

	Cabinet 12 October 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director, Residents and Housing Services
	Lead Member – Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters (Councillor Robert Johnson)
Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2026 - 2031	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open
List of Appendices:	One Appendix 1: Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan
Background Papers:	None
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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Following the publishing of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2031, which was adopted by Cabinet in December 2025, the Council is required to produce an accompanying Action Plan. The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan 2026–2031 sets out how Brent Council will deliver the five commitments in its Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026–2031. It covers the Council's targets for improving performance against the

homelessness and rough sleeping metrics (including households with children in temporary accommodation, use of B&B accommodation, and rough sleeping), the actions and named owners for meeting those targets, arrangements for monitoring delivery, and the Council's approach to partnership working, temporary accommodation suitability, and long-term rough sleeping. Its aim is to prevent homelessness wherever possible, reduce the use and improve the quality of temporary accommodation, and work towards ending long-term rough sleeping in the borough.

- 1.2 This report sets out the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan (Appendix 1) and seeks Cabinet's sign off.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1. Cabinet is asked to approve and sign off the Action Plan for publication before 1 December 2026, subject to any changes arising from discussion at Cabinet.

3.0 Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1 Last year, Brent Council published its Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy outlining our ambitious plan to do more to tackle the homelessness crisis despite difficult headwinds. But strategy without action is meaningless. That's why I'm pleased that, less than a year later, I am able to present to you Brent's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan.
- 3.2 In that time, we have already been busy delivering meaningful change for residents. For example, between publishing the Strategy last December and this Action Plan, the Council has eliminated the use of accommodation for families with children where they have to share a kitchen or bathroom with other households. This Action Plan outlines our plan to do even more to address the homelessness crisis.
- 3.3 The homelessness crisis is a crisis in many senses. It represents a financial crisis for the council. It represents a health crisis, exacerbating physical ill health and placing an enormous mental burden on residents. It is an educational crisis, disrupting children's education and making it harder for children to focus on nursery and school. It is an employment crisis, making it harder for many people to hold down or start a job. And it is a crisis of community, alienating people from their communities.
- 3.4 That's why we have published our action plan outlining the steps we will take to address this crisis. We know we cannot succeed alone, which is why we have outlined at length how we will work with over 15 partners to address both homelessness and rough sleeping. We have outlined monitoring arrangements, established robust governance procedures, and published strong, clear targets for the next year.
- 3.5 There are too many cases where something can and should have been done earlier – where homelessness was preventable. That's why we've set a bold target that we prevent homelessness for 42% of households who come to us at

risk of or experiencing homelessness – and even higher for those experiencing overlapping and deep-seated social, economic, and health challenges.

- 3.6 There are too many individuals sleeping rough on our streets, including some that are sleeping rough long-term. That's why we've set bold action, to ensure that there are half as many people rough sleeping, especially long-term rough sleeping, by December 2027.
- 3.7 We know there are too many children growing up in temporary accommodation. That's why we're taking action to continue to ensure that no children grow up in accommodation with shared toilets or kitchens – and to slow the increasing numbers of children living in temporary accommodation.
- 3.8 There are too many cases that return to homelessness after finding a home. That's why we've set a goal that most single people (75%) and refugees (70%) engaging with our Single Homelessness Prevention Service maintain their tenancies for at least 12 months.
- 3.9 I'm proud we're setting such bold targets for such an important set of issues. By doing this, we will be able to provide a good, stable home for more residents, improving their wellbeing. Not only will this drive substantial cost reduction for the council – our Action Plan will mean improved wellbeing for more residents, improving their educational inclusion, employment opportunities, physical health, mental wellbeing and connection to their community.
- 3.10 The Strategy closely aligns with four of the five overarching themes set out in the Borough Plan, reflecting how fundamental suitable housing is to every individual's ability to thrive:
- *Prosperity and stability in Brent*
 - *Thriving communities*
 - *A healthier Brent*
 - *The Best Start in Life*
- 3.11 The Borough Plan also sets out several housing specific aims, which are also reflected in the draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan:
- *More council homes and temporary accommodation provided by the Council.*
 - *More genuinely affordable and accessible homes available for families and residents.*
 - *Achieving the 'functional built to zero' definition, which means there are fewer people moving into rough sleeping than there are being supported out of it.*
 - *More people supported to live in their own home*
- 3.12 Preventing Homelessness programme: the Action Plan and Strategy closely align with the Council's Preventing Homelessness Programme, a strategic, cross-council programme of work focused on: improving the Council's Housing

Needs & Support Department; preventing homelessness; and reducing the use and cost, and improving the quality, of temporary accommodation.

4.0 Detail

Draft Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan

- 4.1 The draft Action Plan (Appendix 1) has been developed to deliver the five commitments set out in the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026–2031, in line with the MHCLG Homelessness Code of Guidance. It covers the same five-year period as the Strategy. The Action Plan has been developed by identifying key challenges and opportunities to overcome them with staff across the Department and wider partners, building on existing work the Department is doing as well as the Preventing Homelessness Change Programme. An early draft has been shared with MHCLG, who were overall very pleased with the content and made some suggestions for minor comments, which have since been incorporated.
- 4.2 The Action Plan is structured around Brent's performance against the homelessness and rough sleeping metrics in the government's Outcomes Framework for Local Government, setting out, for each metric: the Council's current position and target, actions the Council will undertake to meet those targets and named responsible owners for each action, and how delivery will be governed.
- 4.3 The Homelessness Code of Guidance requires that the Action Plan be formally signed off by Cabinet before adoption.
- 4.4 Headline positions and actions include:
 - Households with children in temporary accommodation: current position of 972 (Stage 1) / 725 (Stage 2), equivalent to 13.9 households with children in TA per 1,000 Brent households. Action includes continuing the “Find a Place You Can Afford” initiative, quarterly Temporary Accommodation Forums prioritising the longest-staying families, to maintain momentum on move-ons. Building private rented sector supply through the Landlord Forum, and new 10-year+1 leased accommodation. Although this is not going to reduce the number of households with children in TA, it will improve the quality and reduce the cost of the TA they are living in, which has been endorsed by MHCLG.
 - B&B use over six weeks: Brent currently has 0 families in B&B or shared accommodation over six weeks. The Council maintains a strong commitment to continuing to achieve this, in line with the law. As the Council is not required to produce a B&B elimination plan, the Action Plan instead sets out the steps that will be taken to maintain this position, including six-week rule tracking as part of standard case management, an escalation process for cases at risk of breach, and a dedicated lead officer.

- Rough sleeping: the single-night figure was 55 (July 2026), with 33 people seen sleeping rough over the month, of whom 32 (40%) were sleeping rough long-term. The Council's Long-Term Rough Sleeping Partnership Plan commits to reaching a functional zero position for long-term rough sleeping by 2031, working within the Built for Zero framework alongside Crisis and other local partners. A Target Priority Group of 28 people (as at May 2026) is being prioritised for intensive, multi-agency support.
- Preventing homelessness: the Preventing Homelessness Delivery Group will lead a test, learn and grow approach to prevention, including a frontline training programme covering affordability assessments and welfare advice, a coordinated pathway for households with complex needs, and improved supported accommodation provision for residents experiencing multiple disadvantage.

4.5 The Action Plan sets out Brent's partnership arrangements in detail, covering both prevention-focused partners and accommodation/support providers. The key partners, and the cohorts each supports, are summarised below.

Partner Organisation	Prevention Role	Cohort
Crisis	Direct homelessness prevention services and support for Brent's Built for Zero programme.	Rough sleeping; long-term rough sleepers
SHPS	Supported accommodation and floating support to sustain tenancies and avoid repeat homelessness.	Single homelessness; multiple disadvantage
Beam	Support into employment for households moving on from TA/homelessness.	General prevention; move-on from TA
NHS NW London (hospital discharge)	Joint discharge protocol and named housing link worker for complex cases.	People leaving hospital; multiple disadvantage
HM Probation Service	Pre-release housing assessments and referral pathway for those leaving custody/on probation.	People leaving prison; criminal justice
Via (Substance Misuse)	Joint working bridging public health and homelessness services.	Substance misuse; multiple disadvantage
Brent Children's Social Care / Leaving Care Team	Joint pathway and housing plans for care leavers before age 18.	Young people leaving care

NHS Brent Integrated Care Board	Strategic partner on health/housing interface; shared data and multi-agency risk panels.	Multiple disadvantage; mental health
Home Office / Asylum Support	Prevents destitution for asylum claimants and NRPF households.	Asylum seekers; NRPF households
Veterans Support Organisations	Single point of contact for veterans at risk of homelessness.	Veterans
DWP	Co-located adviser; benefit maximisation and income stabilisation.	General prevention; households in TA
MAPPA / MARAC	Joined-up housing response for high-risk individuals.	Domestic abuse; criminal justice
IDVA	Fast-track referral into housing options and safety planning.	Domestic abuse
Brent Homelessness Forum	Multi-agency forum for prevention planning and intelligence sharing.	Cross-cutting; all cohorts
Look Ahead, DePaul, Hestia (Commissioned HRS)	Supported accommodation for single homelessness, 16–25s, and complex/mental health needs.	Single homelessness; young people; complex needs
MAC (West London Partnership)	Move-on options, including out-of-London, for long-term rough sleepers.	Long-term rough sleeping
Hodge Jones & Allen Solicitors	Legal advice and representation to prevent homelessness through early intervention.	Legal prevention; PRS

- 4.6 The Action Plan also sets out the Council's temporary accommodation suitability policies, including the Council's Placement Policy framework; the Department's approach to pre-inspecting all potential new properties; an enhanced duty of suitability for families with children (including the Council's position on B&B use, public health drop-in surgeries at Anansi House and Knowles House, coordination with Early Years, and prioritisation of benefit-capped families for move-on).

5.0 Next Steps

- 5.1 Officers will ensure that the final version of the Action Plan is formally published on the Council's website before 1 December 2026.
- 5.2 Officers will monitor progress towards the action plan closely. The Brent Homelessness Forum will serve as the primary governance mechanism for

overseeing delivery of the Action Plan with external partners, community organisations and residents, meeting quarterly and chaired by Crisis. In addition, Housing Needs and Support's senior management team will be accountable for delivering and monitoring the Action Plan, and progress will also be monitored by the Preventing Homelessness Programme Steering Group. Regular updates will also be provided to the Lead Member for Housing, Homelessness and Renters, Cabinet, and the Council Management Team as required.

6.0 Financial Considerations

- 6.1 The Housing Needs and Support budget overspent by £11.7m in 2025/26 and £15.3m in 2024/25 due to exceptionally high demand for the service and a shortage of affordable Private Rented Sector (PRS) accommodation. Notwithstanding the £8m growth allocation included within the 2026/27 budget, the service is forecast to overspend by £9.5m this year, assuming current levels of demand and monthly net expenditure continue throughout the year.
- 6.2 There will be a number of interventions and projects focusing on increasing the supply and decreasing costs that will be set out in the Action Plan. 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.
- 6.3 There are no direct financial implications arising from the development of this action plan.

7.0 Legal Considerations

- 7.1 The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's Homelessness Code of Guidance states that an effective action plan should be developed to ensure that the objectives set out in the homelessness strategy are achieved. The Action Plan should be published by 1 December 2026.
- 7.2 Under Section 1(4) of the Homelessness Act 2002, it is a legal requirement for the Council to review, formulate, consult on and publish a homelessness strategy every five years or the local authority can choose to do this more frequently if circumstances in the district have changed. Section 1(5) requires the local housing authority to take their homelessness strategy into account in the exercise of their functions. The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's Homelessness Code of Guidance states that an effective action plan should be developed to ensure that the objectives set out in the homelessness strategy are achieved. 9.3 The amended Homelessness Code of Guidance published in February 2018 (updated July 2025) under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 states that additional duties introduced through the 2017 Act should be incorporated into a local authority's homelessness strategy including the involvement of all relevant partners for earlier identification and intervention to prevent homelessness and establishing

effective partnerships and working arrangements with agencies to facilitate appropriate duty to refer referrals.

8.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 8.1 An Equalities Assessment has been completed for the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan.

9.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 9.1 None.

10.0 Communication Considerations

- 10.1 The Action Plan has already been shared with MHCLG and has since been modified following their consultation feedback; MCHLG were very complimentary about the draft Action Plan.

Report sign off:

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