



Introduction

1.1 Under Section 1(1) of the Homelessness Act 2002, every local authority in England has a duty to formulate a strategy for tackling homelessness¹. In order to appropriately inform this strategy, a comprehensive homelessness review must take place² which looks at:

- The current and likely future levels of homelessness within the local area;
- The activities which are carried out for preventing homelessness as well as securing accommodation or providing support for those who are, may become or have been homeless; and
- The resources allocated to these activities.

1.2 This year Brent will refresh its Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 – 2025. This review includes insight into the current picture of homelessness in Brent and progress made on the 2020 – 2025 Strategy. This review will inform the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for 2026 – 2031.

Performance against previous commitments (Homelessness and Rough Sleeping 2020 – 2025)

2.1 In 2020, Brent published its most recent Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 – 2025, which set out the direction and priorities for addressing homelessness across a five-year period. The below table highlights the commitments within this strategy and progress against them.

2.2 *Commitments for tackling homelessness (as set out in the Brent Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2020 – 2025)*

Commitment	Evidence
We seek to fully understand the challenge of homelessness in Brent and how it is experienced by individuals so we can develop informed, targeted solutions, and continually improve the quality of the services we deliver	<p>We have taken steps to improve our approach to data collection, including by introducing the Locata HP2A system. Work is ongoing to improve the quality of our data and integrate data across digital systems.</p> <p>We are committed to providing person-centred services to residents, which is reflected in our ongoing commitment to meeting residents face-to-face to process homelessness applications and provide support. Our teams operate out of the Turning Point Centre and New Horizons Centre, both located in Harlesden, which is one of the areas experiencing the highest levels of homelessness in the borough.</p> <p>Work is ongoing to improve the quality of service that we provide to residents. We have begun developing a comprehensive training programme to help improve the service that our teams are providing, which will be rolled out in the coming months.</p> <p>We continue to provide targeted services to specific groups of residents who are experiencing homelessness, including a dedicated Domestic Abuse Service, which provides specialist services to survivors of domestic abuse, and a Hospital Housing Advice Service, which supports hospital discharge teams within the London North West Healthcare Trust Hospitals</p>

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/7/section/1>

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/7/section/2>



	<p>to facilitate a timely and effective discharge from hospital into suitable accommodation.</p> <p>We are continuing to work closely with the Brent Homelessness Forum to understand the various and complex needs of people who are experiencing homelessness, and how we can support them more holistically.</p>
Our services are prevention focused and we ensure the right advice and support is available to those who need it	<p>Our homelessness service has continued to embed the Homelessness Reduction Act and to focus on prevention where possible. However, we know a higher proportion of residents approach Brent already homeless than in London generally and are working to understand why this is the case.</p> <p>The homelessness landscape across London has deteriorated significantly, and as a result our successful prevention/relief resolutions have reduced from 70% in our previous review to 40%. However, despite these challenges, the number of households in temporary accommodation has only risen 4-5%, which represents significant success given the extent of increased demand.</p> <p>Our website is regularly updated to provide residents with relevant information on the services that the council offers. We have introduced a Find a Place You Can Afford campaign to highlight current housing pressures, the limited availability of Council social housing, and steps residents can take to secure and/or retain their own stable and affordable accommodation.</p> <p>There is more for us to do to work with teams from across the Council and with partners to identify the support they can provide to prevent individuals and families from becoming homeless. Our early work to establish an Integrated Neighbourhood Team in Harlesden, that will deliver joined-up and prevention-focused services to residents, is a good example of the approach that we want to take to delivering preventative services and support to our residents.</p> <p>We have continued to work on improving data and are now developing algorithmic models to identify residents who are at risk of homelessness before they approach the council and put in place pre-crisis interventions.</p> <p>Despite the prevention work that we have done, there is significantly more for us to do.</p>
We work to increase the supply of and access to stable and affordable homes across the borough	<p>The Council has worked on three fronts to improve delivery: as a direct provider of affordable homes, working to support registered providers to develop in the borough and as a planning authority in seeking to extract the maximum viable amount of affordable housing from new developments (this includes from small developments of between 5-9 dwellings where a financial contribution towards affordable housing is sought, as well as purpose built student accommodation where more recently financial contributions to meet Brent's affordable housing needs have been prioritised instead of affordable student accommodation).</p>



A 28 July 2025 Cabinet report on affordable housing supply indicates the following amounts of delivery over the last 5 years:

Table 1: Breakdown of affordable homes delivered in the borough as of March 2025

Year	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
Council General Needs	29	332	40	98	56	525
RP General Needs	203	238	293	140	116	990
Council Supported living	0	0	0	61	0	61
Council Temporary Accommodation	0	149	0	0	0	149
Council Shared Ownership	0	0	22	1	0	23
RP Shared Ownership	298	144	352	121	197	1112
RP Other	491	363	78	165	95	1192
Total	1021	1226	785	586	434	4052

Despite the work that Brent has done to provide more affordable homes in the borough, there are still challenges. Progress on delivery has been impacted significantly by a range of factors including increased borrowing costs, rising construction costs, a flat housing market significantly affecting viability, and complications post-Grenfell associated with new fire safety approvals, which have led to some significant delays. Starts on site are significantly down in the last two years, with no significant change in prospects anticipated in the short term. This will impact on overall housing numbers delivered in Brent and due to viability factors could impact on the proportion of affordable dwellings delivered in private sector led housing developments.

We minimise the use of temporary accommodation, but where this is unavoidable, work to improve the quality of accommodation offered, and keep the stay as stable

Despite significantly rising homelessness demand, the number of households in temporary accommodation has only risen 4-5% to 2,408 households, as of 13 August 2025. Recently, on average, about 20 new households enter temporary accommodation for the first time each week. On average, households in emergency accommodation have been in that accommodation for 42 weeks.

We consistently work with our providers to improve the quality of temporary accommodation. This has included being part of the pan-London initiative, Setting the Standard, to ensure properties are safe and habitable.



and as short as possible	<p>We have also introduced the use of council-owned temporary accommodation, giving us greater control over property standards and tenancy management. We have 256 units, mostly in Anansi House and Knowles House. This has led to noticeable improvements in quality, with homes that are better maintained and more consistently meeting residents' needs, while also providing households with greater stability and security. This work was highlighted as best practice in our recent MHCLG visit.</p> <p>We are rapidly developing a B&B elimination plan which will be prioritised during the end of 2025 and start of 2026.</p>
We seek to personalise our services to individuals' needs, and work collaboratively with our partners to ensure those needs are met.	<p>We have worked closely with the Brent Homelessness Forum to develop our understanding of the range of people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness, and to provide holistic support to meet their needs.</p> <p>Our work on the Built for Zero initiative has helped us to work with rough sleepers to sustainably and equitably reduce rough sleeping in the borough.</p> <p>Built for Zero is an international movement to end homelessness. It seeks to create a just and equitable future where homelessness is rare, brief when it occurs, and never a way of life. Brent is proud to partner with Crisis UK (the national homelessness charity) to carry out a test and learn pilot of Built for Zero in the UK. In Brent, we are testing the methodology with those who are rough sleeping - some of the most vulnerable in our community. Since the start of the pilot in October 2023, Brent has made steady progress towards its aim to sustainably and equitably reduce rough sleeping in our borough. The learning from the project is being shared throughout our borough's homelessness response system, as well as with wider stakeholders.</p> <p>Built for Zero achievements since October 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most accurate and reliable data the borough has on rough sleepers• Using wider, more gender informed definition of rough sleeping (spotlight on hidden homelessness population)• Improving partnership working, including coordination of Brent's Winter Night Shelter and the women's rough sleeping census• Feeding into Mental Health and Housing Steering Group (senior leaders from Council and community services attend)• Introduced a new commissioned housing related support referral form• Trialling ways of working to ensure there are no evictions onto the street from commissioned housing related support services• Data feeding into the re-commissioning of housing related support services• Flexing the system to get long-term rough sleepers off the street (90-day challenge)



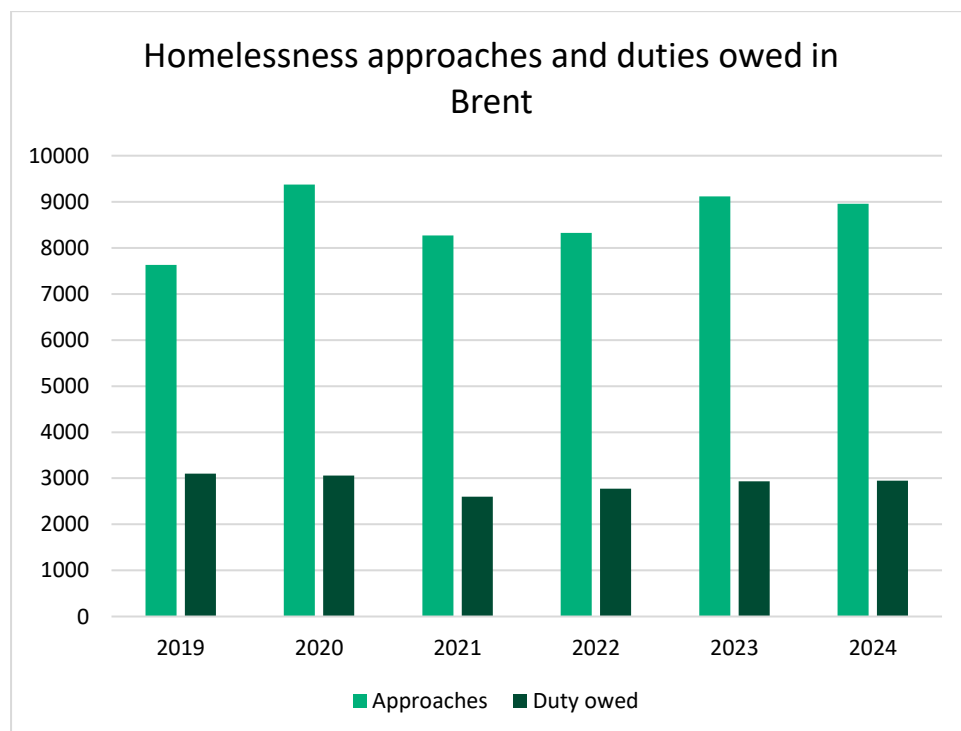
- 2.3 An updated Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will be developed off the back of this homelessness review and will set out the updated direction and priorities for the services that we provide to residents who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

National, regional and local context for homelessness

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and homelessness approaches in Brent

- 3.1 Throughout the last Strategy period, the Government has maintained its emphasis on prevention when it comes to homelessness. At the time of producing this Homelessness Review we are awaiting the introduction of the Renters' Rights Bill. This Bill will further cement the importance of prevention, as it is expected to end section 21 'no fault evictions'. This should make a difference, given that 'no fault evictions' are the leading cause of homelessness in England. In 2024, 32,287 households in England were served with a 'no fault eviction' notice.
- 3.2 Since the previous Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy was adopted, the number of people approaching the Council for advice and/or support relating to their housing situation has increased substantially, in line with regional and national trends (see Figure 1). We forecast that about 9,000 households will approach us as homeless this year and 3,300 of them will become formal homelessness applicants.

Figure 1



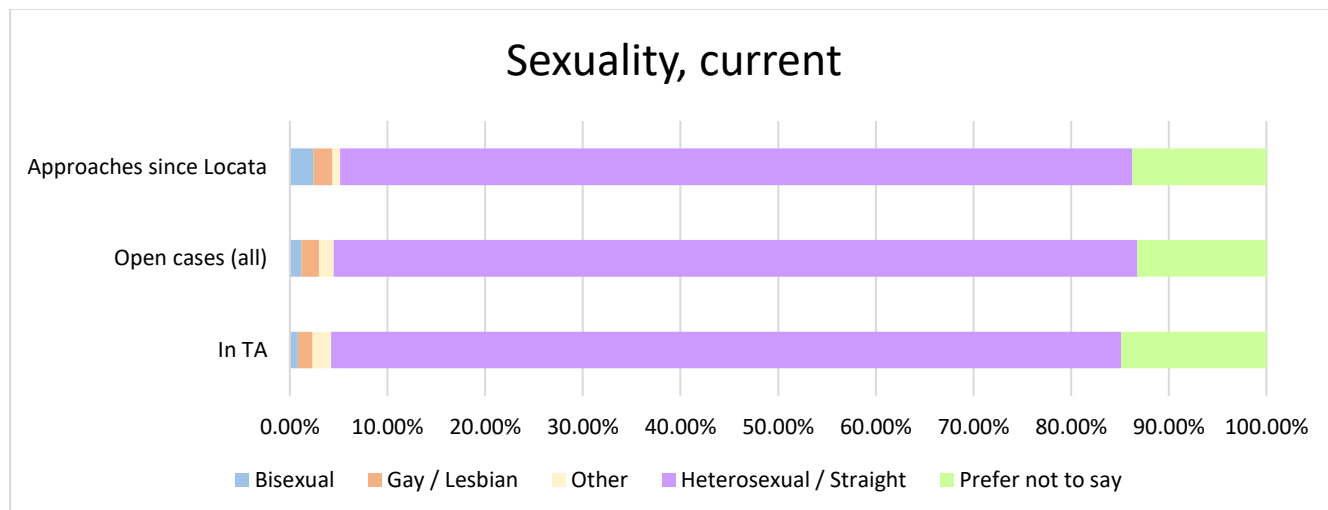
- 3.3 In 2024/25, there were approximately 551 rough sleepers in Brent. This was an increase of 101 from the previous year. 64% of people seen rough sleeping in the borough during 2024/25 were new rough sleepers, while 22% fell into the living on the street category, and 14% were returners to rough sleeping. 289 (52%) people were seen rough sleeping only once in 2024/25, which compares to 247 (54%) seen rough sleeping only once in 2023/24. 65% of people seen rough



sleeping in the borough during 2024/25 who were new to the streets were seen rough sleeping just once.

3.4 In Brent we are seeing an increase in individuals approaching the Council for advice and/or support regarding their housing situation who are identifying their sexuality as lesbian, gay, bisexual or other. In 2024-25, 247 people approaching for housing advice identified as LGB+, up from 319 in 23-24 and 300 in 22-23.

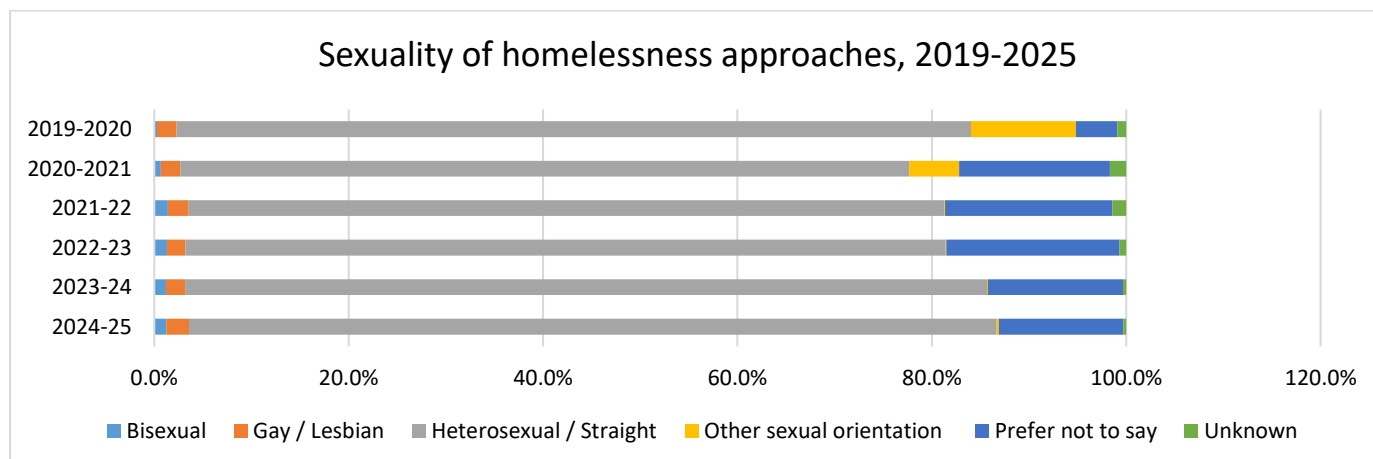
Figure II



All data from August 2025. Migration to Locata occurred on 24 March 2025. Note the increasing occurrence of "Other" sexuality among open cases and households in TA is likely a legacy data collection error.

Sexuality	Bisexual	Gay / Lesbian	Other	Heterosexual / Straight	Prefer not to say
In TA	0.81%	1.50%	1.91%	80.91%	14.86%
Open cases (all)	1.18%	1.80%	1.50%	82.31%	13.21%
Approaches since Locata	2.43%	1.92%	0.78%	81.14%	13.73%

Historical data

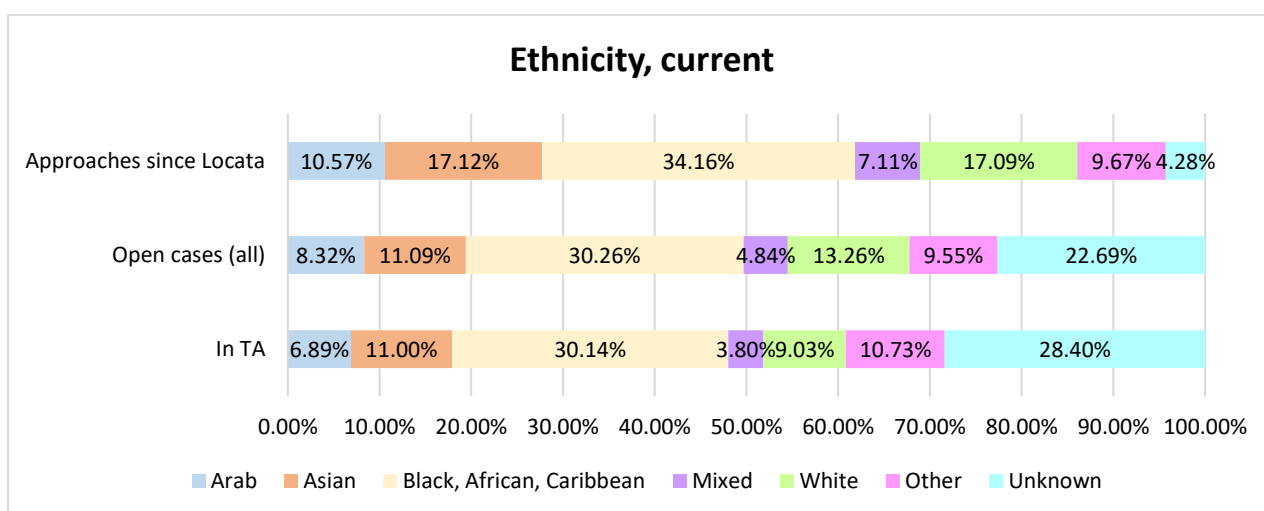




	Bisexual	Gay / Lesbian	Heterosexual / Straight	Other	Prefer not to say	Unknown
2019-2020	0.3%	2.0%	81.7%	10.8%	4.3%	0.9%
2020-2021	0.7%	2.0%	75.0%	5.1%	15.5%	1.7%
2021-22	1.4%	2.1%	77.8%	0.1%	17.2%	1.4%
2022-23	1.3%	1.9%	78.2%	0.1%	17.8%	0.7%
2023-24	1.2%	2.0%	82.5%	0.1%	13.9%	0.3%
2024-25	1.2%	2.3%	83.1%	0.2%	12.8%	0.3%

3.5 Since migrating to Locata, our data collection of residents' ethnicities has significantly improved. From this, we know that there are about twice as many residents identifying as black who approach as homeless compared to the background Brent population – and nearly twice as many living in temporary accommodation. We also know that residents identifying as Arab are more likely to approach as homeless and live in temporary accommodation. Residents who identify as white or Asian are less likely to approach as homeless or live in temporary accommodation. Compared to five years ago, fewer households identifying as white or black and more identifying as Arab or other are approaching the council as homeless. (Population data taken from ONS 2021 Census).

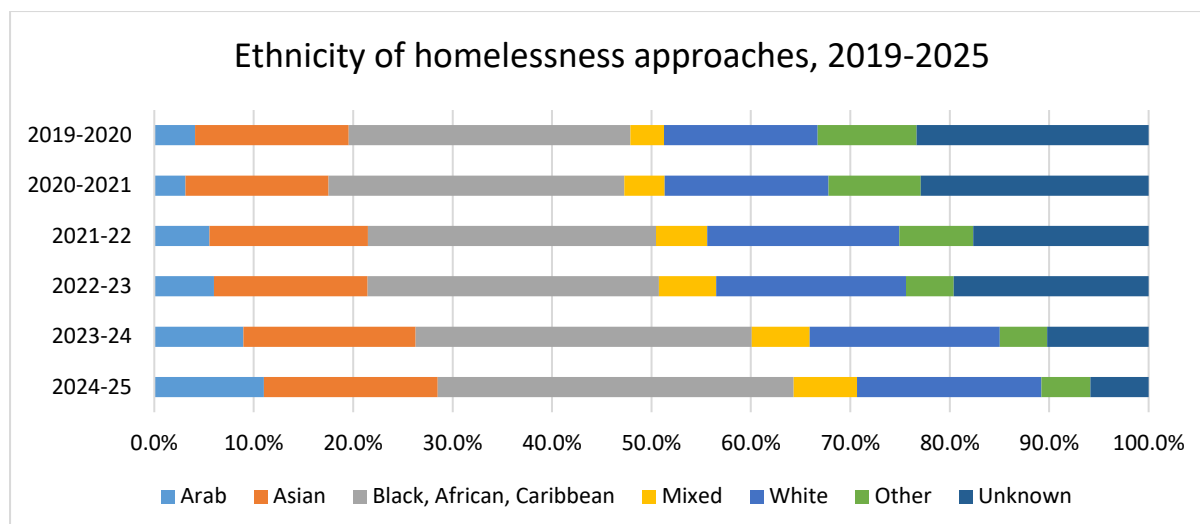
Figure III



All data from August 2025. Migration to Locata occurred on 24 March 2025.

Ethnicity	Arab	Asian	Black, African, Caribbean	Mixed	White	Other	Unknown
Approaches since Locata	10.57%	17.12%	34.16%	7.11%	17.09%	9.67%	4.28%
Open cases (all)	8.32%	11.09%	30.26%	4.84%	13.26%	9.55%	22.69%
In TA	6.89%	11.00%	30.14%	3.80%	9.03%	10.73%	28.40%

Historical data

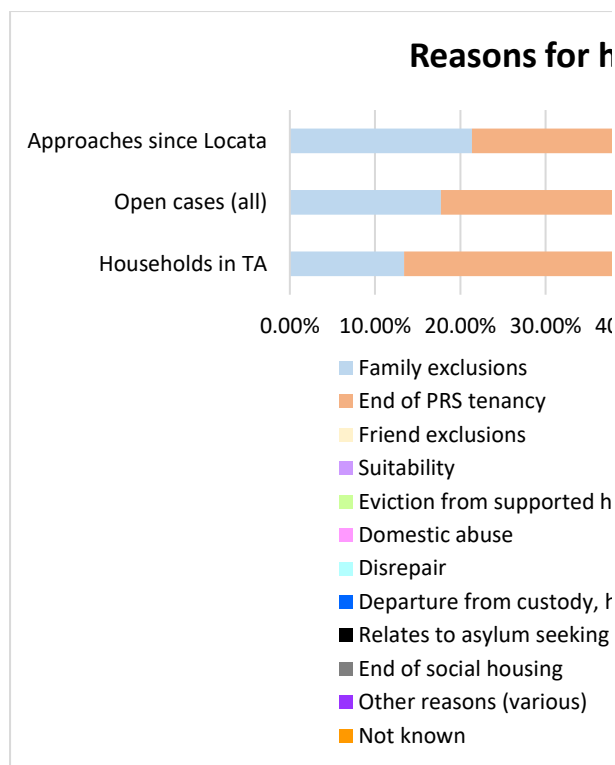


Ethnicity	Arab	Asian	Black, African, Caribbean	Mixed	White	Other	Unknown
2019-2020	4.1%	15.4%	28.3%	3.4%	15.4%	10.0%	23.3%
2020-2021	3.1%	14.4%	29.8%	4.0%	16.5%	9.3%	22.9%
2021-22	5.6%	15.9%	29.0%	5.1%	19.3%	7.4%	17.6%
2022-23	6.0%	15.5%	29.3%	5.8%	19.1%	4.8%	19.6%
2023-24	9.0%	17.3%	33.8%	5.8%	19.1%	4.8%	10.2%
2024-25	11.0%	17.5%	35.8%	6.4%	18.5%	4.9%	5.9%

Reasons for homelessness in Brent

3.6 We look carefully at the reasons why households approach as homeless in Brent to ensure that our prevention strategies are targeted and appropriate, and therefore as successful as possible. Recently, the most common reasons for approaching the council as homeless relate to end of private rented sector tenancies, family exclusions, unsuitable housing, domestic abuse, friend exclusions, and eviction from supported housing.

Figure IV



All data from August 2025. Migration to Locata occurred on 24 March 2025.

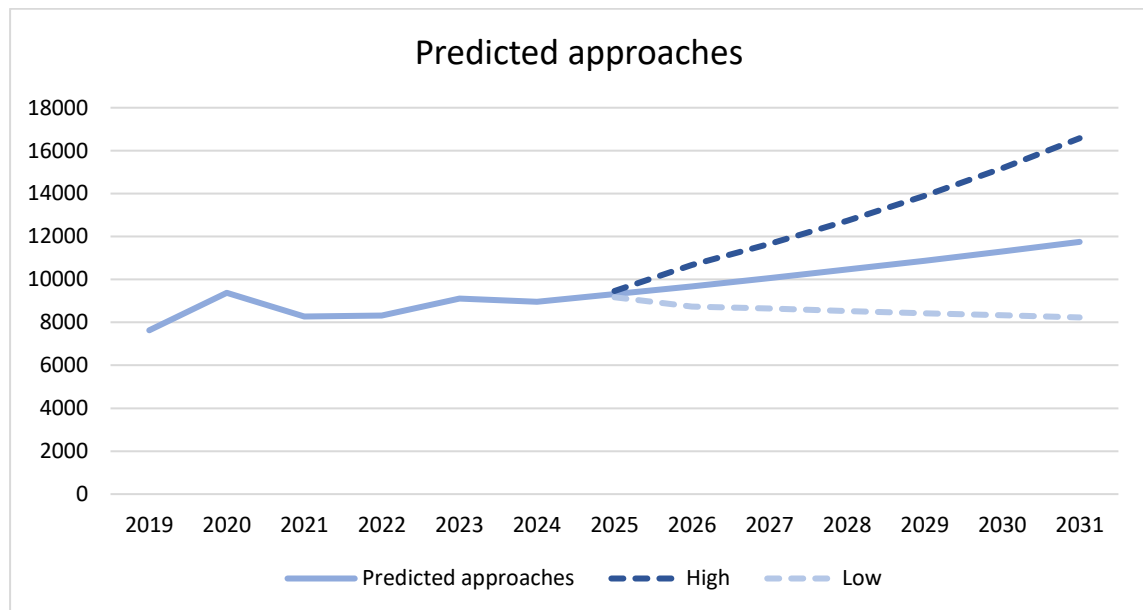


Predicting future homelessness

4.1 Approaches

4.1.1 In 2019, the council received 7631 homelessness approaches. In 2020, this increased to 9375. In 2024, the council received 8957 homelessness approaches and we predict receiving just over 9300 homelessness approaches in 2025. Putting the Renters Rights Act to the side, the number of homelessness approaches would likely continue to grow by about 4% in future years. This is displayed in the graph below. However, the Renters Rights Act should mitigate some of this growth. Officers are currently undertaking more detailed work to model the impact of the Renters Right Act on homelessness approaches, but we will only know for certain once the changes have been enacted in law. For now, officers have provided a high prediction figure (assuming 9.2% growth) and a low figure (assuming -1.2% growth).

4.1.2

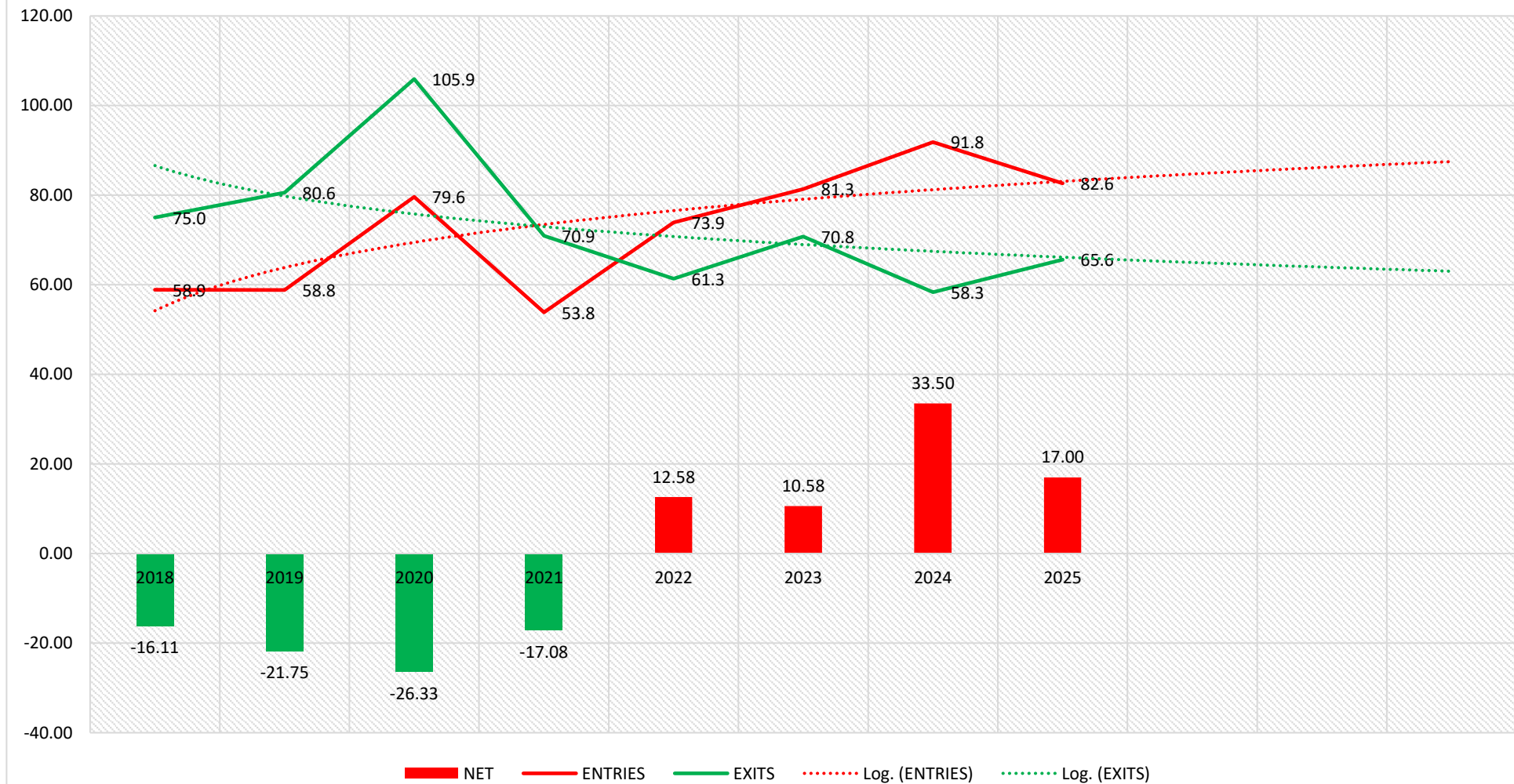


4.2 Temporary accommodation

4.2.1 In 2019, 58.8 households entered temporary accommodation and the council supported 80.6 households to exit emergency accommodation each month (average). In 2024, demand for temporary accommodation had significantly increased to 91.8 new entries per month. The council was able to support substantially fewer households to exit too: 58.3 households per month. Data to August 2025 shows that, for the first time since 2019, the council has been able to reduce numbers of entries and increase the number of exits, although there remains a sizeable gap.

4.2.2 On that basis, with regards to temporary accommodation, our estimated projections for future years include low level growth of entries into temporary accommodation and low-level reduction in exits from temporary accommodation each month:

Entries and exits - All TA (Years)





Homelessness services and initiatives in Brent

5.1. Ensuring that there is adequate and effective support and advice services available across the borough is key to tackling homelessness, from both a preventative and responsive perspective. Appendix 1 provides a list of the services available with:

- The lead organisation providing the service or initiative;
- Whether the main aim is to provide support, secure accommodation or prevent homelessness;
- Who it is aimed at (i.e. families, single homeless individuals etc.);
- Where resources / funding originate from; and
- Key challenges / suggested improvements.

Gap analysis of services

5.2. As part of engagement with external partners, and discovery work we've done to support the establishment of our Preventing Homelessness work programme, we have analysed where there are current gaps in the services that are available to support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Key gaps include:

- There is a lack of access to secure, affordable housing across Brent, specifically in the private rented sector;
- Too many residents are being housed in non-contained B & B accommodation for extended periods of time;
- There is a lack of joined up services across the Council for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. People aren't always provided with the full suite of services and support that would help them to address their housing challenges;
- There is a lack of specialised services aimed at specific cohorts i.e. LGBT individuals, sex workers and those with no recourse to public funds;
- There is a lack of opportunities for social interaction for those who are rough sleeping, peer support or 'buddy' services as well as increased day facilities could help;
- There is a lack of support for those with mental health issues who do not reach the threshold for priority need;
- A more joined up approach to case handover is needed between different services and/or organisations. Effective communication is key to ensure trust is maintained; and
- More training and educational opportunities for those who are experiencing homelessness would be beneficial, with the specific aim of supporting individuals into employment.