Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

2026-31



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Foreword



Everyone in Lewisham should have access to a safe, secure and affordable home. We have made welcome progress in reducing the number of households living in temporary accommodation and continue to work hard to prevent and respond to rough sleeping, but too many residents still face the insecurity and harm that comes with homelessness or the risk of losing their home. Homelessness remains a reality for too many of our residents, and this administration is committed to doing all in its power to reducing it.

Homelessness in Lewisham cannot be separated from the wider pressures facing London's housing system. Housing costs have risen faster than many people's incomes, while too few genuinely affordable homes are available to those who need them most. As a result, more residents are being pushed into housing insecurity and homelessness.

We believe that homelessness is the sharp end of a wider affordability crisis. This affordability crisis is, in large part, the consequence of a failed experiment in elevating the private sector to be the primary provider of housing without adequate regulation to prevent profiteering over what is a basic human need.

This Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out our overarching goal, **to create a borough where homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurring**.

It sets out how we will prevent homelessness wherever possible, improve support for those affected, improve housing standards and temporary accommodation, and increase access to stable long-term housing.

To achieve this, we will do everything in our power to prevent Lewisham residents from becoming homeless. This will mean easier access to homelessness assessments and a simpler, more joined-up service, making it easier for residents to get the help they need as early as possible.

We will support residents who are already homeless, whether they are sofa surfing, on the streets, or in our temporary accommodation, and we will deepen our relationships with our public and voluntary sector partners to do so.

And we will do everything we can to address the upstream causes of homelessness, including the chronic shortage of social housing, particularly for larger families, the shameful sight of empty homes, and exploitation by rogue landlords in the Private Rented Sector.

Local authorities remain intensely resource-poor, and the causes of this current crisis are deeply structural. While this council will do everything we can, we know that we cannot achieve our goals alone. For this reason, we are calling for policy changes from the Mayor of London and central government to begin addressing the homelessness and affordability crisis.

These are to:

1. Close the temporary accommodation subsidy gap. The government should end the freeze that has set its subsidy funding at 90% of the 2011 Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates. Raising the subsidy to match current LHA rates is crucial for helping boroughs' meet today's TA costs.

2. Pin LHA rates to rental inflation. For too long, LHA rates have been a political football, and an easy target for the Treasury when savings are required. As a result, too many households on low incomes and Universal Credit are struggling to find homes within LHA limits, putting them at risk of homelessness and adding pressure to local services.

3. Radically expand the capacity of Local Authorities to build and buy homes for use as temporary and social rented housing. To reduce reliance on finding affordable accommodation in the private rented sector, the government should invest further in council-led housing. This would improve both the quality and value of temporary accommodation, reduce reliance on a volatile private rented sector, and help meet long-term housing needs.

4. Devolve powers to introduce Rent Controls to the Mayor of London. The crisis in private sector affordability is driving rates of homelessness and draining the finances of local authorities. Regional mayors should be granted the power to introduce rent controls, which will return affordability to the private rented market, and improve the ability of households to move on from temporary accommodation into the private rented sector. Rent controls would also help ensure that the benefits of future LHA uprating are passed on to tenants, rather than being absorbed through higher private sector rents.

5. Fully abolish Right-to-Buy (RtB) to end the loss of social rented homes. Despite Government reforms to limit the impact of RtB on new social housing supply and allow more flexibility around the use of funding, this policy remains a drag on social housing deliverability. The full abolition of RtB in Scotland and Wales shows that the end of this generationally harmful policy is both possible and desirable.

I would like to thank everybody who fed into the development of this Strategy, and I look forward to delivering it over the next five years.

Councillor Natalie Thomas
Cabinet Member for Safer Homes, Homelessness and Housing Services

Executive summary

Lewisham, like many Local Authorities, is facing an unprecedented homelessness emergency. Rising costs for private housing, a shortage of family size homes, continuing welfare restrictions, and cost of living pressures have combined to increase the risk of homelessness for many residents.

Compounding this crisis, Local Authorities have endured a long-term reduction in their financial resources since 2010 and continue to pay more simply to meet their statutory duties. London Councils' total expenditure on homelessness in 2024-25 was £2.025 billion, or £5.5 million per day – increasing from £1.586 billion in 2023-24. Despite this expenditure, a large proportion is spent on insecure and often poor-quality temporary accommodation, the cost of which has risen by 75% over the last five years.

Despite these systemic challenges, Lewisham has continued to support thousands of residents experiencing housing insecurity. We have reduced the number of households living in temporary accommodation, maintained our statutory duty to protect families from prolonged stays in unsuitable bed and breakfast accommodation, expanded our supply of council-owned temporary accommodation, and strengthened our partnerships with a wide range of organisations that support vulnerable residents.

The council has a statutory duty, under the Homelessness Act (2002), to conduct a review of the nature and extent of homelessness in the borough every five years and to develop a strategy setting out:

- how services will be delivered in the future to tackle homelessness; and
- the available resources to prevent and relieve homelessness.

Our most recent Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy ended in 2026. This Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out our approach for the next five years. It has been developed through consultation with our own frontline staff, our partner organisations who work to house and support homeless households, and people who are or have previously experienced homelessness.

What we know about homelessness in the borough
– key findings from the Homelessness Review

Below is a summary of key points from our Homelessness Review:

Drivers of homelessness

- Lewisham local economy is characterised by a contrast between residents who commute out of the borough for work and those who work locally.
- Long-term economic issues have driven homelessness nationally and are particularly pronounced in Lewisham.
- The borough has a high proportion of local services / retail work, with a large proportion of part-time and casual employment, and our productivity rate is one of the lowest in London[1].
- Recent changes to the welfare system, such as the removal of the two-child limit, may positively impact some households. However, other constraints remain, including the freeze on Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates and the benefit cap, which limits the total amount of benefits that some working-age households can receive. As of February 2025, 1,605 households in Lewisham were subject to the benefit cap.
- According to research by Savills and Trust for London, the overall number of PRS listings fell significantly between 2018-2024[2]. Lewisham is in line with this trend, with a reduction of approximately 22%.
- Overall affordability within the Private Rented Sector remains a challenge across the UK. In July 2026, Crisis and Citizens Advice estimated that fewer than 2 per cent of homes listed for rent in Great Britain could be covered by LHA alone[3].
- Evictions by friends and family accounted for 37% of prevention cases and 36% of relief cases. These types of eviction can have a range of underlying causes, including younger people being asked to leave by parents and sofa surfers staying with friends or family after leaving their original settled accommodation.
- As of Q1 2026, Domestic abuse accounted for 5.3% of prevention cases and 8.1% of relief cases.

1. ONS Regional Economic Activity by GDP, 1998-2023
2. Private Rented Housing Supply in London, 2024
3. No home to go to: how frozen Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates are causing homelessness

Core statutory homelessness statistics

- Our Homelessness Prevention Rate has improved significantly, moving from 48% in August 2025 to 57% year-to-date as of August 2026.
- Our Homelessness Relief Rate has also improved, increasing from 38% in August 2025 to 43% year-to-date as of August 2026.
- In 2025-26, 345 people were seen rough sleeping in Lewisham[4]. More recently, 71 people were seen rough sleeping in Q1 2026-27, down from 88 in the previous quarter[5]. Across London, 12,938 people were seen rough sleeping during 2025-26, demonstrating the significant wider pressure on rough sleeping services across the capital.
- Statutory homelessness data does not capture all homelessness. Based on Crisis research on hidden homelessness[6], Lewisham may have over 1,000 residents who are homeless but not known to council services, with sofa surfing likely to be the most common form of hidden homelessness.

Temporary Accommodation

- Around 1 in every 54 households in Lewisham was living in TA as of Q3 2025. While slightly below the London average, this rate was more than three times the England average[7].
- Families with children are particularly affected, with Lewisham's rate of households with children living in TA above the London average and more than four times the England average.
- Despite these pressures, the number of households and children living in Temporary Accommodation is continuing to decline. Between August 2025 and August 2026, the number of households in TA fell from 2,547 to 2,168, while the number of children fell from 3,738 to 3,257.
- We have made significant progress in reducing our reliance on nightly paid Temporary Accommodation, with the number of households in nightly paid accommodation falling by more than a third, from 1,167 in August 2025 to 744 in August 2026.
- We have continued to meet our statutory duty to ensure that families with children are not living in B&B accommodation for longer than 6 weeks.

4. London CHAIN data (Combined Homelessness and Information Network) 2021-22 to 2025-26
5. London CHAIN data (Combined Homelessness and Information Network) 2024-25 Q2 to 2026-27 Q1
6. Crisis Report: Revealing the reality behind hidden homelessness
7. Trust for London- London's temporary accommodation crisis- the latest data

Equalities and disproportionate impact

- Nationally, young people (from 18 to 44) are at a greater overall risk of becoming homeless. This trend holds in Lewisham, however, Lewisham has a slightly higher incidence of homeless households in the 45-64 age range compared to regional and national figures.
- Single people make up around half of all our prevention cases, with a weighting towards single men. Single mothers are the most common household type among families with children, outnumbering couples and larger families with dependent children.
- Our relief cases have a stronger weighting towards single households, particularly single men. Single mothers remain the most common household type among families with children.
- Black / African / Caribbean / Black British households are significantly more likely to experience homelessness, accounting for 46.4% of prevention and relief duty cases in Lewisham in Q1 2026. This is disproportionately high when compared with both regional and national homelessness cases[8], and with their share of Lewisham's overall population[9]. Conversely, white residents are significantly less likely to experience homelessness, while other ethnic groups experience homelessness broadly in proportion to their share of Lewisham's total population.
- Many households in work also receive Universal Credit (UC). In Lewisham, 33.9% of all UC recipients are in full- or part-time work, broadly in line with the England average.

8. Black / African / Caribbean households accounted for 11.9% of households owed a prevention or relief duty nationally, and 30.9% across London in Q1 2026.
9. 26% of 2021 Census respondents in Lewisham were Black / African / Caribbean.

Resources and Financial Pressures

- From April 2026, the Government simplified the funding available to councils to tackle homelessness. Funding previously provided separately through the prevention, relief and staffing element of the Homelessness Prevention Grant, the Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant, the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme and the Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation Grant has been brought together into the new Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant[10]. The new grant provides councils with greater flexibility to respond to local priorities across homelessness prevention, rough sleeping and domestic abuse.
- In 2026-27, Lewisham has been allocated £7.35 million through the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant to support this work[11]. The funding is ringfenced and can be used flexibly across its specified functions, subject to the grant conditions.
- Funding for Temporary Accommodation, previously provided through the Temporary Accommodation element of the Homelessness Prevention Grant, has been separated from the new grant and incorporated into the council's wider Revenue Support Grant.
- Housing pressures nationally and within Lewisham continue to place significant financial pressure on the council's housing services, particularly the cost of providing Temporary Accommodation. The council has invested significant additional resources in the Temporary Accommodation budget in recent years to respond to these pressures.
- There also continue to be significant ongoing costs associated with meeting housing need, managing council housing and providing services to residents experiencing homelessness. These costs are influenced by levels of demand for housing and homelessness services, reinforcing the importance of prevention and making the most effective use of the resources available to us.

10. Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant: supporting guidance
11. Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant Determination 2026 to 2027

What our residents/partners/ frontline staff told us

Residents told us that: -

"There should be more opportunities to speak to people face to face, not just by phone. We need information about how the system works the whole way through, not just at each individual step".

"A lot of information about the homelessness system is passed around by word of mouth, between homeless people. Signposting is mostly a list of services, and a lot of them have closed or have the wrong information, staff don't always know what services are out there"

"Often you will be waiting a long time for an initial homelessness assessment, if you're not already rough sleeping".

"Navigating the triage process can be really challenging, especially if you don't have someone to advocate for you".

"Landlords [providing Temporary Accommodation] know that they can raise the rent, and the council has to pay it".

"Being homeless is inherently traumatic – it's not just traumatic if you have a recognised support need".

Frontline Staff and Partners told us that: -

"The levels of need for rough sleepers are extremely high and getting worse, mental health is one of the biggest issues for homelessness in Lewisham. There is a big gap in access to psychological therapy for homeless people, and this can cause tenancies to fail when people are housed".

"Our challenges are mostly about demand – we're seeing 3 or 4 new people every day".

"Some staff don't have information on the support options available to people, and the belief that there's no support out there can be self-reinforcing. "

"There are some fundamental problems with language barriers. People are handed paperwork in English, and don't understand when a duty has been accepted or refused".

"We regularly have to escalate issues, and there isn't a clear escalation process".

"Prevention can get sidelined when services are at capacity and firefighting. There's a hidden cost to homeless people going round and round".

Vision

Our vision is to create a borough where homelessness is rare, brief and non-recurring.

This strategy is structured around five key strategic objectives, which reflect the council's priorities informed by our evidence review and what we heard from residents, partners and staff. It sets out how we will work towards meeting our Local Outcomes Framework targets.

Our five strategic objectives are:

1. Tackle rough sleeping and prevent homelessness
2. Increase standards and enforcement within the Private Rented Sector
3. Improve the quality of our temporary accommodation.
4. Increase Lewisham's supply of long-term accommodation.
5. Work in partnership to support residents to live independent, healthy and sustainable lives.

The council cannot tackle homelessness alone. Success will require continued partnership working with residents, government, housing associations, public services, voluntary organisations and neighbouring boroughs. Through this strategy, we are committing to ambitious, measurable actions that prevent homelessness wherever possible, improve housing stability and wellbeing, and ensure that residents facing homelessness receive the right support at the right time.

Theme 1
Tackle rough sleeping and prevent homelessness

Summary

Any period of homelessness can be traumatic for any individual. For both the wellbeing of our residents, and the resources of the council, it is better to resolve an individual's housing situation before they become homeless. The Government has been clear that Local Authorities are expected to prioritise prevention work, and it is therefore core to this Strategy that we transition our Housing Needs service from being crisis driven to being prevention driven.

Homelessness legislation is complex, and homeless households are too often left without adequate information to understand their rights and make decisions about their housing options. Our feedback has found that service users often feel unclear about their legal rights and how their case will progress and that they lack full information about the housing options available to them. In many cases, this may lead to opportunities to prevent homelessness being missed due to a lack of information.

Every person sleeping rough is one too many. Our aim is to be among the best performing of our statistical peers at preventing rough sleeping, to contribute to the Government's target of halving rough sleeping over the course of the Parliament, and to achieve a borough where rough sleeping is rare, brief and non-recurring.

We know that the level of support needs among people sleeping rough in Lewisham is continuing to increase over time, alongside demand for services. To meet this challenge, our rough sleeping service must adapt to these higher needs, both within the service and through better joint working with health and social care partners.

To address this priority, we will:

- Provide comprehensive homelessness assessments that identify the root causes of a person's situation, and support residents to remain in their own homes through negotiation, mediation, and enforcement services.
- Review our advice and information offer, with the aim of providing comprehensive and accessible advice to anyone at risk of homelessness in the short or long term. This will include the introduction of a customer journey handout, detailing customers' responsibilities and their rights throughout their homelessness case.
- Review our training and induction processes, focusing on ensuring that new Housing Needs staff spend time shadowing our partner services to improve their understanding of the support landscape and what is suitable for each individual.
- Recommission our borough-wide Advice Service. The service will be a central referral partner for the new Crisis and Resilience Fund, and we will work closely with them to ensure households at risk of homelessness receive suitable and targeted advice and receive homelessness assessments where required.
- Utilise the Government's new Crisis and Resilience Fund's short-term and housing-specific elements to prevent homelessness, place households on a more secure financial footing, and prevent rental arrears from resulting in eviction. Alongside this, we will continue to provide support to households living in the PRS to help them sustain their tenancies, address issues that place their housing at risk, and prevent homelessness wherever possible.
- Review our Allocations Policy and seek to remove relevant offer restrictions for victim / survivors of domestic abuse.
- Improve staff training to ensure homelessness assessments include all relevant information and that service users' support needs, preferences, and suitable and unsuitable housing options are all captured at the initial assessment stage.
- Adapt our Rough Sleeper Service to accommodate these higher needs. To achieve this, we will work to secure a sustainable funding solution for our Homeless Outreach (START) team, a small multi-disciplinary assessment team that engages with and assesses homeless people with severe mental health problems and additional substance misuse or physical health needs.
- Review the take-up and effectiveness of the Intensive Housing Advice and Floating Support Service for households who have recently been housed in the Private Rented Sector, to ensure that we are responding to the increased level of need among our service users.

Theme 2
Increase standards and enforcement within the private rented sector

Summary

The homelessness crisis is, above all, a crisis of affordability. For the majority of homeless families with fewer support needs, the main barrier to preventing and/or relieving their homelessness is a lack of affordable accommodation in the Private Rented Sector (PRS).

The affordability of private rented accommodation remains a significant challenge for many Lewisham residents, particularly those on lower incomes. The shortage of affordable PRS accommodation also places significant pressure on the availability and cost of Temporary Accommodation.

Furthermore, it is inefficient for homes in Lewisham to sit empty while over 2,000 Lewisham households are living in Temporary Accommodation[12]. While some private property owners may simply need support to bring their homes back into use, where owners do not engage with the council, we may need to consider enforcement action.

We are confident that we have the resources, policies and strategies to improve Lewisham's Private Rented Sector and prevent households from becoming homeless due to the actions of private landlords. We are already operating comprehensive and successful property licensing schemes, with a total of 17,161 properties licensed in the borough as of August 2026. These schemes are working to improve the quality, standards and safety of PRS housing and to hold landlords to account for poor housing conditions.

The Renters' Rights Act 2025 has also granted councils significant new enforcement powers where a landlord has acted unlawfully when seeking to evict a tenant (for example, attempting to serve a now-invalid Section 21 notice).

12. As of August 2026, 2,168 households were living in TA in Lewisham.

To address this priority, we will:

- Establish a Rogue Landlord Taskforce, which will provide an intensive, place-based focus to identify non-compliant properties and bring them into compliance, helping to provide safer housing. This taskforce will work by directing our existing enforcement resources to review properties owned by landlords who have repeatedly been subject to enforcement action and help make non-compliance with housing legislation an adverse financial operating model.
- Investigate reports of non-compliant landlords seeking to illegally evict tenants and take appropriate enforcement action where landlords have acted improperly. Through new working arrangements between our Housing Needs and PRS Enforcement teams, and the use of new powers under the Renters' Rights Act 2025, we will work to prevent illegal evictions, reduce homelessness arising from landlord action, and improve the viability of the PRS as a move-on option for Lewisham's homeless households.
- Use our influence at a regional and national level to call for rent cap powers to be devolved to the Mayor of London and used to improve housing affordability while maintaining housing supply.
- Build on our Empty Homes Strategy, working to identify privately owned empty homes, apply Council Tax premiums to these homes, and provide advice and assistance to property owners. Where this work has been unsuccessful, we will consider the options available to us, including the use of legal powers such as statutory notices, enforced sale procedures and Empty Dwelling Management Orders to bring empty homes back into use.

Theme 3
Improve the quality of temporary accommodation

Summary

Our service has made significant progress in reducing the number of households living in TA and supporting households to move into long-term, secure accommodation. However, we know that despite our best efforts, many households will continue to spend a significant period of time in temporary accommodation.

The impact that staying in temporary accommodation can have on health and wellbeing should not be understated. Research by Shelter has found that two-thirds of households reported that living in TA had a negative impact on their physical or mental health, and more than two-thirds reported inadequate access to cooking or laundry facilities[13].

Many families in Lewisham are housed in council-owned hostel accommodation with shared facilities. This form of accommodation, while not technically Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation, is not always suitable and appropriate for residents and is certainly no replacement for stable and secure accommodation. While work will continue to move households out of TA into long-term housing, we must also work to ensure that all households living in TA have access to basic amenities, including the 'Five Basics' of cooking facilities, laundry access, Wi-Fi, secure storage, and clear information.

We can control the quality of temporary accommodation through our approach to procurement, the requirements and standards we set for our TA providers, and our processes for monitoring the quality of accommodation and customer services that our TA providers offer.

13. Shelter, Still Living in Limbo, 2023

To address this priority, we will:

- Introduce a Charter of Rights for every household living in Temporary Accommodation. This Charter will guarantee that households receive the 'Five Basics': cooking facilities, laundry access, Wi-Fi, secure storage and clear information.
- Reduce the number of children living in council-owned TA with shared facilities as much as possible and increase the availability of self-contained TA that better reflects the needs and profile of families living in TA.
- Develop a Temporary Accommodation Procurement Strategy that is fit for purpose for the next four years. Where possible, we will continue to purchase properties from the private market for use as council-provided TA.
- Review our use of Private Sector Leased (PSL) accommodation to ensure value for money, with a preference for Privately Managed Accommodation (PMA) where appropriate. Additionally, we will also continue to explore opportunities for long-term leasing arrangements for TA.
- Improve the procurement process for our nightly paid accommodation by adopting a centralised cross-borough procurement platform and the applying our existing TA Lettable Standard.
- Continue our programme of Temporary Accommodation inspections to ensure accommodation is safe, suitable and meets our expected standards, using inspection findings to drive continuous improvement.
- Improve our advice and communication with residents living in TA, including through our new TA Residents Newsletter, quarterly resident surveys, and a detailed TA guidebook.
- Increase the level of contact with our TA residents, including via telephone check-ins and in-person home visits, helping us to identify and respond to changes in residents' needs and circumstances.
- Take steps to standardise and improve the quality of data we hold on TA residents in line with our Directorate's Knowledge and Information Management Strategy.
- Standardise and embed the use of our existing suitability matching process among staff to improve the matching of households to accommodation that meets their needs and circumstances.

Theme 4
Increase supply of long-term accommodation

Summary

Like the rest of London, Lewisham is facing a housing crisis and experiencing a severe shortage of social housing. Resolving the homelessness crisis is only possible by expanding the supply of genuinely affordable, long-term accommodation.

The shortage of social housing is particularly acute for larger family homes, and this is reflected in the proportion of larger households remaining in TA for longer. Every social home that becomes available represents an opportunity for a household in severe housing need to settle and improve their circumstances.

We must therefore explore every avenue to increase the number of available social homes, including housebuilding programmes, acquiring homes from the open market, and making more efficient use of our existing social housing stock.

Housebuilding programmes are currently facing significant challenges, including rising construction and labour costs, higher borrowing costs, and changes to building regulations requiring higher standards of specification and design. We will respond to these market pressures to ensure that we continue to deliver a steady supply of new-build social housing.

To address this priority, we will:

- Deliver high-quality, energy-efficient social rented homes through our Building for Lewisham programme and acquire homes for use as TA to reduce our dependence on the Private Rented Sector.
- Secure the highest possible grant rates per Building for Lewisham home from the GLA and MHCLG, emphasising partnership in our procurement approaches, and maximising the effectiveness of our Right-to-Buy receipts.
- Review our provision and regulation of supported housing as part of the emerging Supported Housing Strategy, including support available to people sleeping rough and those with support needs, to ensure that supported housing is appropriate, well managed, and responsive to the needs of vulnerable people in Lewisham.
- Develop a referral process for older adults living in TA who would like to be considered for our Independent Living accommodation.
- Maintain our existing 100% nomination agreements and continue working with RPs operating in the borough through our renewed Registered Providers Partnership Board to ensure that our Allocations Policy prioritises residents experiencing homelessness.
- Work with our RP partners to free up larger social homes by promoting and reviewing incentives for our downsizing schemes and increasing the number of right-sizing mutual exchanges.
- Work with RPs through our Registered Providers Partnership Board to understand their planned disposal programs and explore opportunities to maximise the contribution of suitable homes towards meeting local housing and homelessness need.
- Continue to work with private landlords to support residents to move from TA into the PRS where the accommodation is suitable and affordable for the household. We will also review the incentives we offer to private landlords to ensure they continue to support the sourcing of suitable, affordable and value-for-money PRS accommodation for households being discharged from homelessness duties.

Theme 5
Work in partnership to support residents to live independent, healthy and sustainable lives

Summary

Ending homelessness requires more than providing accommodation. Many residents experiencing homelessness also face challenges related to physical and mental health, domestic abuse, social isolation, trauma, or a lack of support networks.

The relationship between poor mental health and housing insecurity is complex and mutually reinforcing. Mental ill health can disrupt a household's income and place strain on relationships, putting stable housing at risk. Similarly, periods of housing insecurity and rough sleeping can be devastating for a person's mental health, while periods of hospitalisation can disrupt an individual's living arrangements.

A common view expressed during consultation was that the level of support needs among homeless households has increased significantly, and that many people sleeping rough and residents in supported accommodation lack access to appropriate therapeutic support.

We will strengthen partnership working across housing, health, social care, children's services, employment services, registered providers of social housing, and the voluntary and community sector to ensure residents receive coordinated and person-centred support. This will include improving information sharing, strengthening support for people sleeping rough and victim/survivors of domestic abuse, supporting children, families and care-experienced young people at risk of housing crisis, working with registered providers in the borough to prevent evictions, improving access to employment support and supporting residents to sustain their accommodation and live independent, healthy and secure lives.

By working together, we will reduce repeat homelessness and help ensure that residents do not fall through gaps between services.



To address this priority, we will:

- Introduce a new information sharing protocol to make it easier for us and our partners to share information about service users and their support needs, with their consent, enabling better signposting and referrals to appropriate support where feasible.
- Introduce a formal escalation process for services that are awaiting information or action from the council's Housing Needs service. This will replace current, less formal escalation routes.
- Convene bi-annual Homelessness Summits, open to anyone involved in supporting people experiencing homelessness in Lewisham. We will also launch a renewed Homelessness Forum, providing greater opportunities to share strategic information on the causes and impacts of homelessness in Lewisham.
- Explore opportunities to improve collaborative working practices between Adult Social Care and Housing Needs colleagues, including ASC representation on the Homelessness Forum.

- Build on our Health and Wellbeing Strategy actions, including our 'Health in All Policies' work and implementation of the BLACHIR recommendations, to strengthen collaboration between Housing, Public Health and health partners and better understand and respond to the health inequalities experienced by residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Improve outcomes for children and families at risk of housing crisis by working with Children's Services and Paediatric Health Services to strengthen early intervention in the community and paediatric hospital discharge pathways.
- Work jointly with Children's Services to develop and strengthen Lewisham's Care Leaver Local Offer and prevent homelessness among care-experienced young people through improved access to suitable housing and wider support.
- Continue the work of the Ending Homelessness Accelerator Programme to end the practice of verifying that a person is sleeping rough by requiring outreach teams to meet them while they are rough sleeping, and work with our partners to develop alternative methods of confirming that a person requires rough sleeping support.
- Use our newly established Registered Providers Partnership Board to develop shared prevention processes for households at risk of eviction due to anti-social behaviour, rent arrears, or any other breach of tenancy. We will also develop shared approaches to tackling domestic abuse and identifying 'hidden homeless' households.
- Ensure effective exit planning takes place before individuals leave institutional settings, strengthening our relationships with prisons, probation services, and hospitals.
- Reprocure our Sanctuary Scheme, which provides support to victim/survivors of domestic abuse. This includes refuge accommodation, Independent Gender-based Violence Advocates, outreach support, and a sanctuary scheme (which uses 'target hardening' to increase a survivor's safety in their own home).
- Notify schools, health visitors, and GPs when we place children in TA, to ensure that children receive the support they need[14].
- Improve access to education, training and employment support for residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, working with employment, skills, education and voluntary and community sector partners to strengthen referral pathways that support financial independence and long-term housing stability.

14. This aligns with the action set out in Lewisham's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2025-2030 under the Housing and Health priority- 'To enhance communication/ data sharing with schools about children entering temporary accommodation and ensure that those in temporary accommodation have access to health and social care services'

Targets, governance and monitoring

Local outcomes framework

The Government has introduced a new 'Local Outcomes Framework' which assesses local authority performance across a suite of metrics, including local performance on homelessness. These metrics are:

- Rate of households with children in TA per 1000 households;
- Number of families in B&B over 6 weeks;
- % of duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved;
- % of duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved, for households experiencing multiple disadvantage;
- Number of people sleeping rough on a single night;
- Number of people sleeping rough over the month who are long term.

We have structured our targets for this Strategy around improving our performance against these metrics.

Our approach to setting targets

Lewisham is an ambitious borough, and we will strive for excellence in our homelessness services. Central Government has required every local authority to set targets for its performance against the Local Outcomes Framework set out in the National Plan to End Homelessness[15].

To ensure our targets are both ambitious and realistic, we will benchmark Lewisham's performance against our nearest statistical neighbours.

The 'nearest neighbour' model has been developed by Central Government to group local authorities facing similar challenges, allowing performance to be compared between areas with broadly comparable characteristics. Our nearest neighbours have been calculated based on a bespoke list of variables relevant to homelessness, specifically:

- Population
- Proportion male
- Percentage of working age
- Output area density

15. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-national-plan-to-end-homelessness/a-national-plan-to-end-homelessness

- Percentage unemployed
- Percentage of households where overcrowding exists
- Percentage ethnic minority
- Whether or not the Local Authority owns its own stock
- Indices of multiple deprivation
- Percentage of households in socially rented accommodation
- Evictions (number of court orders
- Median housing prices.

Lewisham's nearest statistical neighbours against which we will assess our performance are:

- Greenwich
- Waltham Forest
- Haringey
- Lambeth
- Southwark
- Hounslow
- Westminster
- Ealing
- Croydon
- Hackney
- Camden
- Brent
- Hillingdon
- Hammersmith & Fulham

For all homelessness metrics set out in the Local Outcomes Framework, **we will aim to reach, or remain within, the highest performing quartile of our nearest statistical neighbours** by the end of the Strategy period. The benchmarks against which we will measure our performance will be updated annually using the latest available H-CLIC data (Homelessness Case Level Information Collection)[16].This will ensure that our targets continue to reflect both current performance and the challenges experienced by frontline services. We will continue to maintain our statutory duty to prevent households with children from living in B&B accommodation for more than 6 weeks.

16. H-CLIC s a reporting system used by local housing authorities in England to track and submit detailed statistics on statutory homelessness and local council activities.

Our current performance and targets

Our current performance against the Local Outcomes Framework metrics is set out below[17]. The 'target performance' shows the level of performance currently required for Lewisham to be among the highest-performing quartile of its statistical neighbours.

LOF Metric	Lewisham Rank	Lewisham Performance	Target Performance	% Improvement Required
Rate of households with children in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households	**9**	1,899 (15.1)	1,260 (10.0)	-33.6% (-639)
Percentage of duties owed where homelessness was prevented	**9**	48.5%	56.0%	+7.5%
Percentage of duties owed where homelessness was relieved	**3**	41.2%	37.4%	Maintain/ improve
Percentage of duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved for households experiencing multiple disadvantage	**2**	65%	56%	Maintain/ improve
Number of people sleeping rough over the month who are long term (YoY Average)	**2**	38	50	Maintain/ improve
Number of people sleeping rough on a single night (YoY Average)	**2**	16	22	Maintain/ improve

This approach allows us to identify areas where we are performing well relative to our peers, as well as areas where we fall behind and where additional resource and effort must be focused.

Our current performance demonstrates that significant work will be required over the next five years to reduce the number of families with children in TA and improve our work to prevent households from becoming homeless. At the same time, Lewisham currently compares favourably with its statistical neighbours in relation to rough sleeping and relief activity. Our ambition is to maintain and improve this relative performance throughout the Strategy period.

17. Figures sourced from MHCLG HCLIC Data for January – March 2026.

Rough sleeping

As can be seen above, Lewisham performs well relative to our nearest statistical neighbours on rough sleeping. However, we recognise that rough sleeping is increasing overall, and that statistics on rough sleeping do not always show the full story.

A significant number of Lewisham's rough sleepers have 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF). This condition restricts access to welfare benefits and forms of public assistance, which can limit the amount of intervention and support the council is able to offer, and can often lead to destitution.

We recognise the Government has set a target to reduce rough sleeping by 50% by the end of the parliament. We will strive to achieve this national goal and reduce rough sleeping by 50% within our borough.

This ambition sits alongside our commitment to remain within the highest-performing quartile of our statistical neighbours.

Governance and monitoring

Our progress against these Local Outcomes Framework metrics and the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan, outlined in Appendix 1, will be monitored through our existing Homelessness Forum. The Forum includes representatives from public and third sector organisations working with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Lewisham.

As part of this work, the Forum will receive new Terms of Reference, based on **MHCLG's model ToR for a Homelessness Strategy Steering Group**. These will strengthen the Forum's role in overseeing and monitoring delivery of the Strategy and Delivery Plan.

The Forum will be chaired by Lewisham Council's Director of Housing Strategy and will report to Mayor and Cabinet and other council governance bodies (such as the Lewisham Health and Wellbeing Board and Safer Lewisham Partnership Board) through the Chair.

Appendix 1: Lewisham's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan

Outcomes Framework metric	Target (based on nearest statistical neighbours) (Jan-Mar 2026 HCLIC data)	Current Lewisham Performance (Jan-Mar 2026 HCLIC data)	Action needed
1. Rate of households with children in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households	10.0	15.1	Need to improve
2. Number of families in B&B over 6 weeks	0	0	Need to maintain
3. Percentage of duties owed where homelessness was prevented	56.0%	48.5%	Need to improve
4. Percentage of duties owed where homelessness was relieved	37.4%	41.2%	Already meeting target Need to maintain/ improve
5. Percentage of duties owed where homelessness was prevented or relieved for households experiencing multiple disadvantage	56%	65%	Already meeting target Need to maintain/ improve
6. Number of people sleeping rough on a single night	22	10 (June 2026)	Already meeting target Need to maintain/ improve
7. Number of people sleeping rough over the month who are long term	50	32 (June 2026)	Already meeting target Need to maintain/ improve

Theme 1 – Tackle rough sleeping and prevent homelessness				
Action	**Lead officer**	**Target date**	**Metrics of success**	**Outcome measure**
1. Provide comprehensive homelessness assessments that identify the root causes of a person's situation, and support residents to remain in their own homes through negotiation, mediation, and enforcement services.	Homelessness Prevention and Assessments Service Manager	November 2027 (Review progress)	• Reduction in homelessness presentations • Increase in successful prevention rates	Improved homelessness prevention outcomes
2. Review our advice and information offer, with the aim of providing comprehensive and accessible advice to anyone at risk of homelessness in the short or long term. This will include the introduction of a customer journey handout, detailing customers' responsibilities and their rights throughout their homelessness case.	Homelessness Prevention and Assessments Service Manager	June 2027 (review progress through resident feedback)	• Reduction in complaints and statutory reviews • Number of customer journey handouts issued/ downloaded	Improved service user understanding of their housing options, improved prevention and relief rates
3. Review our training and induction processes, focusing on ensuring that new Housing Needs staff spend time shadowing our partner services to improve their understanding of the support landscape and what is suitable for each individual.	Homelessness Prevention and Assessments Service Manager	November 2027 (Review initial training schedule and induction changes)	• % of new staff undertaking shadowing • Improved rates of appropriate referrals to partner agencies	Higher rates of referrals to appropriate support services
4.Recommission our borough-wide Advice Service. The service will be a central referral partner for the new Crisis and Resilience Fund, and we will work closely with them to ensure households at risk of homelessness receive suitable and targeted advice and receive homelessness assessments where required.	Homelessness Prevention and Assessments Service Manager	November 2027 (Review impact)	• Number of referrals received and accepted • Increase in prevention rates	Improved homelessness prevention and relief rates

5. Utilise the Government's new Crisis and Resilience Fund's short-term and housing-specific elements to prevent homelessness, place households on a more secure financial footing, and prevent rental arrears from resulting in eviction. Alongside this, we will continue to provide support to households living in the PRS to help them sustain their tenancies, address issues that place their housing at risk, and prevent homelessness wherever possible.	Homelessness Prevention and Assessments Service Manager	June 2027 (Review initial impact)	• Increase in homelessness prevention rates • Number of tenancies sustained in the PRS through our support schemes	Improved homelessness prevention and relief outcomes, increased discharges to the PRS where appropriate
6. Review our Allocations Policy and seek to remove relevant offer restrictions for victim / survivors of domestic abuse.	Housing Register Assessment and Allocations Manager	November 2027	• Percentage of domestic abuse survivors successfully rehoused	Increased offers of social housing for homeless domestic abuse survivors.
7. Improve staff training to ensure homelessness assessments include all relevant information and that service users' support needs, preferences, and suitable and unsuitable housing options are all captured at the initial assessment stage.	Homelessness Prevention and Assessments Service Manager	November 2027	• Reduction in the number of suitability reviews and legal challenges relating to accommodation offers	Improved records of resident data More suitable accommodation offers made
8. Adapt our Rough Sleeper Service to accommodate these higher needs. To achieve this, we will work to secure a sustainable funding solution for our Homeless Outreach (START) team, a small multi-disciplinary assessment team that engages with and assesses homeless people with severe mental health problems and additional substance misuse or physical health needs.	Homelessness Prevention and Assessments Service Manager	October 2027	• Secure sustainable funding for the START service	Improved support and assessment offer for rough sleepers with complex needs
9. Review the take-up and effectiveness of the Intensive Housing Advice and Floating Support Service (IHASS) for households who have recently been housed in the Private Rented Sector, to ensure that we are responding to the increased level of need among our service users.	Homelessness Prevention and Assessments Service Manager	October 2027	• Increase in IHASS referrals each month • Reduction in repeat homelessness among PRS discharged households	Improved support offer to prevent a return to homelessness for recently rehoused individuals

Theme 2 – Increase Standards and Enforcement within the Private Rented Sector				
Action	**Lead officer**	**Target date**	**Metrics of success**	**Outcome measure**
10. Establish a Rogue Landlord Taskforce, which will provide an intensive, place-based focus to identify non-compliant properties and bring them into compliance, helping increase the supply of adequate housing in the PRS. This taskforce will work by directing our existing enforcement resources to review properties owned by landlords who have repeatedly been subject to enforcement action and help make non-compliance with housing legislation an adverse financial operating model.	Head of Private Sector Licensing and Home improvements	August 2026 (Taskforce established) August 2027 (review Year 1 of the taskforce)	• Establish a Rogue Landlord Taskforce • Number of proactive enforcement visits conducted • Number of notices issued • Number and value of civil penalties/fines imposed	Reduction of rogue landlord practices in Lewisham, including any unlawful eviction practices
11. Investigate reports of non-compliant landlords seeking to illegally evict tenants and take appropriate enforcement action where landlords have acted improperly. Through new working arrangements between our Housing Needs and PRS Enforcement teams, and the use of new powers under the Renters' Rights Act 2025, we will work to prevent illegal evictions, reduce homelessness arising from landlord action, and improve the viability of the PRS as a move-on option for Lewisham's homeless households.	Head of Private Sector Licensing and Home improvements	January 2027	• Number of service requests relating to unlawful eviction and/or harassment • Reduction in homelessness applications arising from landlord misconduct	Reductions in the number of households becoming homeless due to illegal eviction in PRS

12. Use our influence at a regional and national level to call for rent cap powers to be devolved to the Mayor of London and used to improve housing affordability while maintaining housing supply.	Mayor and Cabinet	N/A	• Participation in London-wide housing forums • Any formal consultation responses or position statements submitted	Reduced homelessness and housing insecurity arising from unaffordable rents, enabling more residents to access and sustain PRS accommodation
13. Build on our Empty Homes Strategy, working to identify privately owned empty homes, apply Council Tax premiums to these homes, and provide advice and assistance to property owners. Where this work has been unsuccessful, we will consider the options available to us, including the use of legal powers such as statutory notices, enforced sale procedures and Empty Dwelling Management Orders to bring empty homes back into use.	Head of Private Sector Licensing and Home improvements	February 2027 (Review progress of Empty Homes Strategy)	• Number of empty homes identified • Number of empty homes brought back into use	Empty homes brought back into use

Theme 3 – Improve the Quality of Temporary Accommodation				
Action	**Lead officer**	**Target date**	**Metrics of success**	**Outcome measure**
14. Introduce a Charter of Rights for every household living in Temporary Accommodation. This Charter will guarantee that households receive the 'Five Basics': cooking facilities, laundry access, Wi-Fi, secure storage and clear information.	Accommodation Supply and Resettlement Service Manager	November 2027 (Review Progress) October 2028 (Wi-Fi in at least 50% of hostels)	• Further scoping work to be undertaken to establish outcome-based measures for this action	Every household living in TA having access to the 5 basics of storage, internet, laundry, kitchen facilities, and information.
15. Reduce the number of children living in council-owned TA with shared facilities as much as possible and increase the availability of self-contained TA that better reflects the needs and profile of families living in TA.	Accommodation Supply and Resettlement Service Manager	November 2027 (Review progress)	• Reduction in number of children living in TA with shared facilities • Reduction in the average time families spend in accommodation with shared facilities	Reduction in the number of children living in TA with shared facilities
16. Develop a Temporary Accommodation Procurement Strategy that is fit for purpose for the next four years. Where possible, we will continue to purchase properties from the private market for use as council-provided TA.	Accommodation Supply and Resettlement Service Manager	November 2027	• Adoption and implementation of the Temporary Accommodation Procurement Strategy.	Clear strategic framework guiding our approach to TA procurement
17. Review our use of Private Sector Leased (PSL) accommodation to ensure value for money, with a preference for Privately Managed Accommodation (PMA) where appropriate. Additionally, we will also continue to explore opportunities for long-term leasing arrangements for TA.	Accommodation Supply and Resettlement Service Manager	October 2027 (Complete review of our PSL use)	• Number and value of long-term leasing arrangements secured • Trends in the use of PSL and PMA, reflecting council's preferred approach	Improved value for money for procured TA, with overall reduction in Lewisham's overall expenditure on TA
18. Improve the procurement process for our nightly paid accommodation by adopting a centralised cross-borough procurement platform and the applying our existing TA Lettable Standard.	Accommodation Supply and Resettlement Service Manager	April 2027 (ADAM due to be implemented and benefits to be tracked)	• Successful implementation of the procurement platform	Improved understanding of the makeup of nightly paid TA, and any quality issues within this stock

19. Continue our programme of Temporary Accommodation inspections to ensure accommodation is safe, suitable and meets our expected standards, using inspection findings to drive continuous improvement.	Accommodation Supply and Resettlement Service Manager	November 2027 (Review progress)	• Percentage of TA units inspected annually • Percentage of inspection-related actions completed within agreed timescales	Reduction in the proportion of TA properties failing to meet required standards and increase in resident satisfaction with the quality of their accommodation.
20. Improve our advice and communication with residents living in TA, including through our new TA Residents Newsletter, quarterly resident surveys, and a detailed TA guidebook.	Accommodation Supply and Resettlement Service Manager	January 2027	• Newsletter open rates • Resident survey response rates • Production and distribution of TA guidebook	Improved communication with residents in TA
21. Increase the level of contact with our TA residents, including via telephone check-ins and in-person home visits, helping us to identify and respond to changes in residents' needs and circumstances.	Accommodation Supply and Resettlement Service Manager	November 2027 (Review progress)	• Number of phones calls completed, and home visits undertaken	Improved understanding of the needs of our TA residents
22. Take steps to standardise and improve the quality of data we hold on TA residents in line with our Directorate's Knowledge and Information Management Strategy.	Accommodation Supply and Resettlement Service Manager	November 2027	• Increased use of HMS to record vulnerabilities and resident information	Better understanding of the support needs and vulnerabilities of TA residents
23. Standardise and embed the use of our existing suitability matching process among staff to improve the matching of households to accommodation that meets their needs and circumstances.	Accommodation Supply and Resettlement Service Manager	November 2027	• Reduction in suitability challenges	Improved suitability and sustainability of Temporary Accommodation placements.

Theme 4 – Increase supply of Long-Term Accommodation				
Action	**Lead officer**	**Target date**	**Metrics of success**	**Outcome measure**
24. Deliver high-quality, energy-efficient social rented homes through our Building for Lewisham programme and acquire homes for use as TA to reduce our dependence on the Private Rented Sector.	Director of Inclusive Regeneration	2031	• Delivery of new energy-efficient social rented homes through the Building for Lewisham programme.	Increased social housing provision in the borough
25. Secure the highest possible grant rates per Building for Lewisham home from the GLA and MHCLG, emphasising partnership in our procurement approaches, and maximising the effectiveness of our Right-to-Buy receipts.	Director of Inclusive Regeneration	Ongoing	• Average grant rate secured per Building for Lewisham home delivered. • Total grant funding secured from the GLA and MHCLG. • Number of joint funding and delivery initiatives undertaken with strategic partners.	Improved delivery of social housing units
26. Review our provision and regulation of supported housing as part of the emerging Supported Housing Strategy, including support available to people sleeping rough and those with support needs, to ensure that supported housing is appropriate, well managed, and responsive to the needs of vulnerable people in Lewisham.	Homelessness Prevention and Assessments Service Manager	March 2027	• Adoption and implementation of our Support Housing Strategy	Delivery of supported housing reflecting the need within the borough
27. Develop a referral process for older adults living in TA who would like to be considered for our Independent Living accommodation.	Housing Register Assessment and Allocations Manager	June 2027 (Establish process)	• Referral process developed and implemented. • Number of referrals made from TA into Independent Living services.	Better housing outcomes for older TA residents and suitable move on options provided to them

28. Maintain our existing 100% nomination agreements and continue working with RPs operating in the borough through our renewed Registered Providers Partnership Board to ensure that our Allocations Policy prioritises residents experiencing homelessness.	Housing Register Assessment and Allocations Manager	November 2027	• Delivery of a Housing Compact with Registered Provider partners. • Proportion of social housing lettings made to homeless households.	Continued social housing provision for households experiencing homelessness
29. Work with our RP partners to free up larger social homes by promoting and reviewing incentives for our downsizing schemes and increasing the number of right-sizing mutual exchanges.	Housing Register Assessment and Allocations Manager	November 2027 (Review progress)	• Number of households successfully downsizing. • Number of households completing a mutual exchange. • Completion of a review of our incentives for downsizing	Reduction in under-occupancy rates within Lewisham's social housing stock.
30. Work with RPs through our Registered Providers Partnership Board to understand their planned disposal programs and explore opportunities to maximise the contribution of suitable homes towards meeting local housing and homelessness need.	Director of Housing Strategy	November 2027	• Established arrangements with Registered Providers for sharing information on planned disposals, with suitable opportunities considered through the Registered Provider Partnership Board.	Suitable social homes retained for affordable housing and local housing need.
31. Continue to work with private landlords to support residents to move from TA into the PRS where the accommodation is suitable and affordable for the household. We will also review the incentives we offer to private landlords to ensure they continue to support the sourcing of suitable, affordable and value-for-money PRS accommodation for households being discharged from homelessness duties.	Accommodation Supply and Resettlement Service Manager	November 2027 (Review progress)	• Increase in the number of households successfully discharged from TA into suitable and affordable PRS accommodation • Completion of a review of the landlord incentive scheme	Improved homelessness prevention and relief outcomes, increased discharges to the PRS where appropriate.

Theme 5 – Work in partnership to support residents to live independent, healthy and sustainable lives				
Action	**Lead officer**	**Target date**	**Metrics of success**	**Outcome measure**
32. Introduce a new information sharing protocol to make it easier for us and our partners to share information about service users and their support needs, with their consent, enabling better signposting and referrals to appropriate support where feasible.	Homelessness Prevention and Assessments Service Manager	October 2027	• Information sharing protocol agreed and implemented • Improved partner satisfaction with information-sharing arrangements	Improved communication between Housing Needs and VCF services, resulting in improved support for service users.
33. Introduce a formal escalation process for services that are awaiting information or action from the council's Housing Needs service. This will replace current, less formal escalation routes.	Homelessness Prevention and Assessments Service Manager	October 2027	• Refreshed escalation process established and communicated to partners • Positive partner feedback on the effectiveness of escalation arrangements	Improved communication between Housing Needs and VCF services, resulting in improved support for service users.
34. Convene bi-annual Homelessness Summits, open to anyone involved in supporting people experiencing homelessness in Lewisham. We will also launch a renewed Homelessness Forum, providing greater opportunities to share strategic information on the causes and impacts of homelessness in Lewisham.	Homelessness Prevention and Assessments Service Manager	November 2027	• Two Homelessness Summits held each year • Renewed Homelessness Forum established with updated Terms of Reference	Improved understanding within the council of issues within the homelessness system and challenges facing VCF partners, and improved oversight of Strategy delivery
35. Explore opportunities to improve collaborative working practices between Adult Social Care and Housing Needs colleagues, including ASC representation on the Homelessness Forum.	Homelessness Prevention & Assessments Service Manager	November 2027	• Regular ASC representation at the Homelessness Forum • Increased use of the Joint Working Protocol by officers in ASC, Health and Housing	Improved partnership working leading to better outcomes for residents

36. Build on our Health and Wellbeing Strategy actions, including our 'Health in All Policies' work and implementation of the BLACHIR recommendations, to strengthen collaboration between Housing, Public Health and health partners and better understand and respond to the health inequalities experienced by residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.	Head of Housing Needs and Refugee Services	September 2027	• Health in All Policies Policy Officer recruited to further support this work • Improved use of shared housing and health data to identify health inequalities and inform service planning.	Improved understanding of the health inequalities experienced by residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
37. Improve outcomes for children and families at risk of housing crisis by working with Children's Services and Paediatric Health Services to strengthen early intervention in the community and paediatric hospital discharge pathways.	Head of Housing Needs and Refugee Services	November 2027	• Develop and implement a joint working protocol between Housing, Children's Services and Paediatric Health Services for children and families at risk of housing crisis, including paediatric hospital discharge pathways.	Earlier and more coordinated support for children and families at risk of housing crisis, including those transitioning from paediatric hospital care.
38. Work jointly with Children's Services to develop and strengthen Lewisham's Care Leaver Local Offer and prevent homelessness among care-experienced young people through improved access to suitable housing and wider support.	Head of Housing Needs and Refugee Services	November 2027	• Develop and publish Lewisham's care leaver local offer • Increase in homelessness prevention rate for care leavers	Improved housing support and homelessness prevention for care-experienced young people
39. Continue the work of the Ending Homelessness Accelerator Programme to end the practice of verifying that a person is sleeping rough by requiring outreach teams to meet them while they are rough sleeping, and work with our partners to develop alternative methods of confirming that a person requires rough sleeping support.	Rough Sleeper Coordinator	November 2027	• Alternative verification approaches developed and implemented	Improved access to support through the end of verification practice for rough sleepers

40. Use our newly established Registered Providers Partnership Board to develop shared prevention processes for households at risk of eviction due to anti-social behaviour, rent arrears, or any other breach of tenancy. We will also develop shared approaches to tackling domestic abuse and identifying 'hidden homeless' households.	Housing Register Assessment and Allocations Manager	November 2027	Agreed shared processes established with RP partners Increase in homelessness prevention rates among social housing tenants	Increased prevention of homelessness among social housing tenants
41. Ensure effective exit planning takes place before individuals leave institutional settings, strengthening our relationships with prisons, probation services, and hospitals.	Homelessness Prevention and Assessments Service Manager	November 2027 (Review progress)	Increase in homelessness prevention rates among individuals leaving institutions Reduction in homelessness presentations following discharge from institutions	Improved homelessness prevention rates upon leaving institutions
42. Reprocure our Sanctuary Scheme, which provides support to victim/survivors of domestic abuse. This includes refuge accommodation, Independent Gender-based Violence Advocates, outreach support, and a sanctuary scheme (which uses 'target hardening' to increase a survivor's safety in their own home).	Homelessness Prevention &and Assessments Service Manager	February 2027 (Review second year impact with ongoing quarterly reviews)	Sanctuary Scheme successfully reprocured Number of referrals to the Sanctuary Scheme maintained or increased	Improved support for survivors of domestic abuse, contributing to the prevention and relief of their homelessness.
43. Notify schools, health visitors, and GPs when we place children in TA, to ensure that children receive the support they need.	Accommodation Supply and Resettlement Service Manager	September 2026	Notification process established and implemented	Improved support put in place by schools and health services to support families in TA
44. Improve access to education, training and employment support for residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, working with employment, skills, education and voluntary and community sector partners to strengthen referral pathways that support financial independence and long-term housing stability.	Head of Housing Needs and Refugee Services	Ongoing	Number of residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness referred to education, training or employment support.	Improved financial resilience and long-term housing stability for residents

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