

# Hillingdon Council Temporary Accommodation Strategy and Action Plan 2024/25 to 2027/28

February 2025



## Contents

	Page
<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Purpose</li> <li>- Homelessness legislation</li> <li>- Challenges</li> <li>- Strategic objectives</li> </ul>	2
<p><b>Temporary Accommodation Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Demand for temporary accommodation</li> <li>- Projections</li> <li>- Current temporary accommodation</li> <li>- Risks with current provision</li> </ul>	7
<p><b>Strategic Plan</b></p> <p>Objective 1: Reduce homelessness demand and increase rates of successful preventions</p> <p>Objective 2: Increase rates of move-on from temporary to settled accommodation</p> <p>Objective 3: Reduce total expenditure on temporary accommodation</p> <p>Objective 4: Increase the supply of additional social rented housing and new council owned temporary accommodation through acquisition and new build programmes</p>	11
<p><b>Impact and Success Measures</b></p>	18
<p><b>Monitoring and Review</b></p>	19
<p><b>Appendix 1: Temporary Accommodation Action Plan</b></p>	i-v

## Introduction

### Purpose

1. As is the case for many London Boroughs, the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation (TA) in Hillingdon and the cost of that accommodation to the council have reached unprecedented levels. It is imperative that a reduction in costs is achieved and that further reductions are made in future years to bring TA costs in line with the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.
2. It is equally important to achieve a reduction in the use of TA so that potential negative impacts on those experiencing or threatened with homelessness are minimised. Homelessness can have a devastating effect on those that experience it. There is stark evidence of dramatically worse outcomes for individuals in terms of health, education and employment.
3. This document sets out our plans to reduce the cost and use of TA during the remainder of 2024/25 and for the period 2025/26 through to 2027/28.

### Homelessness Legislation

4. Under the terms of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the Housing Act 1996, local authorities have a statutory duty to take steps to prevent homelessness if there is a risk of an eligible person or household facing homelessness within 56 days. Local authorities also have a statutory duty to take steps to relieve homelessness if a household is already homeless when they approach them for assistance.
5. If a household is eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need of assistance then local authorities have a legal duty to provide suitable TA until settled accommodation can be secured. Households may be in priority need in circumstances defined by law. This can include: when the household includes children, when a person is homeless as a result of domestic abuse, when a person is vulnerable as a result of old age, illness or disability, and in a number of other situations set out in legislation and the homelessness code of guidance.
6. It is unlawful to place families with children in Bed and Breakfast accommodation (i.e. with shared facilities) except in an emergency. Even in emergency circumstances, the maximum length of time that families are legally permitted to stay in such TA is six weeks. Local authorities are also obliged to make TA placements in their own authority area, where this is reasonably practical, and if not, then as close to their local authority as they can.
7. Generally the suitability of accommodation rules are different for eligible applicants who have been resident in the country for not more than two years but there are exceptions, for example, some applying under the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme. In general, for those making a homelessness application within two years of their arrival in the UK, Local authorities do not need to

consider most of the factors to assess suitability which apply to other applicants, including the distance from their area, disruption to employment and education, or the proximity of medical facilities, support or local services. The impact of any disruption caused to the caring responsibilities of the applicant or their households must still be considered. There is an exception for a person who had a right to occupy accommodation in the UK for an uninterrupted period of six months or more in the three years before they most recently arrived in the UK.

8. Local authorities have a legal duty to provide suitable TA until settled accommodation can be secured, for those that are eligible.

## Challenges

9. Hillingdon, along with many other councils across the country and in London in particular is seeing a significant increase in pressures related to homelessness. These pressures include both high demand from the number of homelessness presentations, and considerable supply pressures driven largely by increased difficulty in accessing private rented sector housing for homeless households. A shift in the supply/demand balance, alongside some additional cost pressures for landlords, has also helped to fuel increased costs of private rented sector placements.
10. To put these pressures in some context, over 40% of councils now view escalating costs for TA as a critical financial challenge. For London Borough's TA is the largest financial pressure, exceeding adult and children's social care for the first time. An increasing number of councils are concerned about the danger of having to issue a section 114 notice (a financial notice) due to being heavily impacted by spiralling TA costs. Following a section 114 notice a council cannot commit to any new spending, with the exception of that funding statutory services and must set a new budget within 21 days that falls within their spending envelope.
11. The high levels of households in TA are an issue across the country, but especially so in London where homelessness and housing market pressures are most acute. More than £1.6bn was spent on TA in England in 2022/23 with over £1bn of this accounted for by London Local authorities. A significant proportion of expenditure is on short-term emergency provision and there has been a steady rise in use of and expenditure on high-cost B&B temporary accommodation.
12. The most recently published government statistics on homelessness were for the year April 2023 to March 2024. These show 358,370 initial assessments, 10.4% more than in 2022/23. 146,430 households in England were assessed as being threatened with homelessness and therefore owed a prevention duty, a 3.1% increase from 2023/24. 178,560 were assessed as homeless and therefore owed a relief duty, up 12.3% from 2022/23. Both the prevention and relief duty numbers were influenced by those threatened with homelessness due to the end of an assured shorthold tenancy. There was also an increase in the households owed a relief duty due to family or friends no longer being willing or able to accommodate them.

13. The number of households in TA in England has been increasing since 2011/12 and reached 117,450 on 31 March 2024, higher than at any other point since the data series began in 1998 and an increase of 12.3% from the same date in the previous year. Households with children in TA increased by 14.7% to 74,530. Single households increased by 8.5% to 42,920.
14. In London, households with children in TA are most likely to be in nightly paid self-contained accommodation or private rented sector accommodation. In the rest of England they are more likely to be in local authority or housing association accommodation.
15. London Councils have been collating data across London in order to make the case for additional government support and interventions. The data for July 2024 shows homelessness presentations up 9.1% compared to the same period last year and households owed a prevention or relief duty +2.0%. The number of households in TA in London was 61,423 at the end July, 10.2% higher than the previous year.
16. The data collated by London Councils also shows an increase in the median weekly rate paid across TA types of 32.2% in July 2024 compared to July 2023 and an increase of 35.4% in the gross total monthly spend on TA.
17. A recent report by London Councils<sup>1</sup> shows boroughs collectively spending £114 million a month or £4m every day on TA. The figure jumped 68% in one year from 2022/23 to 2023/24. The report notes that one in every 21 children in London lives in TA; that rough sleeping in London has also grown significantly; and that homelessness represents a critical risk to the financial stability of town halls across the capital.
18. There are several factors contributing to the stark increase in TA costs and use in London reflecting broader issues within the housing market, socio-economic challenges and policy choices.
  - House prices have continued to grow making it extremely difficult for low- and middle-income households to afford housing and at the same time private rental costs have also increased.
  - Social housing stocks have reduced in many areas through Right to Buy sales and a lack of new social housing construction. There has also recently been a rush of Right to Buy (RTB) applications submitted following announcements of significant change to come in relation to RTB discounts. It remains to be seen how many will ultimately be sold before the changes take effect.
  - Landlords are understood to be leaving the sector in response to concerns about increasing tax and regulatory issues. Recent research by Rightmove found that 29% of properties listed on its website for sale in London were previously offered for rent.
  - Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates are insufficient to cover rental costs and for those out of work access to rented property is further restricted by the benefit cap.

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<sup>1</sup> [londons\\_homelessness\\_emergency\\_october\\_2024.pdf](#)

## Hillingdon Council Temporary Accommodation Strategy and Action Plan

- Those aged under 35 are particularly hard hit as they are only able to access LHA support at the 'shared accommodation rate' meaning that the amount of benefit they can claim is much less.
- Increasing difficulties in accessing private rented sector accommodation has brought further challenges. Many landlords are electing to offer properties on a nightly rate rather than on a longer-term basis; the imbalance can impact negatively on the quality of accommodation offered; and the council sometimes needs to look outside of the borough in order to find suitable accommodation.
- There are also recruitment and retention issues across the sector as the increase in homelessness creates a staffing demand in excess of available supply.
- As with many other councils' homelessness and particularly the impact on TA numbers is a serious budget pressure with costs well in excess of those previously experienced. This is now a significant risk for the Council.

19. London Councils recently commissioned research<sup>2</sup> by Savill's to assess whether there has been a sustained reduction in the size of the Private Rented Sector (PRS) in London and track the changes in affordability of PRS properties for low-income households. The research found:

- A sustained reduction in London's PRS. Between April 2021 and December 2023 45,000 rental properties were sold without replacement equating to a 4.3% reduction in London's private rented sector.
- An estimated 13,500 properties sold in this period had average rental values in the lowest 30% of the market.
- The greatest reduction in properties available to rent is in Outer London. A comparison of 12 months listings to July 2024 compared to the average in 2018/19 shows that Hillingdon, with a reduction of 41%, is the second worst affected borough after Redbridge.
- There are fewer properties to rent across all bed types.
- Only 5% of rental listings were below Local Housing Allowance in Q2 2024.

20. Landlords selling stock to owner occupiers has increased sharply. Properties are leaving the market at a much faster rate in the most affordable locations in London. During 2023, PRS stock across the lower end reduced by 3.3% per month as a proportion of available listings compared to 2.6% per month across the rest of London. The loss of properties at the lower end of the market has a particular impact on the ability of low-income households to access the PRS and makes it harder for local authorities to prevent and relieve homelessness. The analysis is based on a sample of listings and does not represent the whole market but does provide clear evidence of a reduction in the size of the PRS in London.

### **Strategic objectives**

21. The Temporary Accommodation Strategy is focussed on four key objectives:

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<sup>2</sup> [Private Rented Housing Supply in London](#)

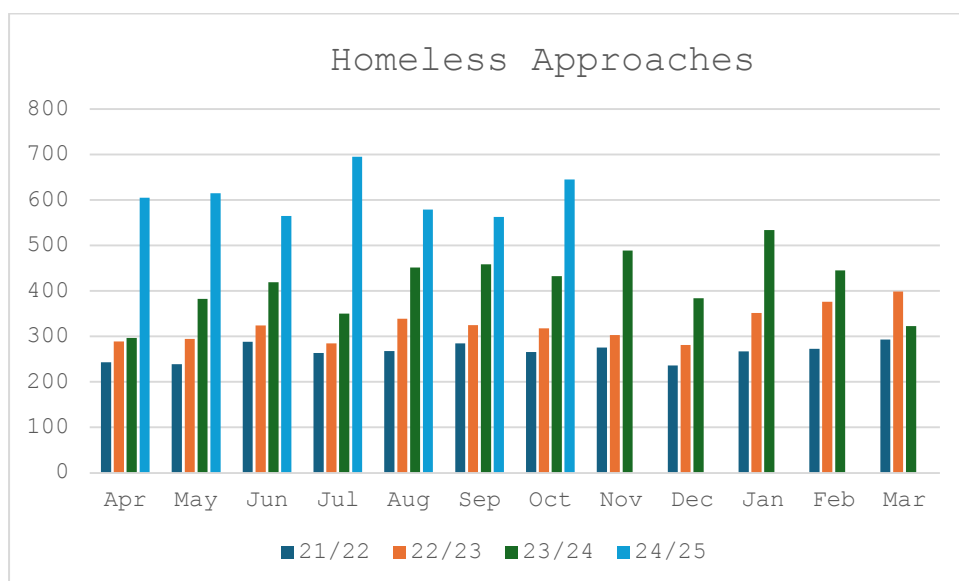
## Hillingdon Council Temporary Accommodation Strategy and Action Plan

- 1) Reduce homelessness demand and increase rates of successful homeless preventions;
- 2) Increase rates of move-on from temporary to settled accommodation;
- 3) Reduce total expenditure on temporary accommodation;
- 4) Increase the supply of additional social rented housing and new temporary accommodation through acquisitions and new build programmes.

## Temporary Accommodation Review

### Demand for temporary accommodation

22. There has been a very significant increase in the number of homelessness approaches in recent years in Hillingdon. In 2021/22 there were 3,198 households approaching which was 22% more than the year before. There was a further 22% increase in 2022/23 to 3,886, and a 27% rise in 2023/24 to 4,968. In the first half of 2024/25 the rise has been markedly steeper. In the first seven months, April to October 2024 there were 4,267 approaches. This is a 53% increase over the same period in 2023.



Throughout the 2023/24 year, there were 700 new reservations made for B&B stays and there were 441 in the first 7 months of 2024/25.

Bedsize need	2023/24		April 2024 to Oct 2025	
	Number	%	Number	%
1 bedroom	215	31%	120	27%
2 bedroom	249	36%	141	32%
3 bedroom	158	23%	136	31%
4 bedroom	72	10%	43	10%
5+ bedroom	6	1%	1	>1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>100%</b>

23. There were 214 bookings for Section 21 (private rented sector) eviction notices during 2023/24, which is 31% of all bookings and more twice as many as for any other reason.

24. Families in need of four or more bedrooms for TA predominantly consisted of households at risk of homelessness under section 21 (42), those fleeing domestic violence (11), and those whose government arranged accommodation had ceased (10), representing the three primary categories.



25. In contrast, families in need of three bedrooms for TA largely consisted of households at risk of homelessness under section 21(83), those whose government arranged accommodation had ceased (23) and family evictions (11) making up the three primary categories.
26. Section 21 eviction notices continue to be by far the most common reason for TA B&B bookings accounting for 179 or 41% of all bookings in the first 7 months of 2024/25, now more than three times as many as any other reason. Other notable reasons include family evictions, ending of government arranged accommodation placements and domestic abuse.
27. Landlord possession actions have shown a general increase since Q2 2021. There is a concentration in London with 8,818 landlord claims and 6,674 landlord orders at London courts in Q3 2024, accounting for 35% of each. In London, there was an increase of 10% from Q3 2023 for landlord claims and of 20% for landlord orders. There were 4,545 landlord warrants in London, making up 39% of all landlord warrants. This is 61% more than London landlord warrants in Q3 2023. Possession action statistics for Hillingdon are shown below:

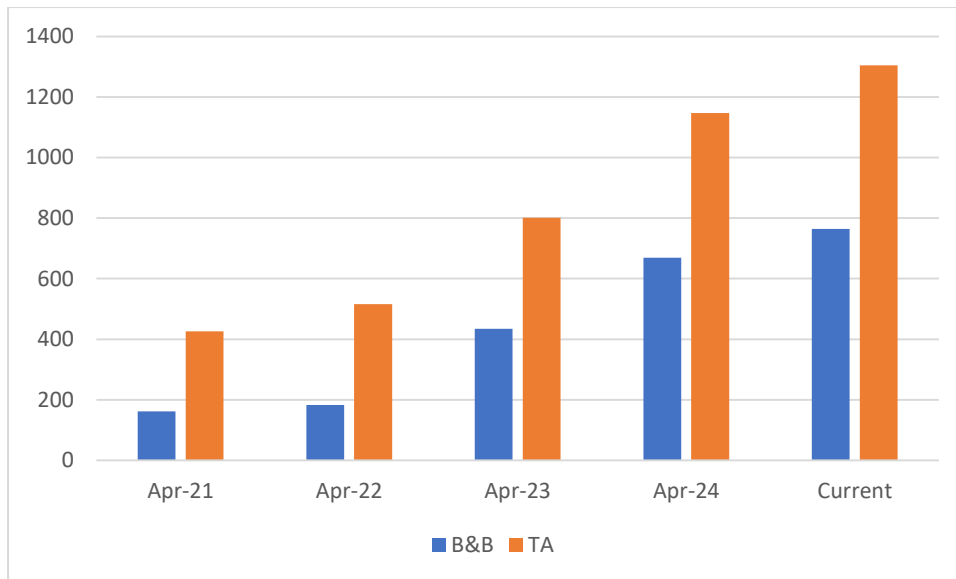
Quarter 3	Claims			Possessions		
	2023	2024	% + -	2023	2024	% + -
Accelerated Landlord	117	144	23%	49	74	51%
Social Landlord	50	49	-2%	10	20	50%
Private Landlord	77	79	3%	16	21	31%

28. A detailed dynamic financial and activity-based model to track homelessness demand for TA and supply to meet that demand has been developed. The model provides a baseline position based on 2023/24 data and forecasts supply and demand over the period of this strategy based on a number of assumptions relating to future costs and demand and to the likely impact of a series of management actions. An important and defining feature of the model is that it is linked to detailed financial information allowing for both overall forecasts for each year covered and month by month forecasts for the forthcoming year to 18 months ahead; and to assign costs/savings to individual elements of the strategy including identified management actions.
29. Using the model, progress will be tracked on an ongoing monthly basis and be substantially reviewed on an annual basis at a minimum. This will include a monthly update on progress to the lead Cabinet Member.

### **Current temporary accommodation**

30. The number of households in TA in Hillingdon and the number of which were in B&B (nightly charged, higher cost temporary accommodation) has been continually rising over the last four years (see chart below).

## Hillingdon Council Temporary Accommodation Strategy and Action Plan



31. At the beginning of December 2024, there were 1,305 homeless families in TA, 97 were funded via specific grant funding and the remainder by the General Fund. A breakdown of the bedroom need of the families and the type of TA occupied is shown in table below:

	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4+ bed	Total
B&B	136	264	255	109	764
Leased TA	12	22	11	1	46
Council Hostel and Shortlife	166	184	112	33	495
<b>Total</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>1305</b>

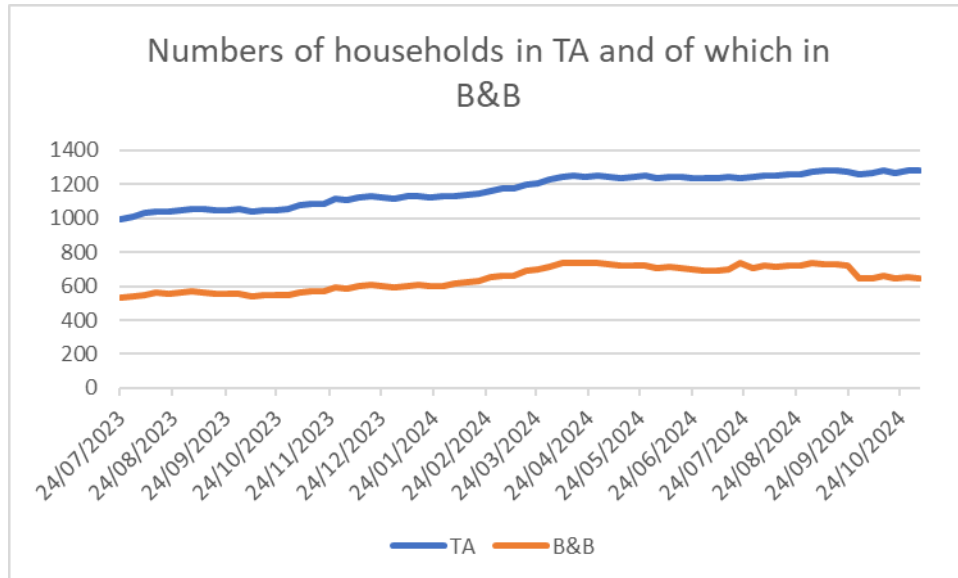
32. Between Q2 of 2019 to Q2 of 2022 there was a steady, stable number of households in TA but Hillingdon then began to see a steep rise particularly towards the end of 2023.

33. A direct comparison to the West London region shows Hillingdon is below the London average per 1,000 households in the borough (see table below).

	Total No. in TA	No. of H'holds in LA (000's)	No. in TA per 000 H'holds
Brent	...	120	
Ealing	3,205	124	25.85
Hammersmith & Fulham	1,382	84	16.52
Harrow	1,087*	88	12.4
Hillingdon	1,476	113	13.7
Hounslow	725*	103	7.1
Kensington & Chelsea	...	76	
<b>LONDON</b>	<b>68,990</b>	<b>3,659</b>	<b>18.85</b>

\*Data for previous quarter shown as most up to date available

34. Throughout 2024/25 there has been a focus on bringing forward actions to reduce TA use. The rise in TA use in Hillingdon, as set out in the graph below, is less steep than it was at this time last year. B&B use is now (November 2024) less than it was Spring/Summer 2024.



### Risks with current provision

35. Numbers of people and families in TA in London and Hillingdon are continuing to steadily rise. There are no signs of this stopping and there are pressures which could exacerbate this further, including forthcoming legislation which will place extra pressures on private landlords. This may encourage more landlords to leave the market before the changes take effect.

36. The current high demand for TA has resulted in more TA provision being marketed on a nightly rate basis and a marked increase in costs, estimated at around 30% per annum.

37. It is not sustainable for the council to continue to fund TA at the current and an increasing rate.

## Strategic Plan

To reduce cost and reliance on TA we will need to address supply issues in both social and private sectors; across new and existing homes; consider what more can be done to keep costs down; prioritise preventing homelessness from occurring in the first place and when households do become homeless, ensure that they move to a settled home faster.

### **Objective 1: Manage homelessness demand and increase rates of successful preventions**

#### **Promote self-service and 'find-your-own' housing options to residents**

38. Those working in homelessness are well aware of the huge imbalance between the numbers of people affected by homelessness and the supply of accommodation available and the enormous pressure on the capacity within councils to meet presenting demands.
39. To ensure that council services are able to run efficiently, we need to make sure that there is very effective communication to residents and partner organisations about what housing options are available. While the council has a duty to provide advice and information about homelessness to all people in their area, other homelessness duties are much more limited. A duty to secure accommodation only applies for certain categories of applicants believed to be homeless, eligible for assistance and having a priority need.
40. We have completed a review of the information provided on the council's website and amended as appropriate. Improvements have been made to make accessing the information more intuitive. The information aims to help people to take control of their housing situation and to understand their housing options and what action they can take themselves. People are encouraged to act early to have a better chance of finding a solution before they become homeless.
41. The second stage of changes being made involves introducing an initial inquiry form which will trigger a contact by a homelessness officer, prior to completion of a full application. A wider communications campaign has been launched including social media posts and a video recorded with Councillor Tuckwell, Cabinet Member for Planning, Housing and Growth. The campaign will continue throughout 2024/25 and into 2025/26 and will particularly target those residents that are most likely to present for housing advice and will include piloting face to face advice surgeries in community locations.

#### **Deliver proactive and quality case work to increase 'no and / or low-cost' homeless preventions**

42. Good case work management is essential in ensuring that appropriate interventions are made and that cases move efficiently through the system

providing a good experience for customers and reducing the creation of unnecessary work through complaints or protracted casework.

43. Case work reviews are being embedded across the Homelessness Prevention service with a focus on resolution and a practice learning model to provide peer support is being embedded to ensure consistently good practice. Reviews will focus on staff engagement with residents as well as technical application of homelessness legislation and council policy.

**Develop our prevention ‘tool kit’ focusing particularly on the most frequent reasons for loss of accommodation**

44. The prevention of evictions from the family home or from living with friends will include enhanced case worker mediation and negotiation. Options to commission a specialist provider of mediation services are being considered for a pilot exercise which will subsequently be evaluated. Routine visits to those evicting to negotiate to prevent eviction will be embedded in processes.
45. Analysis of all evictions to date during 2024/25 is being undertaken to help inform future activity, identify cases that need to be dealt with most urgently, and target actions for specific groups. Homelessness presentations and TA where the reason is domestic abuse will also be analysed to identify opportunities to avoid homelessness.
46. We will seek to reach solutions at scale with landlords who have multiple council customers as their tenants. Meetings will be arranged to agree workable preventative resolutions. We will also proactively engage with relevant government departments to assist in ensuring levels of homelessness are reduced.
47. A revised joint housing / social care / hospital discharge protocol has been agreed to find accommodation solutions for those who cannot return to their former accommodation, when leaving hospital.

**Develop and deliver the action plan to commission additional supply to support prevention of homelessness**

48. We will meet with all third sector housing and support providers to discuss barriers and solutions to increasing referral rates to accommodation/support pathways. This will include all housing associations that have significant levels of housing stock in Hillingdon and supported housing providers that operate in the borough.
49. Discussions with providers will seek to understand and resolve issues, such as blockages to move on along the housing pathway. Single homeless and rough sleepers often face higher risks of mental health issues, substance abuse or trauma. Housing pathways for single adults can better address these issues through supported accommodation.

50. We will explore with providers what support might be necessary and look to review and re-set the offer to landlords, including a tenancy sustainment / after care model for tenants referred to private sector landlords and the re-introduction of a rent guarantee scheme. Once complete the new offer will be actively promoted to all landlords. The private sector housing landlord / agents Forum will be relaunched, and an active communication and engagement programme will be rolled out.
51. New options and proposals relating to models for the procurement of private rented sector properties at a more significant scale to prevent homelessness and move-on from TA will be presented to Cabinet as and when required.
52. The council aims to consider options for leasing properties from private sector landlords. The preference is for settled accommodation, but temporary options will also be considered, if it results in lower costs than currently paid and especially if the agreement includes conversion of the properties at a later date to settled housing.
53. To evaluate options a complete market analysis is being undertaken. This includes affordability analysis by comparing Local Housing Allowance rates, local income levels, and the distribution of affordable properties. Assessments are also being made of household types based on bed-size, income, and suitability, considering time spent in TA. We aim to identify high-demand, low-supply areas to avoid competition zones among local authorities.
54. We will evaluate different leasing models and assess their viability. Different leasing options, include: Long-Term Leases; Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs); Hybrid models: (leasing and ASTs). Financial and market assessments will be conducted.

## **Objective 2: Increase rates of move-on from temporary to settled accommodation**

### **Implement policy and processes to maximise the number of lettings to priority homeless households in social rented housing across all registered social housing providers**

55. A review of the Social Housing Allocation Policy has been completed and a revised policy approved by Cabinet. This will be implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2025.
56. The changes provide a clearer framework for prioritising applications and continuing priority for residents with 10 or more years continuous residency. In addition to changes to the banding structure and the circumstances in which additional priority is awarded, the revised policy will assist with homelessness and meeting housing needs through ensuring movement through housing pathways.
57. There is an increased priority for care leavers and to assist with move on from social care supported housing and from single homeless supported housing for

vulnerable people considered by specialist panels as appropriate for a social housing letting. This will ensure effective use of specialist housing provision and maintain movement through housing pathways to continue access to the available supported accommodation. The high cost of housing means that a single person's needs is often met via shared housing in the private rented sector.

58. A wider range of options are being made available to those living in overcrowded accommodation. The policy already allowed those with a need for a 4-bedroom home to bid for a 3-bedroom property to partially meet their needs which may allow more rapid rehousing. This is being extended to other bedsizes.
59. The Social Housing Allocation Policy includes provision for a Lettings Plan to be developed in order to strike the right balance of allocations to different groups and manage the cost of homelessness. Lettings will be monitored against the plan and if an allocation target is not being achieved, the council reserves the right to enhance access by advertising and/or directly allocating some properties to specific groups. The Plan will be designed to set allocation percentage targets, to determine the proportion of social housing offered to different lists within the Council's Housing Register to best balance their competing demands and needs. The Housing Register consists of three separate housing lists:

**Homeless Households;** for applicants to whom the Council has accepted a statutory homeless duty and who are awaiting an offer of longer-term accommodation.

**The Transfer List;** for Council tenants and eligible Registered Housing Provider tenants applying for a move to alternative accommodation.

**The General Housing Register List;** for all other households applying for social housing in Hillingdon.

60. It is intended that a Lettings Plan is usually produced annually but it may be more or less frequent as circumstances require. Given the current pressures related to TA, a Lettings Plan is currently being developed and will include proposals for the proportion of lettings to be made to homeless households for the remainder of 2024/45 and through 2025/26 to assist in the urgent need to reduce TA numbers and expenditure, and to best meet needs.
61. At 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, registered providers (RP) of social housing owned 6,864 social housing dwellings for general needs renting in Hillingdon along with 497 supported housing homes and 615 sheltered housing homes for older people. They also owned 1,434 Low-Cost Home Ownership Homes.
- A2 Dominion and Peabody Trust own more than 1,000 homes for general needs lettings in Hillingdon.
  - Guinness Partnership, Metropolitan Housing Trust and Notting Hill Genesis have between 500 and 1000 each, Guinness just a little less than 1,000.
  - Home Group, Karibu Community Homes, London & Quadrant and Paradigm all have between 200 and 500
  - Places for People and Shepherds Bush Housing Association have between 100 and 200; and
  - the remainder all have less than 100 properties for general needs rent.

62. We are completing regular reviews of nomination arrangements with all registered housing providers to ensure best use is being made of RP owned social housing to meet needs. A programme of quarterly reviews is being implemented with all providers that have substantial housing stock for rent in Hillingdon.

**Expand the supply of private rented sector accommodation to accelerate move-on from temporary accommodation into long-term sustainable solutions**

63. As described under Objective 1, a number of measures are in train aimed at increasing the supply of private rented housing for both temporary and settled homes.

**Embed a 'one-reasonable-offer' approach to prevent or relieve homelessness**

64. To increase rates of move on, it is important that slick and streamlined processes are in place to make suitable offers for homeless applicants in as short a time as possible. This will include a case management approach that aims to complete the vast majority of suitability and affordability assessments within 5 working days, following which a single suitable offer will be made and the implications of any refusal made clear.

**Increase recovery of properties through tackling fraud**

65. Considerable savings in TA costs can be made by cracking down on fraud. Our counter fraud team work with housing staff to prevent and detect fraud. A programme of unannounced visits to TA take place at least six times a year to identify when accommodation let to homeless families remains unoccupied. A key amnesty campaign will also be run every 6 months for TA tenants to voluntarily end their tenancy if it is not needed.

66. The counter fraud team also work hard to identify social tenancies fraudulently occupied. With every home that is sublet illegally, and every tenancy obtained dishonestly, a person or family in need is deprived of a home and unnecessary costs are added to the TA bill.

**Develop and deliver up to date comprehensive and bespoke Personal Housing plans identifying pathways for all customers currently in temporary accommodation.**

67. A comprehensive updated profile analysis of those households living in TA is being completed to enable identification of all appropriate housing options to provide a housing pathway with potential solutions for each household. Distinct housing pathways for individuals and families facing homelessness shape more appropriate housing placements and sustainable solutions to their specific challenges.



68. A specific move-on project aims to deliver rapid actions to support move-on from TA, informed by the profile of need, including targeting the 100 priority households to move to settled accommodation. This includes further development of the single housing pathway through shared and supported accommodation.

### **Objective 3: Reduce total expenditure on temporary accommodation**

#### **Negotiate reduced nightly rates with all temporary accommodation providers**

69. The nightly rates charged by providers have been increasing at a significant rate. We are taking a more proactive and focused approach to working with landlords with the aim of stemming this increase. A complete analysis of providers charges has been completed to enable efforts to be directed where they can have the most impact and to enable an understanding of which landlords are increasing costs the most and which have remained more stable. As part of a review, the current contractual terms will be considered. Negotiations will be ongoing with all providers of nightly charged TA.

#### **Develop and deliver the action plan to commission additional supply to support prevention of homelessness including use of leased accommodation and lower cost council owned options.**

70. To exercise greater control over cost and quality of TA, the council has used some of its own stock for this purpose. There are currently 495 council owned 'short life' or 'hostel' units used for TA. It is intended that in the short-term further council owned homes will be transferred to 'short life' for use as TA.

71. We aim to reduce the volume of spot commissioned nightly charged temporary accommodation by moving to a sustainable model including leased accommodation. The council has been actively contacting landlords and agents to secure short-term leases for use as TA. This includes both existing landlords that we currently work with and providers that are new to Hillingdon and outside the Borough. A number of potential options are currently being considered.

### **Objective 4: Increase the supply of additional social rented housing and new temporary accommodation through acquisition and new build programmes**

72. A Housing Delivery Programme is underway which includes a forward programme of acquisitions, new build and regeneration sites to assist in addressing the need for homes for both temporary and settled housing.

73. There are a range of delivery routes by which affordable homes may be delivered to meet the housing priorities both for overall housing requirements over the medium term and immediate requirements posed by the current high level of TA. The potential delivery routes are being considered in formulating our wider strategy for development.

74. Acquisitions and new build for settled homes in the social sector add to the stock of available housing to assist in moving people on from TA. As new builds or block acquisitions include numerous properties available for letting at the same time, they provide a bigger boost to lettings than relets of existing homes which only turnover a small percentage each year.

### **Evaluate and adopt options to increase the volume of council owned properties for use as temporary accommodation**

75. By securing a larger proportion of TA within council ownership, greater control can be exercised over cost, quality and management services.

76. Options appraisal exercises will be completed for sites that offer a reasonable prospect for use in providing accommodation. This includes considering options for use of a sites on a short-term basis where a different final use is expected but the site is available in the short term. A consideration of modular build will form part of appraisals where appropriate.

### **Deliver an acquisitions programme to increase the supply of social rented properties**

77. The council is investing in increasing the supply of social rented properties to meet housing need and impact on the number of people and families currently housed in TA. Over the short term the purchase of existing homes will be significantly increased. Buying existing homes will allow for a more rapid impact than can be achieved by developing new housing.

78. During 2024/25 a significant purchase has been made of Cavenham Court at Millington Road in Hayes which provides 113 homes. Smaller purchases have been made of 2 homes (Bartram Close) and 6 homes (at Elmgrove).

79. A pilot contract is underway with a partner to purchase 20 homes and complete any necessary works to them on behalf of the council. Subject to a successful evaluation of the pilot, the model to work with a partner may be implemented for a fixed period of time, to continue to boost supply via acquisitions in future years.

### **Deliver a 5-year programme of new build social and affordable rented housing**

80. Over the latter years of this strategy the aim is for a greater number of new build homes to be delivered and a corresponding reduced need for acquisitions.

81. Affordable housing continues to be delivered by Registered Providers (primarily Housing Associations) however activity has slowed. Housing Associations are focusing to a greater extent on improvements to their existing homes, conscious of increased regulatory requirements, the forthcoming introduction of Awaab's Law and an expected revised Decent Homes Standard. Other issues impacting include second staircase requirements, as well as rising costs and competition for land. We will continue to work with Registered Providers to encourage development in Hillingdon. The current delivery pipeline for Registered Providers in Hillingdon include 87 properties for low-cost rent during 2024/25, and 141

properties in 2025/26 subject to works progressing in line with current expectations.

82. The delivery by registered providers is limited in future years. This places an emphasis on the role that the Council can play in supporting the supply of new homes within the borough.
83. There is a healthy and growing council new build and housing regeneration programme underway. Current projections for council rented homes are 180 homes in 2024/25, 91 homes in 2025/26 and 515 homes in 2026/27. The further ahead the projections, the more likely some of the development projects may be subject to some change. Schemes forecast for delivery in 2024/25 and 2025/26 form part of existing HRA budgets.
84. The initial phases of the Hayes Town Centre (Phase 1) and 30 at Avondale (Phase 1a) project are targeting the creation of 110 new homes. The site construction has been progressing well and is on track to complete in the summer of 2025. The topping-out of the site occurred in November 2024 and will release key developer resources for the next phases of the project. Overall, the initial plan for the regeneration was for 396 new homes to be developed. The build plans for the remaining phases of the project will need to be reconfigured to take account of regulatory requirements post-Grenfell, in particular new requirements to include second stair cores, as well as project delays and higher than expected inflation. The council has been exploring an opportunity to accelerate the remaining build programme by reconfiguring how the phases could be better aligned.

## **Impact and Success Measures**

85. The strategic objectives of this TA strategy are focussed on increasing prevention, move on and new supply and on reducing the cost of TA.
86. The outcomes we want to achieve are:
- A higher proportion of households whose homelessness is prevented.
  - No families with children/pregnant women in non-self-contained B&B for more than 6 weeks.
  - Fewer households becoming homeless and needing temporary accommodation.
  - Fewer households in nightly charged temporary accommodation.
  - Lower overall cost of temporary accommodation.
  - Lower cost per temporary accommodation unit.
  - Shorter average period housed in temporary accommodation.
  - Implementation of acquisition and new build development programme.

Annual targets will be set for the strategy, agreed with Cabinet.

## **Monitoring and Review**

87. The dynamic financial and activity-based model mentioned above will be used to track progress on an ongoing monthly basis and will be substantially reviewed on an annual basis at a minimum.
88. Progress on delivering the TA Strategy and Action Plan will be reported regularly to Cabinet as part of progress reporting on the Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The lead Cabinet Member will receive a monthly update on progress.

## Appendix 1

### Temporary Accommodation Action Plan

As highlighted in the main body of the report, the outcomes we want to achieve are:

- A higher proportion of households whose homelessness is prevented
- No families with children/pregnant women in non-self-contained B&B for more than 6 weeks
- Fewer households becoming homeless and needing temporary accommodation
- Fewer households in nightly charged temporary accommodation
- Lower overall cost of temporary accommodation
- Lower cost per temporary accommodation unit
- Shorter average period housed in temporary accommodation
- Implementation of acquisition and new build development programme

The action plan below summarises the key objectives, actions and measures of success. A more detailed annual plan will be used for delivery purposes including specific actions, targets, timescales and lead responsibilities. These will be subject to regular review and reporting through internal governance structures – updates will be provided to Cabinet through the monthly budget report and through an annual update.

	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Measures of Success</b>
1.	Manage homelessness demand and increase rates of successful homeless preventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliver a communications campaign to promote self-service and ‘find your own’ housing options to residents. Implement changes to the on-line self-referral portal.</li></ul>	From Q3 2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase in proportion of households whose homelessness is prevented at advice, triage, prevention and relief stage</li><li>• Achieve a minimum homeless prevention rate of 40%</li><li>• No families with children/pregnant women in non self-contained B&amp;B for more than 6 weeks</li></ul>

Hillingdon Council Temporary Accommodation Strategy and Action Plan

	Objective	Action	Timeframe	Measures of Success
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver proactive and quality case work to increase ‘no’ and ‘low’ cost preventions – to include;                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the option of a new mediation and accommodation finding service, for residents;</li> <li>○ embed new case work practice and support, to include weekly reviews of case work preventions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Develop our prevention ‘tool kit’, focusing particularly on the most frequent reasons for loss of accommodation, to include;                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ proactive engagement with private sector landlords at scale and working with the Courts, to reduce evictions;</li> <li>○ launch a new offer for private sector landlords to sustain tenancies to avoid eviction, including the option of a Rent Guarantee Scheme, if the right option for Hillingdon; and improvement grants;</li> <li>○ a proactive, fast track approach for evictions by ‘friends and family members’.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Work with Government departments to ensure effective planned arrangements</li> </ul>	<p>Q4 2024/25</p> <p>Q3 2024/25</p> <p>Q3 2024/25</p> <p>Q4 2024/25</p> <p>Q4 2024/25</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer households being placed into nightly paid temporary accommodation than the full year estimate of 892 for 2024/25 (Based on 778 bookings in nightly paid accommodation date up to 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025).</li> <li>• Increased accommodation available and used to prevent homelessness. Baseline estimates for 2024/25 are                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 302 Private rented sector placements</li> <li>○ 192 Lettings to homeless households</li> <li>○ 57 Single homeless supported accommodation</li> <li>○ 166 New Build and Acquisition lettings to homeless households</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Hillingdon Council Temporary Accommodation Strategy and Action Plan

	Objective	Action	Timeframe	Measures of Success
		for leaving accommodation to avoid homelessness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Deliver additional rented housing supply to support prevention of homelessness, to include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ increasing the supply of private rented sector accommodation (see objective 2)</li> <li>○ enabling an increase in the move-on supply of accommodation to support the single homeless pathway, including the supply accessed by voluntary sector partners.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	From Q3 2024/25  From Q1 2025/26	
2.	Increase rates of move-on from temporary to settled accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement policy and processes to maximise the number of lettings to priority homeless households in social rented housing across all registered social housing providers to include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ implement changes to the Social Housing Allocation Policy;</li> <li>○ apply a local lettings plan;</li> <li>○ review every quarter the supply of lettings from all Registered Providers to ensure these are being maximised, for the benefit of residents (nominations).</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Expand the supply of private rented sector accommodation to accelerate move-on from temporary</li> </ul>	Q4 2024/25  Q4 2024/25 Q3 2024/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased supply of PRS for settled accommodation at all duty stages.</li> <li>● Reduced average period housed in temporary accommodation.</li> <li>● No families with children/pregnant women in non self-contained B&amp;B for more than 6 weeks.</li> <li>● Lower overall cost of temporary accommodation (after subsidy).</li> <li>● Lower cost per temporary accommodation unit (after subsidy) in all bed sizes.</li> <li>● Increase in duties discharged particularly on one offer only.</li> <li>● Increase in duties discharged as a result of proactive casework e.g.</li> </ul>

Hillingdon Council Temporary Accommodation Strategy and Action Plan

	Objective	Action	Timeframe	Measures of Success
		<p>accommodation into long-term sustainable solutions, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ an updated Private Sector Rented Policy offer</li> <li>○ a new package of offers for landlords to sustain tenancies, grant funding to improve properties and options to work with the council on a medium-term basis.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Embed a ‘one-reasonable-offer’ approach to prevent or relieve homelessness.</li> <li>● Increase recovery of properties through tackling fraud, including unannounced visits and a key amnesty’.</li> <li>● Complete a rapid review and update of Personal Housing Plans (PHPs) for all tenants of temporary accommodation, identifying suitable housing pathways and options for all residents currently in temporary accommodation. Complete a quarterly review and update thereafter.</li> </ul>	<p>Q4 2024/25</p> <p>Q4 2024/25</p> <p>From Q3 2024/25</p> <p>From Q1 2024/25</p> <p>Q4 2024/25 and ongoing thereafter</p>	<p>intentionality, fraud, within timescales).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increase in PHPs developed and delivered across all entering and currently living in Temporary accommodation</li> <li>● Increase the supply of private rented sector properties by 50%</li> </ul>



Hillingdon Council Temporary Accommodation Strategy and Action Plan

	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Measures of Success</b>
3.	Reduce total expenditure on temporary accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiate reduced nightly rates with all temporary accommodation providers.</li> <li>• Review and implement a new procurement approach for the use of temporary accommodation.</li> <li>• Deliver increased supply of lower cost temporary accommodation, to support prevention of homelessness including use of leased accommodation and lower cost council owned options.</li> </ul>	<p>From Q3 2024/25</p> <p>From Q4 2024/25</p> <p>From Q3 2024/25</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fewer households in nightly charged temporary accommodation</li> <li>• Lower overall cost of temporary accommodation (after subsidy)</li> <li>• Lower cost per temporary accommodation unit (after subsidy) in all bed sizes</li> <li>• Increase the use of existing council relets for use as temporary accommodation</li> </ul>
4.	Increase the supply of additional social rented housing and new temporary accommodation through acquisition and new build programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree and deliver a pipeline supply programme to increase the volume of council owned properties for use as temporary accommodation</li> <li>• Deliver an acquisitions programme to increase the supply of social rented properties (minimum 500 homes)</li> <li>• Deliver a 5-year programme of new build social and affordable rented housing (minimum 1,000 homes)</li> <li>• Proactively work with private developers to unlock 'stalled' residential sites, for planning gain</li> </ul>	<p>From Q4 2024/25</p> <p>From Q1 2024/25</p> <p>From Q1 2024/25</p> <p>From Q2 2024/25</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of acquisition and new build development programme; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increased number of temporary accommodation homes managed by the council to control cost and quality.</li> <li>○ Increased supply of new acquisitions and new build supply to March 2028.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>