

Homelessness Update

Committee name	Environment, Housing and Regeneration Select Committee
Officer reporting	Mark Billings, Planning, Environment, Education and Community Services
Papers with report	None
Ward	All

HEADLINES

This report provides information relating to homeless applications in Hillingdon, including reasons for homelessness, 'bed and breakfast' bookings and move on into social and private rented housing. Further information is provided regarding the housing pathway for rough sleepers in Hillingdon. Note: The vast majority of B&B in Hillingdon is self-contained accommodation. The term does not generally refer to guest house type accommodation, but denotes higher cost temporary accommodation charged on a nightly basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee:

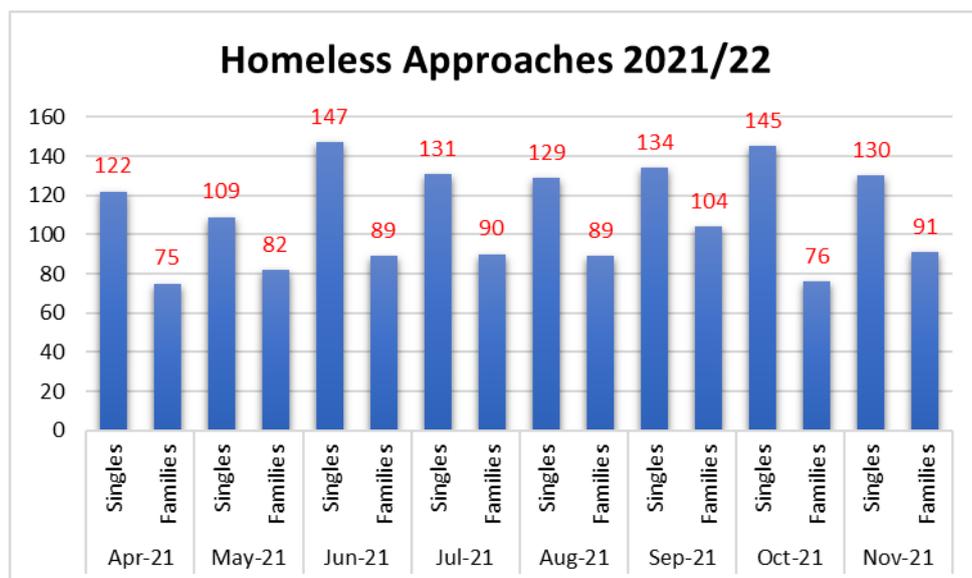
- 1. Note the contents of the report.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Homeless Approaches

- Between April and November 2021 (two thirds of the year) there have been a total 1,743 approaches from households either threatened with homelessness or already homeless. Of these 696 were families and 1,047 were single people. Figure one below shows the homeless approaches on a monthly basis. On average there are 218 approaches each month, which equates to around ten approaches each working day.
- The most common reasons for homelessness are family evictions (360), fleeing domestic abuse (214) and Section 21 (generally private rented sector) evictions (182). These are the most common reasons for both families and single people. In total these three reasons accounted for 43% of all approaches during the period covered. Other notable reasons include:
 - Rough sleeping which is predominantly an issue for single homeless people with 79 approaches from rough sleepers in total, of which 73 were single people.
 - In addition, there were 128 'sofa surfers' or 'friends no longer willing to accommodate' of which 102 were single people.
 - There have been 62 approaches from former asylum seekers, 42 single people and 20 families

Figure one



Early rehousing interventions

3. If a homeless or potentially homeless household requires rehousing, the aim is where possible to facilitate a move to settled accommodation, without the need for a placement in emergency temporary accommodation. Between April and November, 261 households were rehoused in this way. The bed size breakdown is shown in table one.

Table one: Early rehousing interventions

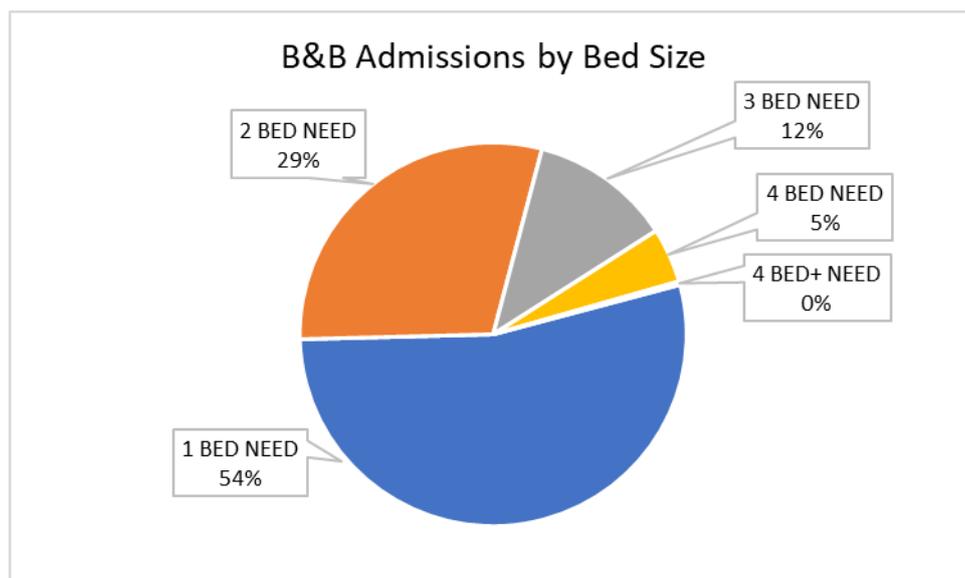
	Shared	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	Total
Bedsize	84	117	40	15	5	261*

*65 of these are supported placements.

'Bed and Breakfast' Bookings

4. During the period April to November 2021 period there have been a total of 346 bookings of homeless households into B&B (emergency) accommodation. Of these 186 were single people and 160 were families of two or more. This represents less than 6% of the total number of approaches.

Figure two



5. The most common approach reasons for those booked into B&B mirror the most common reasons for approaches overall. The number of bookings April to November were as follows:

- Domestic abuse 63 bookings
- Family evictions 53 bookings
- Rough sleepers 38 bookings
- S21s 29 bookings

Current numbers in temporary accommodation and bed and breakfast

6. As at the end of November 2021, there were a total of 436 households placed in temporary accommodation. Of which:

- Bed and Breakfast 171
- Dedicated Council owned temporary accommodation 204
- Private sector leased 61

Move-on from Temporary Accommodation

7. There have been 244 households in total moved on from temporary accommodation between April and November 2021, of which 107 have been into the private rented sector and 137 have been into social housing. Another 15 have moved on from temporary accommodation for various reasons including withdrawal of application, discharge of duty or no longer eligible for assistance.

Table two: Move on from temporary accommodation

	Shared	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	Total
Private Sector	24*	48	17	12	6	107
Social Sector	0	61	40	27	9	137
Total	24	109	57	39	15	244

*17 of these are supported placements

London Benchmarking Statistics

8. The information below compares Hillingdon homelessness data with other London boroughs.

- The London boroughs with over 1,000 homelessness application during 2020/21 are shown in table three. At 1,751 Hillingdon is the 16th highest.
- Table four shows the London boroughs that accepted above the average % of applications at the prevention stage. It also includes the relief stage acceptances for those boroughs.
- Table five shows the accommodation outcomes during 2020/21 which shows a high proportion of outcomes in Hillingdon where accommodation has been secured.
- Table six shows numbers in temporary accommodation, with Hillingdon having very low numbers compared to most London boroughs

Table three: Homelessness Applications 2020/21

Southwark	3,669	Waltham Forest	1,932
Haringey	3,438	Havering	1,837
Lambeth	3,245	Westminster	1,805
Lewisham	3,166	Hillingdon	1,751
Brent	2,951	Greenwich	1,750
Ealing	2,379	Islington	1,698
Croydon	2,379	Barking and Dagenham	1,505
Hackney	2,224	Camden	1,203
Barnet	2,111	Bromley	1,190
Tower Hamlets	2,042	Hammersmith and Fulham	1,076
Enfield	2,029	Kensington and Chelsea	1,049

Table four: % Accepted at Prevention and Relief Stage 2020/21

Local Authority	No. of Applications	No. of prevention duties accepted	Prevention Duties as % of total applications	No. of Relief duties accepted	Relief Duties as % of total applications
England	282,240	119,400	42.3%	149,160	52.8%
London	54,890	23,990	43.7%	27,770	50.6%
Hillingdon	1,751	1287	73.5%	440	25.1%
Merton	567	396	69.8%	155	27.3%
Lewisham	3,166	1830	57.8%	1318	41.6%
Barking and Dagenham	1,505	864	57.4%	543	36.1%
Islington	1,698	938	55.2%	685	40.3%
Barnet	2,111	1124	53.2%	906	42.9%
Havering	1,837	977	53.2%	755	41.1%
Waltham Forest	1932	996	51.6%	927	48.0%
Ealing	2,471	1234	49.9%	1205	48.8%
Lambeth	3,243	1535	47.3%	1679	51.8%
Enfield	2,029	955	47.1%	950	46.8%
Kingston	449	210	46.8%	217	48.3%

Table five: Accommodation Outcomes 2020/21

Local Authority	No. Prevention Duties Ended	% Prevention Duties Ended by securing Accommodation	No. Relief Duties Ended	% Relief Duties Ended by securing Accommodation	% that secured accommodation at end of either duty
England	116,460	59.4%	166,300	39.8%	47.9%
London	23,820	57.4%	33,860	33.0%	43.1%
Merton	435	80.69%	179	59.2%	74.4%
Ealing	1,340	69.78%	1,522	51.5%	60.1%
Hillingdon	1,091	65.17%	636	48.4%	59.0%
Hammersmith and Fulham	378	56.08%	614	57.2%	56.8%
Brent	1,135	62.47%	1,398	51.6%	56.5%
Sutton	339	75.22%	457	41.1%	55.7%
Haringey	1,625	60.37%	1,057	47.7%	55.4%
Camden	363	54.55%	831	54.8%	54.7%
Islington	701	90.44%	895	20.0%	50.9%
Barnet	1,229	65.09%	1,269	35.9%	50.2%
Greenwich	707	64.64%	1,053	38.1%	48.8%
Tower Hamlets	691	55.28%	1,161	42.0%	47.0%
Kensington and Chelsea	287	66.20%	802	37.5%	45.1%
Harrow	228	51.75%	534	41.8%	44.8%
Enfield	968	54.44%	1,167	36.5%	44.6%

Table six: Temporary Accommodation (TA) 30 June 2021

Local Authority	Total In TA	Families in TA	Families in TA per 000 H'holds	Families in B&B	TA Per 1000 H'holds
England	96,600	60,490	2.6	1,400	4.08
London	60,830	42,290	11.9	390	17.07
Newham	5,454	3,839	33.4	1	47.48
Southwark	2,936	1,491	11.1	0	21.90
Redbridge	2,686	1,883	17.4	21	24.75
Ealing	2,463	1,858	15.1	21	20.04
Wandsworth	2,410	1,521	11.2	1	17.76
Barnet	2,244	1,236	8.1	1	14.77
Croydon	2,008	1,484	9.6	58	13.03
Barking and Dagenham	1,439	1,208	15.4	-	18.37
Harrow	1,114	875	10.1	3	12.89
Hammersmith and Fulham	1,054	819	10.0	0	12.90
Havering	890	577	5.4	0	8.40
Sutton	814	511	6.2	3	9.80
Islington	764	456	4.3	-	7.15
Camden	517	285	2.5	0	4.53
Hillingdon	451	268	2.4	3	4.09
Richmond upon Thames	283	139	1.7	-	3.37
Merton	213	136	1.7	1	2.69
City of London	7	5	1.2	-	1.63

Note: In this DLUHC table B&B refers to shared accommodation.

Rough Sleepers

9. There has been a very substantial reduction in rough sleeping in Hillingdon. The number of rough sleepers at the official annual count in November 2019 was 106 and this reduced to 11 in November 2020. At the November 2021 count the number has reduced further to 9.
10. Heathrow Airport has long been a recognised hot spot for rough sleeping and there has been a concerted drive to drastically reduce rough sleeping at the airport and to prevent the airport being viewed as a destination for rough sleepers. The approach has achieved considerable success but will require ongoing action to prevent a return to the previous situation.
11. Central to the approach has been a multi-agency and multi-disciplinary co-ordinated response to rough sleeping. Partnership working in the borough amongst those with an interest in single homelessness and rough sleepers has strengthened to a significant degree and much clearer pathways for rough sleepers have developed and are continuing to be enhanced.
12. The availability of grant funding, especially via the Government's Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) has assisted considerably in the development of our approach. RSI is currently in its fourth year and a 3-year funding proposal for 2022/23 to 2024/25 is in development. Action taken in response to Covid19 has also had a very significant impact on rough sleeping in Hillingdon and across London and the country as a whole.

13. The onset of Covid-19 prompted a large-scale exercise to bring rough sleepers in, off the streets and this made a dramatic impact on rough sleeping. In Hillingdon a concerted four-day effort housed 170 rough sleepers from Heathrow airport. The majority were housed in GLA procured hotel rooms across London. Within Hillingdon RSI funding was used to enable a 33-bed unit, to be leased specifically for the purpose of bringing rough sleepers in from the streets. Initially, 30 rough sleepers were housed in borough. Any subsequent flow of rough sleepers has continued to be housed, either through reconnection with other Boroughs or initially into temporary accommodation in Hillingdon prior to move on to the private rented sector or in some instances, into social housing. In the following months rough sleeper numbers housed in borough increased to over 100. A total of 160 rough sleepers have been moved on to settled housing since this time. On 31 December 2021 there were a total of 61 former rough sleepers in temporary accommodation in Hillingdon.
14. Between April and November 2021 there were 38 rough sleepers booked into B&B accommodation. This does not include those who are initially assessed as having a connection to another borough but are placed into temporary accommodation on a very short-term basis in Hillingdon while reconnection is arranged.
15. Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) funding from the MHCLG (now DLUHC) has helped to significantly increase outreach services, floating support, and accommodation options. RSI funding has been instrumental in increasing the supply of supported bedspaces leased by Trinity which form an important part of the homelessness pathway. There is a significant supply of bedspaces for those with low support needs and a more limited supply for those with higher level needs. 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.
16. CNWL Mental health outreach colleagues and ARCH are key partners and our work with North West London CCG has resulted in good outcomes in GP registrations, Covid vaccinations and dental health. Frequent contact with a wide range of agencies has been and continues to be instrumental in ensuring that numbers of rough sleepers at the airport do not start to rise again. Airport security have worked to restrict access so that only those that intend to fly are able to remain at the airport without challenge.
17. Numbers of rough sleepers on any specific day are low, averaging 5 to 10 per night. On 31 December there were 7 rough sleepers. However, as there is a high level of flow, specifically at Heathrow Airport, the number of individuals sleeping rough over a period of time is high i.e. During December 2021 there were 57 rough sleepers that were engaged with by outreach services of which 35 were new to rough sleeping.

Table Seven: Rough sleeping data

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number sleeping rough as at end of:	13	11	12	9	7	4	6	9	7
Of those, new to rough sleeping	0	5	5	7	3	1	3	2	4
Total individuals sleeping rough in month	19	37	16	38	46	51	50	55	57
Of those, new to rough sleeping	4	20	5	33	29	31	30	38	35
Rough sleepers in TA	82	68	66	70	67	65	59	59	61
UK nationals in TA	45	33	34	32	28	28	24	23	26
EEA nationals in TA	12	9	8	11	12	14	13	15	13
Rest of the world nationals in TA	26	26	24	27	27	23	22	21	22
Under 25s in TA	8	5	4	0	3	3	3	3	3

18. In line with government strategy the council aims to eliminate the need for rough sleeping in the borough by the end of 2024. Our targets for rough sleepers differentiate between the airport and the rest of the borough. For in-borough rough sleepers we have adopted the challenging target of zero rough sleepers. For the airport we have adopted a more cautious approach. The airport is known to have previously attracted large numbers of rough sleepers from across the capital and beyond. Although numbers bedding down at the airport are now low, there is still a constant flow of rough sleepers arriving at the airport every night who are engaged with by airport security and partner agencies to either return to their area of origin or be referred on to other services. As we emerge from the pandemic, more travel is taking place and the airport is becoming busier making it more difficult to identify rough sleepers. Eviction activity is restarting meaning that more people are likely to become homeless and for some this will mean street homelessness. Given these issues, realistically we must expect some additional homelessness pressures at the airport and have therefore set a threshold of 20, which we are working to keep as close to zero as possible.

19. Current work strands have been seeking to strengthen our approach to upstream prevention in all areas. Revised contractual arrangements with an organisation called 'P3' will strengthen our approach to preventing homelessness amongst young people including family evictions. P3 are our commissioned resource working with young people in the borough. We aim to proactively engage with young people at the earliest opportunity so that risk of rough sleeping can be identified and tackled before a young person becomes homeless.

20. We are also concentrating on developing closer working relations with housing associations to ensure that issues are identified and addressed early before they escalate. A new protocol has been developed between housing and social care with regard to care leavers. Regular meetings take place with police and probation and a named contact within our service. For the most part this means that those at risk of homelessness engage with our services before becoming street homeless. We are also working with discharge teams in local hospitals to improve processes aimed at early identification of those who are homeless or are most likely to become homeless on discharge. Hillingdon is part of the London Offender Homeless Prevention Group.

Implications on related Council policies

A role of the Select Committees is to make recommendations on service changes and improvements to the Cabinet who are responsible for the Council's policy and direction. The Council's approach to Homelessness is set out in the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019 to 2024. This also forms part of the Council's Housing Strategy 2021 to

2026 under the priority of 'Supporting Independent Living'. The Housing Strategy is a key policy framework document for the Council.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

Actions that the Council takes in relation to homelessness can have significant benefits for Hillingdon residents. Homelessness can have devastating, long-term and wide-ranging impacts which extend beyond housing to physical and mental health, education and employment opportunities and quality of life.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations of this report.

Legal Implications

None at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.