ensure that vulnerable residents are not excluded.
8. There is a particular need in the short term around housing homeless households. This is because we aim to reduce the use of temporary accommodation, at the same time that there is an increased demand for temporary accommodation for those affected by regeneration and a big risk of increased private rented sector evictions. The pathway around single homeless people and rough sleepers has developed considerably with strong local partnerships having been built up and we aim to further develop the pathway, particularly in relation to those with higher support needs. There is also a specific challenge in relation to those without recourse to public funds.
9. We want to support people to live independently as far as possible. In supporting vulnerable groups, housing and social care colleagues work closely and are continually developing our joint processes and procedures. Partnership

arrangements continue to strengthen around safeguarding vulnerable people. We are developing joint arrangements in respect of care leavers and are working towards DAHA accreditation in relation to domestic abuse. We will also be looking at how we can better tailor housing services for those with autism, learning disabilities and disabilities more generally. Existing council provision for older people will be reviewed.

### **Delivering the Housing Strategy**

10. We will review and update actions annually to ensure that they take account of any relevant significant changes in the external operating environment.

### **Current Legislative and Policy Context for Housing**

11. Many of the recent and forthcoming policy and legislative changes affecting housing are related to:

- An ongoing need for more affordable homes and the desire to Build Back Better following the pandemic.
- The impact that the Grenfell Tower tragedy has had and continues to have in relation to safety and wider housing standards, housing regulation and the relationship between landlords and tenants.
- The increasing prominence of climate change and the wider sustainability agenda.
- A further notable change is the introduction of Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

## Priority one: Place Shaping

### ***Key outcome: Housing services contribute to ensuring inclusive, greener and sustainable places***

1. The amount, type and quality of housing available in an area sits alongside a whole host of other elements and characteristics that go to make up what an area is like and how it works. These include other parts of the built environment, open spaces, jobs, schools, leisure activities, people, communities and organisations. Local authorities have a responsibility to look at their areas in the round and help to shape their future. This part of the strategy is concerned with how housing impacts on and contributes to the wider aims and ambitions of the council for Hillingdon as a whole.
2. Place shaping as a term became common parlance following Sir Michael Lyons Inquiry into Local Government back in 2007<sup>1</sup> although the general theme of looking at the needs of an area in a holistic way have much earlier roots. Place shaping is undergoing something of a revival as local authorities seek to deliver services more efficiently and to respond to change brought on at a pace following the Covid-19 pandemic. Much of this is being driven at a local level.
3. 'Levelling Up' is a notable part of the national policy agenda and a White Paper has been promised for Autumn 2021 which is expected to spell out in more detail what the 'Levelling Up' agenda is about and how it will be rolled out. Improving living standards is part of 'Levelling Up' and sits alongside spreading opportunity and a host of other aims including strengthening community and local leadership, quality of life, improving education and policing and many more. Regional disparities in the UK are greater than in most comparable countries, however after adjusting for housing costs, living standards between UK regions are not particularly unequal. Different communities need to level up in different ways, for London and the South of England, affordable housing is the critical type of infrastructure requiring investment<sup>2</sup>.
4. Emerging themes for the council are around inclusivity, a 'greener' borough and sustainability. The council also wants to see all people in the borough treated fairly and with respect and to have the same life chances as others.
5. In defining place shaping, common themes are about bringing people and place together; about coherent and complementary approaches to physical, economic, and social development; and working with partners across service areas to address the needs and priorities in particular localities.

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<sup>1</sup> [Lyons Inquiry into Local Government, Place-shaping: a shared ambition for the future of local government, March 2007](#)

<sup>2</sup> [The Rebuilding Britain Index: Levelling Up our local communities, Legal & General, Cicero/amo strategic advisers, April 2021](#)

6. Planning and corporate services are central actors in place shaping, but many other services are also involved. Housing has an important role to play, both through direct service provision that impacts on local residents, their communities and the built environment and also through a wide range of connections to other services. Housing services are involved with both homes and their environments and the people living in those homes. This dual aspect means that it has connections to a large number of other service areas concerned with both people and place.
7. Housing services are engaged in managing homes; building and enabling the provision of new housing; preventing and responding to homelessness; and addressing private sector housing standards. In addition, housing has strong links to local planning, the physical fabric of homes and community spaces, energy use, fuel poverty and sustainability, the economy of an area, social care and the needs of vulnerable people and specific groups such as older people and care leavers, health and wellbeing, crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB), substance abuse, poverty and community cohesion.
8. Our homes and wider environments can have significant impacts for wellbeing. This includes our mental as well as physical health, on education and employment outcomes and on our experience of crime and anti-social behaviour. Our homes also have significant impacts on environmental sustainability.
9. As set out in the introduction, there are two driving issues that provide the backdrop to this strategy: 'Normalising service delivery following the Covid-19 Pandemic' and 'Addressing Climate Change'.
10. This strategy aims to:
  - Assist in shaping the built environment at a local level and collaborate across health, social care and housing sectors to create healthy places and improve wellbeing.
  - Improve living standards through investment in stock condition and access to affordable homes.
  - Prioritise actions to address fuel poverty.
  - Identify and understand conditions and the local context, including environmental concerns such as flood risks that housing in the borough faces.
  - Design and implement affordable and socially acceptable retrofit climate change adaptation measures.
  - Work in partnership to identify priorities and take part in local area action.
  - Take a 'Digital by Design' approach to improving service delivery.
  - Improve the security of homes and their immediate surroundings.

<b>We will:</b>	
Contribute from a housing perspective to the development of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the underpinning Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) including consideration of housing circumstances which are an important social determinant of health	Review lettings arrangements to increase the proportion of lettings made to overcrowded households
Contribute from a housing perspective to the delivery of Hillingdon Strategic Climate Action Plan 2021	Identify residential areas at risk from flooding and consider measures to reduce flood risk and increase flood resilience.
Make greater use of mapping capabilities to better understand the spatial dimension of housing issues across the borough	Contribute from a housing perspective to local area action through both taking part in neighbourhood action and in using housing intelligence to identify need for local area action

### **Key Performance Indicators**

- Number of social housing lettings to overcrowded households
- Delivery to key recorded milestones in the Hillingdon Climate Action Plan
- Delivery on time of programmes of works for flood alleviation schemes

## Priority two: Increasing Access to Affordable Housing

### ***Key outcome: An improved ability for Hillingdon residents to access good quality affordable housing***

1. The affordability of housing continues to be a major challenge for those setting up home for the first time and for those who need to move to a larger dwelling. The inability to afford housing in the local market is no longer an issue affecting a minority of households but one affecting most newly forming households attempting to access the housing market. Wide ranging consequences include overcrowding, adverse impacts on mental and physical health and employers' ability to attract staff.
2. The coronavirus temporarily held up new development and is generating pent up demand from delayed evictions and from rough sleepers that have been brought in off the streets. The Government has supported renters during the pandemic by banning evictions except in specific cases (such as anti-social behaviour). However, the ban was lifted at the end of May 2021, and many renters are at risk of becoming homeless. There is a risk of widespread evictions starting during summer 2021 with reports of one in twelve private renters having been served with notice since the onset of Covid-19 and one in three households in fear of losing their home. There are also concerns regarding employment difficulties leading to unsustainable debt, which in turn may also result in homelessness.
3. Following an earlier temporary restriction on home moves, house prices have bounced back well, aided by a temporary suspension of Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT). The London rental market has seen some reduction in rental costs but mostly affecting inner London, with rents in Hillingdon remaining fairly stable and beginning to show signs of increasing. The combined impact of the Coronavirus and leaving the European Union mean that there is still much uncertainty and continuing risk to the economy, unemployment, the housing market, construction industry, evictions and homelessness.
4. This housing strategy aims to:
  - Increase the provision of new affordable housing
  - Take forward regeneration proposals to provide more, good quality, affordable housing
  - Increase the proportion of affordable housing delivered as low cost rented housing to meet predominant housing need
  - Include within Low Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) provision, properties aimed at those with household incomes of £30,000 to £50,000

- Maximise the availability of larger family homes of three and four bedrooms or more to rent at affordable levels.
- Prioritise the availability of housing to facilitate the progress of regeneration projects and to secure move on from or replace the use of temporary accommodation for homeless households
- Release more under-occupied social rented properties for use by families
- Make best use of existing housing for instance, through transfers, conversions or extensions

<b>We will:</b>	
Continue to meet housing delivery targets and promote the delivery of affordable housing through our housing and planning policies. Subject to viability, the council will seek 35% affordable housing on larger sites, rising to 50% on publicly owned land and schemes involving the net loss of industrial capacity	Embark on a review of the Local Plan and any change to affordable housing policies will be observed in the implementation of the Housing Strategy. The council adheres to the requirements of the Mayor's Affordable Housing SPG (2017) and New London Plan
Set out a forward plan for the commitment of Right to Buy receipts to projects. To minimise risk from delayed or abortive development projects, the plan will aim to utilise each receipt at least one year ahead of the deadline for expenditure.	Continue a Right to Buy buy-back programme aiming to purchase in the region of 50 properties a year. In addition to ex-council stock, the search area for properties will be expanded to include market housing in locations with existing council dwellings. Acquisitions of individual dwellings and groups of dwellings will continue to be considered on a case by case basis.
Continue to develop new council owned affordable housing as well as working with registered providers and the GLA to provide new affordable homes through the Homes for Londoners programmes.	Establish a task and finish group to consider options for future rent policy taking account of planning requirements, housing need and affordability and impact on the HRA Business Plan.
Complete an analysis of new development options. This will include consideration and rating of regeneration options.	Continue to seek the tenure mix on affordable housing in line with the Development Plan, which is 70% low-cost rent (Social Rent or London Affordable Rent) and the remaining 30% as intermediate affordable housing. The preference for these intermediate units will be for low-cost home ownership products.

	<p>If a Financial Viability Appraisal demonstrates that the above is not achievable, the affordable housing tenure split becomes the starting point for negotiations. This may include the use of affordable rented units at a higher rent, however this should not exceed LHA levels.</p>
<p>Target in particular, those households with incomes between £30k and £50k to support owner occupation for as wide a group of residents as possible. Where shared ownership options are provided, the council will seek to ensure that low percentage shares are available within the mix.</p>	<p>Maximise the number of larger family dwellings of three bedrooms or more within affordable housing provision.</p>
<p>Work with PRP and voluntary sector partners to extend the use of shared housing to provide affordable housing for single homeless people.</p>	<p>Set targets for the proportion of social housing lettings to households on the housing register for different reasons and monitor these in line with priorities. Produce annual statistics.</p>
<p>Undertake a full review of the social housing allocation policy. Include consideration of how long it takes for different groups to successfully be accommodated and whether the needs of working households are sufficiently taken into account.</p>	<p>Determine policy for and how best to register interest for types of intermediate housing other than shared ownership for sale / part sale and for rent, especially LLR. The Council already has a register for shared ownership dwellings. The impact of 'First Homes' and how will be administered also needs to be considered.</p>
<p>Continue to offer a bespoke personalised service to incentivise the release of under occupied council housing.</p>	<p>Continue to offer fixed term tenancies. The policy will however be altered so that where a tenant has been found not to have complied with the requirements of their tenancy agreement, there will be the option to grant a tenancy for a shorter period of time than the standard five years.</p> <p>A review of the policy to consider costs and benefits, including administration costs will be scheduled for when there is sufficient experience of the implementation of tenancy reviews to draw on.</p>
<p>Consider the potential for extensions and conversions on a case by case basis as properties become void.</p>	<p>Continue close working between the BACFT and housing colleagues to investigate housing fraud.</p>

<p>Follow policy H11 of the new London Plan with regard to affordable housing in build-to-rent housing and as part of our Local Plan Review will consider the viability of alternative approaches.</p> <p>For developments submitted to the local planning authority as ‘build to rent’ from the outset with the affordable element as discounted market rent, our requirement will be that where viable this is supplied at LLR levels or lower.</p>	<p>Downsizing initiatives will continue to be made available. We will also collaborate with Housing Association Partners regarding downsizing and overcrowding solutions.</p>
<p>A review of the current situation regarding the number of empty properties in the borough and action to address them will be carried out. This will consider good practice in dealing with empty property and will link action to securing nominations for homeless households and potentially to the council’s buy back scheme.</p>	

## Key Performance Indicators

- Number of affordable homes delivered
- Affordable housing pipeline
- Number of homes delivered at LAR and social rent levels
- Number of social housing lettings in dwellings with three bedrooms or more
- Number of households in temporary accommodation
- Number of households in emergency accommodation

## Priority three: Leading on Improving Housing Standards

### ***Key outcome: Warm, safe, good quality housing across all tenures***

1. The safety of resident's is the council's top priority in relation to housing standards. Prior to the Grenfell Tower tragedy on 14 June 2017, investment in safety measures in the council's housing stock had already been underway which meant that the council was in a good position to step up our response to ensuring safety in council homes. In the four years following the fire, in addition to fire safety concerns, housing standards in general have been brought into greater focus including the investment needed to maintain housing; the requirements to achieve carbon emission reductions and the impact that stock condition has on resident satisfaction. Repairs and maintenance of council and housing association housing is a key area of service delivery valued by residents and is also an area with significant demand and cost pressures.
2. As well as a greater focus on housing conditions in the social sector, there has been an increased policy focus on housing conditions in the private rented sector especially in relation to rogue landlords.
3. Climate change has increased in prominence on housing agendas. The Committee on Climate Change in their February 2019 report on UK housing stated that 'we will not meet our target for emissions reduction without the near complete decarbonisation of the housing stock'. Since 1990, the UK has reduced domestic gas emissions by 45%, but emissions from housing have not fallen.<sup>3</sup>
4. This strategy aims to:
  - Continue to prioritise fire safety in works to and the management of the council's housing stock.
  - Increase investment in the council housing stock prioritising additional safety elements, compliance and works to address climate change and fuel poverty agendas.
  - Be prepared to meet the requirements of the new Building Safety regime.
  - Develop plans to decarbonise housing across tenures, starting with quantifying the requirements to achieve zero carbon in the council's housing stock.
  - Help low-income households to reduce energy expenditure in their home.
  - Maximise the number of council owned homes with a Band C energy performance rating, or higher.

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<sup>3</sup> Housing and Net Zero, House of Commons Library Briefing Paper Number 8830, August 2020

- Develop a more detailed understanding of housing conditions in the public sector and establish a road map to ensure that council housing stock meets good housing standards.
- Develop a more detailed understanding of housing conditions in the private sector to inform future policy options including for discretionary licensing.
- Work collaboratively across services and agencies and take a robust enforcement approach to combating rogue landlords.

<b>We will:</b>	
Work with the London Fire Brigade where appropriate in the use of enforcement action against the owners of buildings that fail to undertake necessary remediation	Prioritise in the council's works to stock programme, fire safety and health and safety more generally as well as compliance with standards, and heating and insulation
Carry out further work to improve the depth and breadth of customer insight across all high-risk buildings and the Social Housing Allocation Policy will be amended to restrict new tenancies to residents in higher risk buildings who can self-evacuate	Consider the use of 'estate regulations' as part of changes to management practices associated with fire safety and leaseholders in higher risk buildings
Introduce a specific inspection regime to cover the common areas of tower blocks including fire doors as part of a more intensive approach to the management of higher risk buildings	Establish a task and finish project to analyse the costs of day to day repairs and other costs associated with elements of disrepair to identify areas of planned work likely to make the largest 'spend to save' impact over the short and medium term. The analysis will seek to identify those aspects of planned maintenance that result in the highest costs if not undertaken promptly.
Develop the HRA Business Plan and Asset Management Strategy, incorporating a road map for good housing standards via future stock investment and redevelopment. The Asset Management Strategy will include consideration of the lettable standard	Develop a specification for a private sector stock condition survey/modelling which will in addition collate information to assist in gaining a wider understanding of the nature of the private rented sector in Hillingdon and assist in targeting resources.

Establish more formalised structures and processes to share knowledge and intelligence regarding the private rented sector and to develop a comprehensive, co-ordinated and disciplined approach to ensuring a well-managed sector.	Improve knowledge and intelligence through partnering arrangements and research opportunities to inform the development of a more detailed Private Sector Housing Strategy.
Prioritise dealing with licence applications swiftly and efficiency and identifying additional HMOs that require to be licensed	Continue to tackle poor housing conditions and facilitate improved management of high-risk properties in the private rented sector
Continue to use enforcement powers including Civil Penalties where appropriate and work with internal and external partners to take holistic and concerted action to deter those landlords who consistently provide poor standards of housing and management.	Establish a multi-disciplinary task group to gather evidence regarding the prevalence of poor conditions in different parts of the private rented sector and consider the feasibility of different discretionary licensing options.
Develop a granular understanding of the cost requirements of achieving zero carbon across the council's housing stock and to formulate plans for those properties that are low, medium and high cost	Set out an approach to work towards decarbonising council owned housing stock and work with others to similarly encourage decarbonisation in other housing tenures
Deliver Green Homes Grant works to improve energy efficiency for low income households	Progress plans to attract additional funding to deliver improvements at Colne Park Traveller's Site

### Key Performance Indicators

- % HRA dwellings compliant with health and safety legislation and regulations in relation to gas safety, fire safety, electrical safety, asbestos and water quality
- Number of improvements to council homes completed by type of work
- HRA Tenant satisfaction with landlord's repairs and maintenance service
- HRA Tenant satisfaction with the health and safety of their home
- Number of licensed HMOs
- Number of housing enforcement notices served

## Priority four: Embracing the Charter for Social Housing Residents

**Key outcome: The council working together with residents delivers high quality housing services**

1. The Social Housing White Paper: The Charter for Social Housing Residents, was published in November 2020 and forms a central plank of the government's response to the Grenfell Tower fire. It lays out plans to move to a proactive system of regulating consumer standards in the social housing sector, with landlords subject to regular inspections and assessment against tenant satisfaction data. Councils are not, as yet, subject to proactive engagement with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) and will in future have much closer involvement with them. The white paper sets out a new Charter for Residents of Social Housing with seven headline promises.

### **Charter for Social Housing Residents Headline Promises**

1. To be safe in your home
2. To know how your landlord is performing
3. To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly
4. To be treated with respect
5. To have your voice heard by your landlord
6. To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in
7. To be supported to take your first step to ownership

2. The Council intends to fully embrace the Charter, marking a step change in our relationship with residents. We will develop new engagement plans and processes and encourage a more open and collaborative culture to ensure that residents' voices are effectively heard and are able to have meaningful impact. We will also make full use of digital methods to reach a wider range of people and will adopt a digital by design approach to service improvement.
3. This strategy aims to:
  - Meet consumer regulation standards
  - Build up a more comprehensive profile of our tenants to inform service delivery
  - Review how we make information available to residents and what information is provided
  - Ensure that the residents' voice is heard at every level from policymaking to front line delivery

- Develop a comprehensive engagement strategy for greater meaningful engagement with council tenants and leaseholders.
- Implement a new structure to encourage wider resident involvement, scrutiny of our services and greater accountability and transparency
- Seek additional opportunities to improve service delivery through digitisation

<b>We will:</b>	
Complete an annual review of Fire Safety Management Plans as required for high-risk properties within the HRA	Review the Fire Risk Assessment regime for the HRA flatted estate and document procedures for administering and ensuring compliance with the updated process
Establish a Hoarder's panel to mitigate the risk of fire and serious injury	Review what information is available to tenants and leaseholders, how it is accessed and how bespoke it is for different groups
Review our structures and processes for engagement during 2021/22	Develop a comprehensive engagement strategy for council tenants and leaseholders. Key elements will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication regarding fire and other safety issues</li> <li>• Involving different groups including vulnerable households and</li> <li>• New methods of engagement and service design including use of digital methods</li> </ul>
Develop specific local resident engagement strategies related to higher risk buildings	Complete regular self-assessments against regulatory standards with results being reported to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Housing and Regeneration
Deploy a range of methods to capture data, including the use of housing needs surveys, encouraging self-service reporting and gathering data through interactions with tenants.	Improve customer insight and understand what our tenants and communities want, including through use of the STAR survey and through learning from complaints. A further STAR survey will be completed during 2021/2022 and thereafter every 2 years.
Set a baseline for the Regulator of Social Housing's proposed tenant satisfaction measures	Consider residents feedback in formulating the future approach to investment in and management of shared areas to deliver attractive, safe and secure environments

Analyse complaints and review compliance with the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Code on a regular basis	Identify further opportunities for improved and cost-efficient service delivery online, while identifying safeguards in relation to digital exclusion and vulnerable people.
Complete post-occupancy evaluation of new affordable housing developments	Explore how better to engage private rented sector residents

### Key Performance Indicators

- Number of ongoing anti-social behaviour cases
- Publication of an annual statement to tenants
- Number of complaints received
- Percentage of complaints resolved within agreed timescales
- Time taken to respond to information requests by the housing ombudsman
- Tenant satisfaction that the council listens to their views and takes notice of them
- Number of complaints relating to communal areas
- Tenant overall satisfaction with the service their landlord provides
- Completed localised resident engagement strategies for higher risk buildings
- Additional processes digitised

## Priority five: Supporting Independent Living

***Key outcome: Hillingdon residents are supported to live as independently as possible***

1. The council is committed to protecting vulnerable people and enabling people, as far as possible, to live independently. Many people require some help and support to do this either in specialist housing specifically provided for their needs or through floating support provided in general housing.
2. There is a wide and diverse range of supported housing and housing support available in Hillingdon. An initial mapping exercise of all supported accommodation in the borough has been carried out, including both Care Quality Commission (CQC) registered and non-registered services. The list has been shared with NHS colleagues to support a mapping exercise to provide greater clarity regarding the make-up and geography of supply across the borough.
3. The largest client group for supported housing is older people, followed by people with learning disabilities and there is significant provision for mental health and for single homeless people and care leavers. There is also provision in the borough for those affected by domestic abuse.
4. This part of the Housing Strategy considers priorities to address the housing and support needs for particular groups of people, some of which have considerable overlap.
5. The impacts arising from Covid-19 could not be anticipated and have been unprecedented. Lockdown has meant an increased risk of abuse and neglect and of self-neglect for adults at risk. It has also increased the risk of domestic abuse, homelessness, mental health problems and drug and alcohol use in the wider population. Housing teams seek to identify other household support needs in their interventions with residents such as homelessness reviews, tenancy reviews and property disrepair inspections to allow for early identification of safeguarding issues.
6. This strategy aims to:
  - Foster a trauma informed approach to working with vulnerable people
  - Reduce homelessness and rough sleeping
  - Support people to sustain tenancies
  - Increase awareness and action regarding adult safeguarding
  - Achieve sustainable housing solutions for care leavers
  - Become Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accredited

- Develop housing plans to support the independence of residents with learning disabilities and/or mental health needs
- Adopt an autism friendly approach across housing services
- Review existing dedicated housing provision for older people
- Plan for retrofitting of existing housing to address needs for adaptations, including for dementia
- Review the use of grants to support independent living

<b>We will:</b>	
Nurture the development of a trauma informed approach to services, including arranging relevant staff training	Assess current and future housing and support needs of specific client groups during 2021/22. The information will be substantially improved and updated as the results from the 2021 census become available
Complete further investigation into the causes and potential solutions for family and friend evictions. Map the incidence of family and friend evictions and analyse available data within the council and held by partner agencies to inform future homelessness prevention activity	Focus rough sleeper work during 2021/22 on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A supported housing solution for those with higher level needs as a key priority for development of the rough sleepers housing pathway.</li> <li>• Continuing to build our partnership working arrangements with primary healthcare, public health and social care colleagues and other organisations with roles concerning substance misuse and mental health issues</li> <li>• Continuing to increase the provision of additional low support level HMOs for the single homeless pathway and floating support.</li> </ul>
Establish a move-on panel to track that there is effective movement through the single homelessness pathway and address barriers	Explore options to provide additional longer-term move on accommodation including the potential repurposing by a voluntary sector partner of a large building for studio flats and options for shared accommodation to be provided with Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates.

<p>Continue to monitor outcomes for all rough sleepers and separately identify Target 1,000 rough sleepers in the monitoring framework to assess the extent to which rehousing is being sustained and take further action if necessary.</p>	<p>Continue to engage constructively with safeguarding partners and assist in addressing the Safeguarding Partnership's priorities</p>
<p>Arrange for safeguarding refresher training to be undertaken by housing teams including tenancy management, homelessness prevention and housing allocations staff</p>	<p>Work towards achieving accreditation by the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) including identifying dedicated, trained staff within the Homelessness Prevention Team who will be responsible for assisting those affected by domestic abuse. We will review current approach and partnering arrangements and pathway in relation to domestic abuse</p>
<p>Complete a joint housing and social care protocol for care leavers which will be actively monitored and reviewed annually</p>	<p>Housing services will work alongside social care to support the development of a supported accommodation plan for people with learning disabilities and/or mental health needs</p>
<p>Set up a task and finish group to develop our understanding of the housing needs of people with autism in Hillingdon, generate bespoke housing options and consider what housing services need to do to become more autism friendly</p>	<p>Complete a review of council owned sheltered housing which will include consideration of the costs of day to day repairs; future maintenance requirements including energy efficiency implications; void performance and lettings</p>
<p>Set up a task and finish group to investigate further measures that can be taken to provide attractive downsizing options. This will include consideration of new development opportunities, across housing tenures, specifically aimed at older people. In relation to council and PRP sectors this would need to include a rent policy that did not deter moves</p>	<p>Continue to utilise DFGs to support older and disabled residents to remain in their own homes</p>

<p>Continue to promote assistive technology such as telecare, which is available free of charge to people aged 75 and above</p>	<p>Set up a working group to consider options to better meet the housing needs of disabled people including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a specific LBH design code to meet the needs of the vast majority of people, that can be applied to both new housing provision and to inform refurbishments of existing homes</li> <li>• how to increase provision of evacuation lifts</li> </ul>
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### Key Performance Indicators

- Number of homelessness approaches requiring a Homelessness Reduction Act assessment
- Number of rough sleepers at the official annual count / estimate
- Total number of emergency accommodation admissions
- Number of emergency accommodation admissions with an approach reason of:
  - Family eviction
  - Private sector evictions
  - Rough sleeping
  - Domestic abuse
- Number of housing staff trained in recognising abuse and internal referral routes to raise concerns
- Number of care leaver housing placements sustained after 6 months and 12 months by social sector, private sector and supported housing
- Number of presentations to the Housing Enforcement and Domestic Abuse Team
- Number of people with learning disabilities and/or mental health needs with an unmet need for specialist supported housing
- Number of staff that have received autism awareness training
- Number of older council tenants downsizing
- Number of older people assisted by DFGs