



**Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny
Committee**
4 March 2026

**Report from the Corporate Director
of Resident and Housing Services**

**Lead Cabinet Member for Housing -
Councillor Donnelly-Jackson**

**Update on Temporary Accommodation, Preventing
Homelessness, And Supported Exempt Accommodation**

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-key decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Part Exempt - Appendix 1 is not for publication as it contains the following category of exempt information as specified in Paragraph 3, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely: "Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)."
List of Appendices:	Appendix 1 - Exempt
Background Papers:	None
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. To provide an update on temporary accommodation, supported exempt accommodation, and homelessness prevention, including the financial position and partnership working.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. To consider and discuss the updates provided below.

3. Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

3.1. Preventing homelessness, provision and quality of temporary accommodation, and supported exempt accommodation all contribute to a number of Borough priorities, including prosperity and stability, health, and thriving communities. Being at risk of homeless or homeless can significantly affect residents' physical and mental health and can also make it harder to continue engaging with work, education and one's local community.

3.2. They also relate very closely to a number of council strategies and policies, including:

- Brent's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy
- Local Housing Strategy
- Youth Strategy
- Stronger Communities Strategy
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

4. Temporary Accommodation Offer and Financial Situation

4.1. Background

4.1.1. Local authorities across London continue to experience significant and sustained pressure on their temporary accommodation services. Demand has increased sharply over the past decade, while councils face escalating financial commitments associated with providing temporary accommodation. At the same time, households are spending longer periods in temporary accommodation due to a continued shortage of suitable move-on options, particularly larger family homes and accessible properties. This ongoing imbalance between rising demand, constrained supply, and increasing costs forms the backdrop against which local authorities are required to discharge their statutory duties and make accommodation offers.

4.1.2. Within this wider London context, Brent is managing some of the most acute challenges. High levels of demand, a large and long-standing housing waiting list, population growth, and rapidly rising temporary accommodation expenditure have combined to create a highly constrained operating environment. Securing affordable and suitable accommodation within the borough has become increasingly difficult, resulting in greater reliance on higher-cost nightly-paid placements and out-of-borough provision. The Council currently has 2,450 households in temporary accommodation, with 60% placed in costly nightly-paid units. Brent retains a statutory responsibility to resolve homelessness for these households. Although Accommodation Services has reduced expenditure by removing the most expensive placements and negotiating better rates, structural pressures are driving continued growth in

demand, including the end of Section 21 evictions (June 2025), frozen Local Housing Allowance rates, economic pressures into 2026, and the limited supply of social housing.

4.1.3. The current reliance on nightly-paid private providers presents ongoing challenges: financial volatility, limited options to discharge homelessness duties at affordable rent levels, increasing caseloads, and variable accommodation quality.

4.1.4. Without fundamental reform, the temporary accommodation budget is expected to overspend by £4.5m in 2025/26.

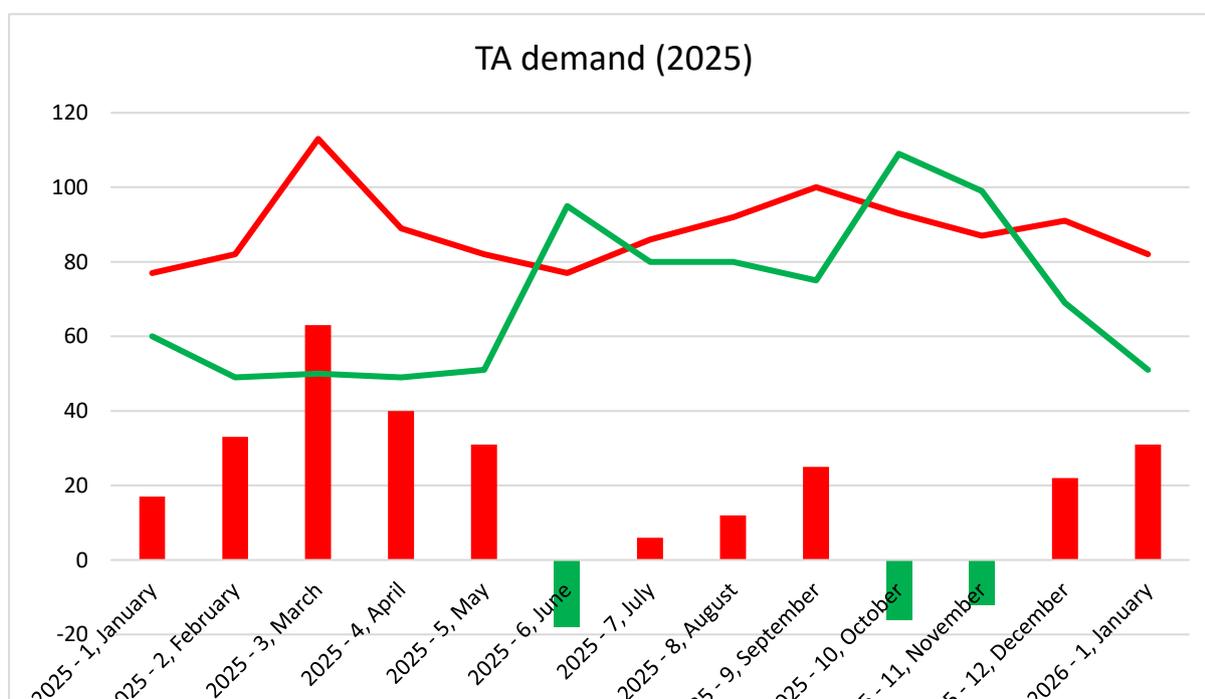
4.1.5. Institutional investors, particularly pension funds, are increasingly offering long-term, lower-cost leased accommodation to local authorities, seeking stable income and social impact rather than high returns. This provides an alternative to the unstable and poor-quality nightly-paid market.

4.1.6. These pressures underscore the need for continued scrutiny and strategic intervention to ensure the borough can meet its statutory responsibilities while managing significant financial and operational risks. The Housing Needs & Support service is proposing to adopt a strategic shift towards procuring temporary accommodation through long-term leasing arrangements of 10 years or more with private, institutional, and pension-fund-backed providers offering affordable rental terms.

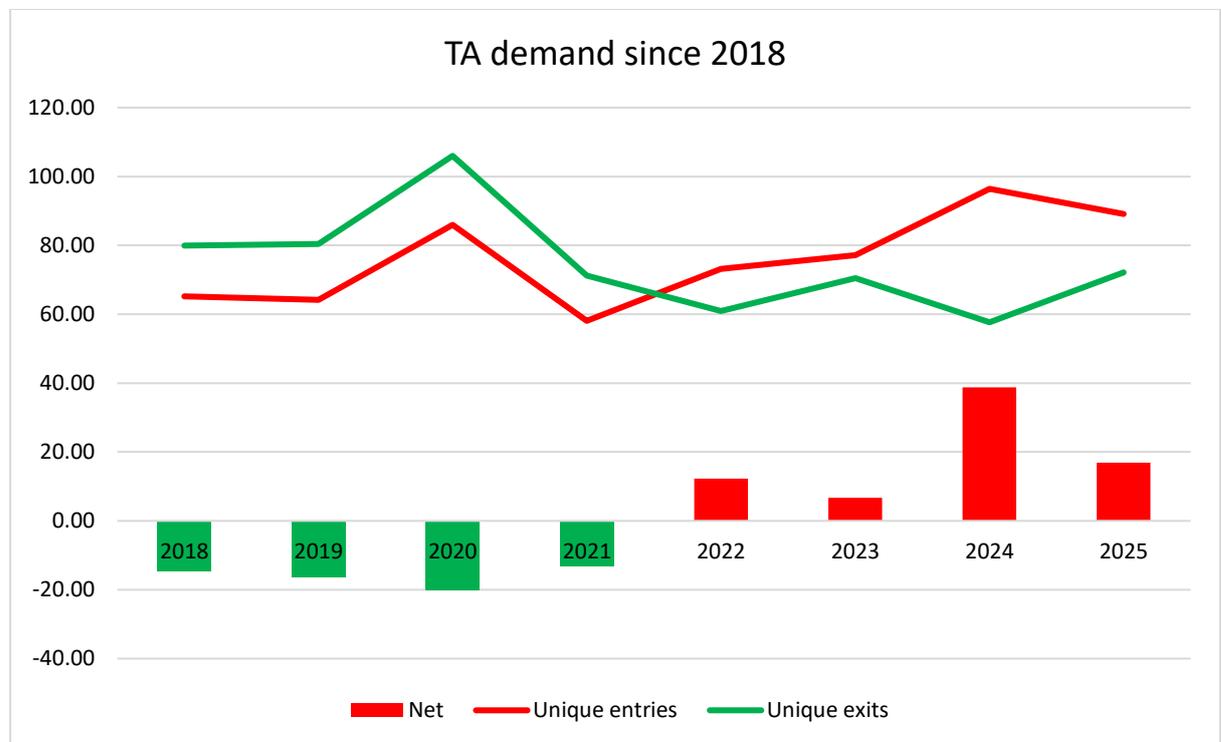
4.1.7. This approach is projected to:

- Generate annual savings of approximately £2.5 million when compared with current expenditure on nightly- paid temporary accommodation.
- Secure an immediate supply of 367 units of good- quality temporary accommodation, strengthening the Council’s overall provision.
- Enhance financial stability by reducing exposure to market volatility and providing greater cost predictability over the duration of the leases.
- Improve accommodation quality and stability for households in temporary accommodation, particularly those with heightened vulnerability.

4.2. The current demand for accommodation



4.2.1. This graph above shows the number of entries into and exits from temporary accommodation per month. It excludes moves between different kinds of temporary accommodation. The red line tracks the number of entries into temporary accommodation – demand. The green line displays number of exits from temporary accommodation. The bars at the bottom track the net effect – red bars represent when more households entered than exited TA, and so the total number of households in TA increased. Green bars represent when more households exited than entered TA, and so the total number of households in TA decreased.



4.2.2. This graph above follows the same format as above, showing average entries into and exits from TA per month, between 2018 and 2025. This shows that between 2024 and 2025, staff were able to reduce demand and increase move ons, a ‘pincer’ effect that has substantially slowed the rise in number of households in temporary accommodation. Total numbers as below:

Year	Unique entries	Unique exits	Net
2018	782	959	-177
2019	770	965	-195
2020	1032	1272	-240
2021	697	855	-158

2022	878	731	147
2023	926	846	80
2024	1157	692	465
2025	1069	866	203

4.2.3. Key points:

- Temporary accommodation demand appears to have peaked in 2024, while exits have picked up due to an influx of new build social housing.
- While TA demand should hopefully further cool, number of exits will likely reduce by more due to reduced availability of social housing, meaning higher net increase in 2026.

4.2.4. Demand by number of bedrooms

Date	Number bedrooms								Grand Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	6+	Unknown	
2024	153	595	209	77	15	44	2	62	1157
Jan	8	46	38	5	1	2			100
Feb	5	55	15	5	3	2	1	7	93
Mar	13	68	20	16	1	3		7	128
Apr	6	43	14	5	1	2		13	84
May	13	54	27	7		8		1	110
Jun	27	48	12	7	2	6		7	109
Jul	21	44	11	9	2	5		10	102
Aug	17	46	10	4	1	4		7	89
Sep	23	42	8	7	1	1	1	1	84
Oct	4	51	19	5	1	2		6	88
Nov	5	57	20	5	1	3		1	92
Dec	11	41	15	2	1	6		2	78
2025	87	628	97	62	23	27		145	1069
Jan	15	37	13	7		4		1	77
Feb	6	46	11	6	5	6		2	82
Mar	8	73	12	10	4	4		2	113
Apr	3	60	8	7	3	5		3	89
May	7	57	10	3	2			3	82
Jun	5	54	4	7	2	2		3	77
Jul	6	54	7	5	3	4		7	86
Aug	9	69	5	3	2	1		3	92
Sep	5	75	10	5		1		4	100
Oct	8	43	7	4				31	93
Nov	4	37	4	2	1			39	87
Dec	11	23	6	3	1			47	91
2026	8	19	5	5	1			44	82
Jan	8	19	5	5	1			44	82
Grand Total	248	1242	311	144	39	71	2	251	2308

4.3. Length of stay in TA

4.3.1. On average (mean), households currently in TA have been living there 648 days, or 1 year 9 months. The median length of stay is 280 days, or 9 months.

4.3.2. Length of stay of current TA placements, broken down by number of bedrooms:

Length of stay (households current in TA)

Number bedrooms	Number placements	Mean length of stay (days)	Median length of stay (days)
1	197	373.1	126
2	1188	525.3	136
3	512	883.2	192.5
4	226	862.0	50
5	67	1140.0	507
6	36	129.2	67
>6	4	2694.0	
Unknown	195	96.3	55
Grand Total	2425	648.4	280

4.3.3. Households that exited TA between 2018 and 2026 were in TA for an average of 606 days, or 20 months. However, the median length of stay was 96 days, or just over 3 months.

Length of stay (households that exited TA, 2018-2026)

Number bedrooms	Number placements	Mean length of stay (days)	Median length of stay (days)
0	143	281.6	83
1	900	429.5	103.5
2	3538	570.5	97
3	1499	870.4	94
4	707	687.0	68
5	124	987.0	91
6	84	163.4	134.5
>6	10	2184.7	163
Grand Total	7005	627.2	96

4.3.4. Just 87 households currently in TA have lived in TA over 5 years (4%), compared to 30% across all of London.¹

4.3.5. Lengths of stay are fairly consistent across different reasons for homelessness.

¹ Please see page 3 of the report at [Update on London's homelessness emergency | London Councils](#)

4.4. Details on supply of properties being made available, vacant and third-party supply

Month	Year	PRSO	Prevention	TOTAL
April	2025	8	10	18
May	2025	11	18	29
June	2025	15	30	45
July	2025	10	34	44
August	2025	6	23	29
September	2025	9	19	28
October	2025	5	15	20
November	2025	8	22	30
December	2025	8	12	20
All	2025	9	20	29

4.4.1. The above table outlines number of private sector properties secured to prevent homelessness for those at risk, or end the main homelessness duty for those in temporary accommodation, through a Private Rented Sector Offer (“PRSO”). “PRSO” refers to residents in temporary accommodation who are offered (and accept) a property in the private rented sector, to end the main homelessness duty. “Prevention” refers to scenarios where private rented sector properties that staff procure are used to support residents at risk of or experiencing homelessness, but who are not in temporary accommodation.

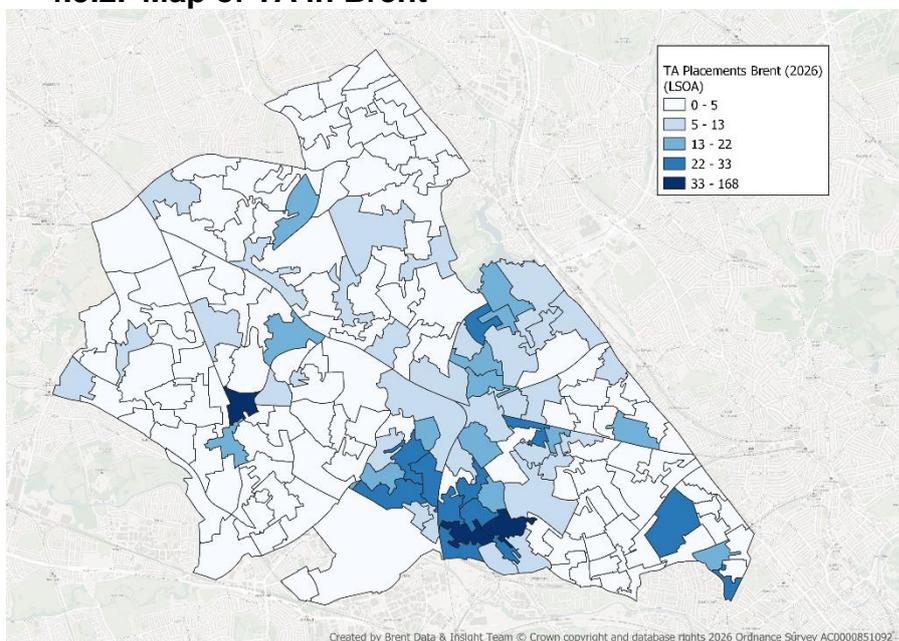
4.5. Information on users

4.5.1. Locations of current TA portfolio, by ward

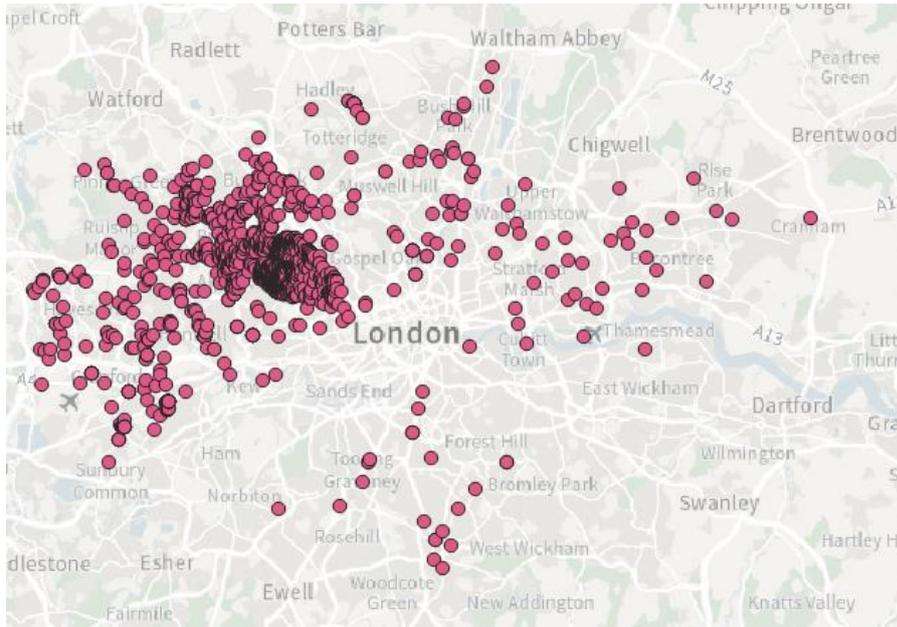
Ward	TA units
Alperton	24
Barnhill	27
Brondesbury Park	11
Cricklewood & Mapesbury	27
Dollis Hill	170
Harlesden & Kensal Green	379
Kenton	59
Kilburn	62
Kingsbury	6
Northwick Park	15
Preston	13
Queens Park	49

Queensbury	7
Roundwood	105
Stonebridge	160
Sudbury	29
Tokington	8
Welsh Harp	32
Wembley Central	30
Wembley Hill	170
Willesden Green	104
<i>Outside Brent</i>	883
<i>Not known</i>	55
Grand Total	2425

4.5.2. Map of TA in Brent



4.5.3. Map of TA in London

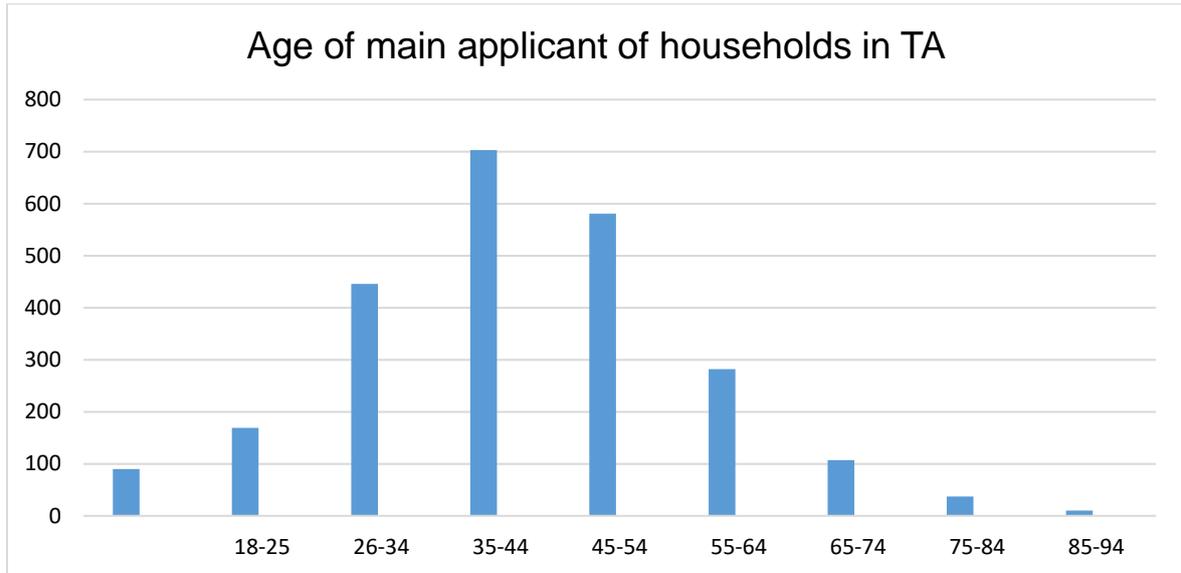


4.6. Demographic information of households in TA:

(N.B. The below tables and graph all apply to the lead homeless applicant of the households only unless otherwise stated.)

4.6.1. **Age:** The median age of the lead homeless applicant of households in TA is 41.5. The mean age of the lead homeless applicant of households in TA is 43.

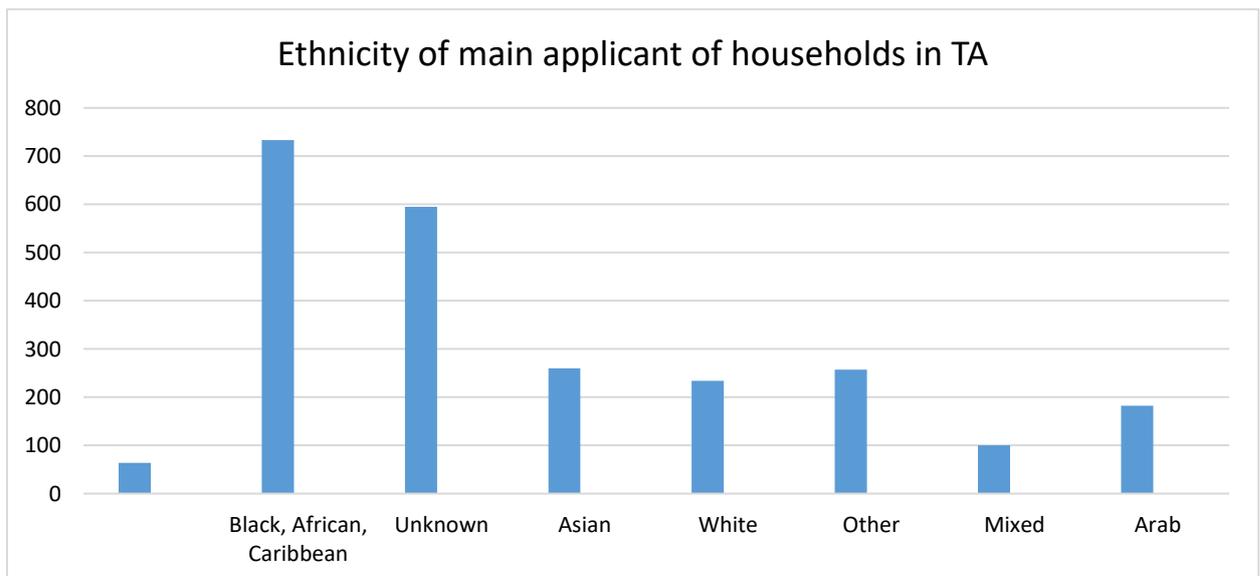
Age category	#	%
Unknown	90	3.71%
18-25	169	6.97%
26-34	446	18.39%
35-44	703	28.99%
45-54	581	23.96%
55-64	282	11.63%
65-74	107	4.41%
75-84	37	1.53%
85-94	10	0.41%
Grand Total	2425	100.00%



(Blank means the age is unknown. These residents are not under 18.)

4.6.2. Ethnicity

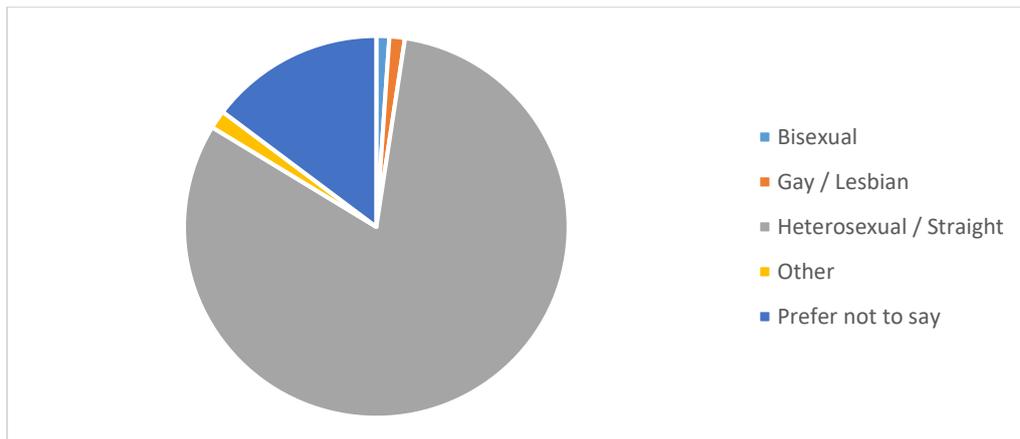
Ethnicity Group	#	%
<i>Blank</i>	64	2.64%
Black, African, Caribbean	733	30.23%
Unknown	595	24.54%
Asian	260	10.72%
White	234	9.65%
Other	257	10.60%
Mixed	100	4.12%
Arab	182	7.51%
Grand Total	2425	100.00%



(Blank means the ethnicity cannot be identified.)

4.6.3. Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation	#	%
Bisexual	21	1.09%
Gay / Lesbian	25	1.30%
Heterosexual / Straight	1565	81.34%
Other	30	1.56%
Prefer not to say	283	14.71%
Grand Total	1924	100.00%



4.6.4. Information about all residents in temporary accommodation

- There are about 8690 residents living in temporary accommodation that Brent Council is responsible for.
- There are about 3660 children living in temporary accommodation that Brent Council is responsible for (42% of all residents in TA). About 800 are aged 0-5 years old (22% of children and 9% of all residents in TA).

Age group	Number in TA (rounded)
0-17	3660
18-25	1410
26-35	1100
36-45	1090
46-55	830
56-65	390
66-75	140
76-85	60
86-95	20
96-105	0
All	8700

Gender	Number in TA
Female	4733
Male	3809

Not Known / Other	145
Prefer not to say	5
Grand Total	8693

4.6.5. Employment status of main applicant

Employment status of main applicant	#	%
At home/not seeking work (including looking after the home or family)	245	10.1%
Don't know / Refused	594	24.5%
Full-time student	40	1.7%
Not registered unemployed but seeking work	129	5.3%
Not working because of long term sickness or disability	258	10.6%
Other	377	15.6%
Registered employed but currently off work due to ill health / disability on reduced or SSP	44	1.8%
Registered employed but currently off work on maternity/paternity / adoption leave on reduced or statutory pay (i.e. SMP)	42	1.7%
Registered unemployed	271	11.2%
Retired (including retired early)	40	1.7%
Training Scheme / apprenticeship	9	0.4%
Working: 30 hours a week or more	76	3.1%
Working: irregular hours with variable or irregular pay	218	9.0%
Working: less than 30 hours a week	67	2.8%
(blank)	35	0.5%
Grand Total	2445	100%

4.6.6. Main reason for homeless for residents currently in TA

Data source: Locata, Northgate. Date: late January 2026.

Row Labels	%
End of PRS tenancy	36.59%
Family exclusions	18.13%
Domestic abuse	13.87%
Friend exclusions	6.06%
Other reasons (various)	5.63%
Relates to asylum seeking or resettlement scheme	5.19%
Suitability	4.48%
Disrepair	3.44%
Eviction from supported housing	2.95%
Departure from custody, hospital, LAC placement, or Armed Forces	2.46%
End of social housing	1.20%
Grand Total	100%

4.6.7. Main reason for homeless for residents recently entering TA

Reason for homelessness	Year of entry into TA								Grand Total
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	
End of PRS tenancy	33.3%	41.9%	31.2%	25.1%	27.5%	31.3%	36.9%	34.8%	33.4%
Family exclusions	35.9%	28.1%	38.8%	26.7%	21.9%	19.8%	14.6%	18.9%	20.3%
Domestic abuse	12.8%	7.8%	10.0%	11.3%	17.8%	19.6%	16.6%	15.1%	15.7%
Friend exclusions	5.1%	5.4%	5.3%	9.7%	7.8%	8.7%	5.5%	6.1%	6.7%
Other reasons (various)	5.1%	3.0%	2.9%	4.0%	4.4%	2.7%	6.3%	5.5%	4.8%
Suitability	0.0%	3.0%	2.4%	6.5%	5.8%	6.0%	3.2%	4.7%	4.5%
Relates to asylum seeking or resettlement scheme	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	1.6%	0.7%	4.2%	6.7%	5.0%	4.1%
Disrepair	0.0%	3.0%	4.7%	5.3%	6.6%	3.2%	3.2%	2.4%	3.5%
Eviction from supported housing	7.7%	2.4%	1.8%	4.0%	2.4%	1.6%	2.9%	3.9%	3.0%
Departure from custody, hospital, LAC placement, or Armed Forces	0.0%	2.4%	1.8%	4.0%	4.1%	2.1%	3.5%	2.3%	2.9%
End of social housing	0.0%	2.4%	1.2%	1.6%	1.0%	0.7%	0.5%	1.3%	1.0%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Key points:

- End of PRS tenancy has remained a consistently substantial cause of households entering TA, around 1/3.
- Family exclusions have significantly reduced as the main reason for homelessness of households entering TA, down from 36% in 2018 to 19% in 2025.
- DA has increased on the whole, peaking at 20% in 2023 and remaining high.
- Asylum seekers have increased, from 0% in 2018 to 6.7% in 2024 and a slight reduction to 5% in 2025.

4.7. Details on Temporary Accommodation inspections and standards:

Ensuring that temporary accommodation is safe, decent, and well-managed is a statutory responsibility for all boroughs. In recognition of the need for consistent, high-quality inspections across London, most boroughs, including Brent, use Setting the Standard (StS), the pan-London temporary accommodation inspection and accreditation scheme. StS was established to deliver a centralised, uniform approach to inspecting bed and breakfast (B&B) and studio-type nightly-paid TA. It provides boroughs with a shared evidence base on property conditions and compliance with safety and management standards. The scheme is widely recognised as a sector best practice model and has been highlighted in the Government's National Plan to End Homelessness. Brent Council works closely with StS to ensure temporary accommodation meets minimum safety, amenity and management standards. Temporary Accommodation inspected under the Setting the Standard (StS) framework covers all nightly-paid placements, including bed and breakfast accommodation, bedsit/hostel-type units, and self-contained studios. These inspections ensure such properties meet pan-London safety and quality

requirements. The StS standards do not apply to long-stay or permanent housing, nor to commercial hotels used solely for emergency placements, as these fall outside the scope of nightly-paid TA provision.

4.8. The borough's current situation compared to other London boroughs and surrounding local areas

- 4.8.1. Brent currently accommodates 2450 households in temporary accommodation, reflecting significant and rising demand driven by population growth and pressures on the wider housing market. This places Brent among the higher-pressure London boroughs, although not at the extreme end of the scale.
- 4.8.2. Across London, boroughs such as Newham, Westminster, Lambeth, Southwark, Hackney, and Kensington & Chelsea report substantially higher rates of households in temporary accommodation per 1,000 households. In contrast, boroughs including Hounslow and Bexley report some of the lowest rates in the capital, highlighting Brent's position in the upper mid-range of London boroughs in terms of temporary accommodation burden.
- 4.8.3. Financially, Brent faces substantial pressure, spending approximately £100,000 per day on temporary accommodation. This aligns Brent with the majority of London boroughs experiencing unsustainable cost escalation linked to high reliance on expensive forms of provision. While Brent does not have the highest caseload, the scale of expenditure underscores its position as a borough facing acute challenges in managing temporary accommodation demand.

4.9. Financial Context and Pressures

Overview of Financial Position

- The Housing Needs and Support budget overspent by £15.3m in 2024/25 due to an extremely high level of demand for this service and a lack of affordable Private Rented Sector (PRS) offers. In 2025/26, with an additional £3.4m funding allocated through the main Homelessness Prevention Grant and £12.6m of growth built into the base budget (total: £13.5m), there is an increase of £15m in the service budget in comparison to the previous financial year to deal with continuous pressures and demand. However, the demand continues to grow and the associated costs are high. Assuming the current monthly net expenditure continues at the same rate until the end of the year, total net expenditure for the financial year after accounting for the Homelessness Prevention Grant could reach £18m, resulting in a £4.5m overspend. Whilst there are improvements, the costs continue to grow, the average net cost of a household in Stage 1 accommodation has increased further from £15k to £17k in comparison to Quarter 2 and the total number of people in temporary accommodation continues to increase.
- There are a number of interventions and projects focusing on increasing the supply and decreasing costs as set out in this report. However, it is important

to note that the overarching budgetary pressure from homelessness may not be significantly alleviated by these potential savings as they are not immediately cashable against the backdrop of ongoing pressures and ongoing demand for the service.

- To help accelerate progress and strengthen commercial negotiations, Greenlight Commercial & Consulting have been engaged to support this workstream with a number of lease proposals in review. Greenlight also work to decant the top 100 most expensive nightly paid placements to cheaper accommodation. To date, 55 moves have been completed, resulting in a cost reduction of approximately £1,929 per night. Greenlight have sourced 367 units that are due for completion in 2026/27, with occupancy expected to be staggered throughout the year. These are 10-years plus one day leases, enabling the full LHA rate to be recovered under the housing benefits subsidy rules.

5. Homelessness Services and Prevention

5.1. Overview of Homelessness Services and Prevention

- This section sets out the Council's homelessness services and prevention offer for both single people, couples without children and families - with particular regard to the significant increase in demand experienced over the last two years.
- The Council provides homelessness support to both single people, couples without children and families through an integrated Housing Needs and Support service. This includes prevention and relief activity, temporary accommodation provision, access to settled accommodation and tenancy sustainment support to reduce repeat homelessness.
- Services are delivered both from the Civic Centre and through satellite locations, including Turning Point and the New Horizon Centre, enabling accessible, partnership-based support for residents across the borough.
- Over the past two years, the service has experienced a sustained and significant increase in demand. This has been driven by rising private sector rents, reduced availability of affordable housing, the cost-of-living crisis, welfare pressures and an increase in households presenting with complex needs, including domestic abuse, mental health concerns and family breakdown.
- In response, the Council has strengthened early intervention and prevention activity, including establishing a presence within community settings such as Family Wellbeing Centres so households can access advice at an earlier stage, often before a homelessness crisis arises. This approach is being further enhanced through the implementation of predictive analytics to help identify households at risk sooner, enabling more targeted and effective preventative support.

- Alongside this, the service continues to ensure statutory duties are met lawfully and consistently within a highly constrained housing market. Service redesign has focused on preventing homelessness wherever possible, reducing reliance on temporary accommodation and improving move-on and tenancy sustainment outcomes.
- For single people, the service offer includes homelessness prevention and relief casework, access to supported accommodation where appropriate and pathways into private rented accommodation supported by incentives and landlord engagement.
- For families, the service offer includes prevention and relief work, access to temporary accommodation where statutory thresholds are met and support to secure longer-term accommodation either within the borough or, where this is not feasible due to affordability pressures and limited housing supply, in suitable accommodation outside the borough.

5.2. End-to-End Homelessness Assessment and Accommodation Process

- When a resident approaches the Council at risk of homelessness, an initial assessment is undertaken to establish eligibility, homelessness status, priority need and any immediate risks. This assessment is carried out by trained Housing Needs officers in accordance with Part VII of the Housing Act 1996.
- Where a household is threatened with homelessness, prevention duties are triggered. Officers work proactively with households and partners to prevent the loss of accommodation, including negotiating with landlords, mediating with family and friends, providing financial assistance or securing alternative accommodation before homelessness occurs.
- Where homelessness cannot be prevented, the relief duty applies. Officers seek to relieve homelessness by helping households secure suitable accommodation for a minimum of six months, supported by a personalised housing plan and ongoing casework. At this time, the duty to provide interim accommodation may be triggered.
- Where a household is assessed as eligible, homeless, in priority need, not intentionally homeless and having a local connection to Brent, the Council owes the main housing duty. Suitable accommodation is secured, which may include temporary accommodation initially, followed by an offer of settled accommodation intended to discharge the Council's main housing duty, typically through a tenancy with a minimum term of at least 12 months.
- All accommodation offers are subject to detailed suitability assessments, taking into account household size, medical and welfare needs, safeguarding considerations, location, affordability and availability. In the current housing context, the Council must balance individual circumstances against severe supply constraints, particularly for family-sized accommodation.

- Prior to securing accommodation, households are supported to prepare for a successful tenancy through tenancy readiness sessions. These sessions outline both tenant and landlord responsibilities and form part of the Council's preventative approach to promoting tenancy stability and reducing the risk of repeat homelessness.

5.3. Homelessness Demand and Outcomes – Data Overview

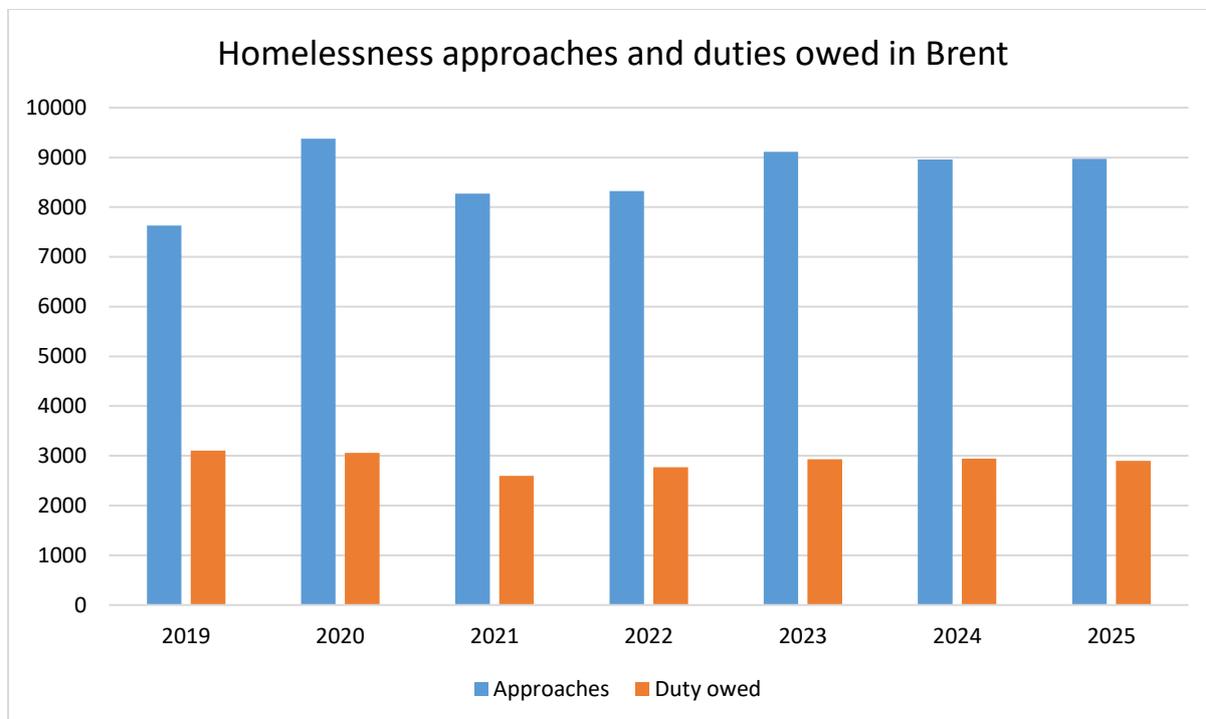
- In the past 12 months, the Council has received 8974 referrals from homeless households comprising both single people, couples without children and families.
- Data on 2025 approaches and duties owed

Month	Approaches	Duties owed upon initial assessment ²	<i>Initial duty: Prevention</i>	<i>Initial duty: Relief</i>	Main duty
January	781	249	60	189	107
February	757	279	83	196	71
March	737	360	85	269	75
April	830	228	47	181	68
May	770	217	40	174	103
June	768	262	57	205	55
July	810	275	69	206	86
August	687	189	40	148	68
September	764	197	31	165	82
October	738	272	59	213	87
November	706	180	44	136	87
December	626	189	59	130	74
TOTAL	8974	2897	674	2212	963

- This includes households approaching the Council for advice and assistance, those owed Prevention or Relief duties and those formally recognised as homeless under the statutory framework, and therefore owed the Main Housing Duty.
- Not every approach to the service results in a statutory homelessness duty being owed. A significant proportion of households are supported through early advice, triage and prevention activity at the point of contact.
- During this reporting period, approximately 2700 approaches were resolved without a formal duty being accepted, where officers were able to provide tailored housing advice and practical support.

² In some cases, this number will be slightly higher than the total number of initial prevention and relief duties owed. This is because some cases are initially assessed as a legacy case or a legacy case owed a main duty. This represents 0.4% of cases.

- This enabled families and individuals to sustain existing accommodation or pursue alternative housing options independently, reducing escalation into statutory homelessness processes. This reflects the service’s focus on early intervention and empowering residents to resolve housing issues wherever possible.



5.4. Homelessness Prevention and Sustainment Outcomes

- Alongside managing a sustained increase in homelessness demand, the Council’s Housing Needs and Support service prioritises early intervention, prevention and tenancy sustainment to reduce escalation into statutory homelessness wherever possible.
- Monitoring outcomes in these areas provides an important measure of service effectiveness, particularly in the context of a constrained housing market and increasing household vulnerability.
- A significant proportion of households approaching the service do so at a point where homelessness is threatened rather than immediate. Through targeted prevention activity - including landlord negotiation, mediation, financial assistance, housing advice and rapid access to alternative accommodation - officers work to stabilise housing situations before crisis occurs.
- During the reporting period, 30% of households had homelessness successfully prevented or relieved through this early intervention model.

- Prevention activity is not limited to resolving an immediate housing crisis. Officers continue to engage with households following intervention to support longer-term housing stability.
- This includes tenancy readiness work, income maximisation advice, partnership working with support agencies and early escalation where risks re-emerge.
- While the service does not formally track tenancy sustainment over fixed time periods, ongoing case engagement and reduced repeat presentations indicate that many households are able to maintain accommodation following intervention. This reflects a preventative model focused not only on resolving immediate risk, but on strengthening residents' ability to sustain housing over time.
- Longer-term housing stability is supported through continued partnership working and early intervention where vulnerabilities are identified.
- Officers work to address underlying factors such as financial hardship, support needs and landlord relationships, helping households stabilise their living arrangements and reducing the likelihood of escalation into repeat homelessness.
- Although formal sustainment metrics are not currently recorded, operational evidence suggests that early preventative engagement contributes to improved housing resilience for many residents.
- Despite strong prevention activity, some households inevitably progress through the statutory homelessness framework due to the severity of their circumstances or wider housing market pressures.
- During the reporting year, 963 households were formally recognised as homeless and owed the Main Housing Duty. While this reflects the continued demand pressures facing the borough, it also demonstrates the Council's compliance with statutory obligations and commitment to securing suitable accommodation for eligible households.
- Taken together, these outcomes highlight a service model that balances statutory responsibilities with a strong preventative focus. Early intervention, sustained engagement and partnership working play a central role in stabilising housing situations, even within a challenging operating environment characterised by rising rents, limited supply and increasing complexity of need.
- The Council continues to refine its prevention and sustainment approach through service redesign, partnership working and the development of predictive tools to identify risk earlier. The objective remains to reduce escalation into homelessness wherever possible, improve housing stability outcomes and ensure resources are directed where they are most needed.

5.5. Partnership Working with the Voluntary Sector and Council Services

- The Council works in partnership with a range of voluntary and community sector organisations to provide holistic support to households experiencing or at risk of homelessness. These partnerships are an important part of the borough's preventative approach, enabling residents to access practical assistance, advocacy and specialist support alongside statutory housing services.
- Voluntary sector partners provide a range of complementary services, including emergency food support, welfare advice, tenancy sustainment assistance, domestic abuse support, mental health signposting and community-based crisis intervention.
- Organisations such as local food banks, community hubs and specialist advice providers - including groups such as Sufra, Crisis and other borough-based charities - support residents facing financial hardship or housing instability, often acting as early touchpoints before a housing crisis escalates.
- Partnership working is managed through regular information sharing (within data protection frameworks), joint case discussions where appropriate, referral pathways and coordinated support planning. Officers maintain close working relationships with voluntary providers to ensure residents receive timely and joined-up assistance, particularly where households present with multiple or complex needs.
- In addition to voluntary sector collaboration, the teams within Housing Needs and Support work closely with other Council departments to deliver a coordinated response to homelessness. This includes partnership working with Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Public Health, Community Safety, Welfare Benefits and Family Wellbeing teams.
- Multi-agency engagement supports safeguarding, income stability, domestic abuse response, mental health interventions and family resilience, recognising that homelessness is often linked to wider social and economic pressures.
- This integrated approach ensures that housing interventions are supported by broader wraparound services, improving outcomes for families and reducing the likelihood of repeat homelessness. The Council continues to strengthen these partnerships to promote early intervention, coordinated case management and sustainable housing solutions.

5.6. Performance and Impact of the Single Homelessness Prevention Service (SHPS)

- SHPS continues to deliver integrated prevention and housing support following its relocation from full co-location at The Turning Point.

- Although the SHPS team is no longer permanently based within the same building, operational arrangements ensure close partnership working and accessibility remain in place.
- The SHPS base at Crisis Skylight is located within a five-minute walk of The Turning Point, enabling regular in-person collaboration between teams. A dedicated SHPS triage officer is based at The Turning Point three days per week, providing direct access to specialist advice and facilitating immediate referrals. For the remainder of the week, officers operate from Crisis Skylight while maintaining ongoing coordination with Housing Needs staff.
- This hybrid model supports consistent communication, joint case working and rapid escalation where required.
- Performance data demonstrates that the service continues to deliver strong outcomes under this operating model.
- Between August 2025 and January 2026, 347 referrals from the Single Homelessness service were accepted by SHPS, close to the performance target of 357. Variations in referral acceptance reflect case complexity, suitability criteria and prioritisation of households where targeted intervention is most effective.
- During the same period, 187 individuals were supported to secure accommodation, exceeding the target of 180.
- In addition, 163 tenancies were sustained, outperforming the target of 144.
- These outcomes indicate continued effectiveness in preventing repeat homelessness and stabilising housing situations for single residents.
- Operational performance is reviewed through monthly monitoring meetings focused on case outcomes, referral pathways and service pressures.
- Strategic oversight is maintained through bi-monthly partnership meetings to ensure delivery remains aligned with borough priorities and emerging challenges are addressed collaboratively.
- Overall, the current delivery model demonstrates that proximity, embedded triage support and structured governance arrangements continue to enable effective partnership working and positive resident outcomes, despite the change in physical co-location.

6. Supported Exempt Accommodation

6.1. Introduction

- 6.1.1. The National Audit Office notes that “Supported housing is accommodation that is provided alongside support, supervision or care to help people with

specific needs to live as independently as possible in the community. This includes, for example, older people, people with a learning disability, people with a physical disability, people at risk of or who have experienced homelessness, or people recovering from drug or alcohol dependence. Supported housing can be short term or long-term, depending on a person's needs."³

- 6.1.2. Supported exempt accommodation is so called because it is exempt from locally set caps on housing benefit. Legally, SEA is:

*Accommodation which is provided by a non-metropolitan county council in England, a Housing Association, a registered charity or voluntary organisation where that body or a person acting on its behalf also provides the claimant with care, support or supervision.*⁴

6.2. Key updates

- 6.2.1. Brent Council commissioned Bridges Outcomes Partnerships to review its provision of Housing Related Support Services. This review identified a number of opportunities for improvement, and Brent Council is going out to tender for a design partner to support the council to commission new outcomes based contracts for these services.
- 6.2.2. While subsidy loss in 24/25 was circa £4m, the most recent forecast for 2025/26 estimates subsidy loss at circa £2m.
- 6.2.3. The Council has approved a scheme to work in partnership with First Wave Housing, who will launch a new supported accommodation scheme. Its goal is to develop a model of supported housing that puts quality and value at the centre, while also being financially sound and sustainable. This scheme hopes to offer supported accommodation to over 300 residents by 2028, including at least 150 new units, while achieving around £2m cost reduction by 2028/29.
- 6.2.4. The Council has been preparing rigorously for the new supported housing licensing scheme, submitting its response to the Government consultation in Spring 2025. The introduction of this licensing scheme, which should allow the introduction of a dedicated inspections team, has been delayed by central Government.
- 6.2.5. Brent Council will be required by Government to develop a Local Supported Housing Strategy laying out our strategic direction and delivery plan. To underpin this, the Council must assess the current availability of all types of supported housing, and project the likely need and availability over the next 5 years.

³ [Investigation into supported housing - NAO report](#), p.4

⁴ [The Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit \(Consequential Provisions\) Regulations 2006](#), Schedule 3

6.3. Service mapping

- 6.3.1. There are currently 1123 units of supported housing in Brent, supporting residents with a variety of needs, especially those at risk of or with experience of homelessness, including rough sleeping, as well as domestic abuse, mental health and substance misuse. There are also some specialist units for care experienced young people and residents with physical disabilities and learning disabilities.
- 6.3.2. At present, 352 individuals are claiming housing benefit for supported exempt accommodation operated by providers that are not registered with the Regulator of Social Housing. 771 are with Registered Providers.
- 6.3.3. Supported housing provides a crucial intermediate step for residents between formal care and living independently, and between being homeless and living independently.
- 6.3.4. Supported housing is provided by a mixture of private providers, social housing providers and voluntary sector organisations. About half of units are commissioned and the other half are not.
- 6.3.5. Data on specific providers has been included in an exempt report at Appendix 1 to maintain commercial confidentiality. Overall, there are 30 Registered Social Landlords and 22 private landlords providing supported exempt accommodation in Brent at present. Overall, this represents a healthy level of diversity in the sector, building in resilience. The largest Registered Social Landlord operates 111 units, and the smallest operate just 1 or 2 units. The largest private landlord operates around 75 units, and the smallest just 1 or 2 again.

6.3.6. Housing Related Support Services

- 6.3.6.1. Brent commissions accommodation and support for adults experiencing homelessness and ex-offenders, domestic abuse refuges, mental health support, and young people (18-24). They play a critical role in preventing homelessness, supporting vulnerable residents to live independently, and in reducing reliance on statutory interventions in health, housing and social care.
- 6.3.6.2. There are 379 units of housing related support services at present, in addition to a floating support service and a handyman and support service. In 2021, the total cost of these services was £5m. The providers are
- 6.3.6.3. Adult Social Care and Housing Needs and Support jointly commissioned a review of Housing Related Support Services by Bridges Outcomes Partnerships to evaluate the performance, relevance, and future direction of existing housing-related support services. The review found that while current services deliver

substantial support to key population groups, including people experiencing homelessness, women fleeing domestic abuse, young people, and older adults, there are also several systemic challenges which undermine their effectiveness. These include a limited quantity of move-on accommodation, rigid eligibility criteria, a lack of integrated pathways, and minimal collaboration across sectors.

6.3.7. Gap analysis

6.3.7.1. Brent Council will be required to develop a supported housing strategy and underpinning needs assessment in 2026. This will provide a full gap analysis. However, preliminary findings are:

- Most providers want to provide support to residents with low level support needs. Some of these providers offer low-quality support for residents and likely represent poor value for money.
- The Council anticipates growing need associated with residents experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness, and the detrimental impact related to those experiences.
- There aren't enough properties modified for residents with mobility requirements.
- There aren't enough mother-and-baby units.
- There are insufficient male only self-contained schemes for former offenders or residents on the sex register.
- There is a gap for high needs residents, including more complex cases that don't meet the threshold for social care packages.
- One area the council wishes to explore is whether whole families may require supported accommodation, as the effects of the homelessness crisis and Covid continue to affect them.

6.4. Quality assurance and safeguarding

6.4.1. SEA

6.4.1.1. Staff are aware of challenges at the national level around the quality of non-commissioned supported exempt accommodation. For that reason, staff engaged directly with 6 of the council's largest non-commissioned providers in summer 2025 to understand their approach, considering their operational arrangements, safeguarding arrangements, and their approach to rent levels, evictions, and move ons. This informed the council's approach to market shaping. Since then, staff have worked to expand provision for the best quality providers and to secure its use for Brent households most in need. Meanwhile, staff have worked with lower quality providers to monitor improvements and, for the lowest quality providers, to slowly phase out their provision.

6.4.1.2. In addition, housing benefits staff closely monitor every single SEA housing benefit application, asking for evidence of a needs assessment and support plan, and ongoing support logs. Applications are regularly turned down or cancelled due to inability to evidence the above.

- 6.4.1.3. Staff are aware that one provider, where staff have some concerns, plan to stop operating in Brent and will safely transfer their stock and residents to another provider. The Council is working closely to support and enable this process.
- 6.4.1.4. Staff conducted a thorough site visit to two properties inspected by one provider, including speaking to staff and to residents. In that case, staff were impressed by the overall quality of the properties, support, management, and impact on residents' lives. Staff hope to continue operating site visits where possible.
- 6.4.1.5. Staff do not operate a structured inspection or resident feedback regime at present. As the council's role is primarily to consider housing benefit applications, historically the council did not take a role in quality assurance, but more recently have begun to do so. The Council is committed to introducing an inspection regime once the Government's new licensing scheme is introduced, and are exploring whether it is possible to do so beforehand.

6.4.2. Safeguarding and escalation

- 6.4.2.1. Staff in Housing Needs and Housing Benefit are working closely with the Brent Adults Safeguarding Board (BASB) to introduce a new reporting process for providers of supported housing for major incidents. This has been communicated to all providers of supported housing in Brent.
- 6.4.2.2. The safeguarding process is as follows: first, the provider must notify BSAF promptly and document the incident. Providers must have an assigned person for this purpose. Second, the provider must gather all relevant details to complete a Council form for record-keeping. Third, the provider must conduct an internal review, address key questions, and identify lessons learned. Fourth, they must submit to Brent council. And fifth, they must commit to continuous improvement. BSAB will meet to discuss any incidents and lessons learned.

6.4.3. Licensing scheme

- 6.4.3.1. In Spring 2025, the Government consulted on a new licensing scheme for supported accommodation. Critically, providers will only be able to claim the higher level of housing benefit that supported exempt accommodation offers if the scheme is licensed. The scheme will apply to all supported accommodation except Ofsted regulated supported housing and potential providers will need to meet the new National Supported Housing Standards and conditions related to the standard of accommodation, the suitability of the accommodation and support for the resident, and the provision of care, support and supervision. All licensees will also be required to pass a fit and proper person test.

- 6.4.3.2. This will provide the council significantly greater powers to regulate the provision of SEA, which staff welcome. Council staff have prepared extensively for the introduction of the new licensing scheme, bringing together a multi-disciplinary group to learn about the existing market and identify the approach to standing up a new team. However, the Government has pushed back the introduction of the new licensing scheme, which the Council is awaiting with anticipation.

6.5. Resident Experience

6.5.1. Housing Related Support Services

- 6.5.1.1. This section outlines findings from Bridges Outcomes Partnerships' review into housing related support services, who conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with service users to understand lived experience.

- 6.5.1.2. Many individuals value the support and dedication of frontline workers. However, people also report feelings of isolation, slow progress in their lives, and limited support in preparing for life beyond the service. A lack of coordinated exit planning often leaves people unsure about what comes next. Key concerns include clarity about what to expect, how long they might stay, intended outcomes, and how they will be supported to progress. From the point of entry, clients are not always given clear information about what to expect from a service, including how long they might stay, what the intended outcomes are, or how the service will support them to progress toward stable housing and greater independence. While they received ad hoc support, this was not brought together to form a coherent pathway to independence. Further, this support could feel fragmented and lacked follow-up e.g. receiving CV-writing workshops but no further support for job applications, interview preparation, or sustaining employment. Other concerns were around slow timescales for void turnarounds and high levels of arrears, preventing move on. Move on accommodation continues to present a challenge in the current housing context, especially for mental health provision.

- 6.5.1.3. Overall, some people remain in services longer than necessary not because of needs but due to lack of options or practical move-on support. Nonetheless, many individuals described positive working relationships with support workers, citing kindness, reliability, and emotional support.

6.5.2. Feedback from residents in SEA

- 6.5.2.1. In Autumn 2025, staff visited two properties in the borough currently providing non-commissioned supported exempt accommodation, mostly to residents fleeing domestic abuse/fear of violence and refugees with mental health needs. In addition, staff invited various residents currently residing in SEA to come into Brent Civic Centre to talk to their experience.
- 6.5.2.2. Overall, staff heard detailed and open testimony from three residents. 2 of 3 stated that they received no support at all in their current supported accommodation. Those residents had been residing in SEA for 5 years and 10 years respectively with two large providers. 1 stated that provision of a weekly support worker for a year, alongside a limited number of therapy sessions, 'changed my life'. That resident was able to move into independent living alongside a career lecturing at a London university within one year. 1 resident was living in fear of violence and would benefit from being housed elsewhere, away from (alleged) use of drugs and alcohol and potentially in a women's only scheme.
- 6.5.2.3. Residents highlighted the kind of support they would benefit from:
- Structured weekly 1:1 sessions with a support worker
 - Tailored benefits support
 - Tailored employment support
 - Support to find move-on / independent accommodation
 - Group activities and opportunities to meet others and connect with community
 - Psychological therapy
- 6.5.2.4. Many of these findings complement findings from engagement with residents receiving Housing Related Support Services, as outlined above.

6.6. Financial Analysis

- 6.6.1. The National Audit Office explains: "Local authorities pay Housing Benefit for specified supported housing, in most cases, directly to the provider. DWP reimburses local authorities for these payments in line with the Housing Benefit subsidy rules which are set out in legislation. In some cases, the rules mean that the amount of subsidy paid to the local authority may be restricted. If the housing provider is registered with the Regulator of Social Housing, DWP reimburses the full amount." For those cases where the housing provider is not registered, an independent rent officer determines how much the local authority can claim as rent, based on similar properties in the area. The local authority can reclaim 100% of the rent officer determination from DWP. Who pays for the amount above the rent officer determination depends

on the vulnerability of the resident. The NAO explains: “If the resident is classed as ‘vulnerable’, the local authority can claim a further 60% of the amount above the rent officer determination. Therefore, local authorities experience a gap in subsidy from DWP of 40% above rent officer determination for particular vulnerable groups, and 100% above this determination, for other residents.”

6.6.2. If the provider is a Registered Provider, the entire cost falls to the DWP. If the provider is not a Registered Provider, the cost is shared between the council and the DWP, with the DWP covering more if the resident has a vulnerability.

6.6.3. While subsidy loss in 24/25 was circa £4m, the most recent forecast for 2025/26 estimates subsidy loss at *circa* £2m. This has been achieved through a combination of interventions:

- An improved process for assessing cases, ensuring that the resident has genuine support needs and the provider is capable of meeting them. This has reduced the number of new entries.
- Identifying ‘vulnerable residents’ e.g. those in receipt of Personal Independence Payment (PIP), and therefore claiming a further 60% of costs from DWP (see above).
- Improved scrutiny of new providers. Bearing in mind national trends and concerns, officers have conducted significantly greater scrutiny of new providers approaching the council, especially Community Interest Companies (CICs), which are associated with concerns at the national level. By preventing unscrupulous providers entering the market, we have avoided the additional demand they can bring, including residents from outside of Brent.

6.6.4. Staff continue to work to embed this improvement sustainably and to go further. They will do this by:

- Working with providers to enable a partnership model, whereby support providers work in partnership with Registered Providers.
- Work in partnership with First Wave Housing to introduce a new supported exempt accommodation scheme which delivers cost reductions, improved quality and better value for money.

Staff aim to further reduce the annual cost from £2.1m to ~£1.5m in 2026-27 through this approach.

6.6.5. Overall, staff believe more can be done to improve value for money. That is why the council is working in partnership with First Wave Housing to launch a supported accommodation scheme. It is also why we will continue to work

with providers to drive up quality, support good providers to expand, manage out poor providers where necessary, prepare for the new Supported Housing Regulatory Oversight Act and associated licensing scheme, and develop a new Local Supported Housing Strategy.

6.7. Benchmarking

- 6.7.1. It is extremely challenging to benchmark for supported exempt accommodation. This is because local authorities do not have a statutory role to commission or deliver SEA, only to decide whether a provider may access a particular category of housing benefit. Consequently, this is not something that local authorities are required to report on nor that is published by MHCLG, Local Government Inform, or other platforms. At the same time, most authorities do not wish to share the level of provision, and associated cost, in their borough.
- 6.7.2. Brent Council meets regularly with other local authorities to discuss approaches to supported exempt accommodation. This includes methods to reduce subsidy loss, the provider market and partnership arrangements. This includes engaging with sub-regional, regional and national groups working across Housing Benefits, Project Delivery, and Housing Needs and Support. The council has continuously implemented best practice and ideas generated from this engagement, and now often advises and supports other authorities.

7. Financial Considerations

- 7.1. Full financial comments on the homelessness and temporary accommodation are provided at 4.9.

Financial considerations - Supported exempt accommodation (SEA)

- 7.2. Under current arrangements, if the SEA provider is not a registered provider, the Council experiences a gap in housing benefits subsidy received from DWP of 40% above rent officer determination for particular vulnerable groups, and 100% above this determination for other residents. This gap needs to be covered by the Council. Housing Benefit subsidy loss associated with SEA in 2024/25 was £3.95m, linked to 654 placements. In 2024/25, this was funded from council reserves. In 2025/26, this subsidy loss is estimated to be between £1.8m and £2.1m.
- 7.3. It is estimated that the Council could achieve £2.2m in cost avoidance over three years by diverting clients and sending referrals for Supported Accommodation from Temporary Accommodation, Adult Social Care and Children's Social Care directly to FWH. Whilst this would not represent

cashable savings against the existing budgets, it is forecast that the proposals set out in this paper would help to avoid costs in the future that the Council would have otherwise had to incur to deal with demand, increasing costs and the existing subsidy gap within this area.

8. Legal Considerations

- 8.1. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (HRA 2017) places a duty on Local Authorities to intervene at an early stage to help prevent homelessness and take reasonable steps to relieve homelessness for all eligible applicants, not just those in priority need.
- 8.2. When a homelessness application is taken under the relief duty, under s.189B of the Housing Act 1996, as amended (the 1996 Act), introduced by HRA 2017, if a local authority have reason to believe that an applicant may be homeless, eligible for assistance and have a priority need, pursuant to s.188 of the 1996 Act, they have a mandatory duty to secure that accommodation is available for the applicant's occupation, irrespective of intentional homelessness. The Council do this through the provision of emergency temporary accommodation.
- 8.3. After 56 days, upon the completion of the local authority enquiries, if it is established that the applicant is homeless, in priority need and not homeless intentionally, the local authority has an immediate and non-delegable duty to secure that applicant and their household suitable accommodation: s193(2).
- 8.4. The Council can fulfil this duty on an interim basis through the continued provision of temporary accommodation pending a final offer of private rented sector accommodation or social housing. The suitability of accommodation is governed by s.210 of the 1996 Act, the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 1996 (SI 1996/3204) and by the Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities.
- 8.5. When discharging their housing duties under Part VII, an authority must, so far as reasonably practicable, secure that accommodation, be it temporary or permanent, is available for the applicant's occupation in their own district: s208(1) of the 1996 Act. If the Council is unable to comply with its mandatory accommodation duties either through the provision or suitability of such accommodation, then it is significant risk of successful judicial review challenges which are likely to have significant cost consequences to the Council.
- 8.6. The Supreme Court in *Nzolameso v Westminster City Council* 2015 addressed accommodation procurement and placements strategy. It sets out

a range of issues that councils need to consider when allocating temporary accommodation to homeless households and makes certain requirements of the councils. These include:

- A requirement that local authorities need to explain their decisions as to the location of the properties offered.
 - Each local authority should have, and keep up to date, a policy for allocating temporary accommodation to homeless households.
 - The policy should reflect the authority's statutory obligations under both the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) and the Children's Act 2004.
 - Where there is an anticipated shortfall of accommodation in the borough, the policy should explain the factors to be considered when making decisions on where a household is placed.
 - The Supreme Court also proposed that each local authority should have a policy for procuring sufficient units of temporary accommodation to meet anticipated demand for the coming year.
- 8.7. The non-commissioned Supported Exempt Accommodation sector is regulated through the Regulator for Social Housing and Charities Commission. Other regulatory bodies involved may include The Financial Conduct Authority; and the Office of the Regulator of Community Interest Companies if the provider has been established as a CIC. The provision is predominantly paid for through Housing Benefit claims in line with Housing Benefit Regulations. It is widely understood that the legal framework is insufficient to ensure appropriate quality and oversight of this type of provision.
- 8.8. The government undertook a national inquiry into Exempt Accommodation to determine future legislation requirements for the sector, and Birmingham City Council's Overview and Scrutiny report and Supported Housing Needs Assessment was included as evidence towards this in line with Scrutiny Recommendation.
- 8.9. The Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act 2023 became law on 29 August 2023. The Act looks to address the gap in regulation and includes: setting up a new national advisory group; national standards for accommodation and support; a licensing scheme for local authorities; an amendment to homelessness legislation preventing an intentionally homeless decision being made for someone leaving unsuitable supported exempt accommodation. The introduction of a new planning use-class for supported exempt accommodation has been deferred for 3 years.

9. Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 9.1. The Public Sector Equality Duty, as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have "due regard"

to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who have a “protected characteristic” and those who do not share that protected characteristic. The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. The council also internally recognises care experience and socio-economic status as protected characteristics.

- 9.2. Having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.
- 9.3. The data presented in this report demonstrates that homelessness in Brent disproportionately affects vulnerable residents with specific protected characteristics, including women experiencing domestic abuse (13.9% of households in TA), children and young people (around 3,660 children, or 42% of residents in TA), and socio-economically disadvantaged residents (37% of TA applicants are not in work). The council’s temporary accommodation and homelessness prevention services therefore play a critical role in addressing entrenched inequalities. The shift towards more stable leased accommodation, strengthened prevention work, and enhanced quality assurance in supported exempt accommodation directly benefits residents with the highest vulnerability, particularly large families, residents with disabilities, survivors of domestic abuse, and those with complex mental health needs, by improving safety, stability and outcomes.
- 9.4. The report also makes clear that structural drivers of homelessness, especially rising private sector rents, family breakdown, and the limited supply of social housing disproportionately impact socioeconomically disadvantaged households. Brent’s recent adoption of the socioeconomic duty means that socio-economic disadvantage is now systematically considered within decision-making and policy development. This is particularly relevant given that 36% of households currently enter temporary accommodation due to the end of a private rented sector tenancy and a further 18% due to family exclusions, both of which reflect the heightened vulnerability of low-income households within a constrained housing market. The council’s prevention work, including early intervention, targeted financial assistance, and tenancy sustainment support therefore play a key role in reducing these inequities.--economic duty means that socio-economic disadvantage is now

systematically considered within decision-making and policy development. This is particularly relevant given that 36% of households currently enter temporary accommodation due to the end of a private rented sector tenancy and a further 18% due to family exclusions, both of which reflect the heightened vulnerability of low-income households within a constrained housing market.

- 9.5. Consistent with the Public Sector Equality Duty, the council recognises that different groups require distinct forms of support. Insights from resident engagement, both from users of Housing Related Support Services and residents in supported exempt accommodation, highlight the need for clearer information, tailored support, and improved pathways to independence. The council's ongoing commissioning work, preparation for the new SEA licensing regime, and development of a Local Supported Housing Strategy will embed these needs into future service design. Continued improvements in data quality, particularly for protected characteristics such as disability, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, will further strengthen our ability to understand disparities, remove barriers, and codesign services with people who have lived experience of homelessness. design services with people who have lived experience of homelessness. The introduction of an inspection regime for supported exempt accommodation as afforded by the new licensing scheme will also have positive implications for residents with protected characteristics alongside quality assurance benefits, and is recommended from an EDI perspective.

10. Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 10.1. This report does not impact the Council's environmental objectives and climate emergency strategy.

Report sign off:

Tom Cattermole

Corporate Director, Resident and Housing Services