



THE LONDON BOROUGH
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DATE: 9 March 2018

CARE SERVICES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting to be held on Wednesday 14 March 2018

Please see the attached report marked "to follow" on the agenda.

10b HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY
(Pages 3 - 88)

Copies of the documents referred to above can be obtained from
<http://cds.bromley.gov.uk/>

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Report No.
CS18135

London Borough of Bromley

PART ONE - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: EXECUTIVE

Date: For Pre-Decision Scrutiny by the Care Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday 14th March 2018

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Executive Key

Title: HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

Contact Officer: Sara Bowrey, Director: Housing
Tel: 020 8313 4013 E-mail: sara.bowrey@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Executive Director of Education, Care and Health Services

Ward: Borough-wide

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 This report presents the final Homelessness Strategy 2018-23 following the completion of the public consultation exercise. It details the feedback from the consultation, together with the final draft of the strategy taking account of the feedback received (Appendix A). The report now seeks consent to publish the strategy and action plan.
-

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Care Services PDS Committee is asked to:

- i) Note the findings from the final homelessness strategy consultation and resulting revisions;
- ii) Recommend that the Council's Executive approve the final draft of the homelessness strategy; and,
- iii) Note that the implementation of specific proposed actions may be subject to further decision making in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.

2.2 The Council's Executive is asked to:

- i) Approve, subject to final formatting, the final draft of the homelessness strategy.
- ii) Delegate authority to the Director: Housing to finalise the action plan to implement and deliver the strategy; and,
- iii) Note that the implementation of any of the proposed actions may be subject to further decision making in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact: The Strategy seeks to support vulnerable adults and children through the provision of effective housing advice and support to assist them to secure settled, safe and sustainable accommodation and prevent the risk of homelessness.
-

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy:
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council Supporting Independence:
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable:
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable:
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Operational Housing
 4. Total current budget for this head: £5,735K
 5. Source of funding: EC&HS approved revenue budget. Contingency budget set aside for homelessness and welfare reform pressures. New burdens Homelessness Reduction Act grant funding.
-

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement:
 2. Call-in: Applicable: Executive decision.
-

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: N/A
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): The Council currently experiences in excess of 5000 households approaching annually facing homelessness or related difficulties which could result in homelessness. The homelessness strategy sets out the Council's strategic priorities in preventing homelessness and supporting people to be able to sustain accommodation
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Homelessness Strategy 2018 - 2023 establishes the Councils priorities in order to prevent and reduce homelessness and to ensure that appropriate accommodation and support is available for people who are or may become homeless in Bromley over the next 5 years.
- 3.2 The strategy has been developed by officers of the Council in consultation with partners and agencies delivering services, customers and other stakeholders, reflecting the fact that in order to effectively prevent and reduce homelessness a strategic approach agreed by all key partners is required. A strategy and action plan agreed with key partners will enable a better collaborative approach to preventing and reducing homelessness, particularly when addressing complex needs and the wider factors which can lead to homelessness.
- 3.3 Putting a new strategy in place will enable the Council to both respond to the risk of increased homelessness and meet the new statutory duties arising from the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 which comes into force in April 2018.
- 3.4 The Homelessness Strategy identifies 4 key priority areas designed to make the most difference and target those at greatest risk of homelessness:
- **Early identification and prevention of homelessness:** To support people wherever possible before crisis and to provide excellent services to those at point of crisis to either prevent homelessness or assist them to secure alternative accommodation.
 - **Achieving positive outcomes for our young people:** Preventing youth homelessness and ensuring young people are supported to make a positive transition into adulthood.
- Increase access to and promote the supply of accommodation:** To make best use of all available housing options to increase access to accommodation that is affordable and sustainable and to increase through flow from temporary accommodation.
- **Achieving positive outcomes; Improving health and wellbeing and supporting people to break the cycle of homelessness:** To ensure services are accessible and tailored to individuals to enable them to secure safe and sustainable accommodation and to assist people to develop the necessary skills and resilience to sustain accommodation and avoid repeat homelessness.
- 3.5 The Executive Committee agreed at the meeting of 6th December to initiate an 8 week public consultation as the final stage prior to approving the homelessness strategy for publication.
- 3.6 This report provides a summary of the consultation results and presents the final draft of the homelessness strategy subject to final formatting for approval. Full details of the consultation feedback will be published alongside the Strategy.
- 3.7 An action plan will accompany the Homelessness Strategy to ensure its effective implementation. This action plan will then be reviewed, updated and published annually to monitor the progress and ensure any changes in pressures, legislative requirement and resulting priorities' are reflected. Key actions will also be fed into and from the Portfolio Plan and departmental business plan.

Consultation Overview

- 3.8 The consultation activities for the development of the homelessness strategy began early in 2017 with customer and stakeholder questionnaires. These were then followed up by a number of focus groups where issues raised from the consultation could be explored in more detail. A broad range of services were invited to the stakeholder consultation sessions

- 3.9 This consultation helped to inform the overarching priorities set out in the draft homelessness strategy.
- 3.10 The final stage of consultation was undertaken through a SMART survey accessed through the Council's website together with a series of stakeholder and customer focus groups. This consultation closed on 6th March 2018. The aim of this consultation was to confirm that the priority and objectives set out in the draft strategy is representative of the views of stakeholders and customers to ensure no areas have been overlooked. It also provided the opportunity for further suggestions and solutions on how priorities can be achieved to be included in the action plan.

Final stage consultation Response:

- 3.11 A total of 232 individual responses were received in addition to the feedback from the focus groups. 37% of those responding are or have experienced homelessness. Representations have also been made from a wide range of organisations and sectors including housing associations, landlords, business organisations the voluntary sector (such as homeless charities and the Citizen's advice bureau), local authorities and health care.
- 3.12 Overall the vast majority of responders agreed that the appropriate priorities for addressing homelessness have been identified.

To prevent homelessness, we propose that the strategy should focus on the following four objectives below. Do you agree with our four strategic objectives?				
		Agree (%)	Neither Agree or Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)
1	Early identification and prevention of homelessness	88	11	1
2	Achieving positive outcomes for our young people	86	13	1
3	Increasing supply of accommodation	87	10	3
4	Achieving positive outcomes: improving health, wellbeing and supporting vulnerable people	89	10	1

- 3.13 Overall there were no key areas identified as excluded requiring revision. Some of the consultation response drew attention to additional points which are relevant to other strategic areas. An area of focus was in relation to the wider issue of affordable housing supply and will be considered in more detail in the forthcoming overarching housing strategy.
- 3.14 There were a number of emerging themes, which whilst included within the homelessness strategy key priorities, provided valuable information to help refine the accompanying action plan to implement and deliver on the key priorities within the homelessness strategy. The key points from this feedback have been detailed within Appendix B of this report. In summary these areas focused on:
- The need to work with those who are homelessness or at risk of homelessness to understand their needs and assist in the most appropriate way
 - The need to ensure access to appropriate support, in particular for those with mental health needs

- The importance of debt and money advice and assisting people to manage and sustain tenancies
- The need to work closely to improve access to training, education and employment activities
- The need to ensure advice and information to resolve housing difficulties is flexible and provided in a range of formats and location
- The importance of working in partnership to prevent and reduce homelessness
- The need to focus on settled accommodation options which are affordable and sustainable

3.15 Appendix A of this report contains the final draft of the homelessness strategy for consideration and approval. The draft strategy, once approved, will be subject to final formatting prior to publication. The implementation action plan will be published alongside the strategy.

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

4.1 The Homelessness Strategy recognises the importance of suitable sustainable accommodation to enable vulnerable adults and young people to reach stability and improve their life chances. The actions contained within the strategy seek to prevent homelessness wherever possible and assist people to access settled suitable accommodation to meet their needs and achieve independence.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Homelessness Code of Guidance states that authorities in implementing their strategies must consider the needs of all groups of people in their district who are homeless or likely to become homeless.

5.2 The proposed strategy builds upon the approved policy in relation to the focus on preventing homelessness wherever possible and assisting people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to access settled sustainable accommodation.

5.3 Reducing homelessness will have a positive impact on all residents and the proposals will contribute to the priorities set out in Building a Better Bromley.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

6.2 Regular reports have been presented setting out the current and growing pressures in relation to homelessness and the provision of temporary accommodation.

6.3 The strategy has been developed to ensure the best use of available resources, in particular the management of costs associated with the provision of temporary accommodation.

6.4 It is likely that there will be significant challenges to face with a potential increase in the need for services because of economic pressures and the new homelessness duties.

6.5 The impact of any such pressures and proposals set out in the strategy may be subject to further decision making. Any financial implications would be fully considered at that time.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 It is a legal requirement for every local housing authority to have a published homelessness strategy.

- 7.2 In formulating the homelessness strategy the council must have regard to its allocations scheme and tenancy strategy. The homelessness strategy is consistent with both of these documents.
- 7.3 The homelessness functions are set out in part VII of the Homelessness Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) There are a number of duties to both prevent homelessness occurring or to provide accommodation to certain people who are homeless and to give advice and assistance.
- 7.4 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 comes into force in April 2018 and extends the current duties in relation to the level of provision local authorities must provide to households who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless
- 7.5 In developing the strategy the statutory requirements, Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities and good practice standards have been taken into account.
- 7.6 The equality duty is relevant to the Homelessness Strategy. The responses demonstrated that there was no one under or over representation of any of the equality groups. An equalities impact stage one screening has been undertaken confirming that a key function of the homeless strategy is in support of the Equality Act and will have a positive impact on equality groups. It will seek through the actions identified to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other prohibited conduct, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 7.7 There may be a requirement to undertake an equality impact assessment for particular actions set out in the Homelessness Strategy and accompanying action plan which will be carried out on the commencement of those projects. For example impact assessments have been undertaken for the Allocations Scheme, Welfare Fund, Discretionary Housing Benefit and the temporary accommodation placement policies. It has also already been identified that equality impact assessments will be required for the relaunch of the private rented sector initiatives and private rented sector offer and on the recommissioning of any temporary and supported accommodation schemes.

8. PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no direct procurement implications arising from this report. Where particular actions contained within the action plan contain procurement or commissioning implications these will be reported and considered through due process.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Personnel Implications.
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Homelessness Strategy 2012-17 Homelessness Contingency drawdown reports Homelessness Strategy Executive Report 5 th December 2017 Temporary Accommodation procurement and Placement Policy Allocations Scheme

London Borough of Bromley

Homelessness Strategy

2018- 2023



DRAFT

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Introduction

About this strategy

The Homelessness Act 2002 requires every local authority to carry out a review of homelessness and develop a new homelessness strategy every five years:

The homelessness review assesses:

- The current and likely future levels of homelessness in the borough
- Activities that are carried out which prevent homelessness, secure accommodation for homeless people and provide support services to people who are or may become homeless
- Resources available to carry out these activities

The Homelessness Strategy must set out how the Council will prevent homelessness and provide support to people who are homeless or may become homeless over the next five years.

The council's previous strategy covered the period 2012 to 2017. The key objectives in the last strategy were:

- Prevent and reduce homelessness and the numbers of households residing in temporary accommodation; support vulnerable people and encourage and empower people to resolve their own housing needs where they can.
- To deliver good quality affordable housing and making the best use of existing housing stock, re-using empty homes and improving the condition of private sector housing.
- To ensure that affordable housing is strategically allocated to best meet identified housing need.

The Homelessness Strategy will feed into Bromley's forthcoming Housing Strategy which will be published later in 2018.

Consultation

We would like to thank the many organisations and members of the public who have worked with us for their contributing to the development of this strategy. This input has been invaluable and has helped us shape our goals. We believe we can only end homelessness and improve people's lives by working together and helping one another. It is therefore critical that the strategy reflects our partners' own strategic homelessness commitments and the specific work they are undertaking in working jointly with the Council to improve outcomes for homeless households.

This strategy is divided into two parts:

Part 1: The Homeless Review looks at both the national and local picture; it contains data on homelessness in the borough and looks at our current and future challenges

Part 2: The Homelessness Strategy gives an overview of our existing services and the initiatives we have in place to prevent homelessness. This section sets out the priorities and objectives that will guide the council's homelessness service from 2018 to 2023.

Part 1 – The Homeless Review

The causes of homelessness are complex, with rarely one single trigger, and as a result there is an array of reasons why individuals and families face the prospect of homelessness.

In order to develop services which effectively tackle homelessness it is necessary to understand the interplay between all the factors, which render a household homeless.

These can be categorised as relating to:

- (i) Individual circumstances
- (ii) Relationships
- (iii) Social policies

Each of these factors needs to be understood in the light of wider national trends.

National Context:

England's homeless population has changed significantly since the start of the current economic cycle.

The housing market was, and still is, pricing out a significant number of people – and not just the most vulnerable. These days, being above the poverty threshold does not necessarily spare individuals or families from potentially being homeless. Furthermore, social factors such as being young, having dependent family members, or having mental health problems makes people more susceptible to the difficulties in accessing housing. As a result, housing affordability and suitability is rapidly emerging as the most challenging issue in the nation.

Since the last strategy was published in 2012 there has been a steady increase nationally, both in the number of households who approached their local authority for homeless assistance and in those subsequently accepted as homeless. The number of housing need decisions made annually by local authorities has gone from 108,720 in 2011/12 to 115,550 in 2016/17. The percentage of these households

considered to be homeless and in priority need has gone from 43% in 2011/12 to 51% in 2016/17.

To address this growing problem the government's latest national housing strategy "Fixing our Broken Housing Market" has set out a clear commitment to tackling homelessness. The approach taken will be to help households currently priced out of the housing market, support people potentially at risk before they reach crisis point, and reduce the number of rough sleepers on the nation's streets. Bromley's own strategy has, and continues to comply with these objectives.

'Making Every Contact Count: A joint approach to preventing Homelessness' is a report which was developed by the ministerial working group on homelessness and was published in August 2012. This followed the previous year's report: *'Vision to end rough sleeping: No second night out nationwide'*.

'Making Every Contact Count' sets out the government's approach to tackling the underlying issues that cause homelessness. It emphasises a coordinated approach across central and local government, health services, the justice system, and third sector organisations. The report introduced a new approach to tackling homelessness. It emphasised the benefits of early intervention in order to prevent households reaching crisis point as a way of reducing the number of homeless approaches.

'Making every contact count' contains five priority areas:

- Tackling troubled childhoods and adolescences
- Improving health
- Reducing involvement in crime
- Improving access to financial advice, skills and employments services
- Pioneering innovative social funding mechanisms for homelessness

The report also includes a list of ten challenges that central government has set local authorities to consider achieving. They can be found in www.npsservice.org.uk/ and home.practitionersupport.org

Localism Act 2011

This act altered profoundly the way local housing authorities deal with homeless households. It ushered in a range of significant changes to national social housing policy including minimising the role central government plays in housing decisions. The policy's objective is to enable local authorities to better manage both housing demand and access to housing within their areas.

The key changes introduced by the localism act are:

- Social housing reform - giving individual landlords new powers to grant tenancies for a fixed term, should they choose to do so
- Allocations reform – giving councils greater authority over who they admit to waiting lists for social housing in their area

- Reform of homelessness legislation - granting local authorities the power to discharge their duties to homeless people by placing them into the private rented sector
- The introduction of a national home-swap scheme to enable greater tenant mobility across the social housing sector

No Second Night out

The government brought together eight departments to tackle the complex causes of homelessness. As well as housing itself they also looked at health, employment, and skills. In 2011 this ministerial working group on homelessness published 'A vision to end rough sleeping: No Second Night Out nationwide'. The report is a strategy aimed at tackling rough sleeping. It sets out the following six commitments¹:

- Helping people off the streets
- Helping people to access healthcare
- Help people into work
- Reducing bureaucratic burdens
- Increasing local control over investment services
- Devolving responsibility to tackling homelessness

Care Act 2014

The act establishes a statutory duty on local authorities to protect people's wellbeing. This can be achieved through the delivery of appropriate housing services and ensuring the suitability of accommodation meets the care and support needs of older and vulnerable people. The act is geared towards preventative services and housing-related support. Below are the key housing elements of the Act:

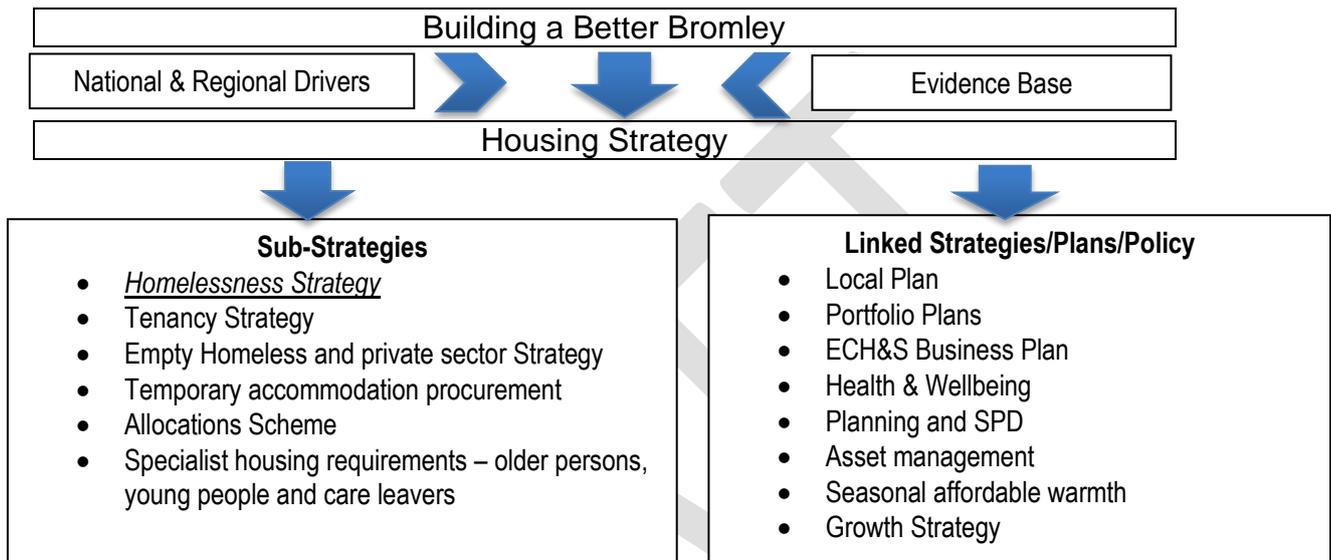
- A general duty to promote wellbeing, making specific reference to suitable accommodation
- Housing is not just the 'bricks and mortar', it also includes housing-related support or services
- Housing must be considered as part of an assessment process that may prevent, reduce or delay an adult social care need
- Information and advice should reflect housing options, as part of a universal service offer
- Care and support should be delivered in an integrated way with cooperation between all partner organisations, including housing.

¹"Vision to end rough sleeping: No Second Night Out" , Department of Communities and Local Government, nationwide https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6261/1939099.pdf, accessed September 11, 2017

Housing & Planning Act 2016

This act brought in the most significant changes to social housing since the Localism Act 2011. The details and implications of this act will be set out full in Bromley's Housing Strategy.

The chart below shows how the Homelessness Strategy fits into the overarching strategic document the Housing Strategy, and our corporate programme 'Building a Better Bromley'.



Current and Future Challenges

The growing challenges that local authorities face in relation to homelessness can be attributed to both the general economic climate and a variety of issues and policy factors, particularly welfare reform.

Welfare Reform

There has been a plethora of welfare reforms introduced since Bromley's last strategy was published. The changes have had an impact on low income households' weekly incomes and the amount of housing benefit payable towards housing costs. Welfare reforms with the most significant impact on housing and homelessness are:

- **Total Household benefit cap:** Limiting maximum benefits that a family can receive. The cap was further reduced in November 2016 expanding the number of households affected.
- **Removal of the spare room subsidy:** Reducing housing benefit entitlement to social housing tenants considered to be under-occupying their homes.
- **Local Housing Allowance frozen (LHA):** LHA rates are used to work out how much housing benefit a private sector tenant receives. LHA rates are now limited to 30th percentile of market rent (meaning that 30% of rents in an area should be lower than the LHA rate), or the total LHA cap, whichever is lower. The government has also frozen LHA rates for 4 years from April 2016.

- **Universal Credit:** This will replace most existing benefits by providing a single stream-lined benefit. This will include the benefit element towards housing costs which will now be paid directly to residents rather than to their landlords.
- **Shared Accommodation rate:** Most single person households under the age of 35 have the amount of benefit capped to the shared room rate. This restriction currently applies to private sector tenants but from April 2019 will be extended to start to include social housing tenancies.

Homelessness Reduction Act: We are currently facing one of the biggest changes to housing legislation. The government has pledged £550 million to tackle homelessness by 2020. The duty set out in this bill will commence on 1 April 2018. All local authorities will have a new duty to prevent and relieve homelessness for all families and single people, regardless of whether they are in priority need or not. One of the new key measures will be that local authorities have a statutory duty to assist those threatened with homelessness 56 days prior to being evicted (currently 28 days)². Furthermore local authorities need to clarify what actions are taken when someone applies for assistance after being served a Section 8 or 21 notice. Our response to this change emphasises the need for teamwork, because there will be a new duty on other public services to refer people they consider to be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Regional Strategic Context

The Homelessness strategy must also work well alongside regional strategies, initiatives and projects set by the Greater London Authority (**GLA**). Over the last three years our approach had to align with the previous London Housing Strategy, '*Homes for London: The London Housing Strategy*', published in June 2014. This gave local authorities a duty to address statutory homelessness. Local authorities needed to take advantage of the flexibility given to them to use the private rented sector. It was also important for London councils to comply with their statutory obligations in relation to location, quality, and length of tenancy. The strategy set out the Mayor's clear commitment to tackling homelessness and ending rough sleeping in the capital.

The Mayor of London launched consultation on the latest Draft London Housing Strategy on the 6th September 2017. The document outlines a set of commitments for local authorities to consider when tackling homelessness and rough sleeping. The homelessness section of London Draft Housing Strategy focuses on helping rough sleepers, increasing the number of affordable home and improving the private rented sector. The Mayor wants to work with local authorities to support greater focus on prevention and ensure those who lose their accommodation are supported into sustainable accommodation. The key homelessness components of the latest draft Housing Strategy are:

- More collaborative approach to securing private rented accommodation for homeless households
- Enable councils to combine their buying power

² Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, s, 1, (1), (4)

- Increase supply of housing for homeless households
- The mayor will make funding available to councils for affordable accommodation to help Londoners who are homeless

South East London Housing Partnership (SELHP)

SELHP is made up of five boroughs in the South East London sub-region. The five boroughs are Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lewisham and Southwark. The SELHP work together and formulate joint approaches, for homeless prevention and the provision of temporary accommodation. The group's goal is to support families affected by welfare reform, maximise people's access to the private rented sector, deliver a sub-regional single homelessness programme, and produce a revised rough sleeping plan.

Local Strategic Context

Building a Better Bromley (BBB)

Bromley's Corporate Strategy, BBB, describes the Council's priorities for the period 2015-2018. BBB is a shared vision with our partners seeking to create an environment where individuals and communities can thrive and where people can live healthier, more independent, and self-reliant lifestyles. The strategy also provides a clear commitment to supporting the borough's most vulnerable residents.

Housing is one of the Council's seven key priorities. The two key objectives are to: "Promote, where appropriate, high quality housing developments, to meet the Borough housing requirements" and: "Assist people experiencing housing difficulties with advice and support aimed at maintaining or securing a home and avoiding crisis". The [Care Services Portfolio Plan](#) sets out the high level actions and targets which have been put in place to deliver on the above priorities.

The Homelessness Strategy will sit alongside the Allocations Policy and forthcoming Housing Strategy. It will set out the context for Housing and homeless prevention in Bromley and support the overall delivery of the Corporate Plan.

Children's Services Improvement Plan - Roadmap to Excellence

Childhood is arguably the most important period in a person's life. It is when our personal experiences shape the adults we become. A child's health and life prospects are dependent on many factors, housing being one of them. Research has shown that children's current and future wellbeing are significantly affected by the standard of their housing. Inadequate housing or homelessness could potentially have an adverse effect on a child's health, both physical and mental, as well as their educational attainment and life expectancy.

It is imperative that the housing department works with children's social service to meet the commitments outlined in the Children's Service Improvement Plan – 'roadmap to excellence'. The housing department will help lay the foundation towards excellence by:

- Helping young people into supported housing.

- Providing safe and secure accommodation, which will improve safeguarding practice. It will also address the fact that an increasing number of young people are living in temporary accommodation, staying in hostels, or simply travelling between sofas and need to be placed in safe and appropriate housing. .
- Ensuring we have appropriate accommodation options for care leavers that eliminates the need to use bed and breakfast accommodation.
- Assess the risk to care leavers in potential accommodation prior to placing them.

Local Context

Bromley Context

Bromley is the largest London borough by area and occupies 59 square miles. The majority of which is Metropolitan Green Belt land. The borough shares borders with the London Boroughs of Lewisham and Greenwich to the North, Bexley to the North East, Southwark and Lambeth to the North West as well as Croydon to the West.

Population

Bromley ranks as the eighth most populous London borough. There are approximately 330,907 people living in Bromley and an estimated 140,602³ households. The **GLA** predicts that the overall population of Bromley will rise by 62,067 to 392,974 in the next 20 years⁴. The combination of longer life expectancy, increasing birth rate and net migration have all contributed to the steady rise in the borough's population which has had an impact on the availability and cost of housing.

Bromley's population is predominantly white (80%). The second largest ethnic group is Black (9%) followed by Asian (4%), and mixed and Chinese/other with 3% respectively. In recent years Bromley has become more ethnically diverse. The number of Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) group has gone up by 29% between 2011 and 2015, from 48,000 to 62,000. The trend suggests that the number of BAME will continue to rise.

The population is relatively old in comparison to other London Boroughs. The population aged 65 or over is forecasted to increase by 82,500 (42%) by 2035⁵. Bromley also has the lowest proportion of people in 16-24 and 25-34 age range in London⁶. As the number of people aged over 65 in Bromley grows there will be more pressures on the provision of services for older homeless people, and the need to ensure the appropriateness of their accommodation.

The tenure mix in the borough has not changed much since the last strategy was published. Home ownership in Bromley remains significantly high at 73%, compared

³ "London Borough Profile" , Greater London Authority, <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/london-borough-profiles>, accessed July 10, 2017

⁴ "2016 based population projections" , last modified July 18, 2017 <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/2016-based-population-projections>

⁵ Population aged 65 and over projected to 2035, POPPI, last accessed September 11, 2017, www.poppi.org.uk version 10.0

⁶ "GLA Population Projections- Custom Age Tables", Greater London Authority, last accessed June 6, 2017, <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/gla-population-projections-custom-age-tables>,

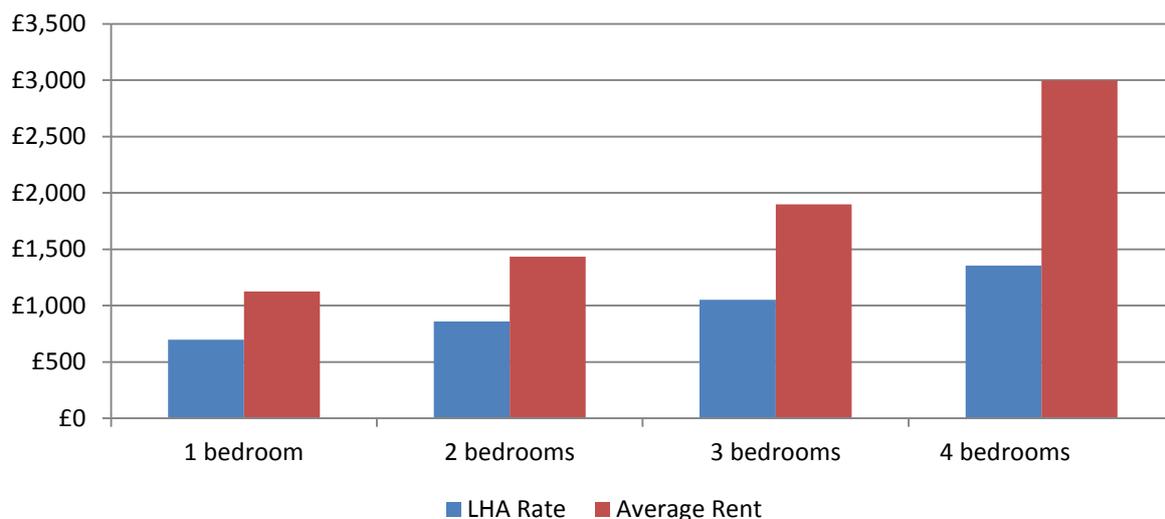
to 51% in the rest of London. Whilst the private rented sector has grown steadily for consecutive years it remains relatively small sector at 14% compared to the London average of 27%. Again the social rented sector is also small, accounting for 13% of the borough's stock compared to the London average of 23%. As with much of London, demand for housing across all tenures outstrips supply.

Buying a home in Bromley is becoming increasingly expensive. House prices have risen by 45 % between 2012 and 2016. The average asking price of a 2-bed flat is £373,584, whilst the median household gross income is an estimated £43,060⁷. Within the South East region average prices are second only to Southwark and prices are greater than the outer-London average.

Private rent levels have also risen sharply and this has subsequently reduced access and security for low income households. Between 2012 and 2016 there has been a 19% increase in private rent prices.

The charts below show the mismatch between the local housing allowance and the average rent in Bromley

Average Rent (14/11/2017) vs. Local Housing Allowance Rate (April 2016) in Bromley



Source: Bromley Rentals, Foxtons website & London Housing Allowance (LHA) rate, Bromley Website.

Although rents in the social housing sector are considerably lower than those in the private sector, rents in the social rented sector have also increased. Social housing weekly rents have gone up by 16% over the same period. Demand for Bromley's social housing is high with 4,093 households on the housing register (waiting list) in 2016/17.

⁷ GLA Household income estimates 2001/02 to 2012/13
<https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/household-income-estimates-small-areas>

Homelessness in Bromley

The need for housing options and support services

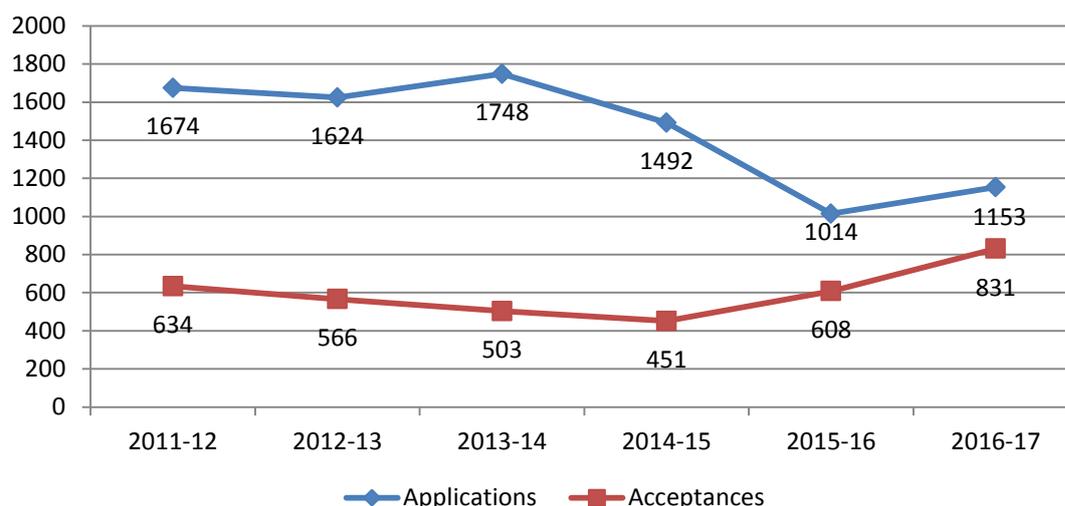
The Housing Options and Support service is an extremely busy service and there is growing demand for housing advice and assistance for residents in housing need or at risk of homelessness.

On average around 460 households approach the service each month for advice. Most of these customers receive advice and information to assist them in looking for accommodation or sustain their existing accommodation and some will be passed through for more intensive casework assistance and assessment. The number of customers approaching has increased steadily over the past five years

Applications and Acceptances

Whilst the overall level of households approaching in housing need has continued to rise, effective signposting and intervention services have meant that the number of formal homeless applications has steadily reduced from its peak in 2013/14, with more than 80% of initial approaches diverted from the need to make a formal homeless application. However, as prevention options become more difficult to obtain, mainly due to the lack of access to affordable accommodation, the proportion of households accepted as homeless increased by 31% over the past 5 years. This upward trend in homeless acceptances is expected to continue, particularly given the current high rental prices and with the full roll out of universal credit in Bromley from 2018.

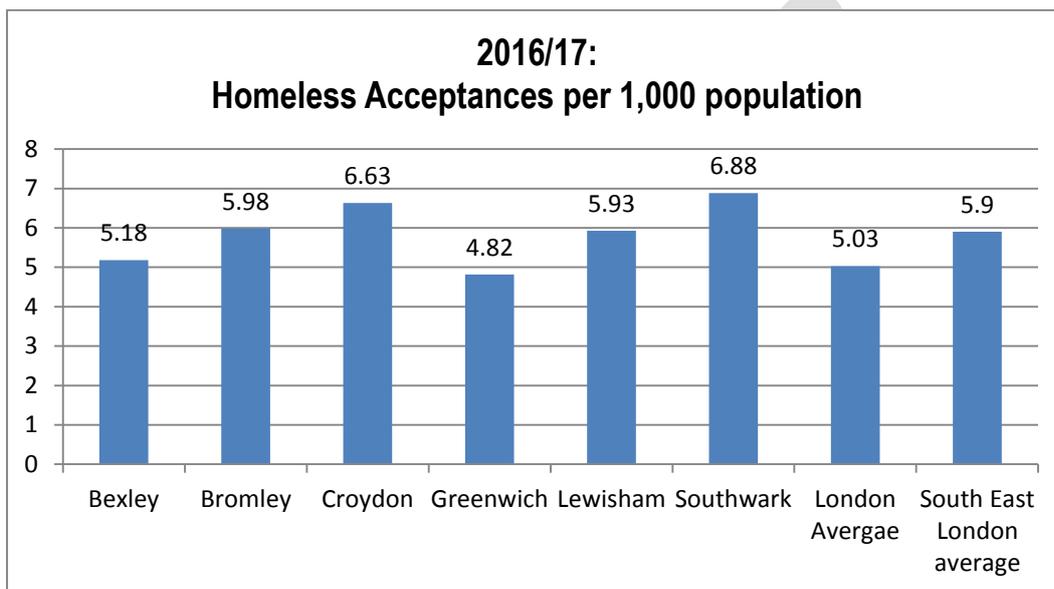
Annual Homelessness Application and Acceptance



Reasons for Homelessness

There have been significant changes in the reasons for homelessness with loss of private rented accommodation seeing the biggest increase. In the majority of cases the reason relates to affordability in rents and in particular the shortfall between

rental levels and LHA levels. Whilst parents and relatives no longer able to be accommodated is still the single largest stated reason for homelessness, an increasing number of households have actually previously lost private rented accommodation and have had to return to family or friends for often unsuitable interim accommodation, later approaching the council when they are unable to secure any alternative. It is predominantly this affordability gap and reduced supply of lettings that has impacted upon the level of homelessness and temporary accommodation use in Bromley. With many families effectively priced out of the market, they have little option other than approaching the local authority for assistance.



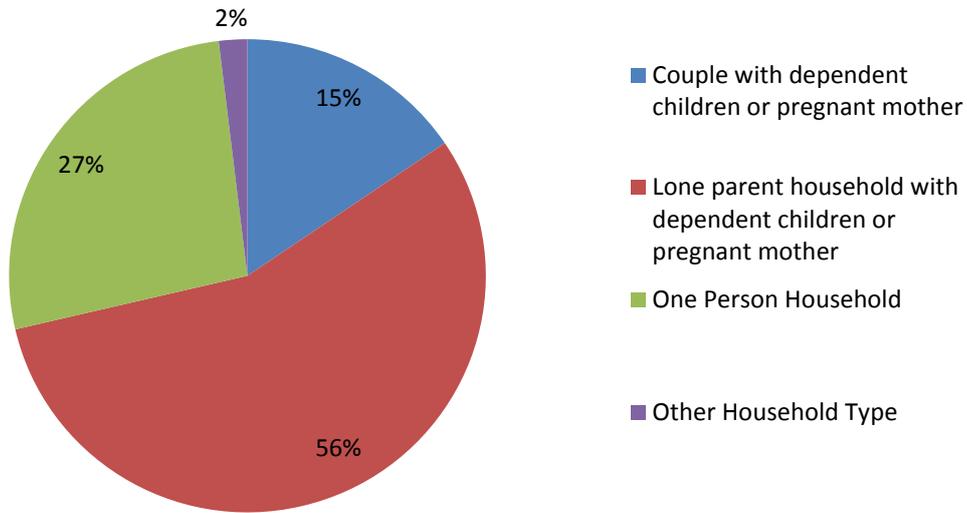
DCLG: Local Authorities' action under the homelessness provision of the 1985 and 1996 Housing Acts (financial year), Local authority, 2016-17

The table above shows that the number of households accepted as being homeless and in priority need in the south East Region against the London Average. The level of homeless acceptances in Bromley is fairly reflective of the South East region as a whole.

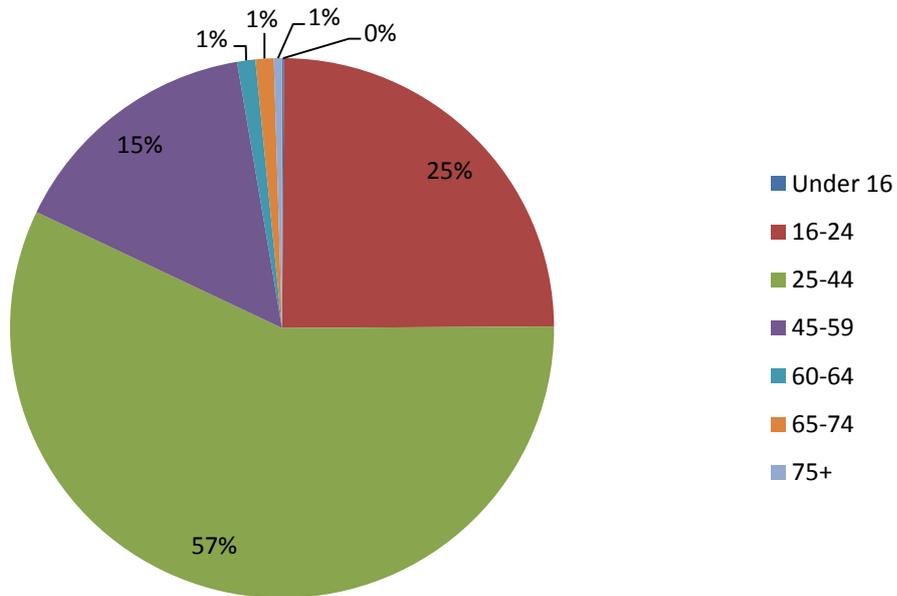
Households Type and Composition

Families account for the majority of accepted homeless households. 56% of accepted homeless households are lone parents. This is slightly higher than the overall London average of 53%. 96% of single parent households were female, whereas 56% of single person households accepted were male.

Acepted Homeless Households 2016-17

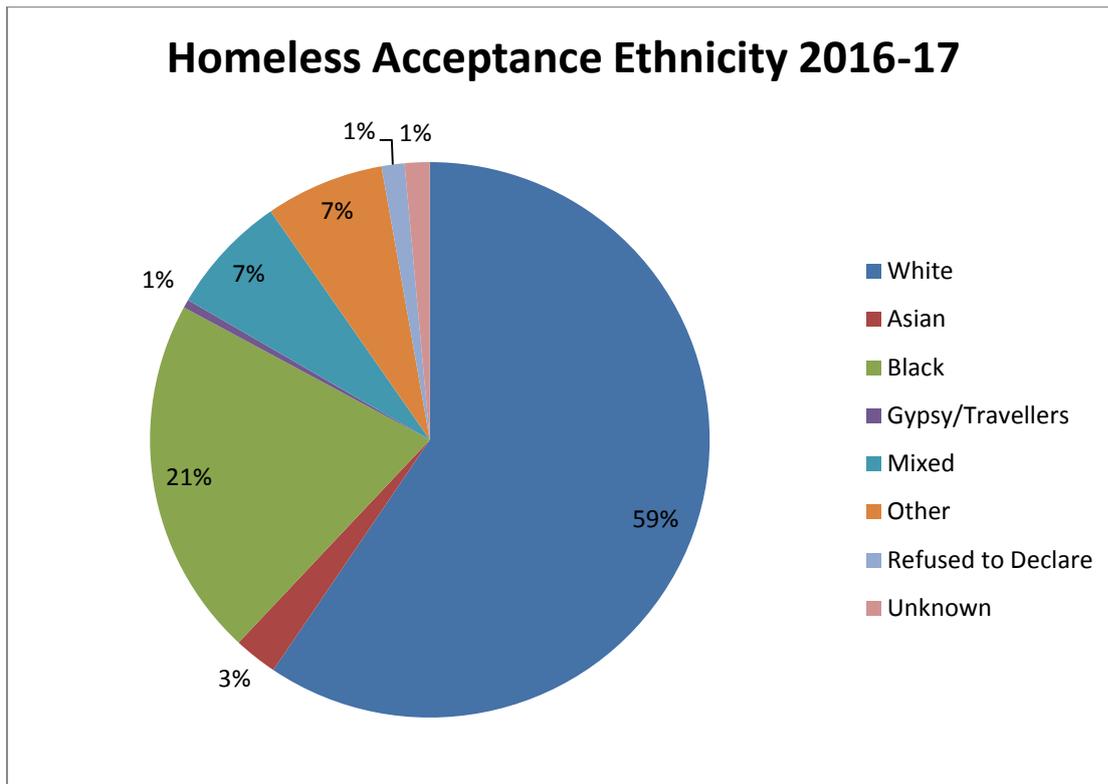


Homeless Acceptances Age 2016-17



57% of accepted homeless households are aged between 25 and 44 years old. This is largely reflective of the main age range of housing benefit claimants in Bromley.

Homeless Acceptance Ethnicity 2016-17



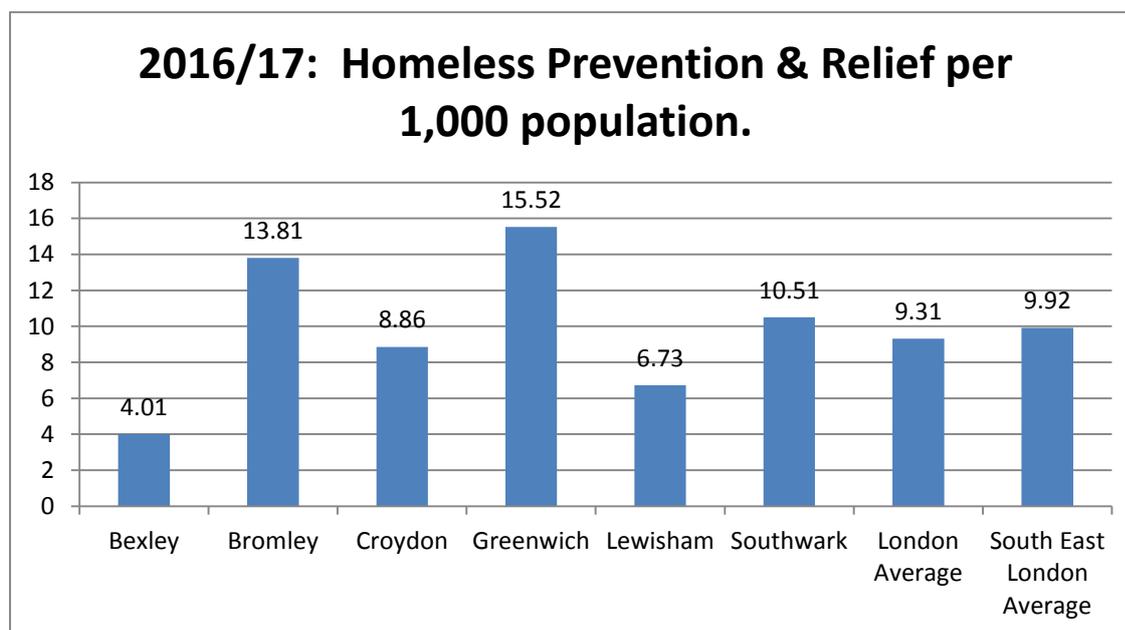
Over the past 4 years the proportion of homelessness acceptances from ethnic groups has increased, this is mainly accounted for by households who identify as Black or Mixed. Since 2012/13 the number of BAME being accepted as homeless and in priority need has gone up by 38%, compared to the 7% of people who identify as 'white'. This shows that BAME are disproportionately likely to suffer from homelessness, despite Bromley being predominately white, BAME are 18.9% of Bromley's population, yet they make up 28% of homelessness applications.

This problem is not confined to Bromley and it is common for BAME populations to be disproportionately homeless, both regionally and nationally. As of 2016/17 BAME made up 39% households accepted as homeless and in priority need nationally, but only 15% of the total population in England.

Non-statutory Homeless

It is important that this strategy highlights non-statutory homeless households. These are individuals and families that are either not found to be eligible, do not fall within the definition of priority need, who are deemed to be 'intentionally homeless' or who have not gone through the legal application for housing. The composition of households and individuals in non-statutory homeless category is varied. However the majority of non-statutory homeless households tend to be single people who do not have dependent children and people who do not fall into the statutory definition of vulnerable. As of March 31st 2017 the outcome of 35% of homelessness decisions were non-statutory. At Bromley we are committed to providing advice and assistance to assist non-statutory homeless households to enable them to secure alternative accommodation for themselves.

Homelessness Prevention and Relief



Source: DCLG P1E: Total reported cases of homelessness prevention and relief 2016-17

The level of homeless prevention in Bromley has been higher than the London and South East London averages for five consecutive years. In the last financial year, the number of cases that have been prevented or relieved has risen by 29% to 1,919 compared to the previous year. We believe that this is in part due to the implementation of the new early intervention prevention team as well as the increased emphasis on early intervention work in the housing needs team in general.

The homelessness intervention team is a new team which has been set up to better identify the triggers that can lead to homelessness. They work with households before a housing crisis strikes and it maximise the chances of successfully sustaining a household's existing accommodation or securing a new home before they become homeless. The team is still in its infancy but has already achieved a lot in relation to preventing homelessness and, when prevention is not possible, delaying homelessness. This allows time for a housing pathway to be developed and alternative suitable accommodation to be secured.

Supporting Vulnerable Homeless

For those that are considered vulnerable, poor housing or homelessness can escalate problems, or exacerbate an existing condition. The pathways in and out of homelessness are multi-faceted. However Bromley Council believe it is important to support vulnerable groups by providing affordable and safe accommodation as it brings stability and security. The benefits are endless as it provides a gateway to access health services particularly for people with ill health, both mental and physical. Furthermore it enhances social and community inclusion and provides the basis for family life. This is also good for those escaping domestic and gang violence.

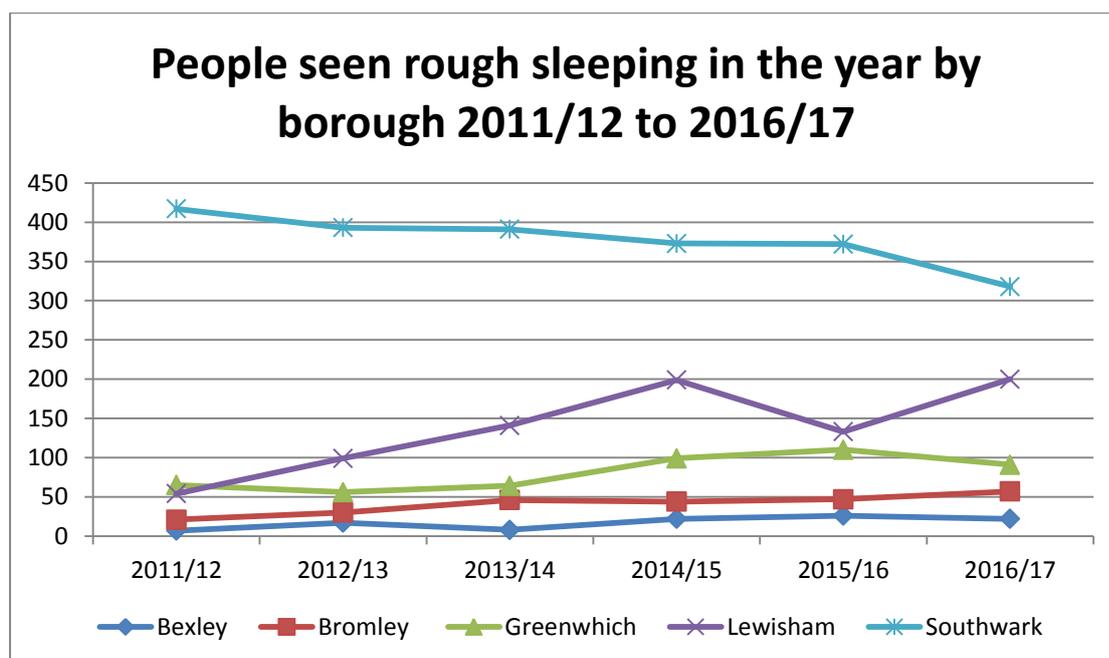
- **Housing Support:** The Housing Support team provides wrapped-around support to vulnerable clients placed across all forms of temporary and permanent accommodation. The team ensures that tenants develop, gain or build upon the skills they already possess to sustain their tenancies. The team helps vulnerable clients by helping them gain access to employment training, build resilience and promoting independence.
- **Gangs and Domestic Violence:** We work to provide advice and support and work with partners like Youth Offending and Bromley & Croydon's women's aid to re-locate victims to different areas to live safer lives.
- **Welfare Reform:** The Welfare Reform team helps residents understand what options are available to them after their benefits have changed. They create pathway for residents to find work, access training and any other form of support.
- **Tenancy sustainment and supported housing units:** It is for residents who may be struggling to sustain their tenancy. It ensures that they have the assistance and support needed to permanently stay in their home. The Support and Resettlement service works very closely with the community's mental health teams to ensure residents sustain their tenancy and homelessness is prevented. There are currently 199 clients being supported by the Support and Resettlement team. There are 55 supported houses in the borough that are mental health specific units.

Challenges

- **Youth Homelessness:** The strategy has already highlighted young people as one of the groups most susceptible to homelessness. There was 125 young people aged 16 to 21 accepted as homeless by Bromley in 2016/17. In comparison to 2015/16 when 88 people aged 16 to 21 were accepted as homeless, a 42% rise in the space of a financial year. In 2016-17 66 decisions were made regarding young people age 16-18 years old. Of the 66 cases, homelessness was prevented in 27 times. However there were 37 cases where homelessness unfortunately could not be prevented.
- **Welfare Reform:** There are a number of people in the London Borough of Bromley that have been affected by recent welfare reforms. In April 2013 approximately 1800 people had their benefit restricted, because of under occupancy. As of the 18th October 2017 Bromley has 300 households who have had their entitlement restricted as a result of the benefit cap.
- **Floating support and accepted as vulnerable:** There are 1583 that have been accepted as vulnerable as of the 19th October 2017. Of the 1583 vulnerable people 48% (752) are female and 52% (831) are male.

Rough Sleepers in Bromley

The number of rough sleepers in the capital has increased significantly over the past five years. Rough sleeping in Bromley is still relatively low in comparison to most other London boroughs. However the recent data from the Combined Homelessness and Information Network **C.H.A.I.N** shows there has been an increase year-on-year in the number of rough sleepers in Bromley since 2011/12.



Source: GLA Rough Sleeping in London (Chain Reports)

During 2016/17, 57 people were seen rough sleeping in Bromley, more than double the number of people identified in 2011/12. Of the 57 people seen rough in 2016/17, 42 of them were new rough sleepers. The majority of rough sleepers were seen just once. 9 were those that had returned to the street after a period away. Of the 57 people seen, 43 engaged to have their support needs assessed, and the assessed issues were mental health (26) drugs issue (22), Alcohol use (20) and only 8 with no alcohol, drugs or mental health support needs. The majority of rough sleepers in Bromley are male (84%) and in the 36-45 age range

Every year Bromley Council participates in carrying out a rough sleepers count in the area. This allows us to monitor and evaluate the extent of rough sleeping in the borough and allocate resources accordingly. The chart below shows the result of the borough's rough sleepers count which is usually carried out on a night in November each year.

London Borough of Bromley- Annual Rough sleepers count				
	November 2014	November 2015	November 2016	November 2017
No. of people found to be rough sleeping on the night of the count	2	4	3	5

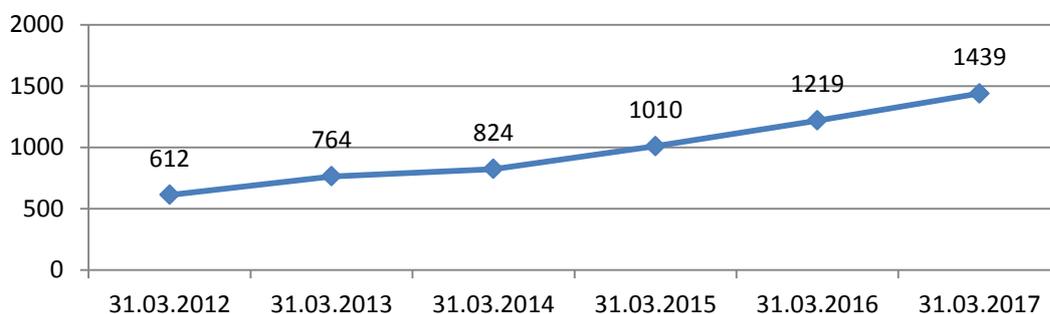
The rough sleepers count only provides a one night snapshot count in the borough. The count has been criticised for this exact reason as a one night snapshot does not reflect the true scale of the problem. It is difficult to find and assist rough sleepers, because people are bedded down at different times, move about, and are hidden away in derelict buildings. Regardless, the count is still important as it gives the council a chance to assist rough sleepers and support them through their predicament.

Temporary Accommodation

The number of households in temporary accommodation (TA) has risen significantly in the past five years due to the marked decline in housing association lettings and a reduction in the supply of private sector accommodation that is affordable.

As of 31st March there were 1,439 households in temporary accommodation, a 135% increase since 2012. During this period there has been a marked reduction in the number of households moving on from temporary accommodation meaning that the net inflow into TA is more than those leaving TA.

Number of temporary accommodation placements from 31.03.2012 to 31.03.2017



These households consisted of 3,606 individuals, of which 1420 were children. There were 570 children under the age of 5 and 850 school aged children (5-16) in Temporary Accommodation 2016/17. 81% of households in TA are families (pregnant or with at least one dependent child). The most common household composition in

TA is single-parent households (63%). Only 18% are couples with dependent children, and this is closely followed by single-person households (with 15%). The remaining 4% are all other households groups. The average stay in TA in 2016/17 is 458 days this is 142 days longer than the average stay in 2011/12 (314).

Those that identify as black are over represented in TA, making up 25% of all placements. This is considerably larger than the second biggest BAME group in TA, which are those who identify as mixed (7%). It again shows that BAME are over-represented and Bromley will do more to help these communities.

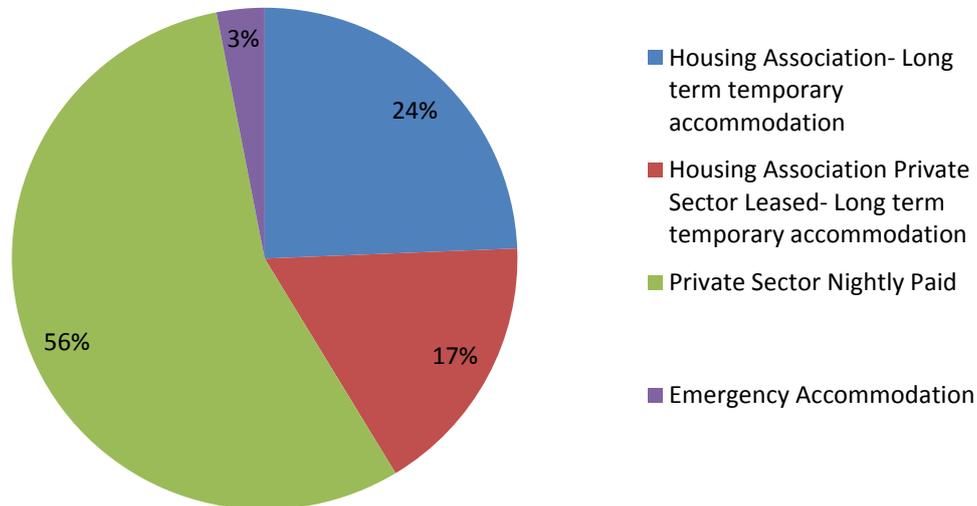
Temporary Accommodation Supply

Like many local authorities, a large proportion of TA, including nightly-paid accommodation is procured within the private rented sector. There is a complex subsidy regime to assist with the cost of TA, however the subsidy arrangements have also become more restricted, and this alongside steep price rises has made it more difficult to secure TA, particularly within the borough.

Homeless households are not the only source of demand for TA and boroughs are also facing increased pressure on this accommodation from 'no recourse to public funds' households and from young people. Across London the demand for TA has increased dramatically with all London authorities effectively chasing the same limited supply. In response, the TA market has moved to nightly paid models of accommodation (essentially private rented accommodation offered on a less secure nightly rate basis) rather than the more traditional longer-term lease opportunities. This has essentially been driven by providers as nightly paid arrangements prove more lucrative.

Households in nightly paid accommodation (NPA) since 31/03/2012 have gone up by 228%, whereas long term temporary accommodation (LTTA) has gone up by 68% in the same period reflecting the change in the offer from providers. The difference in cost of temporary accommodation units and the maximum recoverable rent (set by local housing allowance) is high, averaging £7,252 net cost per unit per annum. This has led to a total net spend of £3,579,659 m in 2016/17.

Types of Temporary Accommodation 31/03/2017



In accordance with the [Homelessness Code of Guidance: Suitability of Accommodation](#). The Council has a policy of zero use of shared facility bed and breakfast accommodation for families with dependent children and young people. Intensive work has achieved and maintained this target.

The Council seeks to accommodate people within their respective area as long as it is reasonably practicable, but if this proves impossible they must try to place people as close as possible to where they were previously living. This does not mean however that homeless households cannot be placed outside of the borough but the decision to place homeless households outside of the borough should be properly evidenced and explained, both in terms of demonstrating available housing supply and in assessing the suitability of any individual placement.

However, there is a serious shortfall of accommodation that can be secured in the borough to meet statutory housing need. It means that it is not reasonably practicable to provide accommodation within Bromley to every household to whom the Council owes a rehousing duty. There is an increasing need to secure accommodation that may be at some distance from the borough. In addition welfare reform has impacted upon the location of placements for some families on the grounds of sustained affordability in relation to the benefits they are now entitled to receive towards their housing costs.

The current TA placement policy sets out how we are prioritising homeless households for temporary accommodation according to its location. This Policy was formally approved by Members in January 2016. The policy and its impact continue to be kept under review and it is reported regularly to the Care Services Portfolio Holder and Policy Development and Scrutiny (PDS) Committee within the performance and supply and demand monitoring reports.

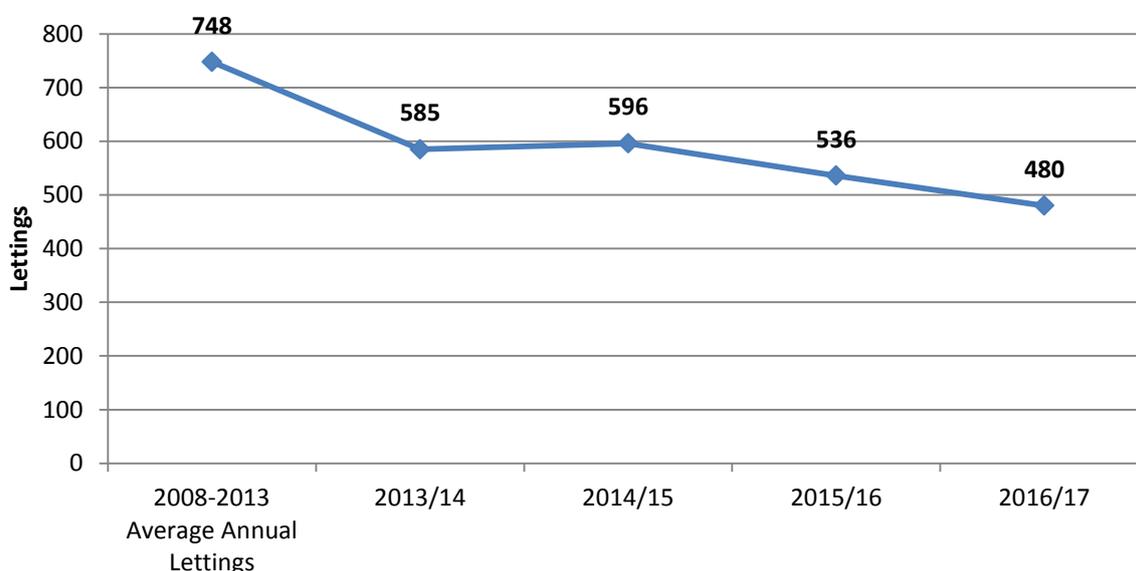
Traditional models of TA have centred on use of existing social housing stock and leasing of private rented sector accommodation. Whilst work continues to maximise supply through these routes it will no longer provide a sufficient supply of accommodation to meet statutory housing needs, particularly as an increasing number of private landlords will divert their accommodation to the more lucrative nightly paid arrangements.

Alternative sources of supply are being sought, for example through use of vacant properties, conversion of former residential units and a property purchase programme. The acute pressures being faced means that, like all boroughs in London, we are having to consider new strategies to tackle growing demand and look to more innovative schemes and also further afield in London and beyond to provide sustainable and suitable housing solutions.

Social/Affordable rented Accommodation

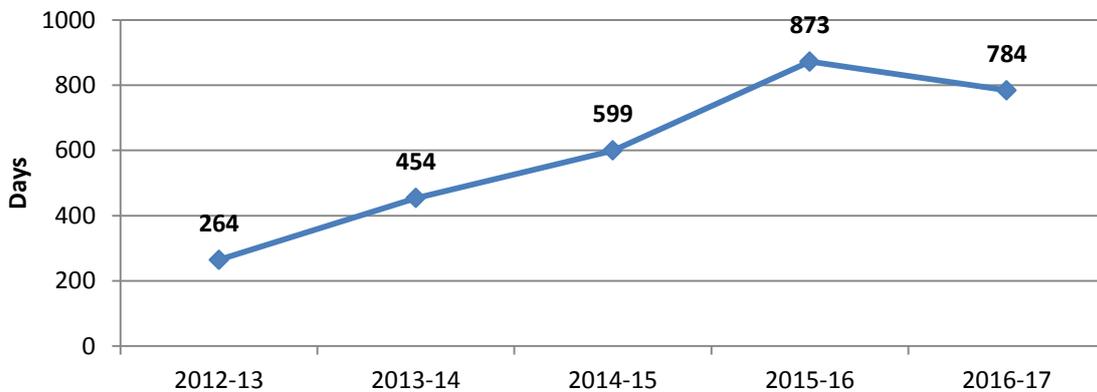
Social housing lettings have reduced both through re-lets and new build accommodation. Developing housing associations have highlighted increasing difficulty in gaining sites and anticipate lower levels of new build developments going forward as a result of recent changes in development and housing association finance frameworks.

Bromley's Social Housing Let Via Choice Based Letting (CBL) by year



The waiting times for social housing have gradually increased over the last 5 years. Currently the average waiting time for a two bedroom property is 26 months.

Housing Register average waiting times 2012-13 to 2016-17



Private rented Sector:

Historically Bromley has been successful in assisting households to secure private rented accommodation. However the rise in rents against restricted housing benefit levels together with the loss of direct housing benefit payments to landlords' means that the private rented sector in Bromley and across London and the South East is out of reach for an increasing number of households. To demonstrate, the average rental price for a 2-bedroom property in Bromley is around £450 per month more than the maximum housing benefit payable to assist with housing costs. As such the supply of private rented sector properties able to be secured to prevent homelessness has reduced year-on-year.

Progress since the last strategy

Bromley's last homelessness strategy set out the following priorities:

- Prevent and reduce homelessness and the numbers of households residing in temporary accommodation; support vulnerable people and encourage and empower people to resolve their own housing needs where they can.
- To deliver good quality affordable housing making the best use of existing housing stock, re-use of empty homes and improving the condition of private sector housing.
- To ensure that affordable housing is strategically allocated to best meet identified housing need.

Below is a summary of our main achievements in the past 5 years:

- 9,712 households were prevented from becoming homeless between 1st April 2012 and 31st March 2017. 6,555 were helped to remain in own home and 3,157 were helped to move into alternative accommodation.
- Meeting the Council's duty to provide temporary accommodation without placing any young people into bed and breakfast accommodation.
- As of April 2017 achieving zero use of shared-facility bed and breakfast accommodation
- A Debt Advice Officer has been appointed to help achieve prevention work and better outcomes for households residing in temporary accommodation as well as those affected by Welfare Reforms
- Development of a new early intervention prevention team to assist households before crisis is reached to increase the effectiveness of homeless prevention initiatives
- Operated a number of outreach surgeries including the domestic violence one stop shop, welfare reform surgery, green parks housing, and probation and youth offending team housing advice surgeries.
- Updated all of the housing department's communications, and including a new housing advice online form to enable people to access advice and assistance more quickly
- Produced homeless prevention, and housing and benefits videos.
- Implementation of a housing options online form to better triage and identify the needs of our clients as well as dealing with enquiries more efficiently and quickly
- Close work with private landlords and a variety of incentives has secured access to 2093 privately rented units for low-income households, between 2012/13 and 2016/17
- Specialist Housing Options Officers have been recruited to deal with the impact of Welfare Reform
- Completion of the refurbishment of two former residential homes to create 83 units of temporary accommodation in borough
- Recommissioning of our young people's accommodation and support services
- Recommissioning of our tenancy sustainment floating support service

- Setting up of a welfare fund to assist households with essential items when moving into their new home.
- Entered into a property purchase programme, 'More Homes Bromley' to buy 400 units by the end of 2018

Key challenges/pressures

Please refer to the [Appendix 1](#) which is give a summary of the key points from the consultation. It will also provide information on what the stakeholders and wider public believed to be Bromley's main challenges and pressures.

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Part 2 – The Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023

The Homelessness Strategy Review highlighted the increasing number of people who find themselves homeless or at risk of homelessness. In the Homelessness Strategy Review we examined the three main causes of homelessness in our Borough which are; loss of privately rented accommodation and parents or friends no longer willing to accommodate and relationship breakdown/domestic violence. This section of the homelessness strategy will look to explain how we will try to eradicate the adverse effects of the main causes of homelessness in Bromley.

Through interaction with our customers and the general public we have learned about what people would like to see change, and the peoples' three main priorities are:

- More accommodation that is affordable
- More support for those considered to be vulnerable for example young and old people, victims of violence and those that suffer from ill health, mental or physical.
- The right advice and support at the right time in the right place.

Tackling homelessness through joint work has become more important than ever. Since 'Making Every Contact Count' was published, joint work has been championed as the most effective homelessness prevention method. Nationally, in 'Fixing our broken housing market' and in the draft London Housing Strategy there has been an emphasis on collaboration between agencies providing housing, social care, health, employment, and training support. It shows that resolving homelessness is more complex than just putting a roof over someone's head. In order to sustain that roof long term, joint work is imperative. We see the Homelessness Strategy and accompanying delivery plan as a great opportunity to build trust and further develop a truly collaborative approach to tackling homelessness.

Our mission statement is:

'To work with our community to ensure everyone has access to a home'

In order to achieve this goal the strategy has been developed following a positive pathway model to tackle and prevent homelessness which has identified following four key priorities

- **Early identification and prevention of homelessness:** To support people wherever possible before crisis and to provide excellent services to

those at point of crisis to either prevent homelessness or assist them to secure alternative sustainable accommodation.

- **Achieving positive outcomes for our young people:** Preventing youth homelessness and ensuring young people are supported to make a positive transition into adulthood.
- **Increase access to and promote the supply of accommodation:** To make best use of all available housing options to increase access to accommodation that is affordable and sustainable, and to increase through-flow from temporary accommodation.
- **Achieving positive outcomes by improving health and wellbeing and supporting people to break the cycle of homelessness:** To ensure services are accessible and tailored to individuals to enable them to secure safe and suitable accommodation and to assist people to develop the necessary skills and resilience to sustain accommodation and avoid repeat homelessness.

1. Early Identification and Prevention of Homelessness

Context:

Over 5,000 households approach the housing service each year for housing-related advice. This number is projected to increase as a result of rising housing costs, the impact of welfare reform and population growth.

The homelessness review demonstrated disproportionate levels of homelessness amongst particular demographic and community groups in Bromley and it is important that we gain an understanding of this in order to tailor services to be as effective as possible.

Early intervention seeks to prevent homelessness by tackling the root causes before they escalate into a housing crisis. In recent years Bromley has increased its focus on early intervention and homeless prevention. Given the challenges faced around increasing homelessness it is critical that we continue to put homeless prevention at the heart of everything we do. We believe this will greatly increase the chances of positive outcomes for people at risk of becoming homeless. We have adopted a person-centred housing and support solution which seeks to ensure effective information and advice is available at every stage to maximise the positive outcomes for those who are or may face homelessness. This requires professionals across agencies to be able to identify the risk of homelessness and know how best to respond.

Challenges

- The number of people at risk of homelessness is increasing. In 2016/17 831 households were accepted as homeless, a 36% increase on the previous year.
- The most common reasons for homelessness are that family or friends are no longer willing or able to accommodate, loss of private rented sector accommodation or relationship breakdown/domestic violence.

- However, homelessness is often not just about accommodation, but also occurs because of a range of complex personal and or wider factors such as the economy.
- 380 households were affected by the benefit cap in 2016/17
- House and rental prices have risen steeply in recent years.
- People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness may approach and seek help from a range of services at the same time.

Our goals:

Maximise the level of homeless prevention by:

- Delivering accessible information services
- Providing effective advice and assistance in the right place at the right time
- Assisting people to stay in their own homes or access alternative accommodation

To achieve these we will:

Deliver accessible services

- Expand phone, internet-based and face-to-face options and housing advice provision.
- Review and expand access routes and referral routes.
- Develop an on-line directory of services to ensure all agencies that may come into contact with an individual who is at risk of homelessness are able to signpost effectively to prevent homelessness occurring.
- Review information provided by the Council and partner agencies to ensure effective and consistent housing advice.
- Review and improve our webpages and develop an on-line customer portal.

Providing the right advice at the right time

- Improving processes, protocols and information-sharing between services to provide a more integrated and consistent approach to tackling homelessness.
- Provide everyone with a personal plan setting out all steps to be taken to either prevent homelessness or secure a suitable new home.
- Develop an early intervention and training programme for agencies to ensure a consistency in advice and referral routes.
- Ensure timely assessments to maximise the effectiveness of homeless prevention and relief interventions.
- Review and expand upon outreach surgery provision.

Maximising positive outcomes to assist people to stay in their own homes or secure suitable alternative accommodation:

- Through joint working and analysis of routes into homelessness better identify people at risk of homelessness to offer advice and assistance at an earlier stage to prevent crisis.
- Work with households to sustain their tenancy no matter who their landlord is.

- Review our protocols with housing associations to ensure referrals are made at an earlier stage for those at risk of eviction.
- Adopt a more collaborative approach to ensure agencies are able to provide effective information on prevention services and adhere to the new duty to refer those who may be at risk of homelessness.
- Adopt an approach that encourages people to take an active role in helping to prevent their homelessness.
- Promote the homeless prevention fund to ensure agencies are able to refer individuals at risk of homelessness.
- Update the housing options toolkit and continue to identify and disseminate good practice in homeless prevention and relief and ensure that prevention continues to target those most at risk.

2. Achieving positive outcomes for our Young People

Context

As a local authority we have a responsibility to safeguard children and young people, and preventing youth homelessness underpins this obligation. It is critical that we support young people at risk of, or experiencing homelessness and ensure they are placed in suitable accommodation that meets their needs and helps them to achieve their aspirations and potential.

Over the last five years young people have become increasingly susceptible to homelessness. They are more likely to live in poverty, because of youth unemployment, welfare reform changes and limited access to affordable housing. It is important for Bromley to take a strategic approach to tackling and preventing youth homelessness.

Bromley has developed an integrated service for young people at risk of homelessness with the overarching aim to ensure that homelessness is prevented wherever possible and that all young people approaching are supported with a pathway to independence which assists them not only to secure suitable housing but to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to sustain accommodation. Without adequate support or preventing youth homelessness it can have a negative impact on education, employment, health and wellbeing. These factors would subsequently make them more prone to homelessness in the latter stages of their life.

Preventative work is important to minimise the number of young people experiencing housing crisis in the first place. Where young people do approach in crisis there is a need to ensure appropriate support and accommodation is available to ensure young people are able to make a successful transition into adulthood and independent living in a planned way.

Key Challenges:

- Number of young people at risk of homelessness has steadily increased in recent years

- The number of 16-24 year-olds accepted has gone up by 60 between 2015/16 and 2016/17
- The number of children open to the leaving care team as of 31/03/2017 is 239.
- Reference HB/WR changes & impact

Our goals:

- Deliver better outcomes for children and families by reducing the level of youth homelessness
- Enable young people to access appropriate accommodation and support service that meet their needs
- Provide coordinated services that tackle the wider causes of homelessness and enable young people to transition into adulthood in a planned and sustained way.

To achieve these we will:

Reducing youth homelessness:

- Expand on the range of initiatives to prevent youth homelessness
- Ensure all young people receive appropriate assessments to determine their future housing options
- Fix broken family relationship and help young people stay at home with parents, relatives, or friends

Access to appropriate accommodation and support services:

- Ensure no young people are placed into shared facility bed and breakfast accommodation and all young people are placed into accommodation that meets their needs
- Work with the leaving care team to ensure young people leaving care are given appropriate accommodation and support to lead independent lives
- Complete a comprehensive review of young people's supported accommodation and seek to develop a framework to expand the accommodation options for young people.
- Work with colleges and Children's services to deliver a placements panel to ensure that accommodation and support is tailored to the individual young person's needs.

Successful transition to independence

- Increase the number of young people in training and employment related activities.
- Ensure that all commissioned housings services for young people assist in access to education, training and employment opportunities.
- Develop a life skills training programme to build the skills and confidence to live independently.

3. Increase access to and the supply of accommodation.

Context

Accessing accommodation is the key to both preventing and resolving homelessness, whether through providing a long-term home, or through providing interim or specialist accommodation pending a move to longer term settled accommodation. However access to accommodation that is affordable, particularly within the borough has become increasingly difficult as demand is high, costs are rising and social housing stock supply is limited.

The demand from homeless households across London is rising. This means that the Council must look to ensure best use of all available stock while assisting to increase access to a range of accommodation across all sectors of the housing market. Increasingly this also means looking outside its boundaries to meet the current levels of need and identify accommodation that people will be able to sustain.

The Council's first priority is to prevent homelessness occurring. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, we will provide temporary accommodation whilst assisting households to find a settled housing solution.

Securing good quality affordable temporary accommodation has become increasingly difficult. Rental prices have risen and local housing allowance has not kept pace. Homeless households are spending longer in temporary accommodation, and this has all placed a significant financial burden on the Council.

The Council has an approved temporary accommodation placement policy. This means that placing households out of borough and in some cases outside of London in more affordable places. This will always be done subject to agreed criteria and an individual risk/suitability assessment for each placement made. We have to take these steps in order to secure a sufficient supply of accommodation to meet our statutory housing duties, but it must be done in a fair and sensitive manner.

In recent years the Council has undertaken a number of new initiatives to increase supply and will continue to consider new strategies to tackle growing demand and look to more innovative schemes and also further afield in London and beyond to provide sustainable and suitable housing solutions. This includes making as much use as possible of the private rented sector to discharge our homelessness duty.

Challenges

- A reducing supply of housing association properties becoming available to let.
- Limited number of PRS housing available in the borough
- Increasing private sector rents and limits on local housing allowance payable have resulted in many areas becoming unaffordable to those on

benefits. Universal credit is also reducing the number of private landlords willing to let to benefit dependent households.

- Competition for housing in London is great across all tenures and areas. Scarcity is also driving up costs.
- Limited land for new build due to high levels of greenbelt.
- Limited move-on supply means households are remaining for longer periods in temporary accommodation.
- Whilst we try to address this issue, we must ensure that, particularly for the households placed outside of Bromley, they have appropriate support and access to services.

Our goals:

Increasing access to and supply of accommodation by:

- Making greater use of PRS for homeless households and those at risk of becoming homeless.
- Increasing our portfolio of temporary accommodation properties.
- Working with housing partners to develop more affordable homes
- Make best use of existing stock to meet housing needs

To achieve these we will:

Increasing access to PRS accommodation

- Introduce an incentive scheme tailored to each individual's household needs to encourage and promote access to PRS accommodation.
- Promotion of out-of-London schemes for households who cannot afford Bromley or London.
- Review incentives offered to private landlords and agents to increase the number of landlords willing to take referrals.
- Hold regular private landlords' forums.

Increasing Temporary Accommodation

- Undertake a review of temporary accommodation provision to model requirements going forward under the homeless reduction act.
- Deliver 400 units under the More Homes property purchase scheme.
- Review leasing and block-booking schemes with landlords to ensure packages are attractive and flexible.
- Continue to work with housing providers and developers to explore all potential schemes for additional provision.
- Explore all potential for conversion of vacant properties for use as temporary or settled provision.

Working with partners to develop more affordable homes

- Produce a new housing strategy to set out the strategic aims of new supply.

- Explore opportunities to develop existing Council or housing association-owned land for conversion and use for modular homes or new build affordable housing.
- Align procurement to source housing for children's, adults and housing services.
- Work with planning colleagues to ensure that the affordable housing provision is secured on new developments and to maximise the use of s106 payment in lieu contributions for new supply.

Making best use of existing stock

- Review methods of communicating the lettings plan, outcomes and waiting times to help people make informed decisions
- Review the allocations scheme to ensure it supports the delivery of the Homeless Reduction Act and focuses on homeless prevention.
- Ensure take-up of quota queues for care leavers and move-on from supported accommodation to increase through-flow
- Continue to free up existing stock through tackling fraud, addressing under-occupation and promoting alternative housing options
- Work with households who have been in TA the longest to facilitate move on to settled housing solutions

4. Achieving Positive Outcomes by improving health and wellbeing and supporting vulnerable people.

Context

The threat of, or actual homelessness, is traumatic and can impact on the wellbeing of individuals and families and can contribute to poor physical and mental health. Many who face homelessness have complex needs, whether in terms of their housing, personal circumstances or health. Whilst many who approach for help are able to be guided to help themselves, others will require far more intensive support to resolve their housing difficulties. We understand that without the necessary support tailored for each individual, outcomes may not be positive and tenancies not sustained.

Homelessness can also disconnect people from support networks and services and the longer a household remains in unsettled accommodation the harder it is to protect vulnerable adults and children. We believe a move into temporary accommodation should only be one part of a journey for a client. Where possible we want to avoid the use of nightly paid accommodation. However, when we do place a household into temporary accommodation, be it short or long term, we aim to have a clear pathway for each household, based on the family's needs longer term. Whilst we try to address this issue, we must ensure that for the households placed outside of Bromley, they have appropriate support and access to services.

In recent years there has been an increase in rough sleeping. Rough Sleepers may experience a range of multiple and complex needs which are

rarely able to be addressed by one service. In addition to the risks faced by rough sleepers, rough sleeping can also have a negative impact on the wider community. Tackling rough sleeping requires effective collaboration between partners to ensure a comprehensive programme is in place to offer proactive outreach

Education is important not just in schools, but in the wider community. It is important that people know how to recognise when they need to seek help and what help they may need. We believe that our advice and assistance cannot just be limited to housing; we need to address the family's needs as a whole and help households to develop the skills and resilience to manage in the long term.

Key Challenges:

- The number of rough sleepers has more than doubled since 2011/12. 57 rough sleepers were identified in Bromley in 2016/17. <http://lbb2k3s163:8080/businessobjects/enterprise115/desktoplauncher/InfoView/res/general/treeCtrlImages/blank.gif>
- The recent JSNA health needs audit highlighted the high proportion of single homeless people with complex needs relating to physical and mental health.
- The time spent in temporary accommodation is increasing
- Due to high and rising need the Council has to place households into temporary accommodation outside of the borough in order to meet its statutory housing duties. This is often at some distance from existing support services.
- The number of homeless application, because of domestic and gang violence went up by 50 between 2015/16 and 2016/17. Between July 2015 and June 2016 there was 4800 reported domestic abuse and sexual violence incident in Bromley. Of the 4800 2480 were domestic violence victims.
- Welfare reform has increased the number of people facing homelessness because they cannot afford their accommodation costs.
- More people are accessing food banks in Bromley

Our goals:

- Minimise the impact of welfare reform
- Provide tailored support to prevent homelessness and sustain accommodation
- Build resilience
- Reduce the risk of rough sleeping

To achieve these we will:

Minimise the impact of welfare reform and financial exclusion

- Benefits Advisor to assist with uptake of benefits and the legislative changes in relation to Welfare Reform

- Ensure housing services participate in the development of local support arrangements for implementation of universal credit to minimise the risk of homelessness arising from benefit change
- Provide access to money and debt advice to resolve homelessness and ensure households are able to sustain future living expenses.

Provide tailored support to prevent homelessness and sustain accommodation

- Ensure the wider needs of all households are considered as an integral part of their pathway plan and that appropriate support is provided to access and sustain accommodation.
- Review existing floating support and supported accommodation and ensure future commissioning meets identified needs.
- Work with Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid to improve pathways for domestic abuse victims leaving refuges
- Promote more joined up working with health, prison and probation services to prevent homelessness on discharge or release.
- Work closely with partners in the criminal justice sector through [Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference](#) (MARAC) and [Multi-agency public protection arrangement](#) (MAPPA) arrangement to provide appropriate support, including housing.
- Complete [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) (JSNA) health needs audit to improve links with health to better understand and address health needs of homeless people.
- Ensure good communications with local authorities in which temporary accommodation placements are made.
- Ensure those placed outside of the borough are able to access local services.
- Undertake a review of supported accommodation

Build resilience

- Develop a financial inclusion approach to minimise the risk of future homelessness
- Increase access to employment support for families and vulnerable adults who are at risk of homelessness.
- Encourage savings and enable low cost finance by promoting the credit union.

Reduce rough sleeping

- Deliver on the 'no first night out project' in partnership with south east London housing partnership to secure private rented accommodation and provide the necessary support to ensure tenancies are sustained.
- Undertake the annual headcount to monitor levels of rough sleeping
- Work closely with London Street Rescue to identify and support rough sleepers away from the street.
- Promote the no second night out helpline and streetlink reporting tool.

- Work with No Second Night out (NSNO) and London Street Rescue (LSR) to create a forum or task group to enable professionals both in the sector and the local authority to have a clear plan of action for rough sleepers in the borough.

Cost and Resources

Homelessness can have a long-lasting negative impact on the health and wellbeing of people. There is also a large financial cost arising through homelessness.

The Council faces increasing costs in providing services to homeless people. Direct costs incurred in relation to homelessness and temporary accommodation have been increasing year-on-year and it is forecasted to amount to £13,768,020 of which approximately £9,686,593 is met through government grants and housing benefit receipt.

Investing in services which prevent homelessness and support people to sustain accommodation in the longer term can help to stem these costs and improve the health and wellbeing of individuals and families.

The Council will continue to invest in services during this strategy to reduce the level of homelessness in Bromley. In the process we seek to minimise the wider costs which may include welfare benefits, health, social care, and criminal justice.

Delivering the Homelessness Strategy

An action plan has been developed from workshops involving a range of agencies and stakeholders to support delivery of the commitments set out in the Homelessness Strategy.

Monitoring our action plan in a timely manner will make it easier to update in light of other potential changes to national, regional or local policy and means we will be able to respond appropriately. We will review our action plan annually and each quarter we will monitor the actions and measures that have been set out in it. Progress will be regularly presented to Members and key external stakeholders

Appendix 1: Homelessness Strategy Action Plan

Early Identification and Prevention of Homelessness				
Action	Outcome/ Success Measures	Responsibility	Resources	Timescales
1. Accessible Information				
Expand phone, internet based and face to face options and housing advice provision.	Increased take up of advice before crisis Reduction in approaches and homeless acceptances. Reduced proportion of households requiring emergency temporary accommodation placements. Reduced timescales to access advice	Head of Housing Options and Support	Mainstream staffing resources. IT system capital funding	
Review and expand access and referral routes	Increased take up for advice pre crisis and reduced homeless acceptances	Head of Housing Options & Support	Mainstream staffing resources	
Develop an on-line directory of services to ensure all agencies who may come into contact with an individual who is at risk of homelessness are able to sign post effectively to prevent homelessness occurring.	Comprehensive directory of services and resources rolled out to all agencies Customers will be signposted to the right service at the right time	Head of Housing Compliance & Strategy	New burdens funding	

Early Identification and Prevention of Homelessness

Accessible Information (Continued)

Review information provided by the Council and partner agencies to private tenants and landlords to identify opportunities to better inform them about homeless prevention services.	Reduced homeless applications & acceptances from those facing eviction from the private rented sector.	Head of Housing Options & Support	Existing revenue budget	
Ensure all communications deliver consistent messages on the Council's approach to homeless prevention and housing solutions available. Review and update as required all leaflets and website.	Website reviewed and updated. All leaflets reviewed at least annually and updated as required. Reduced approaches as homeless	Director of Housing		
Develop a web based interactive housing advice module	Increased take up of self-help service to prevent crisis	Director of housing	Housing IT system approved capital funding	
2. The right advice and assistance at the right time				
Review current frontline access arrangements to offer increased duty arrangements to reduce appointment times.	Reduced waiting times for appointments leading to reduced homeless acceptances.	Director Housing Head of Housing options & Support		
Develop early intervention and homeless prevention programme for voluntary and community sector partners.	Training programme developed and delivered. Reduced applications and acceptances Consistent advice provided to anyone at risk of homelessness.	Head of Housing Compliance & Strategy		

Early Identification and Prevention of Homelessness

2. The right advice and assistance at the right time (Continued)

Improving processes, protocols and information sharing between services to provide a more integrated and consistent approach to tackling homelessness.	Increased action before crisis to reduce homelessness. People receive consistent advice regardless of where they approach	Director of Housing. Head of Options & Support and head of Allocations and Accommodation.		
Develop personal plans setting out signposting advice and assistance to homeless people	Everyone has a clear plan setting out the steps to prevent or relieve homelessness and who is responsible for this. Increased take up of self-help options Reduced homeless acceptances	Head of Housing options & Support	To be costed	By march 2018
Reduce assessment times	Assessments times reduced – new targets to be established for HRA	Head of Housing Options & Support	Mainstream revenue funding	
Introduce housing advice at court.		Head of Housing Options & Support	To be costed	May 2018
Review the effectiveness of current outreach surgeries and undertake a scoping exercise to assess the potential benefits of expanding outreach provision as a method of early intervention including community shops, children's centre. Following review identify the best locations for the provision of early advice	Regular network of advice surgeries in place. Clients actively utilising for advice and support	Head of housing Options & Support Head of Housing Compliance & Strategy		

Early Identification and Prevention of Homelessness

2. The right advice and assistance at the right time (Continued)				
Provide regular briefings for frontline staff across agencies who come into contact with vulnerable households and develop referral protocols to ensure referrals are made effective and comply with the new duty to refer	Consistent advice provided Reduction in homeless acceptances	Director of Housing		
Working alongside Bromley Children's Project to identify those at risk. Develop a clear analysis protocol and referral process	Families referred before crisis to increase the number of successful prevention and reduced acceptances	Head of Housing Compliance and strategy		
3. Support to remain in the home of access alternative accommodation				
To work with landlords no matter who their landlord is. Develop specialist tenancy relations capacity	Reduced homelessness as a result of eviction.	Head of Housing Options & Support		
Through joint working better identify people at risk of homelessness to offer advice and assistance at earlier stage to prevent crisis. Develop identification tools for partners.	Increased access to early intervention services to reduce homeless acceptances	Head of Housing Options & Support		
Ensure that the new integrated health networks are able to identify issues which could lead to homelessness and provide effective sign posting to intervention services.	Increased access to early intervention services to reduce homeless acceptances	Head of Programme Design Head of Housing Options & Support		

Early Identification and Prevention of Homelessness

3. Support to remain in the home or access alternative accommodation (Continued)

Review our protocols with housing associations to ensure referrals are made at an earlier stage for those at risk of eviction	Decrease in evictions from housing associations, increase in planned move on	Homeless Intervention Manager	Mainstream staff resources	
Promote the homeless prevention fund to ensure that agencies are able to refer individuals at risk of homelessness.	Increased take up of homeless prevention fund Reduced homelessness	Head of Housing Options & Support		
Pilot the use of mediation services for those at risk of homeless and review effectiveness to determine future commissioning of mediation services alongside social care.	Reduced homelessness through family/friend evictions	Support & Resettlement Group Manager Children's commissioner		
Analyse prevention work for good practice to share amongst frontline staff	Increased homeless prevention reduced homeless acceptances	Head of Housing Compliance & Strategy		
Analyse routes into homelessness to target resources at early intervention	Increased homeless prevention reduced homeless acceptances	Director of Housing		
Refresh hospital discharge procedures	Reduced homelessness and increased planned move on. Reduction on delayed discharges	Head of Housing options & Support Support and resettlement Team Manager		

Early Identification and Prevention of Homelessness

3. Support to remain in the home or access alternative accommodation (Continued)

Work closely with partners in the criminal; justice sector through MARAC and MAPPA arrangement to provide appropriate support, including housing	Agencies are provided with the best help options to reduce the level of homelessness and inappropriate housing	Head of housing options and support		
Continue to work closely with colleagues in safeguarding to respond to referrals and work according to protocols to assist in rehousing solutions	Increase in planned moves to reduced homeless acceptances	Head of housing options and support	Mainstream revenue funding	Ongoing. Annual review of protocol
Update housing options toolkit in line with HRA and good practice guidance	Compliance with HRA and reduced homeless acceptances	Director Housing Head of Housing Compliance & Strategy Head of Housing Options & Support		
Identify and work with the top families with housing, social and health needs to improve their own lives and become self-reliant	Reduced repeat homelessness	DLT		

Achieving positive outcomes for our young people

Action	Outcome/ Success Measures	Responsibility	Resources	Timescales
1. Reducing Youth Homelessness				
Continue the integrated 16/17 year old service and expand on the range of initiatives to prevent youth homelessness	Reduced homeless approaches	Group Manager housing support & resettlement	Mains stream staff resources Homeless prevention fund	Immediate on ongoing throughout strategy
Continue to monitor and review where necessary the 16/17 joint protocol between housing and children's services	Improved joint working between services and reduced homelessness	Director Housing Director children's social care		
Ensure all young people receive appropriate assessments to determine their future housing options	Improved move on to independence. Young people in suitable accommodation Reduced failed tenancies	Group Manager Housing Support & Resettlement Head of Referral and Assessment		
Fix broken family relationship and help young people stay at home with parents, relative friends	Increased number of young people returning home	Group Manager Support & resettlement		

Achieving positive outcomes for our young people

1. Reducing Youth Homelessness (Continued)

Develop a programme of homelessness awareness in secondary schools	Young people will know how to identify if they are at risk of homelessness Young people will know where to go for support and advice	Head of Housing Compliance & Strategy Group Manager support & Resettlement		
Provide housing advice outreach surgeries in the MASH and Youth hub	More young people assisted to remain in their home	Group manager support and resettlement		

2. Access to appropriate accommodation & support services

Ensure the provision of emergency and assessment units within supported housing	Young people have appropriate accommodation whilst a longer term option is identified	Group manager support & resettlement	Existing approved supported accommodation budget	
Ensure no young people are placed into shared facility bed and breakfast accommodation and all young people are placed into accommodation that meets their needs	All young people are placed into suitable accommodation with a move on pathway	Head of Housing Allocations & Accommodation		
Work with the leaving care team to ensure young people leaving care are given appropriate accommodation and support to lead independent lives	All young people are placed into suitable accommodation with a move on pathway	Head of Housing options and Support. Head of CLA and care leavers		

Achieving positive outcomes for our young people

2. Access to appropriate accommodation & support services (Continued)				
Complete a comprehensive review of young people's supported accommodation and seek to develop a framework to expand the accommodation options for young people.	All young people are placed into suitable accommodation with a move on pathway. Reduced tenancy failure	Director Housing Director Children's Social Care Children's Commissioner		
Continue to contribute to the placements panel to ensure that accommodation and support is tailored to the individual young person's needs.	Reduction in young people failing tenancies or entering inappropriate accommodation	Head of CLA and care leavers Homeless Intervention Manager	Mainstream staffing resources	ongoing
To provide use of emergency beds as an alternative to remand for young offenders	Reduced number of young people held on remand	Group Manager Support and resettlement Head of YOS		
3. Successful transition to independence				
Work with colleagues in education and youth services to increase the number of young people in training and employment related activities.	More young people in training and employment. Reduced tenancy breakdown	Group Manager Support & Resettlement.		

Achieving positive outcomes for our young people

3. Successful transition to independence (Continued)

Ensure that all commissioned housings services for young people assist in access to education, training and employment opportunities.	More young people in training and employment. Reduced tenancy breakdown	Commissioner Children Group Manager Support & Resettlement Group Manager CLA		
Develop/commission a life skills training programme	Reduced tenancy failures and repeat homelessness	Children's Commissioner Group manager support & resettlement Group manager leaving care		
Housing attendance at Moving On workshops to present information on acquiring housing and sustainability	Reduced tenancy failures and repeat homelessness	Group manager housing support & resettlement		
Develop agreements with young people to commit to certain standards and training.	Reduced tenancy failures and repeat homelessness	Group manager housing support & resettlement		
Ensuring young people have access to health services and that health promotion activities are delivered across all supported accommodation.	All young people are accessing the appropriate health services	Group manager support & resettlement		

Increasing the supply of accommodation				
Action	Outcome/ Success Measures	Responsibility	Resources	Timescales
1. Greater use of PRS				
Identifying need and creation of a bespoke incentive package to support and encourage clients to take up private sector accommodation	Reduced number of households entering temporary accommodation	Group manager housing management & Acquisitions Homeless Intervention Manager		
Further develop links with the private rented sector: Support and develop a single homes initiative. Explore the potential to develop a lodging scheme Hold regular landlords forum Undertake a regular publicity campaign to attract landlords and agents Continue to work with the empty homes project	Improved access to the PRS to prevent/relieve homelessness	Group manager housing management & acquisitions		
Promotion of out of London schemes for households who cannot afford Bromley or London	Increased take up of out of borough options	Group Manager housing management && Acquisitions		
Review incentives offered to private landlords and agents to increase take up	Increased access to PRS to prevent/relieve homelessness	Group manager housing management & Acquisitions		

Increasing the supply of accommodation

2. Increase temporary accommodation supply

Deliver 400 units under the More homes property purchase scheme and explore options for us in discharge for the homelessness duty	Reduced number of households entering NPA accommodation and remain in TA	Director Housing Director Commissioning		
Review leasing and block booking schemes with landlords to ensure packages are flexible	Reduced number of households entering NPA accommodation and reduced average cost of placements	Director Housing		
Increase range of temporary accommodation- review all potential schemes and options for the procurement of new supply.	Reduced reliance on costly NPA accommodation Reduction in costs Zero use of shared facility B&B accommodation	Director Housing	Mainstream revenue budget Homeless contingency TAMF grant	
To review use of the TAMF to increase the range of TA options available	Appropriate accommodation Reduced length of stay Reduced use of NOA and associated costs	Director Housing	TAMF	
Review TA to ensure it supports the principles of new legislation to reduce length of stays and facilitate conversion to settled accommodation wherever possible	Reduced length of stay in temporary accommodation	Director Housing	TAMF. Revenue Budget	

Increasing the supply of accommodation				
3. Working with Partners to develop more affordable homes				
Produce a new housing strategy to set out the strategic aims of new supply	Reduced numbers and time in TA	Director Housing		
We are exploring opportunities to develop existing Council owned land for conversion and use for modular homes.	Reduced numbers on TA	Director Housing		
Align procurement to source housing for children's, adults and housing services	Reduced costs and inappropriate placements	DLT		
4. Make best use of existing stock to meet housing needs				
Review the methods used to communicate the lettings plan, outcomes and waiting times to improve transparency and understanding	Annual report and regular publication of the lettings plan	Group manager housing allocations		
Review the allocations scheme to ensure that it supports the delivery of the Homeless Reduction Act and focuses on homeless prevention	Increased allocations under homeless prevention reducing numbers in TA	Director Housing Head of Allocations & accommodation		
Ensure take up of quota queues for care leavers and move on from supported accommodation to increase through flow	Reduced use of temporary accommodation for these client groups	Group Manager housing allocations		
Continue to free up existing stock through tackling fraud, and promoting alternative housing options. Implementation of visiting officers	Improved through flow from temporary accommodation	Head of Allocations & Accommodation		

Increasing the supply of accommodation

4. Make best use of existing stock to meet housing needs (Continued)

Continue to free up stock by addressing under occupation including maximising use of extra care housing	Improved through flow form temporary accommodation Full utilisation of extra care housing	Head of Allocations & Accommodation Head of Assessment & Care Management		
Work with households who have been in TA the longest to facilitate move on to settled housing solutions	Increased move on in discharge of duty from TA into settled housing solutions	Group Manager Allocations		

Achieving Positive Outcomes: Improving Health and Wellbeing and supporting Vulnerable people.

Action	Outcome/ Success Measures	Responsibility	Resources	Timescales
1. Minimise the impact of welfare reform				
Benefits Advisor to assist with uptake of benefits and the legislative changes in relation to Welfare Reform	Reduced homeless acceptance	Head of Housing Compliance and Strategy		
Access to computers in a range of locations Access to support Communication about Universal Credit Co-locate at JCP with JCP/BCP – additional post to cover this work	Reduced homelessness arising from welfare reform. Reduced rent arrears	Head of Compliance & Strategy Welfare reform manager		
Ensure housing services participate in the development of local support arrangements for implementation of universal credit to minimise the risk of homelessness arising from benefit change	Reduced homelessness	Head of Housing compliance & Strategy		
Increase employment opportunities through working with JCP and other partners	Reduced homelessness and reduction in benefit cap cases	Head of Compliance & Strategy Welfare reform manager		
Work with internal and external partners to monitor the impact of welfare reform.	Understanding of impact. Resources are targeted to reduce homelessness	Head of housing compliance and strategy Head of revenue and benefits		

Achieving Positive Outcomes: Improving Health and Wellbeing and supporting Vulnerable people.

1. Minimise the impact of welfare reform (Continued)

Develop awareness around the following tools to assist residents: Digital inclusion Credit union Debt and welfare advice Access to employment and training Transfers and home swap Access to out of borough and out of borough accommodation	Awareness raised with internal and external partners People affected signposted to the correct agency for support Reduced homeless approaches	Head of housing compliance and strategy Head of revenue and benefits		
Review the use and access to discretionary housing payments to ensure these are able to be deployed quickly and support homelessness prevention and the duties contained in the homeless reduction act	Reduced homelessness, failed tenancies and repeat homelessness	Director housing Head of revenue and benefits		

2. Provide tailored support to prevent homelessness and sustain accommodation

Outreach support for distant/out of Borough placements	Decrease in rent arrears Households being able to contact our service with ease when required and be provided with timely support and/or advice	Head of allocations & Accommodation Group manager housing support and resettlement		
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Achieving Positive Outcomes: Improving Health and Wellbeing and supporting Vulnerable people.

2. Provide tailored support to prevent homelessness and sustain accommodation (Continued)

Provide tenancy support to establish and sustain tenancies in the private sector	Reduction in failed tenancies and repeat homelessness	Group manager support and resettlement		
In-depth assessment to ensure the right household is matched to the right property				
Provision of support to meet the households needs in order to sustain their tenancies	Fewer review requests Decrease in complaints/contacts regarding temporary accommodation			
Work with health services to adopt a preventative, joined up approach				
Continue to develop links with mental health providers and to assess the impact of changes in the delivery of services to clients	Effective referral pathways developed to reduced homelessness or extended stays in residential settings	GM support and resettlement		
Ensure that all personal plans fully assess support needs and that applicants are signposted or referred to the appropriate services		Head of housing options and support		
Explore the potential to commission a housing first model		Director Housing		

Achieving Positive Outcomes: Improving Health and Wellbeing and supporting Vulnerable people.

2. Provide tailored support to prevent homelessness and sustain accommodation (Continued)				
Specialist accommodation and floating support				
Work with Bromley & Croydon Women's Aid to improve pathways for domestic abuse victims leaving refuges		Group Manager Housing options		
Promote more joined up working with health, prison and probation services to prevent homelessness on discharge or release.		Head of Housing options & Support		
Complete JSNA health needs audit to improve links with health to better understand and address health needs of homeless people.		Group manager Housing resettlement & Support		
Ensure those placed outside of the borough are able to access local services and are provided with a temporary accommodation information pack		Group Manager Housing Allocations		

Achieving Positive Outcomes: Improving Health and Wellbeing and supporting Vulnerable people.

2. Provide tailored support to prevent homelessness and sustain accommodation (Continued)

Ensure good communications with local authorities in which temporary accommodation placements are made and that notifications are provided for all out of borough placements		Group Manager Housing Allocations		
Maintain refuge provision				

3. Build resilience

Consider a client's strengths as well as support needs and risks Provision of appropriate supporting services during stay in temporary accommodation and ensure support services remain in place in the early start of new tenancies	Reduced failed tenancies	Head of housing options and support	Mainstream staffing resources	ongoing
Commission pre tenancy training programme	Reduction in failed tenancies and repeat homelessness	Head of Options and Support		
Encourage savings and enable low cost finance by promoting the credit union.	Reduction in failed tenancies and repeat homelessness	Head of housing options & Support		

Achieving Positive Outcomes: Improving Health and Wellbeing and supporting Vulnerable people

3. Build resilience (Continued)				
Develop a financial inclusion approach to ensure that they minimise the risk of future homelessness	Reduction in failed tenancies and repeat homelessness	Head of Housing Compliance and strategy		
Increase access to employment support for families and vulnerable adults who are at risk of homelessness.				
Financial Resilience - Debt Advice to be given as early as possible				
Monitor the number of enquiries from domestic abuse victims Specialist Training for staff Staff are able to recognise and respond appropriately to victims of domestic abuse				
4. Reduce the risk of rough sleeping				
Deliver on the no first night out project in partnership with south east London housing partnership to secure private rented accommodation and provide the necessary support to ensure tenancies are sustained.	Reduced rough sleeping	Group manager housing options		

Achieving Positive Outcomes: Improving Health and Wellbeing and supporting Vulnerable people

4. Reduce the risk of rough sleeping				
Undertake the annual headcount to monitor levels of rough sleeping		Head of housing compliance & Strategy		
Work closely with London street rescue to identify and support rough sleepers away from the street.	Reduce the number of entrenched rough sleepers returning to the streets.	Head of Housing options & support		
Promote the no second night out helpline and street link reporting tool.	Reduced rough sleeping	Head of Compliance & Strategy		
Work with No Second Night out (NSNO) and London Street Rescue (LSR) to create a forum or task group to enable professionals both in the sector and the local authority to have a clear plan of action for rough sleepers in the borough	Reduced length of rough sleeping	Head of Housing options and support		

Appendix 2: Key points from Bromley's Consultation

Bromley's Homelessness Strategy was developed with the help of organisations from the public, third and housing sector. The engagement with residents also helped us form the homelessness strategy.

Consultation workshops took place in February and March 2017 with Housing Advice Teams, stakeholders and service providers to better understand the needs of homeless households or those at risk of homelessness in our community.

The strategy takes into account the views of our community and its partners; we have ensured that their voices are reflected in this strategy.

The key messages that came from the consultation are:

The current housing situation is mostly affecting people's ability to afford their rent and housing

- Having housing related issues is causing stress and ill health
- Very little access to private sector accommodation because Landlords are reluctant to let to clients that are in receipt of benefits
- It was felt that the best way to manage this and identify those at risk is through partnerships, joint working and advice
- The top two initiatives put forward to prevent homelessness are, housing stock/development and education
- Greater communication to deliver prevention work
- It was felt that the best way that Bromley Council assist agencies is to work with Agencies and increase our stock
- There needs to be greater awareness of our Housing Needs service and the Options available to people

- The public felt that the best way to reduce homelessness is to reduce cuts and increase housing

The keys messages that came from the questionnaires are:

- More affordable homes need to be built in the borough
- More night shelters and drop in centres
- There needs to be more of an holistic approach in the public sector
- Prioritise people with mental health and drug and alcohol problems.
- There needs to be more research on the specific needs of minority groups like the LGBTQ, BME and etc.
- Invest more in drug, alcohol and probation.
- Support existing organisation committed to helping homeless people.

Members of the Homelessness Strategy Working Group 2018 - 2023

- Affinity Sutton
- Bromley Citizen Advice Bureau
- Bromley Shelter
- Bromley and Croydon's Women's Aid
- Centrepoint
- Community Links
- Crystal Palace Community Trust (CPCT)
- Health Watch Bromley
- Hestia
- Homeless Link
- Job Centre Plus
- Keniston Housing Association
- LBB-Bromley Childrens Project
- LBB- Early Intervention and Support
- LBB- Housing Department
- LBB- Leaving Care
- Latch Project
- The Links Medical Practice
- Living Well
- Mayflower
- MOAT Homes
- No Second Night Out
- Penge Churches Housing Association
- Radcliffe Housing Society
- Thames Reach

Appendix 3: Glossary

A

Action Plan: It is a sequence of steps or changes that must be taken, or activities that must be performed well, for a strategy to perform well. In relation to the homelessness strategy it highlights what specific tasks will be done, who they will be carried out by, time it will be done and what specific funds are available for said strategy.

Affordable homes: They are homes that are no more than 80% of the average local market rent.

Arrears: It is sum of money that is owed and should have been paid earlier.

B

Bed and Breakfast Accommodation (B&B): Households are placed in B&B accommodation, because of a lack of suitable accommodation. Most B&BS used by the council are not like hotel accommodation, and are often run specifically for homeless households. Residents placed in B&B may have to share facilities with other households/residents.

C

Choice Based Letting: It is an online system that shows what properties are available to rent. It is for people accepted onto the housing register, and it can be accessed via various mediums.

Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN): It is a multi-agency database that gathers information about rough sleeping in London.

Consultation: It is a meeting where people/groups discuss a subject/topic and share advice.

D

Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP): It is a short term payment from a local authority to help cover some housing costs. DHP does not have to be repaid by the resident.

Domestic Abuse: Women's aid has defined it has an incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and violent behaviour. It includes sexual violence, by partner, family member or carer.

F

Forums: It is a meeting/ medium where ideas and views on a particular issue can be exchanged. People can talk about a problem or matter especially of public interest.

G

Greater London Assembly (GLA): It is strategic city wide government for the city of London. The GLA holds the mayor accountable, investigates issues and influences policy development.

H

Homeless: You may be homeless if you live in unsuitable housing, do not have the right to stay where you are, or if you are sleeping rough.

Homelessness Strategy: Homelessness Act 2002 states that local authorities must have a strategy for preventing homelessness in their district. The strategy applies to anyone at risk of being homeless. Council's must also relieve homelessness where someone has been found to be homeless but is not owed a duty to secure accommodation under the homelessness act.

Homelessness prevention: It has been defined by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) as a local authority "providing people with the ways and means to address their and other needs to avoid homelessness".

Homelessness Relief: It is when a local authority is unable to prevent homelessness, but helps someone to secure accommodation, despite not being obligated to do so.

Housing Association/ Registered Social Landlord (RSL): It is a non-profit organisation, and they rent properties to low incomes households with particular needs. Their portfolio consists of social and affordable rented properties, and they provide options for low cost home ownership.

Housing Demand: It is a market driven concept and relates to the type and number of houses that households will choose to occupy based on preference and affordability.

Housing Need: It is an indicator of existing deficit: the number of households that do not have access to accommodation that meet certain normative standards.

Housing Tenure: is the legal status under which someone has the right to live in a property. The two most common forms of tenure are home ownership and renting. Home-ownership is when a property is owned outright or bought

with mortgage or loan. The second type of tenure is renting, and it has two forms, and they are social and private renting.

J

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA): It is process by which local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and other public sector partners jointly describe the current and future health and wellbeing needs of its local population and identifying priorities for action.

L

Landlord- It is an owner of a property, and the landlord leases their property to an individual or business, and they are called tenants.

Leaving Care: It is a service for young people aged 16 plus to 21. It ensures that young people do not leave care until they are ready, and that they receive effective support once they have left.

Local Housing Allowance: It is a housing benefit that helps people renting from private landlords. The LHA is administered by the local council.

Lodge: It is a specialist accommodation project for long term rough sleepers.

M

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC): It is where information is shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representative of local police, probation, health child protection, housing practitioner, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) and other specialist from the statutory and voluntary sectors.

Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA): Multi-agency public protection arrangement ensures the successful management of violent and sexual offenders.

Mortgage: It is a legal agreement by which a bank/ building society, lends money at interest, and in exchange they take the title of the borrower's property. Over a set period of time, the borrower must repay the loan in order to outright own the property. If the borrower fails to meet the condition of the agreement, the mortgage provider can repossess the property.

N

Nightly Paid Accommodation (NPA): It is used as an interim accommodation while an individual's application for housing is being assessed. Councils only pay for the accommodation the night it is used.

No Second Night Out: It is a London-wide project aimed at ensuring that people sleeping rough do not spend a second night out on the streets.

Not for profit- It means that any surplus generated is reinvested in the pursuit of a social goal. In this context profit would be reinvested into building more affordable home for low income households.

O

One stop shop: It offers a multitude of services for people, and it provides a convenient and efficient service.

P

Private Rented Sector (PRS): The PRS is a property that is owned and rented out by a private landlord. It is the fastest growing tenure in the country, and 14% of Bromley residents live in private rented housing.

Public Sector: It is controlled by the state, owned and operated by the government. The public sector provides services for citizen and does not seek to generate a profit.

R

Rough sleeping (or Street Homeless): It is the most visible form of homelessness. Rough sleeping has been defined as people sleeping or bedded down in open air, building or other places not designed for habitation.

S

Social services: It is a government service that provides and promotes the welfare of vulnerable people. Social service better the wellbeing of children, adults and the elderly.

South East London Housing Partnership: It is partnership made up of the 5 boroughs in the South East London sub-region. They are Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lewisham and Southwark

Stakeholder: It is person or group that has an interest in an organisation. Stakeholders can affect or be affected by an organisation's actions, objectives and policies.

Statutory homelessness: Homelessness defined within the terms of the homelessness legislation and it determines when local authorities will have a duty to offer accommodation.

Support Needs: It is a mixture of practical, financial and emotional support for people who need extra help to manage their and be independent (including mental health, problematic drug and alcohol use and access to social supports)

T

Temporary Accommodation: Local authorities place households in an interim accommodation, when permanent housing is not available, or when households are awaiting a decision on their homelessness application.

Third Sector: Encompasses registered charities and other organisations such as associations, self-help groups and community groups, and they are 'value-driven'. This means they are motivated by social goal and not profit.

W

Welfare Reform: It is when government changes or amends social welfare policies. The goal is to reduce number of individuals/ families dependent on government assistant, so claimants of benefits can be self-sufficient. It affects how much monetary support people are entitled to.

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CONSULTATION FEEDBACK EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the comments and feedback received during the consultation period. The final stage public consultation commenced on the 9th January 2018 and closed on 6th March 2018. All comments have been analysed and will be used to inform the strategy implementation action plan. A full summary of the feedback from the consultation will be published alongside the Homelessness Strategy.

Summary

232 consultees responded to the online survey and 6 different types of organisations also responded to our online survey including representatives from local authorities, police, probation, healthcare, voluntary sector (including homelessness charities) and housing associations.

Of the individual responses 37% were people that are homelessness or have been homeless in the past 37%. Those at risk of becoming homeless now and in the past made up 20% of respondents.

In terms of ages of people who completed the survey:

1	under 18	0.0%
2	18-24	11.9%
3	25-34	25.4%
4	35-54	42.1%
5	55+	20.6%

Whilst no-one under 18 years of age completed the survey, a specific focus group was held to talk to young people who have been in care or experienced homelessness to ensure that their views have been taken into account

In addition to the consultation and Focus Groups, the draft strategy has also been to the Health and Wellbeing board for discussion and feedback.

Of the organisations responding to the survey or attending the focus groups this included agencies that supported or represented the following specific client groups:

- Families
- Young people (16-17)
- Young people (18-24)
- Care leavers
- Older people
- Ex-offenders
- People with Mental Health/disabilities
- People with Physical disabilities
- People with alcohol pendency
- People with drug dependency
- People experiencing domestic violence
- Rough sleepers

Service Demand

73% of all responders considered that demand on the service from those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness will increase over the next 5 years

Main Risk

The cost of housing was overwhelmingly ranked as the number one risk of homelessness.

Strategic priorities - Overall there was strong support for the strategic priorities set within the draft homelessness strategy:

To prevent homelessness, we propose that the strategy should focus on the following four objectives below. Do you agree with our four strategic objectives?				
		Agree (%)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (%)	Disagree
1	Early identification and prevention of homelessness	88	11	1
2	Achieving positive outcomes for our young people	86	13	1
3	Increasing access to and supply of accommodation	87	10	3
4	Achieving positive outcomes: improving health, wellbeing and supporting vulnerable people	89	10	1

Key Themes from feedback

General Comments	
Clear targets should be set to reduce rough sleeping and the use of temporary accommodation	Targets are already set in these areas and will continue to be reviewed, monitored and published through the annual action plan.
Fraudulent activity should be tackled to focus services on those most at risk	The Council is committed to actively tackling fraudulent activities and ensure assessment of need is robust to identify and tackle any cases of fraudulent activity whilst effectively supporting those most at risk. The range of actions taken will be set out in the action plan.
Disabilities – ensuring access to suitable accommodation	Noted: The strategy seeks to ensure that accommodation secured is suitable to meet needs. Current planning requirements include requirements on the provision of accessible/adapted accommodation.
Working in partnership is important – the Council taking a leadership and coordination role is welcome	Noted: Partnership working is integral to the success of the Homelessness Strategy and this will continue to be an overarching priority throughout the term of the new Housing Strategy.

Priority 1 – Early identification and prevention of homelessness	
Feedback	Response
The need to understand and work with homeless people in order to understand their needs and best assist them	Noted – the strategy emphasises a focus on working with people who have experienced or are at risk of homelessness, to both inform future service provision and work with individuals to help them resolve their housing difficulty. In line with the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act a personal plan is developed with everyone who is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless to jointly agree on all actions that need to be taken to resolve their housing difficulty. A dedicated worker will then oversee delivery of the personal plan until the situation is resolved. The high proportion of people responding to the consultation who have experienced or have been at risk of homelessness has assisted in developing the action plan.
Universal Credit – monitor impact of welfare reform. Engage and support those who will be moving to Universal Credit	Noted. A dedicated team are in place to work proactively to support people through the transition to universal credit. The team work in partnership with the job centre plus and advice agencies. The impact of welfare reform continues to be monitored closely. Specific range of initiatives will be set out within the delivery action plan.
Communication is essential but it needs to be more than on-line. A range of leaflets, face to face	Agreed. Pages 38-41 set out the commitment to ensuring that the right advice is provided at the right time. This must include ensuring advice is accessible in terms of the location and format it is delivered.
Early identification is key	This is a key priority with the Homelessness Strategy with a wide range of initiatives included within the delivery action plan. This seeks to ensure that any early identification takes place of any factors which may lead to potential homelessness and that effective advice, signposting and support is provided in a timely way to maximise the success of prevention actions and assist people to either remain in their home or access settled and sustainable housing.
Priority 2 – Achieving positive outcomes for young people	
Feedback	Response
Ensure actions focus on those at greatest risk	
Ensure support is provided to care leavers to manage tenancies including money advice	Noted This is already included as a priority within the strategy with greater emphasis on support and training to be able to manage tenancies. The action plan will set out in more detail the range of support provided and ongoing money management.

Education – better support to access jobs/employment. Schools should education children to reduce the risk of homelessness	Noted the Homelessness Strategy has a key focus on education and working with schools to help reduce the risk of homelessness. Pages 44-47 set out the overarching priorities for this area of work.
It is not just about the young people but supporting families and parents	Agreed the action delivery plan will set out the commitment to assisting both young people and their families.
Priority 3 – increasing access to and the supply of accommodation	
Feedback	Response
Private Rented Sector – ability to make payments and rental guarantees to increase the number of landlords prepared to take tenants in receipt of benefits. The quality of accommodation is also key.	The Homelessness Strategy (pp38-58) sets out the approach to helping people to access the private rented sector. This will be expanded upon within the delivery action plan. It includes a range of initiatives to work with private landlords to improve the quality and access to accommodation, together with practical assistance such as deposits and essential households items.
Private Rented Sector – not affordable to many. Landlords should reduce rents and rent controls should be put in place.	Whilst Private Sector Accommodation is not affordable for everyone it does provide an alternative housing solution for those who can afford it with some support. This may be the only independent housing solution for people who would not be considered as having a high or priority need for social housing under the current legislation. Close work does take place with landlords and in many cases this can assist in agreeing rents at an affordable level. The Council also offers a number of rental guarantee and deposit schemes to assist in accessing the private rented sector. Rents controls are not within the Council's control or scope of the homelessness strategy. Such measures would require legislative changes.
More emphasis should be put on affordable housing requirements when planning applications are approved. Ensure developers supply the required percentage of affordable housing.	Noted – no change to the strategy. The Council's planning policy requirements for affordable housing are published on the Council's website. Viability assessments are required on all sites in the event that the required proportion of affordable housing cannot be secured on site and this is considered as part of the planning application.
Need to increase the supply of local affordable housing	Notes – no change. The focus on the strategy is to prevent homelessness and increase the supply and access to housing across all sectors of the market to meet housing need. This includes maximising access to affordable housing. The forthcoming housing strategy will also explore this in more detail.

Empty homes	The Council does run a scheme to bring empty homes back into use. In some cases this can create opportunities for direct nominations format he council one homes ready to let. Options to tackle empty homes is outside the scope of the homelessness strategy but will be considered in more detail within the wider forthcoming housing strategy.
Homeshare schemes	Noted. The action plan will include an action to explore the potential to develop a homeshare scheme.
Greater emphasis on settled accommodation rather than Temporary Accommodation	Noted that strategy is committed to improving access to settled accommodation. Where temporary accommodation has to be used the strategy aims to ensure that this accommodation is of a good quality.
Ensure Temporary Accommodation where has to be used is of good quality	Agreed. The strategy sets out a number of aims around the provision of temporary accommodation. This includes ensuring that all accommodation is of an appropriate standard and meets the households' needs. The visiting outreach team has specifically been set up to be able to better monitor the quality of accommodation provided.
Moves to areas where housing is more affordable, in greater supply	This is included within the strategy.
Regular visit to those in temporary accommodation to understand what happens next and rehousing options that may be available.	Noted: the strategy sets out a priority to increase contact with those in temporary accommodation through the development of the visiting outreach team.
Priority 4 - Achieving positive outcomes: improving health, wellbeing and supporting vulnerable people	
Feedback	Response
Tenant ready training	No change – the strategy already includes support to people to ensure they are able to sustain tenancies as a key priority including tenant ready schemes'. The action plan will set out in more detail how we intend to expend on the training already offered.
Better support and integration of ex-service persons back into society	Noted: Pages 52-58 sets out the overarching priorities for providing early advice and support. Specific actions will be contained within the delivery action plan. This will include developing closer working relationships with organisations working with ex-service persons to improve explore options to improve the level of homelessness prevention.
Better support and provision for those leaving prison	Noted. There is already a dedicated role within the housing options service to support those being discharged from prison. This includes a regular

	surgery through probation and floating support to assist ex-offenders to secure accommodation and gain the support required to abstain from reoffending.
Greater support with follow up	Already in the strategy
Mental health. Key that Mental health support is provided and suitable supported accommodation	Supported needs are assessed at point of contact and referrals made to relevant support services or supported housing schemes. Ongoing works continues to take place to ensure close joint working takes place between housing and mental health colleagues. Surgeries are also undertaken at Green Parks house to ensure that housing pathway is developed and in place before discharge this includes assessing both housing and support needs. The strategy aims to expand on this work as a key priority to both reducing homelessness and ensuring that people are able to sustain their home in the longer term. Pages 54-56 summarise the key approaches to ensuring appropriate and timely support.
Improving access to training and education – tackling the route causes	Assessments consider all of the issues which may have led to homelessness. The strategy focuses on a holistic approach to look at all measures which not only resolve homelessness but any underlying factors which could make a household at risk of future homelessness. This includes a wider range of activities include for example accessing education, training and employment, debt and money management and so forth.
Training GPs	This is included within the priority actions identified within the strategy. A health needs audit has been undertaken which feeds into the homelessness strategy. Part of this work includes working with GPs to enable them to better identify factors which could risk homelessness and how to effectively sign post to support and advice.
Engage with businesses	To be included within the delivery action plan. Improving access to education and employment is a key priority to reduce the risk of homelessness
Ensuring access to healthcare	The strategy sets out a commitment to working with health colleagues both to improve access to healthcare and also to ensure identification of factors which could lead to homelessness to enable early prevention work to take place.
Money management and debt advice is key	The provision of money management and debt advice is a key priority (Pages 57 and 58). There is a money management and debt advice service.

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