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WE ARE NEWHAM.



Summary of Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021-2026

www.newham.gov.uk/council/homelessness-rough-sleeping-strategy

INTRODUCTION

A home is not only a source of shelter but a safe and secure place to live, bring up a family, relax, work and develop roots within a community. This strategy sets out an intelligence-led, public health approach to tackling homelessness, and improving access to, and the quality of, housing within the borough.

Prevention will be a golden thread woven through everything we do, ensuring residents have access to the support they need, when they require it. Our overarching aim is to reduce homelessness and eradicate rough sleeping, ensuring no resident is left with no other option but to sleep on the street or forced to live in dangerous or transient accommodation.

This strategy is accompanied by an action plan setting out specific actions we will take, and a review of homelessness in the Borough, which comprises a review of the previous strategy's action plan, alongside data on the state of homelessness and rough sleeping in the Borough.

KEY STATS

ENGLAND



One in every 206 people in England are currently homeless – that's over **274,000** people including **126,000** children



London has the highest rate of homelessness of any region, with **one in 53** people in London currently homeless



It is estimated that across England, **2,700** people are sleeping rough on any given night



Certain groups are disproportionately affected by homelessness – in England, **1 in 23** Black households are homeless or threatened with homelessness, as opposed to **1 in 83** households from all other ethnicities combined



A number of Government schemes such as 'Everyone In', the boost to Universal Credit and the eviction ban put in place during Covid lockdowns **have now ended**, and are expected to result in an increase in homelessness

NEWHAM



Newham has the **highest rate** of homelessness of any local authority in England



It is estimated that **one in 22** people in Newham are currently homeless, living in temporary accommodation or on the street



Low incomes and high housing costs are important factors driving the high rate of homelessness – in Newham, two in five people are **living in poverty**



One in three Newham residents live in the private rented sector, where in the last ten years rents have increased by **55%**, while wages have only risen by 37%



Since 2019, Newham has achieved the **greatest proportionate reduction** in rough sleeping numbers of any local authority in the country

PRINCIPLES

1. The Council will work to develop our understanding of current and future housing need and homelessness in the borough.



- We will use a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to inform planning, building, and housing vulnerabilities.
- We will also continue to invest in our rough sleeping intelligence and data gathering to ensure we tailor our interventions to each person's specific needs and situation.
- Through our private sector licensing scheme, we will enhance the way we work with the 25,000 landlords in Newham to support people at risk of homelessness, understand the supply of housing, and identify the 'red flags' of exploitation.
- By collecting richer data through our new duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act, we will improve the detail and quality of information that we collect to inform our long-term understanding of homelessness, its causes, and how we can prevent it
- We will undertake regular reviews of our systems, complaints, and feedback on services to ensure that our service users are central to improvements in our services

2. The Council will prioritise efforts to prevent the trauma of homelessness through early help by working to keep households in their homes, or giving people more control over the timing and nature of their move where possible and appropriate.



- In the Private Rented Sector (PRS), we will tackle harassment and illegal evictions together with our charity and legal partners. We will also work to improve communication and engagement with landlords and tenants through forums, dedicated relations officers, information sharing, and research.
- In Council properties, we will do everything we can to keep people in their homes including providing financial advice or support, referring people to other local services, and agreeing affordable and sustainable payment plans.

- We will focus and tailor our support to tenants based on what they need – for example, connecting them to Our Newham Money, which helps residents to maximise their income and access to benefit, or raising awareness of different housing options in a sensitive, caring and compassionate way.
- We will establish a free-to-use sanctuary scheme for survivors of domestic abuse that can help them stay in their own homes if appropriate and safe to do so, as well as providing them with legal advice and support.

3. The Council will support people to move off, and stay off, the streets by embracing a holistic, public health approach to rough sleeping that addresses the needs of each person's complex journey to homelessness.



- We will transform rough sleeping services by reflecting the insights, views, and experiences of our service users – some examples include providing immigration support, including people in decisions about their future, and wrapping a model of care around each rough sleeper.
- We will open a new assessment centre, Lady Helen Seymour House, that will be able to accept people straight from the street and provide both immediate refuge, rapid assessment, and a route to longer-term accommodation and support for up to 42 rough sleepers at a time.
- Our services will provide respond to specific feedback received about our care for people of different genders, nationalities, substance misuse, and across the spectrum of health and wellbeing needs.

4. Newham Council will improve access to better housing that meets the needs of residents by maximising opportunities and supply in the borough and creating inclusive pathways out of homelessness.



- We will work to provide stable homes and clear, tailored access to support for residents that are flexible enough to meet their needs – ranging from domestic abuse to recent discharges from prison.
- We will improve the way we communicate with households in temporary accommodation and across the private rented sector to ensure that available homes meet our standards, improve the resident experience, and maximise our ability to intervene if needed.
- We will increase and invest in housing stock to enable people to adapt their existing homes to their needs, including people with disabilities. We will also use our placements policy to enhance the location and suitability of our accommodation offers.

5. The Council will aim to reduce current use of temporary accommodation to shift our service focus from reactive short-term stability towards long-term proactive prevention.



- We will increase the supply of sustainable and affordable accommodation through working with our programme partners, making data-based interventions to reduce nightly-booked accommodation, and boosting the supply of social-rent properties in Newham
- Through working closely with private sector landlords and our national partners like Homefinder, we will enhance our move-on offer to support people out of temporary accommodation and into sustainable, long-term homes

6. Our Housing Services will adopt a partnership approach to preventing homelessness by working with other Council teams and external partners ranging from mental health to Children and Young People's Pathways.



- We will drive a culture change across the service to build more effective information sharing and working relationships with our colleagues across the NHS, Children and Young People services, and Education among others and both in and out of the borough, to deliver more successful outcomes for residents.
- We will redouble our efforts to work with external partners including faith groups, the voluntary and community sector, and multi-agency partners including the policy to deliver wraparound support and support people through homelessness.

Our full strategy, which sets out each of these pillars in detail, is available on the Newham Council website here.

We know we can't fix this problem alone – so you can read about the Five Actions we are asking Government to take to Tackle Homelessness here.