

Cabinet

Tuesday 17 June 2025

11.00 am

Walworth Living Room, All Saints Hall, Surrey Square, London SE17
2JU

Appendices – Part 1

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| 8. | Southwark's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030 - Formal consultation review and suggested amendments to final draft Appendices 1 – 5. | 1 - 112 |

Contact

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Date: 9 June 2025

Homelessness & Rough Sleeping strategy feedback summary:

Outline:

Southwark held its formal consultation period between Monday 2nd September and Sunday 8th December 2024. Over this period and slightly beyond, the following engagement activities were undertaken:

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| 2 nd September | Our online survey was launched on Southwark's Consultation Hub. |
| 4 th September | Draft was presented at Southwark's Homelessness Forum. |
| 10 th September | Draft was presented at the Central East Local Housing Forum. |
| 2 nd October | Draft was presented to housing staff in service wide meeting. |
| 3 rd October | Draft was presented at the North West Local Housing Forum. |
| 24 th October | Draft was presented at the Private Renters Forum. |
| 30 th October | Draft was presented at the Social Prescribers Liaison Forum. |
| 5 th November | Second presentation at Southwark's Homelessness Forum. |
| 5 th November | Single Homeless Focus Group session held. |
| 7 th November | Homeless Families Focus Group session held. |
| 7 th November | Draft presented at the Southwark Faith Leaders Network. |
| 12 th November | TA Households Focus Group session held. |
| 28 th November | Draft presented at the Southwark Advice Forum. |
| 3 rd December | Female supported hostel resident focus group session held. |
| 10 th December | Mixed supported hostel resident focus group session held. |

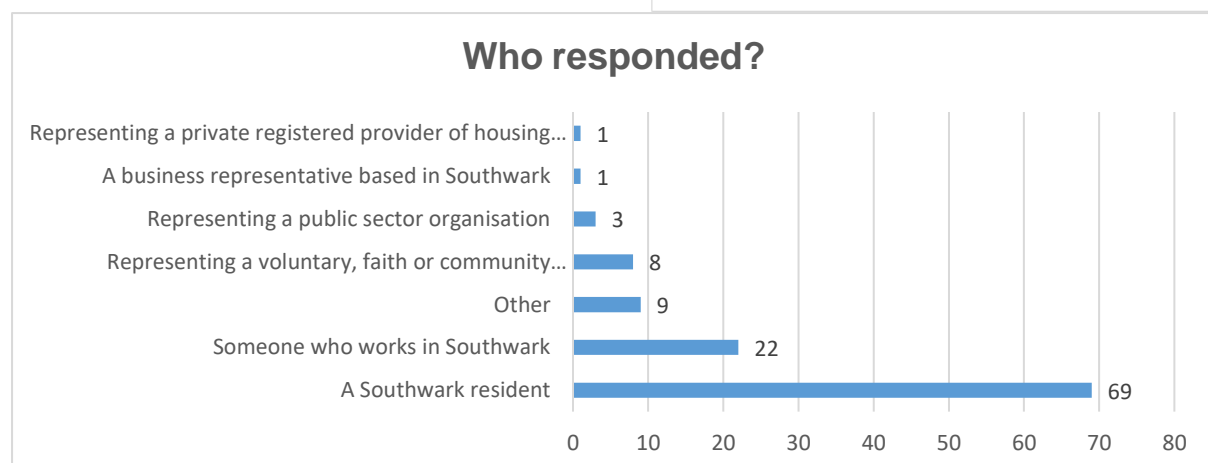
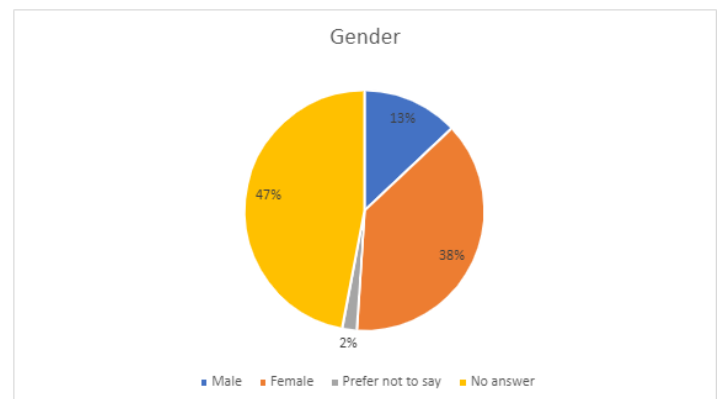
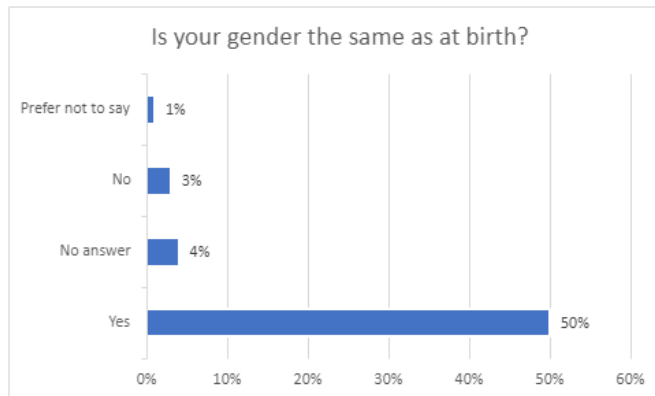
In addition to the in person and online engagement activities, Southwark's Communications service supported the consultation with the following pieces of digital and print information for residents and partner organisations:

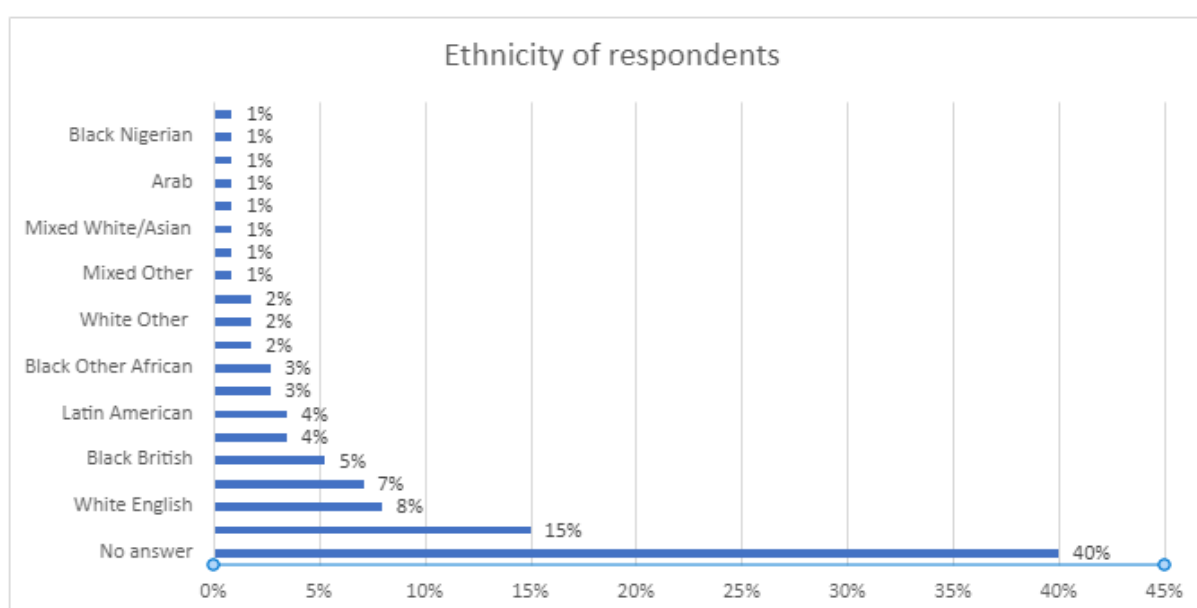
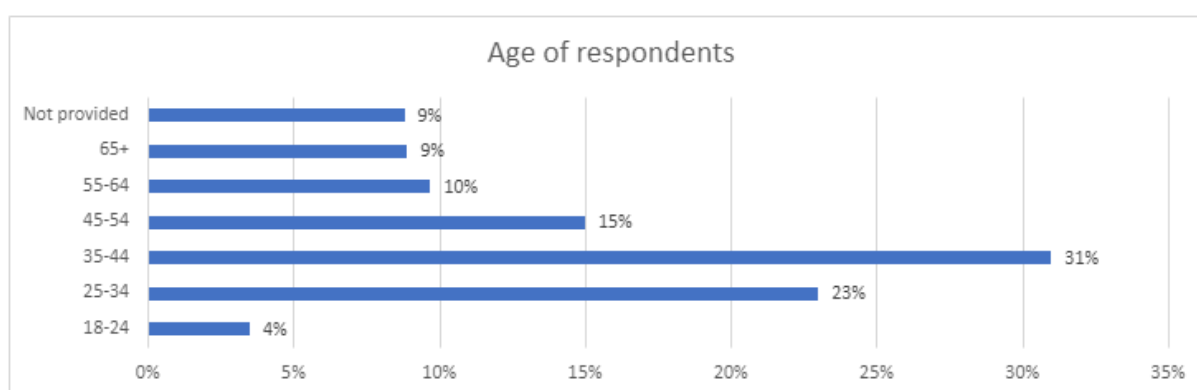
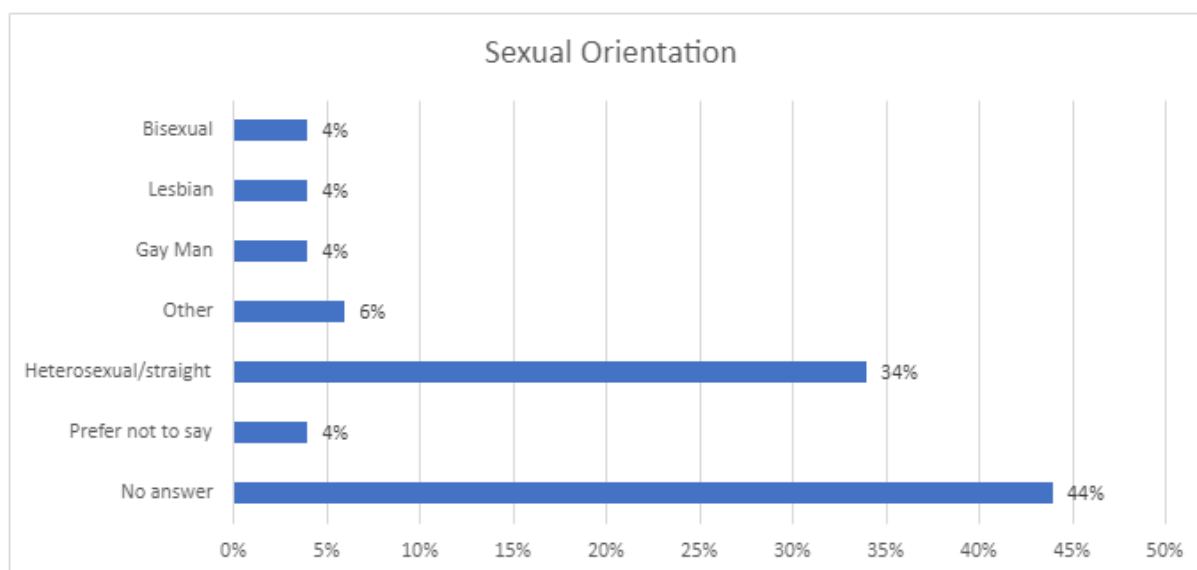
- *Southwark Life magazine* – The consultation was promoted in the [Summer 2024 issue](#) (page 4)
- *Business e-newsletter* – sent in October 2024
- *Althea's Blog* – sent to staff on 15/10/2024 (attached)
- *Estate newsletters* – Tustin (SE15), Aylesbury (SE17), Marie Curie (SE5) and Ledbury (SE15) published in October 2024.
- *Resident E-newsletter* – regular features on '[Tell us how we can better help people who are homeless](#)' sent 14 November 2024.
- *Social media* – regular posts on our Facebook and WhatsApp channel and Instagram stories for homelessness consultation – 18 November 2024.
- *Press release* - [How can we better help people who are homeless?](#) (2 October 2024) – aimed at practitioners e.g. Big Issue, Crisis, Shelter, Centre Point, Manna Centre etc.

The service was grateful to have received 113 responses to its online survey as well as wider feedback from our partners and staff in the development of our final draft.

The following data has been compiled from our survey responses and thereafter, substantive responses from Public Health, Southwark Law Centre and our rough sleeper outreach commissioned partner St Mungo's.

Demographics of respondents:





Other key take aways of demographics:

- 30% of respondents reported a disability:
 - 10% reported a mental health issue.
 - 7% physical health condition
 - 7% Long term health condition
 - 4% Learning disability
 - 3% Hearing/vision issue
- One respondent shared their experience in Spanish indicating that non-native English speakers are part of the demographic.
- Employment and Income: A respondent mentioned having a job and making a salary of 35k but still facing housing instability. Another mentioned being a student and unable to work.
- **Do you know who to contact if you need help with housing issues?**
 - 64% of respondents said 'Yes'
- **Do you have experience of homelessness or rough sleeping?**
 - 29% responded 'Yes', of which 53% said they experienced homelessness over 5 years ago.
- **Have you needed help with your housing issues and struggled to get advice and support?**
 - 36% responded 'Yes'
- **If you have accessed support, which service did you contact?**

Probation

Homeless charity

HASL

Generic council phone line

Various, including a solicitor with legal aid.

Homeless line via telephone and e-mail.

We spoke to an advisor at the Southwark Council base in Bournemouth Road

- **If needed who would you most likely approach to get housing advice, personally or on behalf of someone you know?**
 - 22% - Southwark Housing Solutions.
 - 19% Citizens Advice Southwark.
 - 17% Shelter online.
 - 7% Other LBS service.
 - 6% Southwark Law Centre.
 - 4% Food bank.
 - 2% Job Centre Plus.

- 11% Other (friends/family/GP/HASL/Manna Centre)

Overall summary of feedback:

Feedback on the data and information provided in the draft:

- Page.13/14 – The 2022 JSNA is referenced in this section. The most recent data can be found in the 2024 [JSNA annual report](#)
- Page.18 – It mentions Solace has been co-located with the Housing Solutions service. Have we linked in with the VAWG transformation and the development of the new domestic abuse service?
- Page.22 – The table comparing number of support needs between Southwark and London is tricky to digest. Comparing percentages as it done in the last column is more helpful.
- Page.30 - “We must also ensure that we improve our understanding and data collection of marginalised groups such as those identifying as LGBTQ+” – it is unclear whether it is possible to collect this data and it needs to be done more comprehensively or whether there isn’t the option in current data collection forms and that needs to be added in? It would be helpful to clarify in an action what would help address this.
 - a) Data on LGBTQ+ and homelessness, from a soon to be published JSNA on the health and wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ people in Southwark.
- Page 35 - Average monthly figure is confusing as snapshot number has been used, the new CHAIN data is more reflective.

General feedback:

- No mention of traveller community in the draft
- At the beginning SST is mentioned, however, it doesn’t get mentioned again when talking about actions and priorities with vulnerable groups.
- Useful stats and information in the Autism and homelessness report.

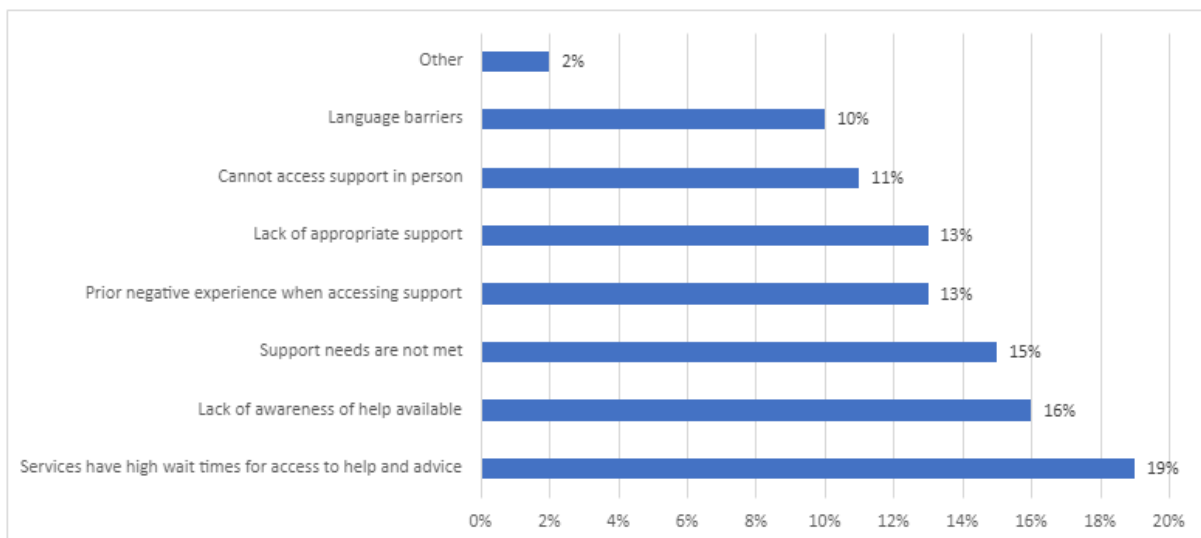
Positive experiences:

- Some respondents had positive experiences with legal services and solicitors who provided reliable advice.
- With SLC and legal aid services
- With Housing First specifically
- Food banks
- HASL
- Southwark Housing Temporary Accommodation team.

- Housing Needs – but noted that it can take a long time to get in touch with them/get a response.
- Cross-discipline work in the Rough Sleeping space is working well, leading to good outcomes and joint working.

Negative experiences & barriers to accessing help:

- **What do you think are the most important barriers or issues residents face with accessing council services early or other agency advice and support?**



- Some reported receiving no support or good service when reaching out to MPs or the noise team.
- A common theme is the lack of information and clarity about available resources and how to access them. Many felt that their individual circumstances, such as being a domestic abuse survivor or having specific personal needs, were not adequately considered by the authorities.
- With Housing Needs/LBS:
 - Several respondents reported negative experiences with council officers and housing departments, citing unresponsiveness unhelpful or rude staff and a lack of prioritisation in their cases. There were also instances where individuals felt discriminated against or that support was only available to certain groups.
- Lack of employment/affordability for properties offered and having to move out of area.
- Lack of affordable, secure and suitable housing were the most highly rated issues respondents felt contributed to homelessness.
- Language barriers not always being effectively dealt with through the use of translation and interpreting services.
- Some rough sleeping cases can fall through the gaps, e.g. those who are not eligible for help from Housing Needs.

- Hostel residents have reported insufficient support from hostel staff and also lack of progress in seeking more settled and permanent move on accommodation.

Areas to improve:

- **Lobbying:**
 - to improve access to affordable housing through increasing the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and benefit cap, and to take action around rent controls in the PRS.
- **Prevention work & extra support:**
 - Several respondents suggested that tailored support services before and after housing are crucial for addressing underlying issues such as addiction.
 - Additionally, some respondents emphasised the need for early recognition of credible risks of homelessness and immediate action to address them.
 - Others called for action against rogue landlords and estate agents and for the council to provide more support for everyone, not just those who meet certain criteria.
 - More tailored advice and assistance in PHPs to help prevent homeless and engage customers.
 - Reduce backlogs and delays in other areas such as waiting list application processing to prevent crisis situations needing homelessness interventions.
- **Improvement of Housing Stock:**
 - Southwark must take an active role in lobbying central government to improve the quality and security of private rented sector accommodation by better enforcement action against rogue landlords/agents
 - prevent unlawful evictions/harassment and more effective licensing of HMOs, and lobbying of central government to improve housing standards by ensuring that the council will have sufficient resources in place within the Housing Enforcement Service
 - Prioritise carrying out timely repairs to existing housing stock
- **Increase in housing supply:**
 - There were calls for the council to increase the stock of suitable housing and create bespoke pathways to other housing provisions.
 - Calls for improvement in offers of TA, including location and other suitability factors.

- This includes placements of high needs/complex residents with low support needs individuals leading to a deterioration on their health due to the added stress of sharing facilities etc.
- Proposal of the use of empty council properties to house the homeless.
- A particular focus ought to be given to children with any additional needs and educational needs, such as moving between nursery to reception or from primary to secondary in addition to exam years, and a commitment to maintaining current school places where possible with journey times remaining within the statutory guidance.
- **Improvement in Suitability**
 - Better communication between those sourcing accommodation and those referring residents for help to ensure appropriate housing is sourced in a timely manner.
- **Joint working improvement:**
 - A holistic approach needs to be taken by the council to ensure cohesion between all relevant departments including housing, welfare, enforcement, planning, and education.
 - Another common theme was the need for more collaboration between the council, charities, and voluntary organisations to provide a holistic approach to support those at risk.
 - There were calls for better signposting to relevant services, more street outreach teams.
 - There is scope to co-locate with the [health promotion van](#) at events.
 - Page.36 – Action 31: Could there be a similar action specific to supporting people living in TA? The partnerships / holistic package of support developed could be based on the Temporary Accommodation JSNA findings.
 - Expansion of homelessness forum membership could be to groups supporting those who have been identified as “high risk / vulnerable” e.g. LGBT+, asylum seekers etc
 - Focus groups found that many in TA do not change their GP or support locations despite being placed far away. Resettlement support with GPs in TA locations and NHS support from floating nurses/health workers to ensure those in TA are supported.
- **Training and customer service:**
 - Respondents suggested that more resources should be allocated to front-line customer service officers to answer calls and emails quickly and effectively.

- Respondents advocate for a more empathetic approach from council staff and services that are tailored to individual needs.
- Respondents also called for more education on housing rights under Part 7 & Part 6, asylum/refugee cases and those who are disclosing sensitive and traumatic information.
- Access to face-to-face appointments is needed, especially for disabled residents, vulnerable residents, those who have difficulty using the phone/internet including the elderly or street homeless & those in urgent need.
- Reasonable adjustments for those who do not speak English as their first language. This can include leaflets and information to be provided in a variety of languages.
- More openness of who is responsible for a given case with contact details and commitment to respond in a timely manner.
- Take advantage of the public health training offer including MECC & MHFA.
- **Rough sleeping targeted support:**
 - A commitment to increase bed spaces for rough sleepers.
 - Respondents ask for more emphasis on outreach work with other agencies that have the expertise on this cohort to help and achieve outcomes.
 - Commitment to ensuring specialisms in this field, e.g. outreach workers, cross-service outreach with NHS to be protected.
 - There is the long term need and the amount of work that goes on to keep a tenancy maintained and keep access to support services.
 - Supported housing – current provision has been cited as needed improvement, in terms of communication, access, transparency of reporting.
 - Action 29: To improve supported hostel access and move on for rough sleepers- please state how you will do this/milestones etc.
 - Training on Trauma-informed working and best practice.
 - Making reasonable adjustments for this cohort who may not be tech savvy and need extra support regarding TA placements etc.

Ratings of the Draft Priorities:

1. **Prioritising homelessness prevention** - using a data-led and joined up approach to prevent homelessness and sustain existing accommodation arrangements where possible:
 - a. **57% of people strongly agreed with this priority**
2. **Deliver high quality advice and support** - making sure high quality, tailored, trauma-informed, effective advice and support is delivered promptly to address the diverse needs of our residents.

- a. **70% of people strongly agreed with this priority**
- 3. **Work to end rough sleeping** - expanding Southwark's off the street provision for rough sleepers and those with complex needs, prioritising Housing First, and working with partners to address the causes of rough sleeping.
 - a. **67% of people strongly agreed with this priority**
- 4. **Quality outcomes through housing provision** - making best use of accommodation available that meets the needs of our residents, supports their health and wellbeing, and continue to drive up standards.
 - a. **58% of people strongly agreed with this priority**
- 5. **Tackling housing insecurity** - working with partners to address wider causes of housing insecurity including through advocacy, and empowering residents to make informed decisions in resolving their housing issues.
 - a. **55% of people strongly agreed with this priority**
 - b. **This priority had the highest of 'disagree' / 'strongly disagree' responses; totalling 8%**

Appendix 2 – Evaluation of feedback and proposed amendments

Evaluation of feedback and proposed amendments

Theme - Prevention and Support –

- 1. The importance of tailored support services before and after housing, particularly for issues like addiction.**

It is proposed this area of feedback is covered in our existing draft strategy at priority 4 Quality Outcomes Through Housing Provision

- *and high-level activity 34 (page 37) and action plan (page 27) – Improving access to and pathway through supported housing / Developing improved information exchange with our accommodation providers for access and move on.*

- 2. The need for early identification of homelessness risks and immediate action, as well as addressing rogue landlords and providing broader council support.**

It is proposed this area of feedback is covered in our existing draft strategy at priority 1 Prioritising Prevention (activities 4 – 6 on page 30 of the draft strategy and explored in more detail on pages 3-5 of the draft action plan) in using data and collaborating with enforcement teams.

This area is also covered in our existing draft strategy at Priority 2 Deliver High Quality Advice and Support (activities 19 – 21 on page 32 of the draft strategy and explored in more detail on pages 13-15 of the draft action plan) with enhancing the use and legal recourse for rogue landlord criminal offences.

- 3. More personalized advice in PHPs and reducing backlogs in areas like application processing to prevent crisis situations.**

It is proposed that whilst our existing draft strategy seeks to improve the handling of homelessness casework at Priority 2 Deliver High Quality Advice and Support (page 32 of the draft strategy and activity 11 at page 8 of the action plan) the actions that flow from this do not detail minimising casework delays or personalising PHPs which are important outcomes to make explicit. Therefore suggested amendments to the action plan are as follows:

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- To ensure staff receive regular training and development around effective casework and that referrals under s198 to other Authorities wherever relevant are made promptly and accurately so that delays in assessments are minimised. (Page 8 of draft action plan.)
- To ensure personalised housing plans are tailored to the needs of residents through regular casework audits, caseload reviews with senior management and advice and guidance through caseworker monthly meetings (new action at Page 9 of the draft action plan.)

Theme - Improvement of Housing Stock –

- 4. Lobbying central Government to improve private rental housing quality and security by enforcing stricter actions against rogue landlords, preventing unlawful evictions, and ensuring better licensing of HMOs.**

It is proposed that the draft strategy and action plan do contain commitments to lobby central Government to improve the PRS and to implement the Renters Rights Bill at Priority 5 Tackling Systemic Housing Insecurity (activity 59 in the draft strategy page 43 and page 37 of the draft action plan.)

- 5. Advocate for improved housing standards and ensure the Housing Enforcement Service has adequate resources.**

It is proposed that the draft strategy and action plan do contain commitments to refresh Southwark's rogue landlord taskforce, share intelligence more effectively, deliver training to the Police and explore commissioning of further services in the area of tenancy enforcement (such as Safer Renting) at Priority 2 Deliver High Quality Advice and Support (activities 19 – 21 on page 32 of the draft strategy and explored in more detail on pages 13-15 of the draft action plan)

- 6. Ensure timely repairs to existing housing stock.**

It is proposed that repairs to existing housing stock for the purposes of temporary accommodation are considered at Priority 4 – Quality Outcomes Through Housing Provision with the high level activity 36 of the draft strategy (page 36 and actions under this in the action plan on page 25.) That Proactive monitoring the standards of our emergency accommodation will be undertaken and ensuring clear information and support is provided to residents to tackle poor provision.

Theme - Temporary accommodation improvements –

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7. Improvements in temporary accommodation (TA) offers, including location and suitability, were also requested, as well as avoiding placements of high-need individuals with those having low support needs.

It is proposed that this area is considered under the same points of the draft strategy as feedback item 7 above. That the procurement and placement policy is used for offers and suitability and monitoring of placements, with feedback channels introduced will address these needs.

8. Using empty council properties for housing the homeless. Additionally, a focus on children with additional or educational needs was recommended, ensuring smooth transitions between school stages and maintaining current school placements with reasonable travel times.

Again, these areas are considered under the points of the draft strategy and action plan as 7 and 8 above. Proportion of voids usage for TA is being considered as an internal measure and so would suggest this is not explicit in our strategy. However, with the introduction of the TA working group this year, it is proposed to add the following amendments to the draft strategy and action plan –

Draft Strategy –

New high-level activity under Priority 4 at 37 (page 40) –

37. To launch a temporary accommodation working group with partner agencies and resident groups to collectively identify and tackle issues faced by households and improve services to access health and resettlement support.

Draft Action plan –

- *Holding quarterly meetings with the group to take forward the three lines of enquiry –*
- *Quality including suitability of dwellings used as temporary accommodation.*
- *Support for children and families including neurodiverse and Disabled children.*
- *Council led multi-agency work to address the needs of people in TA.*
- *Improving information flow between TA households and partners to help with initiatives to access health and effective resettlement from TA.*

NB – Context require here to set out challenges with supply and market and on the day provision with limited access. Be mindful of differing stakeholder needs (to bring into the intro paragraphs.)

Theme - Joint working improvements –

9. More cohesion between departments like housing, welfare, enforcement, planning, and education.

It is proposed that the draft strategy considers improved cohesion across the Council in Priority 1 Prioritising Homeless Prevention high level activity 4 (page 32 of the draft strategy) and actions 4 – 6 in the draft action plan (pages 3-5.) The LIFT dashboard

Appendix 2 – Evaluation of feedback and proposed amendments

use to identify at risk groups for collaborative interventions with exchequer services and improvements to the enforcement network in the Council addresses these issues.

10. More collaboration between the council, charities, and voluntary organizations was emphasized, along with better signposting to services and more street outreach teams.

It is proposed that the draft strategy considers this in the development/expansion of the homelessness forum in Priority 5 Tackling Systemic Housing Insecurity (activity 43 in draft strategy page 42 and action plan (page 28) as well as the prevention forum it is seeking to introduce under Priority 1 Prioritising Homeless Prevention (activity 7 on page 32 of the draft strategy and page 5 of the action plan.)

11. The homelessness forum could include groups supporting vulnerable populations like LGBT+ individuals and asylum seekers.

Currently, Southwark's Manna Centre and Southwark's Day Centre for Asylum Seekers are members of Southwark's Homelessness Forum. However, we have not as yet invited groups representing the LGBTQ+ Community. It is therefore proposed to amend the action plan at action 48 (page 42 of the draft strategy and page 31 of the draft action plan) to include the following:

- *To invite organisations representing the LGBTQ+ community to join both the homelessness and prevention forums.*

12. Additionally, resettlement support for GP and healthcare services in TA locations was recommended, as many residents do not change their support providers despite being relocated.

It is proposed that identifying solutions to improve support for families in temporary accommodation to access healthcare services is covered in the lines of enquiry in the terms of reference under the new temporary accommodation working group. To note, this group will also be attended and supported by Public Health who are investigating this issue. Therefore this area is covered above at point 9.

Theme - Improvements in customer care

13. Allocating more resources to front-line customer service officers for quicker, more effective responses.

It is proposed that improvements to front line customer service has been considered in the draft strategy throughout Priority 2 – Deliver High Quality Advice and Support and activities 11 – 18 (page 34 of the draft strategy) as well as the actions that are listed under these activities in the draft action plan (pages 8 – 13.) The work outlined

Appendix 2 – Evaluation of feedback and proposed amendments

seeks to utilise digital tools for staff as well as ensuring rapid and effective same day assessments are available when needed.

14. A more empathetic, tailored approach from council staff and services. There were calls for better education on housing rights, especially for asylum seekers, refugees, and those disclosing sensitive information.

15. Access to face-to-face appointments was emphasized for vulnerable residents, including disabled, elderly, and homeless individuals. Reasonable adjustments should be made for non-English speakers, such as providing information in multiple languages.

16. Increased transparency about case responsibility and contact details, along with timely responses, was also requested.

17. Taking advantage of public health training, including Making Every Contact Count (MECC.)

It is proposed that many of the developments proposed in the draft strategy under Priority 2 – Deliver High Quality Advice and Support and its high level activities 11-18 address the feedback issues above with working on a more effective and responsive hybrid model of service delivery. This will be better enabled through the re-design of Southwark's Homesearch Centre in 2025. However, further actions have been identified to make explicit, improvements to accessibility and customer care in the draft action plan at high level activity 15 (page 34 of the draft strategy) and new actions listed on the draft action plan (page 12.) –

Activity 15 – Review access to Housing Solutions services post-covid and implement a new service delivery model.

- *To ensure residents have easy access to translation services and a fully accessible front facing facility is maintained for those with physical disabilities.*
- *To ensure staff have regular training on trauma informed practice and making every contact count to improve the quality of advice provision and effective coordination among partner services.*

Theme - Rough sleeping targeted support:

18. Increase in bed spaces for rough sleepers and emphasized the need for more outreach work in collaboration with expert agencies to achieve better outcomes (such as NHS staff.)

It is proposed that this feedback is considered already in the draft strategy under Priority 3 – Work to End Rough Sleeping with the high level activity *Expanding off the street provision and housing options and support for those with complex needs and couples*. Our RSI provision already funds an outreach nurse and this provision will

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likely continue. Furthermore we have a SLAM resourced nurse and RSTAG funded nurse that works within this cohort.

19. The long-term need for tenancy support and access to services was highlighted. Supported housing provision was noted as needing improvement, especially in communication, access, and transparency.

It is proposed that this feedback is largely considered already in the draft strategy under Priority 3 and activity 29 in the draft strategy (page 37) and the draft action plan (page 20.) It is to be noted that there is a Thamesreach Pilot move on programme that will be reporting recommendations in April to consider around this area that can be implemented under this activity. A particular issue raised by Hostel residents in the focus group was being able to bid through the Allocations Scheme with support and so this area has been made explicit in the action plan under activity 29:

- To improve access to move on accommodation through the Allocations Scheme.

Under Priority 3 Work to End Rough Sleeping - Further amendments to the draft action plan has been made to:

- In view of the implementation of a 56 day notice period for applicants claiming asylum under the streamlined asylum process (a previous lobbying point in the initial draft) high level activity number 26 (draft strategy page 37 and draft action plan page 18) has been amended to state as follows:

During the 56 day notice period given by the Home Office to Streamlined Asylum Applicants, ensuring the Council and partner agencies are working effectively to provide resettlement and support.

- Amend the Rough Sleeper Initiative and Accommodation for Ex Offenders grants as the new combined Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant 25/26 (action 27 page 19.)

- Add the Task and Targetting forum to the list of multi-agency meetings in the rough sleeping space, introduced by our Rough Sleeping Coordinator, (action plan at action 28, page 20.)

- Remove specific grant funded organisations such as Beam and St Mungos as these may change during the course of the next 5 years, (action 31, page 21.)

20. Action 29 should outline how to improve access to supported hostels and move-on options for rough sleepers, with clear milestones. Training in

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trauma-informed care and best practices, as well as reasonable adjustments for those not tech-savvy, was also recommended, particularly for temporary accommodation placements.

It is proposed that the draft action plan can only contain a certain amount of detail and the key mile stones and KPIs around this area would be better contained in our RSI plan and Supported Housing pathway performance plans. Training in trauma informed care and best practice is considered in the additional actions covered at feedback point 18 above.

21. From SMT, CMT and LMB feedback during the initial presentation of our proposed final draft of the Strategy and action plan, further amendments have been made to both.

The updating of key data in the strategy, such as more recent JSNA's by Public Health, the funding formula for Homelessness Grant by MHCLG and key contextual information around Southwark 2030 has now been added.

22. From SMT, CMT and LMB feedback, it is acknowledged that the existing draft action plan has become too lengthy with some overlapping activities and a need to revise the existing format and to revise the timescales for delivery. A number of amendments have been made to the action plan and consequently the Strategy document to improve in this area and a further summary version of the action plan has also been produced.

1. Under our first priority of Prioritising Homeless Prevention, we have merged action 1 and 2 so we have one overriding action to widen support, activity and collaboration of services to address debt, food and fuel poverty.
2. Under our first priority we have removed our previous action 6 of monitoring and improving the duty to refer process into the work of the proposed prevention forum (action 4) where referrals and themes for threats of homelessness are identified.
3. Under the first priority, we have sought to merge actions that relate to training of partners to cover both homeless prevention and Homeless Reduction Action 2017 shared activities to prevent homelessness, as well as enforcement around illegal eviction and harassment that also aid homeless prevention outcomes, (action 4 deleted and adding to revised action 6.)
4. We have also removed additional explanatory text in action 3 for LGBTQ+ groups.
5. We have updated the key community organisations that provide LGBTQ+ group support that we are building stronger partnerships with.
6. Under our second priority to Deliver High Quality Advice & Support we have merged the additional action (15) of same day assessments into wider new service delivery model action 14 and moving the focus on earlier assessments for those requiring emergency accommodation to this revised combined action.

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7. In our third priority of Work to End Rough Sleeping, we have merging the action of 25 and 26, as suggested they are similar and bringing over distinct sub-activity of utilising legal aid practitioners into this under 25.
8. In our fourth priority Quality Outcomes Through our Housing Provision, we have reworded our third high level activity - Improving the standards of our *accommodation*.
9. In our fourth priority, we have sought to merge the first two actions as quite similar and bringing together distinct sub-activities.
10. In our fourth priority we have also merged actions 42 and 41 as suggested due to their similarity.
11. We have suggested deleting action 49 in our fourth priority as it has been covered in revised action 10.
12. We have sought to remove lobbying activity under priority 5 as guided by CMT comments and added this into the main body of the strategy (highlighted on page 45,) as activity to be undertaken through the course of the strategy.
13. The timescales for expected delivery of a number of actions have also been reviewed and amended. For example, under our second priority Deliver High Quality Advice & Support, amended action number 11 has been changed and brought forward to be completed much sooner to align with the refurbishment work that is now scheduled in the near term for the Bournemouth Road resident access facilities.

Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030

Draft

DRAFT

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Foreword

We continue to be in the midst of an escalating crisis in housing and homelessness, with a record number of households, including children, in temporary accommodation in England, and rough sleeping also on the increase across London. An increase in S21 no-fault evictions, the cost of living crisis, insufficient Local Housing Allowance (LHA) and challenges around Home Office cases have fuelled an increase in homelessness applications over recent years, and it is shocking that 1 in 21 children in London is now estimated to be in temporary accommodation. At the same time it is becoming increasingly difficult for the council to procure accommodation in a timely manner that meets the needs of local people. The financial implications of this for local authorities are severe with Councils across London now estimated to be collectively spending £4m a day on temporary accommodation. In some local authorities, it is also leading to the use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation for extended periods of time, and out of area placements, which are further and further way from a person or family's support networks. This is being fuelled by factors outside of local authority control, but we remain committed in Southwark, to providing the best possible service to those who find themselves in housing need and using our limited resources in the most effective way possible.

*This Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out our overarching goal, “to work to end homelessness through the delivery of timely, effective and collaborative support which enables Southwark residents to address their housing insecurity”. This goal underlines the importance of partnership – in Southwark facilitated by our Homelessness Forum – and of early intervention, to support residents before they reach crisis point. The Strategy sets out three underpinning objectives and organises our response under five priority headings. Firstly, we want to be **data-led** so that we can respond better to our residents' needs, and this Strategy is informed by a comprehensive Data Review which examines the challenges and trends specific to Southwark. As an example, we continue to have a much higher number of homelessness presentations from single men, and applications that result from eviction from friends and family. Secondly, we want to ensure that advice and support is **effective** and **timely**, and thirdly, we want to be **outcomes-focused**, always learning and open to how we can improve the quality of our support.*

The five priorities set out in the Strategy are to:

Prioritise Homelessness Prevention

- 1) Deliver High Quality Advice and Support*
- 2) Work to End Rough Sleeping*
- 3) Achieve Quality Outcomes through Housing Provision*
- 4) Tackle Systemic Housing Insecurity*

These priorities have been discussed with many people and organisations through the consultation period and I want to thank everyone who took time to provide input. In particular, we took time to organise a number of focus groups so that we could hear from residents who have direct experience of our service, a practice that I am keen for us to embed in an ongoing way through our structures going forward. Among the things set out in our Action Plan are the commitments to establish a recurring strategic roundtable, chaired by myself as the lead Cabinet Member, and to set up a Temporary Accommodation Action Group, drawing on best practice from other local authorities. Over the coming months, we will also be taking action to make our Homelessness Service more accessible and to once again reopen Bournemouth Road as a Homelessness Prevention Hub, ensuring that other key services are also co-located there to enable our residents to get the timely advice that they need. We will also be ensuring that the new Allocations Policy goes hand in hand with this Strategy, supporting our objectives around homelessness prevention and move-on. Despite the financial challenges, I was pleased that Council Assembly agreed a budget amendment earlier in 2025, committing an additional £520,000 to our homelessness work, and along with additional grant funding from government, I hope that we will be able to strengthen our prevention and support offer as we go forward including through Housing First and partners such as BEAM. Work continues on developing our TA Supply Plan and among other things we will be using over £11m from the Local Authority Housing Fund to buy-back former council homes on our estates, as well as investing in empty homes on the Aylesbury Estate that are earmarked for redevelopment in latter phases of the regeneration there.

Delivering a successful strategy is not just about our Housing Solutions team. It is about the many partners that we work with on a daily basis to address homelessness, and also about a cross-departmental approach. Our ambitions here are supported by our Exchequer Team who continue to provide Cost of Living support and administer Discretionary Housing Payments, by Adults' and Children's who commission our specialist services and support our care leavers, by a Housing Department which continues to manage the largest stock of council housing in London, and ultimately by a Council which is committed to delivering as many homes at social rent as possible, including through our council house-building programme which to date has delivered 3000 new homes either completed or on site. In the end, efforts to end homelessness will only succeed when all branches of government pull in the same direction. We had a glimpse of what is possible via the 'Everyone In' initiative, and the Mayor of London has also now set out his ambition to end rough sleeping by 2030. It is our hope that with the right political will, including through the cross-departmental work being undertaken by central government, we will soon see an end to this crisis and better outcomes for everyone in housing need.

Councillor Dennis, Cabinet Member For New Homes And Sustainable Development

Executive Summary

Southwark's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030 sets out our plan to prevent and relieve homelessness. It will build on our last strategy and from our analysis and reviews, we will set out our objectives, priorities and actions to meet current and emerging needs in our Borough. It is a strategy that will focus efforts to prevent homelessness wherever possible through existing and new partnerships, relieve homelessness with accommodation that meets residents' needs and will aim to address inequality and insecurity in the Borough for our residents.

Homelessness does not only describe the condition of people visibly sleeping rough; it also includes those households to whom a homelessness duty has been accepted by a local authority. This wider definition includes those **with accommodation that is only available as a temporary measure**, such as people staying with family and friends and those in temporary accommodation provided by the Council, or those threatened with homelessness within 56 days, with no alternative suitable accommodation available to them.

Southwark has introduced and developed a number of improvements to better meet the needs of our residents through its current strategy. This has included an expansion of prevention activity with additional resources of prevention officers across teams. We have expanded the offer of support for private tenants, landlord and agents and built stronger relationships with our key partners. Through the duty to refer mechanism introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, Southwark has developed clear and effective referral pathways with numerous internal and external agencies and significantly expanded our service to provide effective interventions and support for rough sleepers. However, in view of global and national events in recent years that have made already challenging circumstances more acute, we must ensure our next Strategy provides for a renewed focus to strengthen partnerships and deliver for our residents.

Southwark has continually reviewed the circumstances and needs of our residents through a significant review of data in the Borough to help form our draft strategic aims, objectives and priorities. We have also now taken this forward and completed an informal consultation exercise within the organisation and with our partners and service users to produce our draft strategy.

Introduction

The Statutory and National Framework to be considered

The work of delivering housing advice and support is underpinned by a number of key pieces of legislation and government strategy. These include:

Part 7 of the Housing Act (1996) sets out groups of persons that should be awarded a reasonable preference along with the definition of homelessness, and the duties that local authorities owe to applicants who are accepted as being homeless or threatened with homelessness. The Council has a duty to provide accommodation if there is reason to believe that an applicant may be eligible, homeless and in priority need. If these criteria are met, interim accommodation is arranged for the applicant until a decision has been reached on their application. If the Council decides that it owes the 'main homelessness duty' to an applicant, they will be offered temporary accommodation until they find their own accommodation or are made a final offer of accommodation, or the duty ends in another way.

The Localism Act (2011) also amended the 1996 Housing Act by allowing local authorities to discharge their homelessness duty by arranging a suitable offer of accommodation in the private rented sector.

The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) made significant changes to the Housing Act (1996) and placed a number of new duties upon local authorities. These include:

- To assess the cause of homelessness, circumstances and needs of all household members, including children.
 - To develop and agree with applicants a personalised plan of the steps that will be taken to prevent or relieve homelessness.
 - Extending the time frame a household is threatened with homelessness from 28 days to 56 days, meaning that local authorities have a duty to prevent homelessness from an earlier stage.
 - New duties to assess all eligible applicants (not just those unintentionally homeless and in priority need), and new duties to take reasonable steps to prevent and relieve homelessness.
 - A duty on public authorities to refer service users who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to the housing authority (with the consent of the individual)
-

- Services must be designed to meet the needs of specific groups including care leavers, people leaving hospital / prison and victims of domestic abuse.

The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) places a duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children. This creates a framework to support survivors to have increased protection and safety no matter the tenure. **The Homelessness Act 2002** and the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) requires a homelessness strategy for every housing authority district, to be renewed at least every five years and consulted upon by other local or public authorities or voluntary organisations.

The Government Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 - 2022

Government set a target to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and eradicate all street homelessness by 2027. In September 2022, the strategy was updated to define ending rough sleeping as ensuring it is prevented wherever possible, and where it does occur, it is rare, brief, and non-recurrent. This vision is supported by four key themes:

- **Prevention:** Stopping rough sleeping before it occurs.
- **Support:** Providing immediate assistance to those in need.
- **Recovery:** Enabling individuals to rebuild their lives.
- **A Transparent and Joined-up System:** Strengthening partnerships for a coordinated response.

The council's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy is underpinned by this national framework, ensuring alignment with both local priorities and government objectives.

Funding and Resources

The council's ability to deliver its strategy is supported by a range of funding streams, including the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG). In 2024/25, the HPG totalled £440.4 million, ensuring targeted support for homelessness prevention and recovery.

Key Funding Updates for 2025/26

The allocation of HPG funding is determined by a formula based on relative homelessness demand and cost pressures. Following consultation in summer 2022, the formula was updated for 2023/24 and 2024/25 to better reflect local needs. Key changes now include:

- Replacing the Temporary Accommodation Management Fee (TAMF) variable with revenue outturn data on Temporary Accommodation (TA) spend.
- Simplifying the formula by combining the £63m Homelessness Reduction Grant (HRG) and £47m HRA Uplift into a single £110m element.
- The RSPARG Rough Sleeping Prevention & Recovery Grant (RSPARG) and Accommodation for Ex-Offenders (AFEO) programmes have been merged into a single, ring-fenced funding stream for 2025/26 to give local authorities greater flexibility in supporting people at risk of or experiencing rough sleeping.

For 2025/26, Southwark Council's funding allocations are as follows:

| Programme | Allocation (£) | Purpose |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG) | £10,483,320.00 | Supports early intervention and prevention initiatives. |
| Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant (RSPARG) | £2,601,118.00 | For reference: Previous RSI 24/25 allocation: £2,337,479.00. |
| South East London Sub-Region Allocation | £292,390.00 | Part of a wider £760,780.00 allocation for Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark, Bexley, Bromley. |
| Rough Sleeping Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant | £661,261.00 | Joint MHCLG/DHSC programme; un-ringfenced funding for substance abuse support. |
| Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme | £214,500.00 | Supports rough sleepers into longer term accommodation and specialist staff to access to the help they need. |
| Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme | £350,792.00 | Support services to those people previously sleeping rough in SHAP. |
| Total Funding for 2025/26 | £14,603,381.00 | Enables targeted prevention, recovery, and specialist support services. |

Key Targets for use of funding:

- Prevent homelessness through early intervention and tailored support.
- Reduce reliance on Temporary Accommodation by investing in sustainable housing solutions.
- Deliver specialist services to address complex needs, such as mental health and substance abuse.

Southwark Framework of Strategies and Policies to be considered

Our next Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy must also align and enhance the work we are undertaking in a number of key Southwark strategies, policies and initiatives:

Southwark Housing Strategy 2015 – 2043

Our long-term Housing Strategy was established in 2015 and in 2020 was refreshed with simplified clearer commitments and updated actions.

The four fundamental issues remained affordability; quality; security and pride and responsibility.

The four broad principles were re-focused on these key values as follows:

1. Increasing the supply of genuinely affordable high-quality homes that meet our residents' housing needs and aspirations.
2. Demanding safer, higher quality, energy efficient homes
3. Promoting tenure security and social support in housing, and improving the health, wellbeing and economic resilience of residents.
4. Empowering residents and communities to have pride and influence over their homes and neighbourhoods.

Achievements –

Through this Strategy, Southwark continues to deliver the largest council home building programmes in the country with over 1368 new social homes built to date and 3000 new homes delivered or currently on site for completion. It has invested in significant programmes of major works to its existing estate with high levels of support for its tenants and leaseholders. As the largest Local Authority landlord in London, we have worked hard to minimise misuse of stock and support resident involvement and interests in regeneration programmes around the borough.

The Housing Service has delivered the highest levels of new housing building nationally, providing quality homes to meet the needs of those on the housing register. Southwark will let continue to let a number of new homes in 2025-2026, having achieved 555 new build lets in 2024-2025. This work will continue to help reduce the number of households temporary accommodation and those living in unsuitable accommodation arrangements within the borough alongside a range of other medical, support and overcrowding issues which if not addressed, might lead to homelessness.

Challenges –

Systemic inflationary pressures, alongside the higher cost of borrowing, will impact our delivery for further new homes development, at a time when the supply of private sector accommodation for procurement is reducing. With household incomes squeezed and

those most vulnerable to cost hikes worst affected, a greater demand for earlier support is needed from Authorities now and for some time ahead.

There is uncertainty in longer-term funding settlements, which affects the shaping and resourcing of local priorities. This uncertainty is particularly challenging for emerging communities that are in need of support and resources to establish themselves and thrive. As we work to address the needs of these communities, it is crucial that we secure stable funding to ensure their growth and development are not compromised.

Southwark Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018-2022

Our last strategy set out the following overarching aim -

Deliver an innovative, leading and accessible service to prevent homelessness and assist homeless households in finding long term affordable and sustainable housing.

From this formed 3 objectives - -

1. To offer a high quality and innovative service to homeless households and households threatened with homelessness.
2. To use our position as a leading trailblazer authority to make a positive contribution to national policy around homelessness and welfare reform.
3. To work collaboratively in finding long-term housing solutions for people threatened with homelessness.

To achieve these objectives, Southwark set out 5 key priorities and operational goals within these -

Priority 1 – Homeless Prevention

Priority 2 – Tackle Rough Sleeping

Priority 3 – Vulnerability and health

Priority 4 – Responding to the local housing market

Priority 5 – Responding to welfare reform

Achievements -

Our current strategy has brought about significant changes in the way services have been delivered and achieved improved outcomes in many areas, including:

Rough Sleeper Support –

Southwark has extended the commissioning of outreach services through the use of its Rough Sleeper Initiative Grant. We have introduced Navigators to engage with rough sleepers with support needs to help access accommodation and health services to build trust and maintain engagement. The service has also commissioned a specialist nurse and mental health practitioner to improve tailored support for rough sleepers with complex needs.

Southwark also introduced and has since expanded its complex needs housing provision through Housing First and continued to expand off the street accommodation. Since its inception in 2017, the Housing First service has become a nationally recognised locus of best practice. Currently, Southwark is a co-applicant to a £1.3 million NIHR grant investigating how to improve housing-led responses to rough sleeping and complex needs. Current and former users of the Housing First service have created an Experts by Experience Advisory Board who contribute both nationally and locally to the development of new knowledge in the sector.

Finally, the service has also worked jointly with Southwark Law Centre to provide immigration advice and support to regularise the status of rough sleepers and enable access to mainstream housing provision as well as building an employment and skills offer to help rough sleepers avoid returning to the streets.

Early homelessness prevention

Southwark has continued to secure high levels of funds to fully commit discretionary housing payments and our rent arrears fund in helping residents meet shortfalls of rent and help to mitigate the impacts of welfare reform over the last 5 years. The service has continued to liaise well with the DWP and other key agencies in delivering advice through cost-of-living roadshows and we have seen continued high levels of homeless prevention for residents to sustain their accommodation arrangements across tenures.

Private Rented Sector support and advice

The last strategy enabled an expansion of services to help meet the needs of those renting privately in the Borough. With a dedicated team providing early advice to landlords, tenants and agents, the service has managed to help defend possession proceedings or negotiate with landlords where possible. The service has also worked jointly with partner agencies, such as Southwark Law Centre and Kineara an enabling third sector organisation to provide a rapid and holistic package of support with threats of eviction, the need for legal advice and additional support to manage often complex needs, which underpin their housing insecurity.

Challenges -

Our borough has universally been impacted by a worsening financial climate. Those renting have faced significant rent rises against real terms falls in household income. The pandemic placed huge strains on families and we recognise the work we must do to help sustain living arrangements wherever possible.

During the second half of 2023-24 we saw rising levels of homelessness that could not easily be addressed through prevention strategies, with a spiralling of residents evicted from Home Office accommodation as significantly expedited decisions were reached on their immigration case. Many of these decisions were part of the Streamlined asylum process (SAP) introduced to address Home Office decision backlogs. This led to a 550% increase in homeless approaches from this group during the second 5 months of 2023/24 compared to the first 5 months of that period. Over the course of 2023/24 we saw 286 approaches from this group compared to 62 the previous year. One year on, the implications for the service in terms of homeless assessment processes, costs of temporary accommodation and accommodation to prevent homelessness have been

considerable. The immediate impact was increased rough sleeping, given the majority of residents were single adults without vulnerabilities. When looking at the private rented sector re-housing options for this group, there were constraints due to availability and affordability issues which compounded the risk for prolonged homelessness for this disadvantaged group. In 2024-2025, we took 276 applications from those being evicted from NASS accommodation and of those cases we have closed, only 53 were rehoused into accommodation during their Homelessness Relief period which shows the limited options for assisting this group into the private rented sector.

When looking at our approaches and work with private renters, we can see the challenges being faced with the cost of living and lack of affordable properties in the borough. In 2023/24 we took 815 applications from this cohort. In 2024/2025, this number is still significant, but reduced slightly by 5% to 772. We also have recorded that 26% of these approaches in 2024/2025 were due to landlords wishing to sell or re-let their property for higher rents, showing the growing challenge faced in this area.

Southwark Allocations Policy

Southwark Council is required under section 167 of the Housing Act 1996 to produce a Housing Allocation policy. The requirements of the policy are set out in Part VI Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and Localism Act 2011) giving reasonable preference to those applicants defined by the 1996 Act. In June 2012 the Government further issued guidance to Local authorities on the allocation of housing stock. The homelessness strategy and the council's housing allocations policy must have due regard for each other. The current policy is being reviewed and will be available for consultation in 2025.

Southwark's Placement and Procurement Policies for Temporary Accommodation and Private Rented Sector Offers (PRSO)

Building on our existing policy and Good Homes Standard commitment for temporary accommodation, Southwark is driving improvements in the allocation of affordable and suitable homes and tailoring provision to resident need through enhanced suitability assessments. Additional governance and checks through the development of a new procurement approach will help to ensure good standards and compliance. It will also be part of evolving measures to help procure further accommodation to meet our needs through work with institutional investment opportunities to create longer term options and use of our existing stock.

Southwark Stands Together

From a call to action following the death of George Floyd on 4th June 2020, Southwark established a Borough wide initiative to better understand the injustice and racism experienced by Black, Asian Minority Ethnic people, in order to help create a fairer and

more equal society. This initiative spans both its internal culture and processes and service to its residents and partners. Its work will encompass the following themes -

1. Renewing and reinventing our open spaces and buildings –
To enable our Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic people in Southwark to collaborate in developing diverse and inclusive open spaces to the public that establishes best practice standards shapes key policies and celebrates our communities
2. Education theme –
To enable our young Black, Asian and minority ethnic people are participating fully and meaningfully in an environment where their heritage is reflected in teaching as well as receiving exposure to new opportunities and excellent support for their transition into the world of work
3. Health theme -
Harnessing the passion and commitment of our Black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities to address health inequalities hearing their views on effective health and care and working with a fully mobilised health sector.
4. Culture theme –
To provide greater opportunities for our Southwark based Black, Asian and minority ethnic artists to receive support in the development of new products and show casing their work with increasingly diverse and supportive organisations.
5. Communities theme –
To enable Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities play key roles in shaping their services, supporting their neighbours, creating together spaces that are vibrant warm and welcoming and sharing equally in local resources, such as spaces and funds.
6. Interaction with policing theme –
Supporting a community that can celebrate good news stories where Black, Asian and minority ethnic residents are working closely with the police and developing increasing levels of trust and confidence through positive engagement models.
7. Employment and business theme -
Many people from diverse backgrounds across Southwark are accessing quality jobs. Locally inspired Black, Asian and minority ethnic-led small business are also thriving, backed by accessible and effective business support.
8. Council staff engagement theme -
Creating a culture where everyone can be themselves at work and are supported to achieve their full potential in an organisation that is representative of the community and that has pledged to become an anti-racist organization.

Given the known systemic inequality that exists in the Borough and manifests in housing insecurity and an overrepresentation in those approaching for support, we must ensure our strategic aims echo this commitment and supports all aspects of its work to make Southwark a fairer Borough.

Southwark 2030

In early 2025, Southwark launched its 2030 strategy and council delivery plan, outlining how we will work to create good lives together. Following extensive engagement with thousands of residents, one of the most important barriers they identified to leading a good

life was housing. Alongside improving standards across the housing sector, and increasing the number of affordable homes, a key strand of Southwark 2030 is to reduce the number of people who are homeless or who live in overcrowded accommodation. To take a whole council approach to delivering change, decent homes is one of our six goal areas alongside a good start in life; a safer Southwark; a strong and fair economy; staying well; and a healthy environment. Southwark 2030 recognises the need to break down siloes, working as one council and looking at the entire system when providing homelessness and rough sleeping support.

Both Southwark 2030 and this strategy emphasise the need to work in partnership, using intelligence and insights, and consider our principles of reducing inequalities, empowering our communities and investing in prevention as we tackle homelessness. One of the greatest disparities in our borough is the gap between those who have safe, decent, affordable and secure homes, and those who do not. Despite the root causes of homelessness being complex and continuing to grow, we will work closely with those with lived experience: hearing their needs, understanding their past, and adjusting our services to make sure they work for each person. As much as possible, this will include preventing residents becoming homeless in the first place.

Housing remains one of the borough's most significant challenges but as the largest council landlord in London, we have a unique responsibility to lead by example in providing high quality homes and advocating for national policies to support the future of affordable, good quality housing. We will only be successful if by 2030, we have reversed the trend of increased homelessness seen across London.

National and Local Context

The National context –

The UK economy has in many ways recovered from the shock of the pandemic, but by the latter half of 2022, inflation rose significantly impacting the poorest households most severely due to the large share of their budget spent on essentials. Energy, food and other prices, compounded by the war in Ukraine, are driving a cost-of-living crisis and drop in disposable income.

The Government has delivered packages for addressing the cost-of-living crisis, including lump sum payments to those in receipt of means-tested benefits and payments to reduce fuel bills to all householders. Locally, Southwark has match funded its allocation of grant from the Household Support Fund to establish a Cost of Living Fund worth almost £12 million in helping those most in need. In 2023-2024, distributed more than £40 million in extra Cost of Living support to residents. Nonetheless, we know the poorest households will continue to be hardest hit by this systemic insecurity that is exacerbated by increasing housing costs. Support to uprate Universal Credit in April 2023 in line with inflation will

have had a positive impact, however, due to cuts and freezes in the basic rate of benefit entitlements since 2010, significant pressure remains for many households. The further measure to restore Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates to 30th percentile of market rent determined in September 2023 saw a boost in housing costs support for many. However, with the benefit cap formula remaining unchanged, many out of work households will be affected with minimal to no increase in support. We understand this will most likely impact those renting privately with children most acutely. The indication that this is a 1 year increase only will not provide the market confidence required. With recent Government borrowing and expenditure, national debt stands at 98.8% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Government has announced aims to reduce inflation and debt and grow the economy. With these factors and drivers, it is understood that housing insecurity will remain an acute risk for the country for many.

Southwark – The Local context

Southwark Demographics (an overview)-

For an in-depth analysis of Southwark including demographic, equality, and housing market information please see our Review of Homelessness. This is useful to consider when looking at homelessness and the responses to tackle these issues as they are often interlinked. The Borough is undergoing rapid and continual change with high levels of private investment and development but also has areas of high deprivation, as well as a large and diverse population with varying needs. The pandemic had a profound impact on the Borough including a significant impact on our population numbers which saw a drop of 3.8% from 2020 to 2021. This was also likely compounded by the UK's exit from the EU.

Southwark is a proudly diverse borough and 4 out of 10 people were born outside of the UK. This diversity means that we have many different communities, languages and needs to consider when looking at housing and homelessness.

When looking at household breakdown in the borough, Southwark has a high number of single person households in the north of the Borough, with the larger households (4 or more household members) in the centre of the Borough. The ten-year change since 2011 has seen a fall in single households, in 3 person households and in 4 person households. There was, however, a rise of 2.7% in 2 person households.¹ This change may have been due to the impact of the pandemic, which saw many families move out of London.

Other needs that need to be considered are disability and support needs. When looking at disability and carers in Southwark, there are estimates that there are over 18,000 unpaid carers which are expected to be disproportionately made up of women, people

¹ [Household size - Census Maps, ONS](#)

from Black African ethnic backgrounds and those that also have a disability/complex needs.² A more in-depth analysis of the borough by our Public Health department is available [here](#). It is also important to note that according to the 2021 Census, 14% of Southwark residents report having a disability under the equality act which is marginally less than the national average of 17%.³

21% of Southwark's population ranked within the most deprived nationally. According to the Urban Health Index, which looks at 68 neighbourhoods across Southwark and Lambeth, in the South of the borough, all neighbourhoods were ranked in the top 20 of areas, whilst several of the neighbourhoods in the middle and towards the North of the Borough were ranked in the bottom 20. Southwark has a more polarised distribution of neighbourhoods compared to neighbouring borough of Lambeth for example.⁴

There are also disparities between areas in the borough. As noted above, the North and centre of the Borough has more inequalities than the South. In the Faraday Ward which covers areas of Walworth and Burgess Park, 32% of children under 16 live in poverty compared to 5% in Dulwich Village, (1.5 miles away).⁵ When comparing wards further, we see that male life expectancy in Nunhead & Queen's Road area is 75 years compared to 87 in Dulwich.⁶

We also need to consider the impact of Covid-19 on the health and wellbeing of Southwark's population. As already discussed, Southwark has a high population of people from ethnic minority backgrounds, who are living in the more deprived areas of Southwark. Within these areas, we saw higher risks to Covid-19 due to many working in front facing roles, higher vaccine hesitancy from social, historical and religious factors and a higher presence of co-morbidities associated with Covid-19 complications.⁷ Mortality rates in the most deprived areas were double those in the south of the borough.⁸

When looking at employment, Southwark has around 244,600 working age people with 51,900 people not in work which is an increase on previous years. Average incomes are higher than the national average at £46,634. However, 23% earn below £30,000 per year with large variations in income levels across wards.⁹

A Breakdown of Housing Tenure in Southwark

The percentage of social rent properties has been decreasing annually for some time but Southwark remains the largest council landlord in London and has ambitious council house-building plans, with over 3,000 new homes either built or currently on site. In 2010 Southwark housing stock made up 31.4% of all housing in the borough. By 2021 this had fallen to 25.9%. There has, in turn been an increase in private rents in the Borough, whilst those owned outright/owned with mortgage have remained steady. 31% of all households in Southwark own their property (largely towards the south of the Borough), or own with a

² Southwark JSNA Annual Report: 2024

³ Southwark JSNA Annual Report: 2024

⁴ [Urban Health Index \(Lambeth & Southwark\) - Impact on Urban Health](#)

⁵ Southwark JSNA Annual Report: 2022

⁶ Southwark JSNA Annual Report: 2024

⁷ The value of partnership working to support residents during COVID-19; Southwark's Annual Public Health Report 2022

⁸ Southwark's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027

⁹ Southwark JSNA Annual Report: 2024

mortgage. 40% are socially rented, still a relatively high proportion, (the London average is 24%), largely the centre and North of the Borough, and 29% are private rented (mostly evenly spread from the very centre of the borough and the north).¹⁰

There are other necessary considerations when looking at the increase in private rented properties. Many people in Southwark can be considered vulnerable in terms of their health needs, low incomes, and household composition and will be reliant on welfare benefits to help pay their rent. From the table below, we can see that the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate is much lower than upper quartile rents and in most cases it is below lower quartile rents also. It is becoming increasingly harder to source affordable rents for those receiving welfare benefits. We are also seeing an increase in the amount people spend on rent as a percentage of their total income, this is happening across all income brackets. The ONS has estimated that in London, only those on a higher income quartile would be able to rent without spending more than 30% of their income.

Southwark's average private rents compared to the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) (2023)

| ROOM SIZE | Mean (£) | Lower Quartile (£) | Median Q (£) | Upper Q (£) | LHA (£) |
|--------------------|----------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|---------|
| Room rate | 768 | 700 | 745 | 900 | 515 |
| Studio | 1156 | 1050 | 1112 | 1250 | 1146 |
| 1 bedroom | 1542 | 1300 | 1500 | 1750 | 1146 |
| 2 bedroom | 1988 | 1600 | 1850 | 2250 | 1346 |
| 3 bedroom | 2517 | 2000 | 2450 | 2863 | 1670 |
| 4 bedroom + | 3332 | 2775 | 3275 | 3650 | 2194 |

Source: ONS, London Rental Statistics

It is important to consider whether these homes are overcrowded, occupied or under occupied based on the number of bedrooms available. In 2021, 48% of households reported to be occupied, or in other words, using all bedrooms, without being overcrowded or under occupied. The most overcrowded area, was around Burgess Park and Peckham North with an average of 16% being overcrowded by at least one bedroom. Conversely, in the south of the borough around Dulwich Park and Herne Hill, 52% of households were under occupying by 2 or more bedrooms.¹¹

Homelessness in Southwark– an overview and key findings from our data review

Our Homelessness Data Review can be found in the appendix. The following are some key data points that give a good overview of the picture of homelessness in the Borough including demand for the service, approach reasons, supply of accommodations and

¹⁰ [Tenure of household - Census Maps, ONS](#)

¹¹ [Occupancy rating for bedrooms - Census Maps, ONS](#)

outcomes for applicants. Please note that data has been updated to the most recently available data set, where possible.

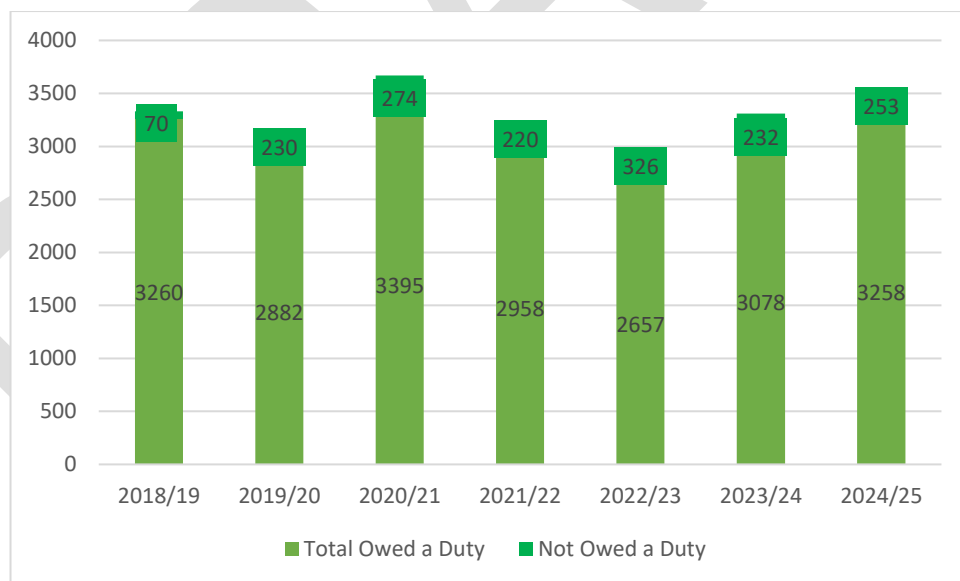
Applications

1. **Homeless applications taken fell by 10% between 2018/19 and 2022/23 (excluding 2020/21 during the height of the pandemic) but rose again in 2023/24 & 2024/25**

The review of homelessness in 2017 showed that the number of homelessness applications received had increased considerably in 2016-2017. The chart below shows the number of homelessness applications owed a duty in Southwark has increased significantly since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and rose especially in 2020/21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic but has started to level out in the years since.

The increase in applications is due to two important factors: the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018, which allowed the council to help residents sooner with their housing issues by broadening the reasons residents can approach for assistance; and a reduction in the number of homes that residents can afford. Affordability issues are complex but welfare reform and increasing costs of the private rented sector in the Borough have been continuing factors.

Breakdown of applicants owed a homelessness duty on approach (Owed a Prevention or Relief Duty vs No Duty owed)

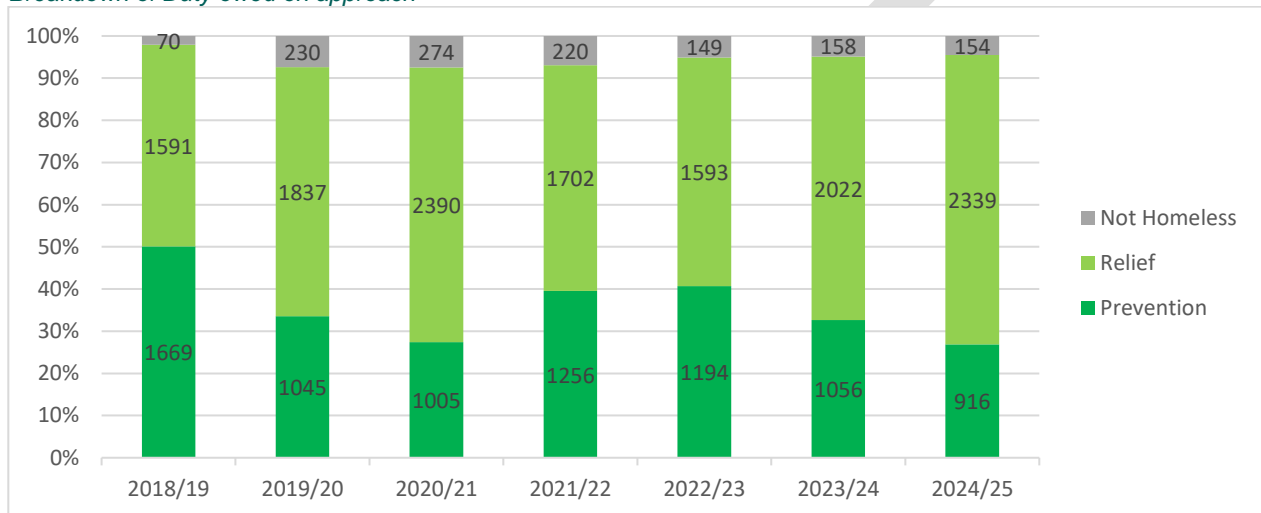


Southwark takes a significantly higher number of homeless applications than the average for England and London. When broken down further, inner London takes comparatively more than Greater London with Lambeth the only inner London borough to take more applications than Southwark (3744 compared to Southwark's 3310 in 2023/24.) This shows the strain on services in the south and south east of London and is reflective of the lack of affordable housing in the area. Another notable difference is that in 2020/21, Southwark's homelessness applications increased when those in England and London

reduced slightly. This can partly be put down to the fact that whilst Court proceedings were paused for the majority of cases for those renting by Secure or Assured Tenancies, the hidden homeless were not protected under Government initiatives to prevent homelessness during lockdown. In Southwark there are many households that suffer with overcrowding and poor quality housing.

Therefore, with the nature of the virus requiring households to have space to shield and self-isolate, many were therefore at risk of homelessness due to the very nature of their housing circumstances. Also, Southwark has a large social housing stock, so whilst formal evictions were stopped, there were still friends/family exclusions to consider.

Breakdown of Duty owed on approach



The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 allowed for applicants to approach the council for assistance earlier when experiencing instability with their housing. In 2024/25, 26% of approaches were given a Prevention Duty.

Whilst most cases are given a relief duty on approach to the service, not all cases are placed into Temporary Accommodation. A breakdown of those placed into accommodation is below as compared to applications taken. On average so far this year, we have placed 36% of households into TA when they have been assessed.

Placement in TA on approach compared to approach figures

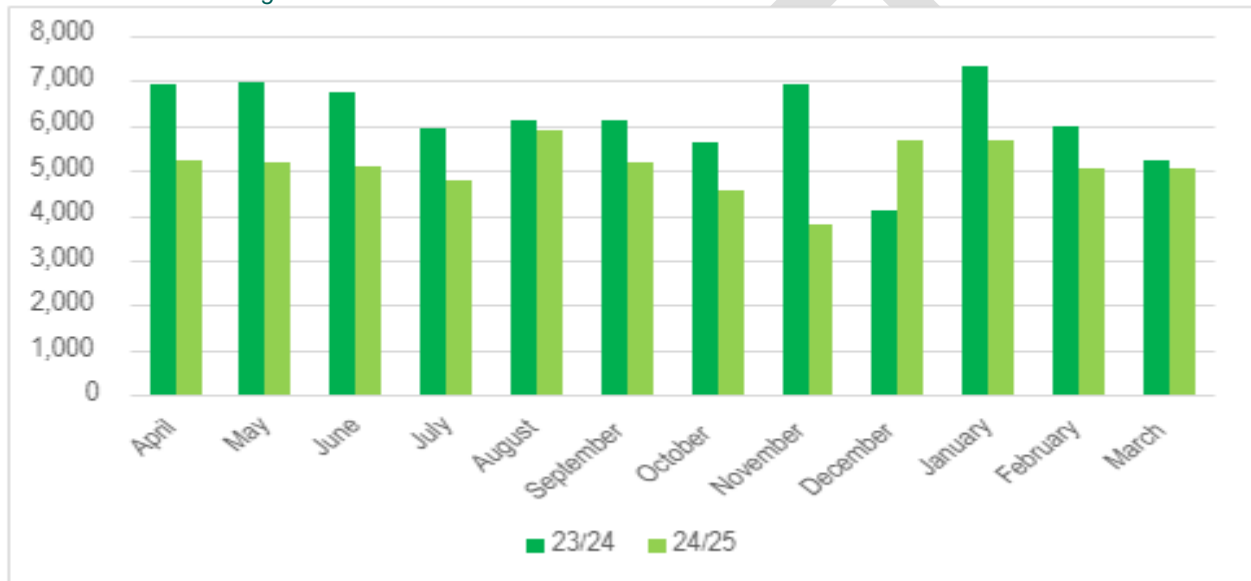
| 2024 | Part 7 Approaches | TA placement on approach | % |
|-----------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----|
| April | 350 | 132 | 38% |
| May | 378 | 139 | 37% |
| June | 304 | 124 | 41% |
| July | 299 | 117 | 39% |
| August | 279 | 72 | 26% |
| September | 296 | 114 | 39% |
| October | 333 | 123 | 37% |
| November | 272 | 92 | 34% |
| December | 205 | 62 | 30% |
| January | 302 | 99 | 33% |

Demand for service delivery

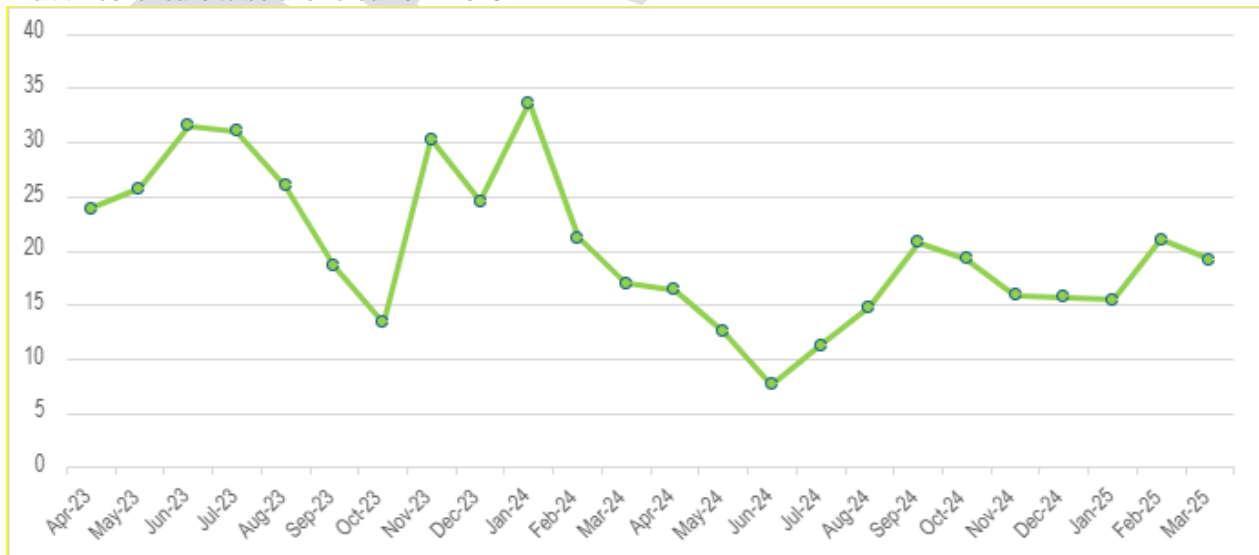
2. The Service received an average of 5100 calls to the service each month in 24/25

Demand for assistance from the Housing Needs service has continued to grow over the past 3 years following the pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, and the UK's departure from the EU. Below we can see this demand in our call numbers has increased in the past two years.

Calls received to Housing Solutions teams in 2023-2025



Wait times for calls to be answered 2022-2025



Wait times for calls to be answered averaged 20 minutes in 2024/25, however, as above, we saw waiting times fluctuate significantly with highs of 33 minutes in January 2024 and lows of 11 minutes in July 2025.

Reason for approach

3. Family and friends evictions remain the highest homelessness approach reason in Southwark followed by the termination of Assured Short hold Tenancies. The largest increase in approach reason was seen in Domestic Abuse.

The chart below sets out the main causes of homelessness in Southwark over the last two years. The most common cause of homelessness over this time has been that parents, friends or relatives are no longer willing to accommodate the individual or household in question (32% in 2024/25). There had been a significant growth over time in the termination of assured short hold tenancies; which accounted for 30% of homelessness in 2015/16. However, this was lower in 2022/23 (18%). This is likely due to the eviction ban which was introduced during the initial lockdown for the Covid-19 pandemic. This meant landlords were required to serve longer notices and were not able to obtain court orders to formally end tenancies until this ban was lifted in June 2021.

Another notable change is that approaches due to Domestic Abuse have increased significantly, these approaches made up 7% of approaches in 2024/25. 253 households approached due to this reason in 2024/2025 and 45% of this group were homeless from family or friends accommodation and 21% were homeless from their own tenancies (both social, owner occupied and private rented). It is important to note the introduction of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 which introduced automatic priority need for those who have been made homeless for this reason. The increase in approaches from this cohort can also be accredited in part, to our joint working with Solace, who co-located with the Housing Needs service from 2018. Our service continues to invest in training and accreditation in this subject area and has encouraged officers to become Solace Champions, meaning they have up to date training as well as refreshers to keep their knowledge relevant.

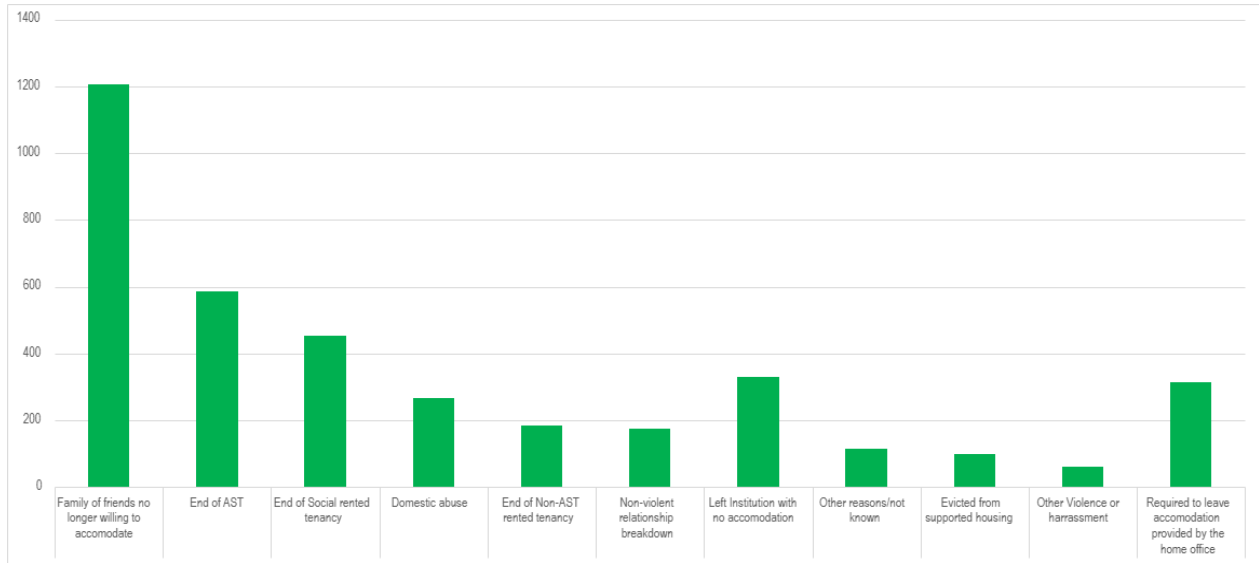
We can also see from this data that there are a number of approaches due to 'End of social rented tenancy'. This is due to HCLIC reporting categorisation and does not reflect the number of Southwark tenancies that were ended in 2024/25. This categorisation is used for any tenant who approaches with an issue with their tenancy, for example; rent arrears issues, who would be assisted with a prevention duty and helped to apply for DHP etc. This proactive approach to tenancy issues, is why this figure is our third highest approach reason.

This data also contains a significant number of records stating the "the main reason for homelessness" as "other", this can include reasons such as 'Fire, Flood or other emergency', 'property disrepair', 'Home no longer suitable due to disability/ill health' etc.

During the second half of 2023-24 the numbers of those approaching the service as a result of immigration decision began to climb rapidly as a result of the Streamlined Asylum Processing (SAP) work undertaken by the Home Office. By January 2024, 180 households, only 11% of whom were families, had approached the Council for housing assistance as a result of receiving a negative decision. The options for this group were extremely difficult given the short periods of notice and the challenges in securing private

sector solutions. This continued through 2024/25 with 9% of all approaches coming from those homeless due to a notice to leave NASS accommodation.

Main reason for loss of last settled accommodation 2024-25

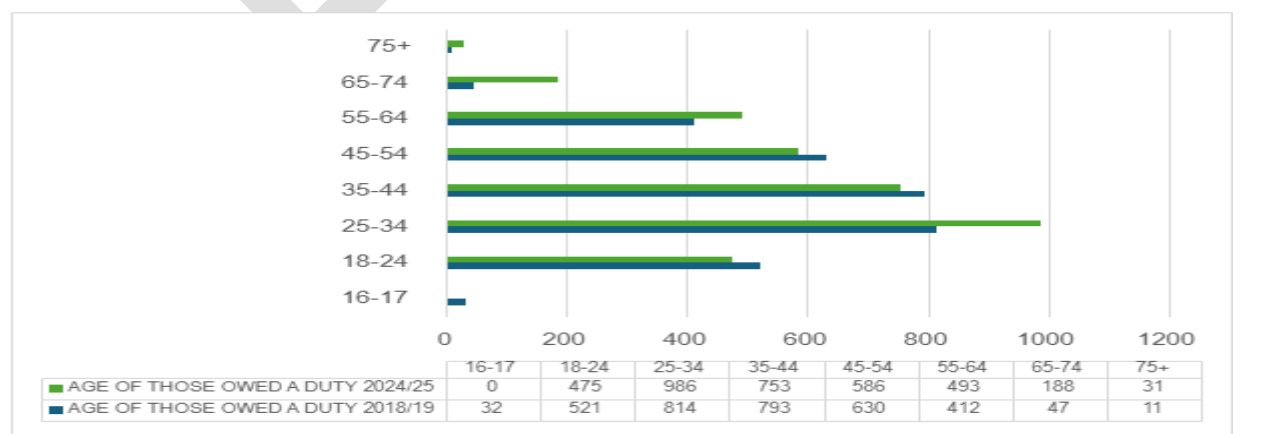


Age Profile of those approaching

4. The percentage of over 55-year-olds presenting to the service for a homelessness assessment has continued to increase from 2018 and 2024/25

The majority of main applicants accepted as owed a homeless duty are under 45 years of age, (63% in 2023/24). The largest cohort of applicants were between the ages of 25-34, making up 26% of applicants in 2023/24. This represents an increase in younger applicants on previous years. The chart below shows how this has changed since 2018/19. The largest change has been in the number of over 65 year olds approaching the service, which increased over this period. The causes of this are complex but there are links between this and housing suitability as people age, properties may no longer be fit for their needs. It is also necessary to consider the financial impact of the cost of living and fuel poverty among this group.

Age of main applicant on approach (2018/19-2024/25 comparison)

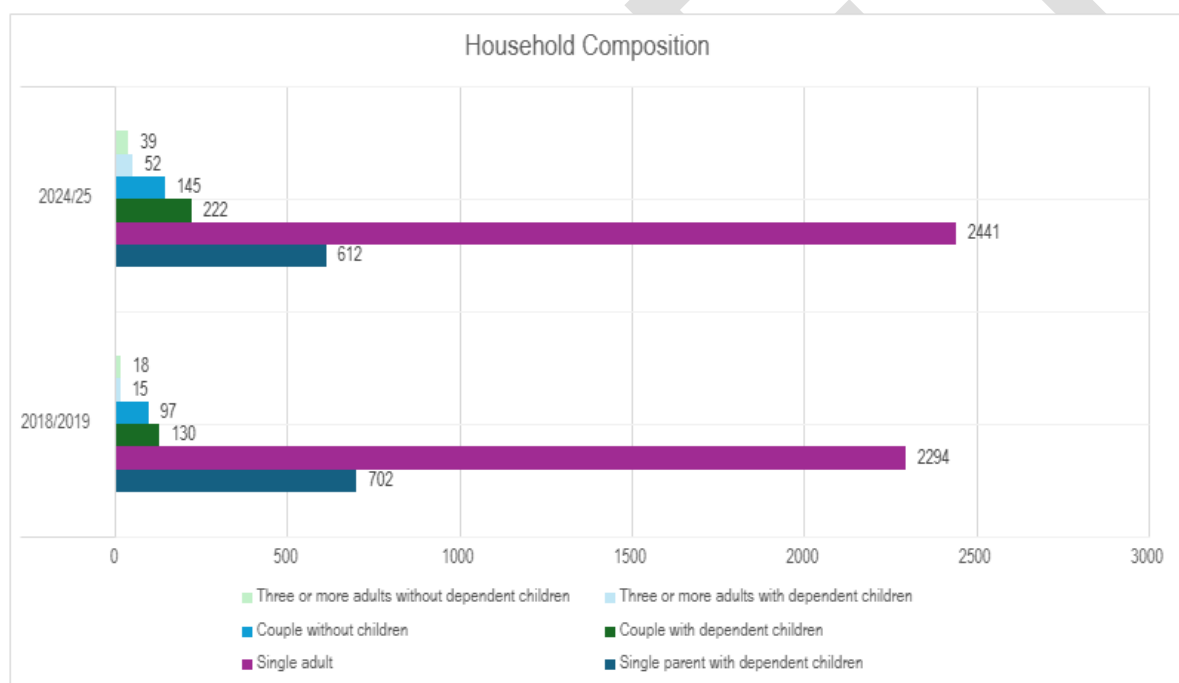


Household composition of approaches

5. The largest household type presenting to the council in 2024/25 was single adults.

The chart below sets out the range of household types accepted as owed a homelessness duty last year. Lone parent households headed by a female account for the majority of s.193 homeless duty acceptances in Southwark. We have also seen a sharp increase in the number of single homeless applicants approaching our service since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 as access to prevention and relief options were broadened. This group now make up the largest demographic of approach cases. In 2015/16, single applicants made up 14% of applications owed a duty compared to 69.5% of applications in 2024/25

Household composition of approaches in 2018/19 – 2024/25



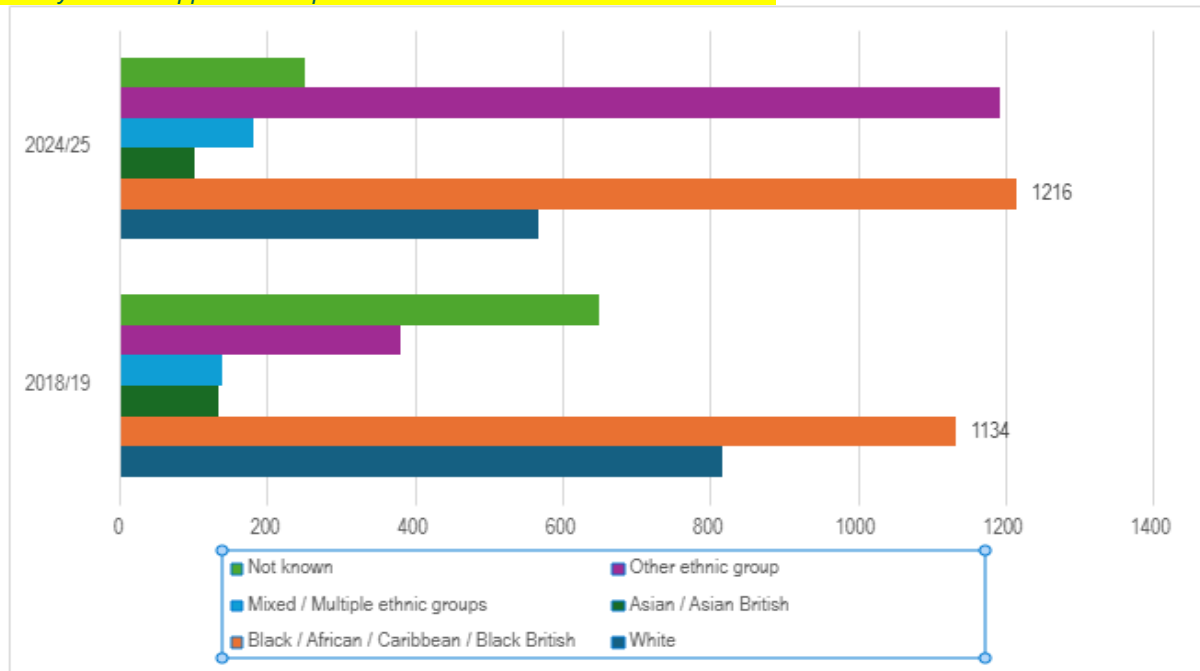
Ethnicity of household main applicant

5. Those identifying with Black/African/Caribbean/Black British ethnicity made up 36% of approaches in 23/24

This chart looks at the ethnic origin of households approaching as homeless or threatened with homelessness. There was an increase between 2020/21-2022/23 in the number of households chose not to state their ethnic origin in their initial application, this was reflective of new remote working procedures which allowed customers to fill in a registration form themselves in which 'ethnicity' was not a mandatory question. This has since been changed and we have seen a reduction in

the use of this response in our HCLC data uploads. Black/African/Caribbean/Black British make up our largest approach ethnicity followed by White.

Ethnicity of Main Applicant comparison between 2018/2019 and 2024/2025



Support needs

6. The biggest support needs identified by service users were physical ill health and mental health needs

We can see from the data that homeless households in Southwark are more likely to have a support need to report than the London average. Notably, Southwark applicants report higher levels of physical ill health and disability on average than England as a whole, as well as higher levels of repeat homelessness. Conversely, Southwark has lower levels of drug and alcohol dependency and applicants with a reported offending history approaching.

The below table shows the reported support needs of applicants in 2023/24, this data shows 55% of homeless applicants had one or more reported support need. When breaking these down, the most reported support need was 'physical ill health or disability' followed by a 'history of mental health problems', & 'at risk of/has experienced domestic abuse'.

It is important to note that these assessments are self-assessments made by the main applicant during a homeless application. It must be considered that not all applicants would report their needs in this way due to the categorisation of these fields, or simply not feeling comfortable to do so.

Support needs reported by households in 2023/24

| Number of support needs reported in 2023/2024 | | | | |
|---|----------------|-----------------|------------------|--|
| | 1 support need | 2 support needs | 3+ support needs | % of households reporting any support need (of total apps) |
| Southwark | 779 | 374 | 527 | 55% |
| London | 15,670 | 6,010 | 5,190 | 41% |

Successful Homelessness Preventions and Reliefs

7. The service prevented homelessness in 72% of all prevention duty cases issued compared to 20% of relief cases in 2024/25

The introduction of the HRA17 allowed us to get involved in cases of homelessness earlier. This has proven very successful as prevention cases have an 72% success rate compared to 20% in relief cases. This shows the importance of getting involved earlier in housing insecurity cases to resolve issues before they reach crisis point.

Below highlights the importance of this work, as we can see that more cases in prevention were successfully assisted to secure accommodation than were subsequently homeless at the end of their prevention duty. Outcomes of this will include; securing PRS properties, negotiating renewals on existing tenancies and advocacy to end eviction proceedings.

Positive Prevention outcomes v. Positive Relief Outcomes (2018/19-2023/24)

| | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| % Positive prevention outcome | 86% | 68% | 83% | 85% | 84% | 78% | 72% |
| % Positive relief outcome | 16% | 18% | 27% | 21% | 20% | 15% | 20% |

Prevention duty outcomes: Secured accommodation v. Became Homeless (2018/19-2024/25)



With the changing affordability of private rented properties in the Borough along with the cost-of-living crisis, positive outcomes for prevention cases are harder to obtain through securing new tenancies as shown below in the reducing number of PRS scheme moves achieved after the highs of the pandemic years. 2024/25 saw an increase again with 339 moves made through our two incentive schemes.

PRS scheme moves successfully completed (2018/19-2024/5)

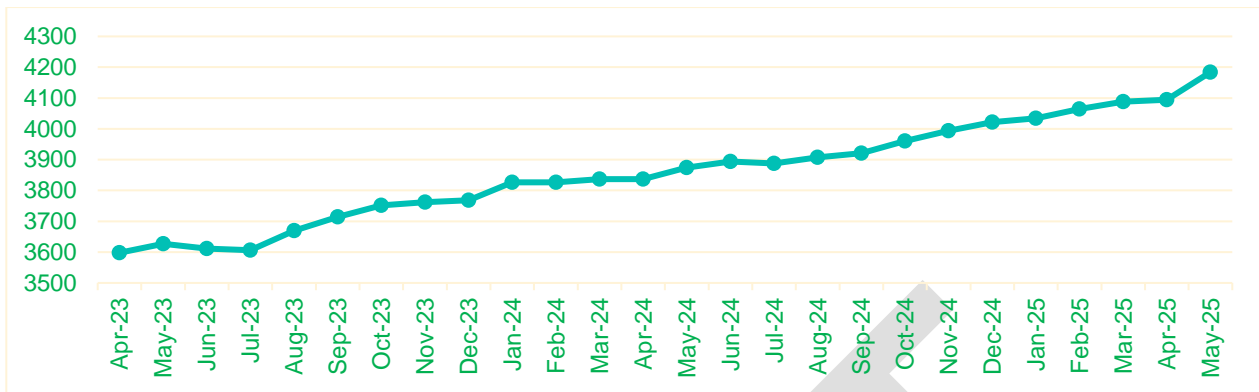
| | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Self Help Scheme's processed | 38 | 69 | 463 | 233 | 167 | 109 | 212 |
| Finder's Fee Scheme moves | 154 | 225 | 320 | 158 | 79 | 70 | 127 |

Temporary accommodation numbers

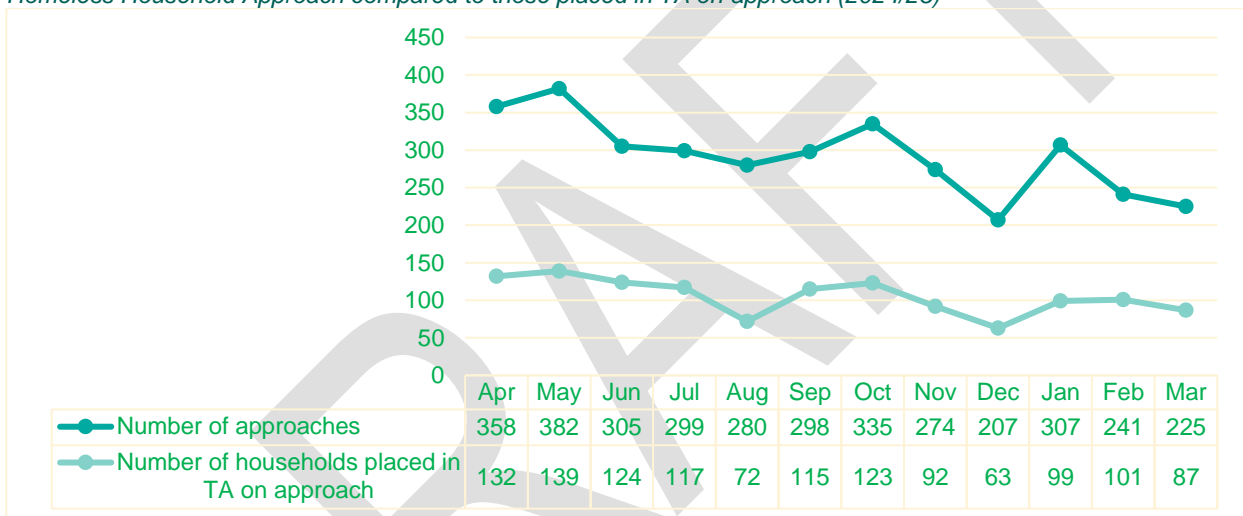
8. 4184 homeless households are in TA (as at May 2025), 1609 of which are in nightly paid accommodation

We have a high number of households in Temporary Accommodation (TA) compared to the London and Inner London average. Sourcing TA is being an increasingly difficult task as well as sourcing quality and size appropriate accommodation for our need. Our TA use has been steadily increasing over time with a 50% increase in total placements between 2020 and 2025. Of those in TA, 38% are in nightly paid accommodation. You can further see the pressure on this source of accommodation when looking at cases in TA waiting for a decision, where 62% are in nightly paid.

TA numbers Southwark April 2020-May 2025



Homeless Household Approach compared to those placed in TA on approach (2024/25)



Not all households will be placed in TA when they approach the council for assistance with their homelessness, the chart above shows that around 36% of approaches are placed in TA when they first contact us for a homelessness application.

During 2023/24-25 research by London Council's has shown numbers in TA across the capital rising for more than a year. It also highlighted homeless demand increasing sharply with greater use of bed and breakfast accommodation, including greater numbers of placements of over six weeks in breach of statutory regulation. The supply of accommodation in the private sector to prevent homelessness, or as temporary accommodation has reduced. This has led to increases in costs per unit and declining standards. Southwark has avoided the use of bed and breakfast and retained numbers in temporary accommodation, which had been stable for more than a year, but numbers began to rise rapidly in the second half of the year as housing market pressures, accommodation availability and cost of living all combined to produce an acute pressure.

The data below provides some context in which Southwark is placed in terms of temporary accommodation pressures when considering total numbers in this form of accommodation, as well as families placed in shared nightly provision and total numbers of children in these placements. To note our nearest neighbours are calculated to be

Boroughs of similar demographics and demand profiles to Southwark (as per MHCLG formulation of data sets) and are Lambeth, Hackney, Islington, Hammersmith and Fulham & Greenwich:

Source - London Councils TA data returns

| Homeless in TA | 2024 | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 |
|---------------------------|-------|------|------|------|
| Southwark | 3975 | 3741 | 3592 | 3410 |
| Nearest neighbours (ave.) | 2664 | 2327 | 2090 | 1910 |
| London wide (ave.) | 2,400 | 2063 | 2000 | 1968 |

Southwark: There has been a consistent increase in the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation, rising from 3410 in 2021 to 3975 in 2024 (17% increase). Southwark had 3975 households in TA as at October 2024, a 6% increase on the same time the previous year.

Nearest Neighbours: The trend also shows an increase, increasing 40% from 2021 to 2024.

London Wide: The number of homeless households in temporary accommodation has increased from 22% between 2021 and 2024, with a notable jump between 2023 and 2024. There was an average of 2400 households in TA in each London borough compared to Southwark's 3975 as at October 2024.

Key trend: Southwark had consistently higher numbers in TA and compared to neighbours and London average, but numbers have increased more slowly than nearest neighbours and London wide averages.

Source - London Councils TA data returns

| Families in shared TA over 6 weeks | 2024/10 | 2023/10 | 2022/10 | 2021/10 |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Southwark | 0 | 0 | 9 | 1 |
| Nearest neighbours | 27 | 6 | 4 | 1 |
| London wide | 48 | 65 | 25 | 4 |

Southwark: The number of families in shared accommodation over six weeks has remained at 0 or 1 for most years, with a slight increase in 2022.

Nearest Neighbours: There has been fluctuation here, with a significant increase in October 2024.

London Wide: The trend shows a notable increase in 2023 falling in 2024 but still remaining high.

Key Trend: Southwark consistently reports 0 families in TA over 6 weeks compared to neighbours and has managed to keep this number consistent.

Source - London Councils TA data returns

| Number of children in TA | 2024 | 2023 | 2022 | 2021 |
|--------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Southwark | 5076 | 4493 | 4095 | 3942 |
| Nearest neighbours | 3186 | 2927 | 2795 | 2555 |

Southwark: There has been a consistent increase in the number of children in temporary accommodation, rising 29% between October 2021 and October 2024, Southwark had 5076 children in TA which was a 13% increase from the previous year.

Nearest Neighbours: Another consistent increase with a 25% increase overall.

London Wide: The number of children in temporary accommodation has increased steadily from 2021 to 2022, with a significant jump between 2022 and 2023 however, this fell in October 2024 by 13%. There were an average 3172 children in TA per London Borough in October 2024, compared to Southwark's 5076.

The Housing Waiting List

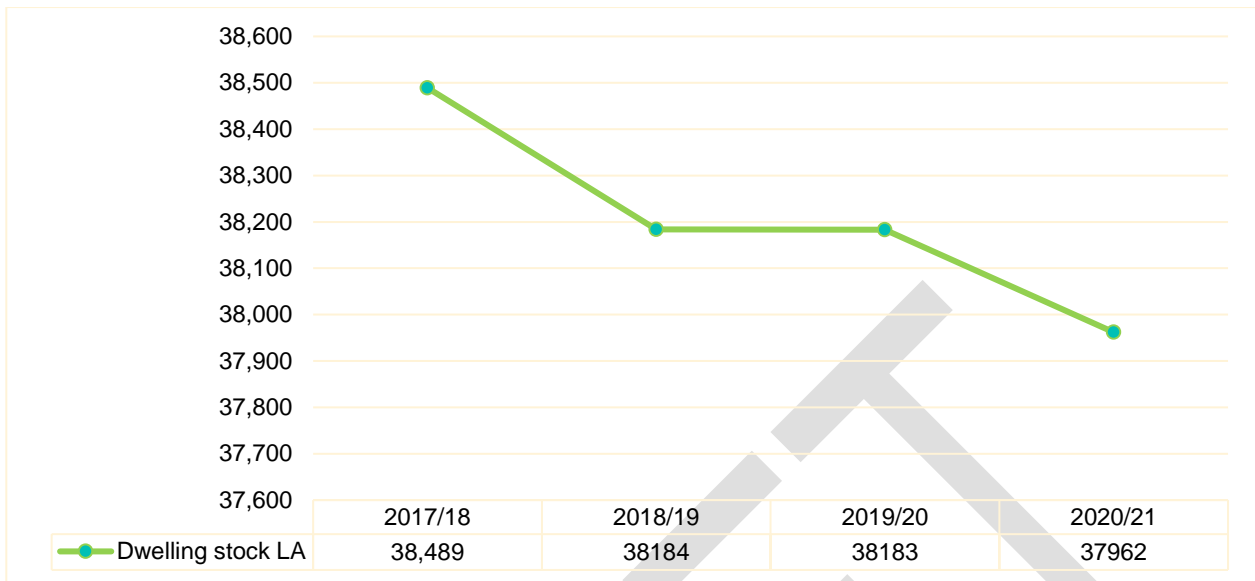
9. 19586 households are on the waiting list for social housing in Southwark with 1403 social lets made last year.

Our housing waiting list continues to grow as the housing crisis has worsened. We have over 19,000 households on the list currently with around 400-500 new applications received each month. We made 1403 lets from the register last year which shows the growing disparity between the supply and demand here.

Bed need of households on the housing waiting list May 2025

| Bed Need | Total Households |
|----------|------------------|
| 1 | 9555 |
| 2 | 4622 |
| 3 | 3320 |
| 4 | 1473 |
| 5 | 4446 |
| 6 | 91 |
| 7 | 21 |
| 8 | 5 |
| Unknown | 53 |
| TOTAL | 19,586 |

Local Authority Housing Stock (2018-2021)



Southwark has one of the largest local authority housing stocks in the country, but levels of housing need have been growing substantially in recent years. In response to this the Council has delivered high levels of new supply with a commitment to the delivery of even more, meeting need remains a challenge which is made more difficult as stock is lost to right to buy.

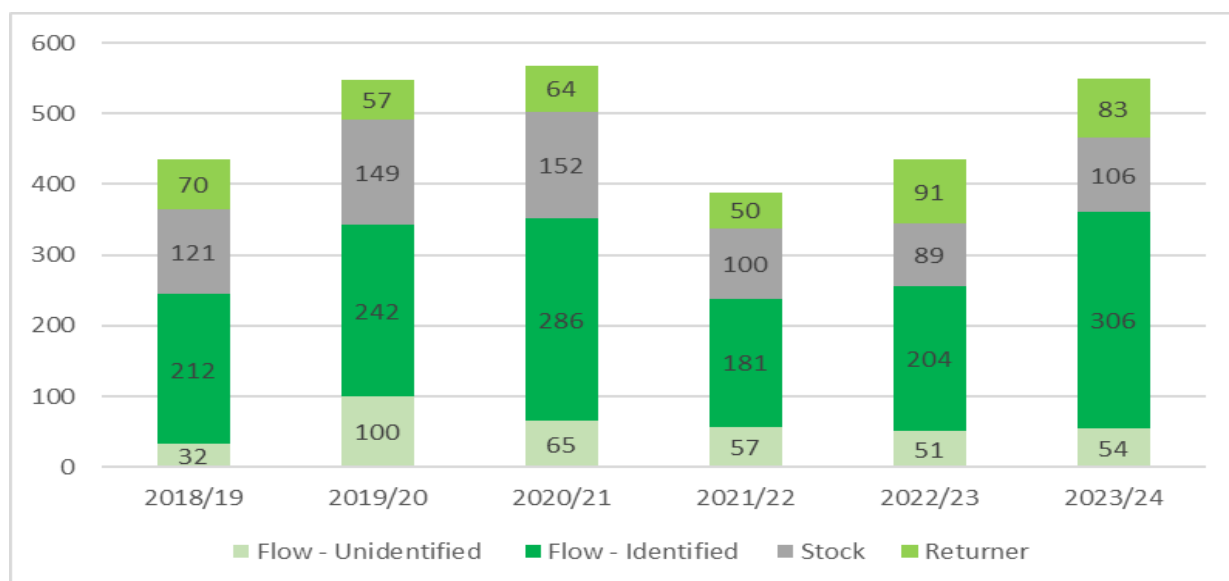
Southwark's housing register is split into priority categories. Overcrowding is the most common reason for an applicant to join the register. This is followed by homelessness and then medical needs. The table above shows that there is the greatest need for 1-bedroom properties. When looking at households who are on the register due to overcrowding, the greatest need is for 3 bed properties.

Rough Sleepers

10. Rapid rehousing navigators rehoused 154 rough sleepers in 24/25

Rough sleeping numbers have reduced in Southwark since the Pandemic. The Rapid Rehousing Navigators have been successful in expanding our off the street provision in the past 3 years as shown in the rehousing numbers. The Rapid Rehousing Project achieved 154 new Private Rented Sector (PRS) tenancies in 2024-2025. And since the beginning of this project in late 2019 the project has been able to sustain 95% of tenancies procured.

Levels of Rough Sleeping in Southwark (Chain reports)



The New Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030

The Overarching aim

To work to end homelessness through the delivery of timely, effective and collaborative support which enables Southwark residents to address their housing insecurity.

The 3 objectives

1. To use a data-led and joined up approach with our partners to identify and support those at the earliest stages of housing difficulty.
2. To ensure effective and timely advice and support is provided to help make real and lasting change for our residents.
3. To improve the outcomes of residents in the quality of our support and work together to tackle the root causes of homelessness.

The Five Priorities

Prioritise Prevention

- Improving timeliness and effectiveness of mediation and support to sustain accommodation.
- Greater use of our Homelessness data and deprivation data collected within the Council to identify and target support for 'at risk' groups.
- Improved pathways for people leaving institutions and from our statutory and community sector partners.

Key Data to consider

The most common cause of homelessness over the past 5 years has been that parents, friends or relatives are no longer willing to accommodate the individual or household in question (32% in 2024/25).

Of cases owed a duty in 2024/25, 28% were prevention compared to 72% relief, in 2022/23 preventions were 42% and relief 58%.

In 23/24 Southwark was ranked 2nd highest local authority in England for successful homelessness preventions (2nd in London)

There was an increase in approaches from PRS households between 2022/23 and 2023/24 (22% increase)

Those approaching with rent arrears issues has increased as can be seen in our DHP and Rent Arrears Fund data. There were 685 successful applications for DHP in 2024/25 with an average award of £1374 (this is 64% more than the average award in 2018).

For the 6 months from September 2024 to March 2025, 115 benefit calculations were completed using our Better Off calculator by caseworkers. 137 households were identified as missing out on benefits they were entitled to.

We received 1843 'Duty To Refers' in 2024/25 with the top 5 referrers being the DWP, Probation, the Southwark No Recourse Team, NHS & St Mungo's

Of those given a prevention duty, 72% (on average) ended positively whereas only 20% of relief cases had similar outcomes.

Through co-location with other services in the borough, Southwark Housing Needs has been able to offer financial advice and private renting support to residents at regular roadshows. Advice provided at these events include bedroom tax, DHP applications, rent arrears issues and cost of living assistance available.

As outlined by Priority 1 of Southwark's last Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, homeless prevention has been, and must remain at, the core of all the work we do. Southwark has continued to achieve some of the highest levels of homeless prevention in London year on year. Following a decade of welfare reform in the country that has added pressures to household budgets for many, we understand that our residents have more recently been significantly impacted by inflationary pressures nationally and globally. We have also seen the impact of the global Covid-19 pandemic and its residual effects on residents and communities. We therefore need to ensure we can identify those in the Borough at risk and aim to provide help before crisis point.

We must also ensure that we improve our understanding and data collection of marginalised groups such as those identifying as LGBTQ+ and to further develop the provision of advice and tailored support in partnership with key advocacy agencies. We will also be developing staff through packages of training and development to better identify and support those marginalised due to their sexual identity. Our work will also ensure residents are aware of their entitlements for a range of support with cost-of-living expenses. Although recent Government measures to uprate rental support in April 2024, this will have limited benefit given the benefit cap in place, with families renting privately at most risk of insecurity. We anticipate further reform in the private rented sector through the Renter's Reform Bill that will seek to increase the security of tenure for tenants and includes measures of removing the s21 eviction procedure, whilst in tandem supporting landlords to recover possession in specific prescribed circumstances. Concern remains that many landlords will seek to leave the private rental market as has been seen since the covid pandemic ahead of this Bill becoming Act.

From our data review and the challenges residents face now and in the years ahead, we have set out the following broad activity areas and actions to help us achieve effective homeless prevention for the next 5 years:

Improving timeliness and effectiveness of early help to sustain accommodation.

1. Improving our joint work with agencies that support debt, food and fuel poverty locally and nationally.
2. Using improved and easy to understand tools for residents and staff to use understanding how to manage household income.

Greater use of our Homelessness data and deprivation data collected within the Council to identify and target support for 'at risk' groups.

3. Using Council data to identify those in difficulty and to target tailored support early.

Improved pathways for people leaving institutions and from our statutory and community sector partners.

4. Developing bi-monthly prevention forums with social housing providers and community partners to identify housing issues, improve our referral pathways and develop best practice.
5. The Housing Needs service will proactively work with NHS partners to ensure residents requiring hospital discharge are provided with the discharge pathway appropriate to their needs.
6. Training offer for our enforcement teams, local partners, the Police and enforcement bodies around homeless prevention, illegal eviction and harassment.
7. Joint work with Court advocacy services and improve outcomes for those facing eviction proceedings.
8. Work proactively with partners and accommodation providers around the streamlined asylum process to prevent homelessness or provide a sustainable solution.

Deliver High Quality Advice & Support

- Rapid, consistent and high-quality housing advice when it's needed with improvements to our advice provision.
- To reduce the number of new households going into temporary accommodation by accessing suitable affordable private rented sector accommodation.
- Enhancing our intervention around unlawful landlord and agent activity in Southwark's private Rented Sector.

Key data to consider

The number of applications for homelessness assistance increased significantly with the introduction of the HRA17 with the expansion of provision this introduced. Applications increased 88% from 2016/17 to 2024/25.

We answered 40758 calls from customers looking for advice on homelessness and rough sleeping in 2024/25.

We received 3813 homelessness enquiry web forms in 2022/23 compared to 2764 web forms in 2021/22, this was an increase of 38% (webforms have since been discontinued as a method of first contact with the service).

There was a significant increase in demand for homelessness assistance throughout the pandemic and despite levelling out (-18% change between 2020/21 - 2022/23), applications increased in 2023/24 and in 2024/25.

When housing insecurity leads to homelessness, we must ensure that high quality, tailored and readily accessible advice and support is delivered promptly, that addresses our diverse needs of our residents. The Council and its partners need to work to improve mediation with family members when there is a relationship breakdown and to ensure protections for those renting privately are upheld.

Southwark is also reviewing the delivery of its hybrid homelessness and advice services to ensure that resident needs and circumstances are central to its operation. The Council will be working towards an offer of a same day initial and full homeless application wherever needed and to provide this face to face when required or requested by residents. Residents who require support in a housing related emergency will always be able to avail of face-to-face support and advice and our referral partners will be central to ensuring the advantages of a hybrid model of service delivery are utilised.

We understand that our residents may not seek the advice they need by approaching us directly and so we will be looking for even more opportunities to co-locate with our partner agencies to ensure the support is available at the earliest opportunity.

Our work will continue to provide the specialist support for vulnerable groups, such as those at risk of or victim to domestic abuse, those leaving care and our young persons, or those at risk due to their sexual identity. We'll be continuing to improve protection for those renting privately and using the enforcement powers and network of internal teams and external agencies to ensure poor landlord and agency practice are tackled. We have therefore set out the following broad activity aims and actions to achieve this over the next 5 years:

Rapid, consistent and high-quality housing advice when it's needed with improvements to our advice provision.

9. Improving the delivery and quality of the Council's housing advice offer at the earliest stages for our residents.
10. Refreshing the Council's webpages to ensure advice and information is more readily available and accessible to all communities and to provide a comprehensive list of wider agencies to help.
11. Exploring the co-location and outreach for early advice in the community – e.g Social Prescriber sites, food banks, LGBTQ+ support and advocacy services and other community agencies.

To meet the diverse needs of the residents we serve to access suitable affordable settled accommodation.

12. Expanding support to deliver advice in the community that helps resolve relationship breakdown.
13. Review access to Housing Solutions services post-covid and implement a new service delivery model.
14. To continue to provide specialist support and rapid intervention to those at risk of, or victim of domestic abuse.
15. To continue to deliver prompt and high-quality advice and support for our care leavers and young persons in meeting their ongoing housing needs.

Enhancing our intervention around unlawful landlord and agent activity in Southwark's private rented sector.

16. Improving the delivery of advice and support in the community through joint visits with enforcement teams.
17. Ensuring a joined-up approach is maintained to tackle the subletting of accommodation in the borough.
18. Delivering a robust response to criminal offences to protect residents in this sector through a rogue landlord taskforce and exploring further commissioning where required.

Work to End Rough Sleeping

- Aligning all activity to the Governments 4 key objectives of improving prevention, intervention, recovery and developing joined up and transparent systems to make rough sleeping rare, brief and non-recurrent.
- Tackling new flow to the street and partnering with local statutory and voluntary sector partners to develop an improved prevention framework of activity.
- Working with Government to maximise funding for local projects that will benefit those rough sleeping in Southwark
- Developing new off the street options and expanding Housing First provision for those experiencing multiple exclusion homelessness.
- Developing new off the street options and expanding housing first provision for the most complex rough sleepers.

Key data to consider

Southwark has access to over 900 supported housing bed spaces which cater to variety of needs including learning disabilities, young people and mental health needs.

279 referrals for supported accommodation were made in 2024/25.

Southwark has received £10.48 million in Homeless Prevention Grant (HPG) along with £2.60 million in Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant (RSPARG) from Government for 2025/2026.

The Rapid Rehousing and Supported Lettings service achieved 154 new PRS tenancies for rough sleepers in 2024/25 and has been able to sustain 95% of all tenancies procured since its introduction in 2019.

20 cases were heard at the Complex Needs Advisory Panel in 2023/24.

CHAIN data shows that rough sleeping increased 41% between 2021/22 and 2023/24.

There was an average of 93 rough sleepers seen in Southwark each month in 2024/25

65% of rough sleepers in Southwark (23/24) were new to the streets, 19% had been seen in the year previous and 15% had not been seen in 2022/23 but had been seen before this.

47% of new CHAIN recorded rough sleepers were homeless from a long term accommodation (this includes living with family, PRS and social housing). 36% were homeless from Institutional and armed forces accommodation (this includes NASS accommodation), 6% were homeless from short/medium term accommodation such as hostels, asylum support

We, like central Government understand that the collection of data in this area of work is in need of further development to understand the risk factors that lead too many residents to sleeping rough and know that further insight to improve our prevention and pathway from crisis point when reached is critical. Southwark will be joining organisations and Government to improve data collection, sharing and analysis. We will continue to develop our nationally recognised rough sleeping service and partnerships to use an improved data-led approach to tackle those at risk of rough sleeping. Aligning with the Government Strategy we will ensure we can enhance our prevention and intervention around rough sleeping. We'll be working to continually expand our provision, including our Housing First Programme to help rough sleepers off the streets and enable greater sustainment of longer-term accommodation for those with complex needs. This will involve making full use of grant from the Single Homeless Accommodation Programme (SHAP), Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP).

We will be doing so by improving our systems and working transparently with our partners, neighbouring Authorities and Government. We have therefore set out the following broad activity aims and actions to achieve over the next 5 years:

Tackling new flow to the street and partnering with local statutory and voluntary sector partners to develop an improved prevention framework of activity.

19. Improving our collection of data to improve prevention and intervention with rough sleepers.
20. Using new Government tools such as the rough sleeping prevention tool and strategic insights tool to identify those at risk or rough sleeping.
21. Working with the Home Office and providers to fully integrate with DTR processes and ensure a joined-up and resident-focussed approach is maintained.
22. Ensuring local Home Office accommodation providers work with the Council to provide early notice of decisions that enable the Housing Service and Stronger Neighbourhoods teams to identify housing solutions and wider support.

Expanding off the street provision and housing options and support for those with complex needs.

23. Supporting the role of the commissioned Street Outreach Service
24. Continuing to secure Government grant through sole bids and those we can make jointly with our partner agencies and Authorities.
25. To continue the use of multi-agency and disciplinary panels to deliver joined up and customer focussed outcomes.
26. To improve supported hostel access and move on for rough sleepers.
27. To expand support initiatives for persons experiencing multiple exclusion homelessness, such as Housing First.
28. To continue and develop our partnerships with the commissioned Substance Misuse Service, the commissioned Street Outreach Service, Education, Training and Employment services, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust and other voluntary, community and faith-based agencies to provide a holistic package of support for service users to build and maintain independence.

Quality Outcomes Through Housing Provision

- Improved timeliness of access to accommodation commensurate to residents' needs.
- Improving access to and pathway through Supported Housing.
- Learning and improving the standards of our support.
- Improving the standards of our accommodation types.
- Minimising the use and duration of interim accommodation wherever possible.

Key data to consider:

There are currently over 19,586 households on the waiting list for social housing in Southwark. We made 1403 lets in 24/25.

There were 65 'smart moves' completed in 24/25 - these are lets through our under occupiers scheme which moves households into properties that match their needs and frees up bedrooms for overcrowded households.

We have 401 households with an under occupiers category on their application, 94 with a statutory overcrowded priority and 4981 with a more general overcrowding code.

We secured 339 private rented sector lets (excluding rough sleeper lets through our navigator team) in 2024/25.

Average rents in Southwark are around 33% higher than LHA rates.

Surveys of temporary accommodation residents on the quality of their accommodation returned an average positive response rate of 89% last year.

The average stay in TA for households is around 25 months

A TA visiting team was set up in 2023 – 345 visits were completed in 24/25 to check standards, talk about move on options and to check occupancy.

Understanding that all forms of suitable and affordable accommodation are reducing, it is incumbent upon Southwark to ensure we make best use of the accommodation available for our residents. Through our Housing Strategy we'll be targeting empty properties in the borough, and we will be aiming to improve all options for our Secure and Assured tenants to move to good quality and more suitably sized accommodation for their needs.

With the significant achievements in Southwark's new homes programme, we will be supporting homeless households settle from temporary accommodation, as well as enabling re-housing for those in most urgent need across the borough.

We'll also be improving access to specialist accommodation types and working with partners in accessing accommodation in the private rented sector. We'll be listening and learning from our residents to improve our services and drive-up standards across all accommodation types.

We will be improving the channels we have for feedback and introduce regular sessions with service users and initiating insight sessions through an expert panel of residents with lived experience of homelessness and housing insecurity to help inform and develop our work further. Our work will also include wider ranging strengths-based training and development with the aid of service user feedback and lived experience.

Through this work, we'll improve standards, continue to minimise the take up and duration of emergency accommodation wherever possible for the benefit of our residents and meet budget commitments. We have therefore set out the following broad activity aims and actions to achieve over the next 5 years:

Improved timelines of access to accommodation that meets the needs of residents

- 29. To improve housing mobility schemes within the Council to optimise the use and access to Southwark's stock including the development of Southwark's Smart Move offer.
- 30. To increase access to specialist accommodation types such as sheltered and extra care.

Improving access to and pathway through supported housing.

- 31. With better assessments of resident needs, we'll seek to improve the access to supported accommodation generally.

Learning and improving the standards of our accommodation

- 32. Working across the Council to ensure our Good Homes Standard commitments are achieved, with close monitoring of standards and clear information provided to residents to tackle poor provision.

33. To help establish a temporary accommodation working group with partner agencies and resident groups to collectively identify and tackle issues faced by households and improve services to access health and resettlement support.
34. Establishing customer focus groups through our 'you said we did' feedback channel so that we can continually learn and improve our services.

Minimising the use and duration of interim accommodation wherever possible.

35. To ensure sufficient allocations of properties for homeless applicants are maintained.
36. To develop partnerships with housing supply providers so that quality, settled private rented accommodation is available.
37. Developing improved support for those moving and settling to new homes in and beyond our borough across all types of housing.
38. To work with council colleagues to secure an increase in the delivery of genuinely affordable housing for Southwark residents, including new council homes and through innovative schemes such as that provided by Centrepoin in Peckham.

Tackling Systemic Housing Insecurity

- Protecting communities and challenging inequality where it manifests in housing insecurity and working with internal and external partners to enhance this work.
- Improving resident access to employment, skills and eligible support to mitigate heightened financial pressures.
- Empowering residents with a realistic and comprehensive appraisal of how they can mitigate housing insecurity to make the right choices in their customer journey.
- Making the case for changes to Government for regulation, supply and support for residents.

Key data to consider:

Our Homelessness Forum which is chaired by Southwark Law Centre occurs every quarter and has an attendance of around 35 different agencies.

In the first 6 months of 2024/25 our partnership with Beam assisted with signing up 27 residents for help with job seeking and training (this partnership was amended in 2024/25 so outcomes from this are not yet available).

394 cases were taken by our Private Rented Sector Team in 2024/25 to help with evictions and problems with private rented landlords.

A Landlord forum held in 2023 saw 34 private landlord attend to hear on legislative update, licensing news and information on working with the council.

22% of approaches for homelessness assistance in 2024/25 were from Private Rented Tenants.

Evictions from Southwark secure tenancies totalled 18 in 2022/23, with the highest rate in 2018/19 and 2019/20 which saw 64 and 62 respectively.

We understand that Southwark Council alone cannot resolve the deepening housing crisis that is impacting our residents and communities. Southwark is committed to working in partnership with statutory and community partners to help our residents build resilience and where possible, resolve their housing issue and to be open and transparent with the help we can provide so that informed choices can be made. We will remain committed to addressing systemic inequality in the borough that manifests in housing insecurity.

With the growing insecurity we are seeing for those renting privately in the borough, Southwark will be working through the Private Renter Support Organisation. This key partnership with Citizen's Advice Southwark, will include forums for tenants and partner organisations as well as 'know your rights' sessions to build resilience of tenants and identify where to seek help at the earliest stage.

Southwark will be initiating a twice-yearly strategic partnership roundtable for stakeholders to ensure our overarching aims, priorities and objectives to meet these under our strategy are reviewed, as well as reviewing the learning from insight sessions from panel experts with lived experience. The board will serve to align the activities of stakeholders and enable the collective progress and fulfilment of our work is maintained for our residents. In conjunction with our strategic roundtable.

We'll be joining other Authorities in making the case for change to central Government for the policies and resources we all need to make homelessness more generally rare, brief and non-recurrent. **This**

will include a call for a change to LHA rates and a lift on the benefit cap to improve the purchasing power of residents and Authorities to access accommodation.

We will also support reform to the temporary accommodation subsidy regime, currently linked to January 2011 LHA rates, to ensure that the costs of securing accommodation are more closely linked to the subsidy available to provide it.

We will also seek increased provisions for rough sleepers with no recourse to public funds and discretionary housing payments to improve homeless prevention activity.

We have therefore set out the following broad activity aims and actions to achieve over the next 5 years:

Protecting communities and challenging inequality that results in housing insecurity. Working with internal and external partners to enhance this work.

- 39. To ensure our homelessness forum is continued and widened to include more partners working in health and justice.
- 40. To work in partnership with Southwark's private renter's organisation in driving up standards in Southwark's private rented sector.
- 41. To reintroduce a twice-yearly strategic roundtable, Chaired by our Cabinet Member, to bring partners together to assess the progress of all stakeholders' work against the strategy and our action plan.
- 42. To improve pathways and work with vulnerable communities such as those identifying as LGBTQ+.

Improving resident access to employment, skills and eligible support to mitigate heightened financial pressures.

- 43. Improving the delivery of our Southwark Works programme and supporting expansion with partner agencies.
- 44. Working with external providers in the community that deliver employment and skills support to those at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping.

Empowering residents with a realistic and comprehensive appraisal of how they can resolve their housing issues, where possible and make informed choices.

- 45. To ensure a realistic appraisal of support is given. That this is understood and communicated through all partner agencies and those working with our residents.
- 46. That our support and advice is tailored to ensure residents can make informed choices that empower them to resolve their housing issues.

Making the case for change to Government to communicate local and regional housing need and redress to wider impacts that lead to housing insecurity and inequality.

- 47. Develop incentives for landlords to participate in the lower end of the market.
- 48. Enable public acquisition of properties leaving the market for our procurement through grant programmes such as the Local Authority Housing Fund. Ensure these solutions with adequate levels of funding to make development and acquisition viable.
- 49. Support new development of social homes through a grant programme that properly funds the cost of supply and supports the removal of wider barriers to building.

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Priority one: Prioritise Homelessness prevention -

| Ref. No. | Description of Issue | Action | Proposed Timeframe | Lead(s) on delivery |
|----------|--|--|---|--|
| 1. | <i>Improving the timeliness and effectiveness of early help to sustain accommodation.</i> | <p>Improving our joint work with agencies that support debt, food and fuel poverty locally and nationally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Widening services across the Council that can contribute to Southwark's cost of living crisis roadshow to include providers of Southwark Works delivery partners. - Increasing referrals to partner agencies such as Citizens Advice Southwark and Step Change and monitoring through personal housing plan reviews. - Ensuring relevant agencies are included in our initial advice offer digitally and our Council website has a comprehensive outline of these sources of help for residents. | Monitoring and reviewing at end of QR 4 2025-2026. | <p><i>Housing Needs, St Giles Trust, Beam Up Ltd, Citizens Advice Southwark and Private Renters Support Organisation</i></p> <p><i>Housing Needs and review at Homelessness and Prevention Forums.</i></p> |
| 2. | | <p>Using improved and easy to understand tools for residents and staff to use understanding how to manage household income.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing the use of Southwark's online benefit and income maximisation tool by residents through monitoring. - Ensuring the enhanced benefit and income maximisation tool is used for every homeless application and monitoring the completion and use of these in casework reviews. | Monitoring and reviewing at end of QR 2 2025-2026. | <p><i>Southwark's Housing Needs service and web team and digital platform partner.</i></p> <p><i>Southwark's Housing Needs service</i></p> |
| 3. | <i>Greater use of our Homelessness data and deprivation data collected within the Council to identify and target support for 'at risk' groups.</i> | <p>Using Council data to identify those in difficulty and to target tailored support early.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with our partners in exchequer services to access and utilise a borough wide LIFT dashboard and commence early intervention work with targeted households - To enhance our view of resident risk and needs with data held across the Council and to complete at least 4 interventions through direct communication and visits with impacted groups per year - To explore further sources of data held within the Council that can be added to the dashboard to provide greater insight into risk factors linked to housing insecurity. - Improving data collections on vulnerable groups, especially those who identify as LGBTQ+ to ensure we are offering an inclusive service that meets the needs of residents. | <p>End of Q2 2025-2026</p> <p>End of Q3 2025-2026</p> <p>Ongoing and to review at 6 months from implementation.</p> <p>Monitoring and reviewing at end of QR 2 2025-2026.</p> | <p><i>Southwark's Exchequer and Housing Needs services.</i></p> <p><i>Housing Needs service.</i></p> <p><i>Southwark's Housing Needs, Public Health Private Sector Housing Enforcement services and Strategic board</i></p> <p><i>Southwark's Housing Needs and Public Health service.</i></p> |
| 4. | <i>Improved pathways for people leaving institutions and from</i> | <p>Developing bi-monthly prevention forums with social housing providers and community partners to identify housing issues, improve our referral pathways and develop best practice.</p> | By end of year 1 from implementation date. | <i>Southwark's Housing Needs service.</i> |

Appendix 4 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan 2025-2030

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| | our statutory and community sector partners. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a bi-monthly forum. - To agree terms of reference and shared performance indicators to improve homeless prevention in the borough. - To raise awareness of issues creating housing insecurity and identifying solutions collectively. - To share information gathered from our Duty to Refer Pathway to identify service improvement work with our partners. - To inform further and wider representations to London Councils, Centre for Homelessness Impact and MHCLG to lobby for evidence-based change. | | |
| 5. | | <p>The Housing Needs service will proactively work with NHS partners to ensure that persons experiencing homelessness and requiring hospital discharge are provided with the discharge pathway appropriate to their needs, as set out in the 2024 DHSC/MHCLG statutory guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through training and ongoing monitoring of approaches and outcomes, we will ensure customer-facing teams understand the published evidence-base for Out of Hospital Care Models. - Ensure customer-facing teams have good legal literacy around care and support needs, mental capacity and homelessness. | <p>From implementation and reviewed quarterly.</p> <p>Relevant training to be completed by end of Q2 2025-2026</p> | <p>Housing Needs, commissioned services, Guys and St Thomas, Kings College Hospital, SLAM, Adult Social Care.</p> |
| 6. | | <p>Training offer for our enforcement teams, local partners, the Police and enforcement bodies around homeless prevention, illegal eviction and harassment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To conduct training and briefings for all enforcement teams on the objectives of the Homelessness Reduction Act to demonstrate the importance of homeless prevention and information sharing as well as support available. - For Southwark's PRS Team to re-deliver its training session for Southwark's police force with our Special Investigations Team and provide an annual refresher for Officers. - For quarterly joint briefings with enforcement teams to be delivered to key partner advice agencies to help raise awareness with our residents. | <p>By end of year 1 from implementation date.</p> | <p>Housing Needs and Special Investigations Team</p> <p>Southwark's Housing Needs, Planning Enforcement, Trading Standards, Community Safety and Private Rented Sector Housing Enforcement services.</p> |
| 7. | | <p>Joint work with Court advocacy services and improve outcomes for those facing eviction proceedings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a joint working protocol with our Legal Aid Agency contractors (currently Duncan Lewis solicitors) for Southwark resident cases at County Courts. - Improving the contractor's provision of tailored advice and support available through Council and partner agencies. | <p>Ongoing – review at 6 months</p> <p>By end of Q2 2025-2026</p> <p>To monitor and review by end of Q2 2025-2026</p> <p>To monitor and review by end of Q2 2025-2026</p> | <p>Southwark Housing Needs service and Legal aid courts contractor.</p> |

Appendix 4 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan 2025-2030

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring timely referrals to and from the duty scheme and early advice schemes are made. | | |
| 8. | | <p>Work proactively with partners and accommodation providers around the streamlined asylum process to prevent homelessness, or provide a sustainable solution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a joint working protocol with our community partners in order to continue and develop key partnerships that provide outreach, accommodation and support to this group. - Continue co-location of weekly outreach surgeries at partner services. - Establish rota of teams to attend surgeries including other services in the council. | <p>On-going – review at 6 months</p> <p>By end of Q2 2025-2026</p> <p>Commenced and to be reviewed quarterly</p> <p>Ongoing and to review Quarterly</p> | <p>Southwark Housing Needs service</p> <p>Housing Needs, St Giles Trust, Beam Up Ltd, Kineara, Citizens Advice Southwark and Private Renters Support Organisation</p> <p>Housing Needs, St Giles Trust, Citizens Advice Southwark</p> <p>Housing Needs, NRPF, Pecan, Legal Aid contractor</p> |

Priority two: Deliver High Quality Advice & Support

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| 9. | <p>Rapid, consistent and high-quality housing advice when it's needed with improvements to our advice provision.</p> | <p>Improving the delivery and quality of the Council's housing advice offer at the earliest stages of difficulty for our residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The development and implementation of an online advice platform 'Advice Aid' for residents and staff to use. - To provide consistent and high-quality advice through this platform that can be disseminated for residents and used in further casework. - To ensure staff receive regular training and development around effective casework and that referrals under s198 to other Authorities wherever relevant are made promptly and accurately so that delays in assessments are minimised. - To ensure personalised housing plans are tailored to the needs of residents through regular casework audits, caseload reviews with senior management and advice and guidance through caseworker monthly meetings. - To continue to hold monthly Housing Law and effective case management sessions within the service to maintain high quality assessments and decision making. | <p>To be implemented by Q2 2025-2026.</p> <p>To monitor and review quarterly.</p> <p>Ongoing and reviewed Quarterly.</p> <p>Ongoing and reviewed Quarterly</p> <p>Ongoing and reviewed Quarterly</p> | <p>Advice aid and Southwark's housing Needs service.</p> <p>Southwark's housing Needs service.</p> <p>Southwark's housing Needs service.</p> <p>Southwark's housing Needs service.</p> <p>Southwark's housing Needs service.</p> |
| 10. | | <p>Refreshing the Council's webpages to ensure advice and information is more readily available and accessible to all communities and to provide a comprehensive list of wider agencies to help.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete a comprehensive review of the Southwark website. - To amend and update all content relating to our advisory services addressing housing insecurity. | <p>Current and due to complete end of Q3 2025-2026.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>To monitor and review Quarterly.</p> | <p>Southwark's housing Needs service.</p> |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To periodically review our site's efficiency and ease of access for the varied needs of our residents through feedback, google analytics and our technology team. | | |
| 11. | | <p>Exploring the co-location and outreach for early advice in the community – e.g Social Prescriber sites, food banks, LGBTQ+ support and advocacy services and other community agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To seek advice surgeries and/or briefings with North and South Borough social prescriber sites. - To seek and evaluate advice surgeries and/or briefings with foodbank venues. - To seek and evaluate advice surgeries and/or briefings with identified hubs through Southwark's homelessness forum. - To coordinate within and outside the Council to help develop targeted and tailored support for our residents who identify as LGBTQ+ with referrals to specialist community agencies for advice and support. | <p>Ongoing – review at 6 months</p> <p>Co-locating Feasibility assessments completed by end of Q2 2025-2026.</p> | <p>Southwark Housing Needs and Public Health, Quay Health CIC, Improving Health Ltd,</p> <p>Housing Needs, Pecan and Homelessness forum attendees.</p> <p>Housing Needs, Public Health, Community Southwark, Stonewall , The Outside Project and LGBTQ+ Community Centre</p> |
| 12. | To meet the diverse needs of the residents we serve to access suitable affordable settled accommodation. | <p>Expanding support to deliver advice in the community that helps resolve relationship breakdown.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To increase the number of in-home assessments by our visiting officers. - To develop best practice and benchmark initiatives to sustain accommodation using the prevention forum locally and wider initiatives through intelligence networks such as the Centre for Homelessness Impact (CHI.) | <p>Ongoing – review at 6 months.</p> <p>Ongoing and to review monthly.</p> <p>To complete development by end of Q3 2025-2026.</p> | <p>Southwark's Housing Needs service.</p> <p>Housing Needs, Centre for Homelessness Impact and homeless prevention forum attendees.</p> |
| 13. | | <p>Review access to Housing Needs services post-covid and implement a new service delivery model.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benchmarking with other Local Authorities to gain insight into effective hybrid models of service delivery. - Deliver streamlined processes of initial contact for emergency approaches and facilitating the offer for face-to-face appointments. - Increasing the availability of same day assessments. - To ensure those requiring emergency accommodation at point of initial contact have been fully assessed to help them settle as soon as possible. - Working with our referral partners and service users to continually develop our service access arrangements. - To ensure residents have easy access to translation services and a fully accessible front facing facility is maintained for those with physical disabilities. | <p>Commenced and to be reviewed quarterly</p> <p>Completed, but to be reviewed periodically.</p> | <p>Southwark's Housing Needs and facilities management services,</p> <p>Homelessness and Prevention fora partners.</p> |

Appendix 4 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan 2025-2030

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To ensure staff have regular training on trauma informed practice and making every contact count to improve the quality of advice provision and effective coordination among partner services. | | |
| 14. | | <p>To continue to provide specialist support and rapid intervention to those at risk of, or victim of domestic abuse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Residents at risk or victim of domestic abuse will continue to receive prompt, specialist and discrete advice and intervention to ensure their safety. - To continue the commissioning of specialist support in Domestic Abuse through IDVAs. - Residents at risk will be central and involved in Southwark's plan to support through an open, coordinated and informed personalised housing plan. | Current and reviewed monthly. | Southwark's Housing Needs service and our commissioned partner. |
| 15. | | <p>To continue to deliver prompt and high-quality advice and support for our care leavers and young persons in meeting their ongoing housing needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Southwark will build on its position as a corporate parent and ensure provisions under s17 and s20 of the Children's Act are continually developed. - To develop a revised joint housing protocol which is to be continually reviewed. - Deliver a new protocol specifically related to care leavers | <p>Ongoing – review at 6 months</p> <p>To implement by Q3 2025-2026</p> | Southwark's Housing Needs and Childrens' Services. |
| 16. | Enhancing our intervention around unlawful landlord and agent activity in Southwark's private rented sector. | <p>Improving the delivery of advice and support in the community through joint visits by enforcement teams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From our rogue landlord taskforce, joint visits to properties in question will be identified. Utilising intelligence from the taskforce or other confirmed data sources, (see action 4 and 19,) in scheduling visits. - Using improved and shared systems for residents to raise complaints. | To Implemented by Q1 2026-2027. | Southwark's Housing Needs, Planning Enforcement, Trading Standards, Community Safety and Private Rented Sector Housing Enforcement services. |
| 17. | | <p>Ensuring a joined-up approach is maintained to tackle the subletting of accommodation in the borough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To develop robust partnerships to improve detection of housing fraud in the Borough. - To share data through the rogue landlord taskforce and raise awareness with our partners so subletting of Assured and Secure tenancies are tackled collectively. | Ongoing – review at 6 months | Southwark's Housing Needs, Special Investigations and Private Rented Sector Housing Enforcement services. Housing Association tenancy fraud teams. |
| 18. | | <p>Delivering a robust response to criminal offences to protect residents in this sector through a rogue landlord taskforce and exploring further commissioning where required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through the taskforce, teams can identify offences across disciplines. | By end of year 2. | Southwark's Housing Needs, Planning Enforcement, Trading Standards, Community Safety and Private Rented Sector Housing Enforcement services. |

Appendix 4 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan 2025-2030

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>With improved data collection and analysis take collective action to tackle poor performance.</i> - <i>Develop partnerships with organisations that support enforcement work.</i> | | |
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Priority three: Work to End Rough Sleeping

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| 19. | <i>Tackling new flow to the street and partnering with Government to develop an improved prevention framework of activity.</i> | <p>Improving our collection of data to improve prevention and intervention with rough sleepers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Improving the reporting of rough sleeping through homelessness data collected by the Council (HCLIC data) by initial assessment and casework teams through regular reporting and monitoring.</i> - <i>Improving the reporting through HCLIC data, of prevention and relief with rough sleeping cases.</i> | Current and to be reviewed quarterly | <i>Southwark's Housing Needs service and DLUHC.</i> |
| 20. | | <p>Using new Government tools such as the rough sleeping prevention tool and strategic insights tool to identify those at risk or rough sleeping.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Utilising Government tools as they are trialled and support their development and implementation.</i> - <i>Ensuring partners are involved in the development and delivery of these tools.</i> | <p>Ongoing – review at 6 months from implementation.</p> <p>Current and to be reviewed quarterly</p> | <p><i>Southwark's Housing Needs service and DLUHC.</i></p> <p><i>Homelessness forum partner organisations.</i></p> |
| 21. | | <p>Working with the Home Office and providers to fully integrate with DTR processes and ensure a joined-up and resident-focussed approach is maintained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Improving the information exchange with the Home Office and using shared systems such as Clearspring is fully utilised.</i> - <i>Working with Home Office accommodation providers to provide information and upstream prevention opportunities.</i> - <i>Working with community partners to support those leaving Home Office provision holistically.</i> | <p>Ongoing – review at 6 months</p> <p>Current and to be reviewed quarterly</p> | <p><i>Southwark's Housing Needs service and the Home Office.</i></p> <p><i>Homelessness forum partner organisations.</i></p> |
| 22. | | <p>Ensuring local Home Office accommodation providers work with the Council to provide early notice of decisions that enable the Housing Service and Stronger Neighbourhoods teams to identify housing solutions and wider support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Working with community partners, including legal aid providers to target work with this group and lobby the Home Office for better working practice.</i> - <i>Explore opportunities to improve working relationships with accommodation providers to ensure early intervention is possible.</i> | <p>On-going – review at 6 months</p> <p>Current and under continual review.</p> <p>Current and under continual review.</p> | <p><i>Southwark Housing Needs service and Stronger Neighbourhoods teams</i></p> <p><i>Southwark Housing Needs service and Southwark Law Centre and Legal Aid Providers</i></p> <p><i>Southwark Housing Needs service, Southwark Law Centre, HO accommodation providers</i></p> |

Appendix 4 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan 2025-2030

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with community partners, including legal aid providers to target work with this group and lobby the Home Office for better working practice | Current and under continual review. | Southwark Housing Needs |
| 23. | Expanding off the street provision and housing options and support for those with complex needs. | <p>Supporting the role of the commissioned Street Outreach Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving partnership working particularly in the context of the council's role in coordinating responses to rough sleeping and securing grant funding (e.g. emergency off-street provision and dedicated roles). - Supporting cross-disciplinary approaches to outreach (e.g. co-working with health partners). - Working with the Street Outreach Service to ensure that rough sleepers with a local connection to another local authority are fully supported to be reconnected. | Current and under continual review. | Southwark's Housing Solutions, Stronger Neighbourhoods and Adult Social Care and commissioning and Environment and Leisure, London Councils and DLUHC. |
| 24. | | <p>Continuing to secure Government grant through sole bids and those we can make jointly with our partner agencies and Authorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continually reviewing our service delivery and making bids for Government grant under: Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) Supported Housing Accommodation Programme (SHAP) Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant 25/26 <p>To explore opportunities to procure or convert accommodation in expanding off the street provision.</p> | Current and under continual review. | Southwark's Housing Needs, Stronger Neighbourhoods and Adult Social Care and commissioning and Environment and Leisure. |
| 25. | | <p>To continue the use of multi-agency and disciplinary panels to deliver joined up and customer focussed outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To continue and develop multi-agency fora that helps improve joint work through: South-East London Rough Sleepers forum. Street Population Forum Homelessness Forum Cuckooing Forum Pan London Rough Sleepers Lead Forum Muti Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Task and Targetting forum - We will work cross departmentally with our colleagues in the Drug and Alcohol Team (DAAT) to amplify the positive effect of housing-led grants (e.g. SHAP) and treatment-led grants (e.g. RSDATG) for the rough sleeping cohort. - Continuing development of complex needs panels that help identify service barriers and improve ways of working to improve resident outcomes. | Current and under continual review. | Southwark's Housing Needs, Stronger Neighbourhoods and Adult Social Care and commissioning and Environment and Leisure, London Councils and DLUHC. |
| 26. | | To improve supported hostel access and move on for those with support needs. | Ongoing – review at 6 months | |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Housing Needs service will continue to act as a single point of contact between the general needs hostel providers and support services. - We will assist hostel providers to ensure that vacancy information, needs assessments and move on plans are easily accessible to relevant agencies to inform effective ongoing support. - We will contribute to cross-departmental work within the council (e.g. Integrated Care Board, Public Health) to ensure that the specific needs of rough sleepers are articulated within commissioning and procurement activities (e.g. those with co-occurring mental health, substance misuse and rough sleeping). - To improve access to move on accommodation through the Allocations Scheme. | | Southwark's Housing Needs, Accommodation and Support, St Mungos and Riverside Housing. |
| 27. | | <p>To expand support initiatives for persons experiencing multiple exclusion homelessness such as Housing First.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To utilise grant funding to expand the Housing First Team. - To explore further provision of Council or Registered Provider accommodation. | Ongoing – review at 6 months | Southwark's Housing Needs, Construction, Asset Management and ASC Commissioning. |
| 28. | | <p>To continue and develop our partnerships with the commissioned Substance Misuse Service, the commissioned Street Outreach Service, Education, Training and Employment services, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, and other voluntary, community and faith- agencies to provide a holistic package of support for service users to build and maintain independence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To continue and develop key partnerships that provide outreach, accommodation and support. - To develop a wider offer of employment and skills to help residents build independence in their journey off the street. | Ongoing – review at 6 months | Housing Needs, SLAM, NHS and commissioned partners. |

Priority four: Quality Outcomes Through Housing Provision

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| 29. | Improved timelines of access to accommodation that meets the needs of residents. | <p>To improve housing mobility schemes within the Council to optimise the use and access to Southwark's stock including the development of Southwark's Smart Move offer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To continue to progress Southwark's Rightsizing action plan and engagement plan. - To increase the number of downsizing moves and mutual exchanges. - To improve engagement with residents and information exchange. - To improve the use of our data to help identify residents who could benefit from our Rightsizing suite of initiatives. | Current and under regular review. | Southwark's Housing Needs and Accommodation and Support services. Housing Associations. |
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| 30. | | <p>To increase access to specialist accommodation types such as sheltered and extra care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>To ensure sheltered and extra care placements are fully utilised and voids are minimised.</i> - <i>To improve information sharing between services and partners to identify eligible residents for our schemes.</i> - <i>To improve the timeliness of assessments and relieve homelessness with this provision wherever possible.</i> - <i>To ensure our allocations policy supports this access.</i> | Current and to be reviewed quarterly. | <i>Southwark's Housing Needs and Accommodation and Support services.</i> |
| 31. | <i>Improving access to and pathway through supported housing.</i> | <p>With better assessments of resident needs, we'll seek to improve the access to supported accommodation generally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Increase the number of supported housing assessments made for residents.</i> - <i>Improving our referral process to access supported accommodation.</i> - <i>Developing improved information exchange with our accommodation providers for access and move on.</i> | <p>Monthly caseload reviews from Q2 2025-2026.</p> <p>To review monthly from Q2 2025-2026.</p> | <i>Southwark's Housing Needs, Accommodation and Support, St Mungos and Riverside Housing.</i> |
| 32. | <i>Learning and improving the standards of our accommodation</i> | <p>Working across the Council to ensure our Good Homes Standard commitments are achieved, with close monitoring of standards and clear information provided to residents to tackle poor provision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Ensuring our residents are happy with standards of our temporary accommodation through feedback and service user focus groups.</i> - <i>Improving monitoring of standards through our procurement and placement policies.</i> - <i>Involvement in and compliance with Setting the Standard.</i> - <i>Checking standards and supporting resolution of issues and ensuring residents are engaged and supported to move to more settled accommodation.</i> - <i>Signposting to relevant services for wider advice if required.</i> - <i>Undertaking a training programme for staff through resident engagement and listening exercises to help improve our customer service and processes.</i> | Current and ongoing with continual review. | <i>Housing Needs, Accommodation and Support, Asset Management and Setting the Standard.</i> |
| 33. | | <p>To help establish a temporary accommodation working group with partner agencies and resident groups to collectively identify and tackle issues faced by households and improve services to access health and resettlement support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Holding quarterly meetings with the group to take forward the following four lines of enquiry:</i> - <i>Quality including suitability of dwellings used as temporary accommodation.</i> | To be launched by Q2 25-26 and reviewed bi-annually. | Housing Needs, Accommodation and Support, Southwark Law Centre, Impact on Urban Health, LOVO and Southwark Citizens |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for children and families including neurodiverse and Disabled children. - Council led multi-agency work to address the needs of people in TA. - Improving information flow between TA households and partners to help with initiatives to access health and effective resettlement from TA. | | |
| 34. | | <p>Establishing customer focus groups through our 'you said we did' feedback channel so that we can continually learn and improve our services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing our online form with clear standards for customer service on our website. - Improving the channels for feedback directly and through our partners as identified in Homelessness and Prevention fora and strategic board. - To conduct quarterly customer insight sessions in person and online, to learn of any barriers, service standard issues, good practice and ensuring our services are meeting needs of those with lived experience. | <p>To be completed by end of Q4 2025-2026</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring from Q2 2025-2026.</p> <p>To commence from end of Q2 2025-2026.</p> | <p>Housing Needs, Accommodation and Support, Asset Management, Temporary Accommodation Income services.</p> <p>Housing Needs service, service users and third sector advocacy groups including Southwark Citizens.</p> |
| 35. | Minimising the use and duration of interim accommodation wherever possible. | <p>To ensure sufficient allocations for homeless applicants are maintained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To continually monitor our homelessness pressures and lettings. - To minimise overdue homeless decisions through improved monitoring and caseload reviews. - To ensure our allocations policy development is aligned to our aims of this strategy. - To ensure local and annual lettings targets are set through our plan to best meet the varying needs of our residents. | Current and to be reviewed monthly. | Southwark's Housing Needs and Accommodation and Support services. Housing Associations. |
| 36. | | <p>To develop partnerships with housing supply providers so that quality, settled private rented accommodation is available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To run landlord forums with our providers, landlords and agents to develop relationships and expand supply. - To inform and review developments in policy and legislation that affect our stakeholders. | Current and to be reviewed quarterly. | Southwark's Housing Needs and Private Sector Housing Enforcement services, NRLA, DWP and landlord and agents known to Southwark. |
| 37. | | <p>Developing improved support for those moving and settling to new homes in and beyond our borough across all types of housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing our assessments and packages of support to help residents in their move to settled accommodation. | <p>Ongoing – review at 6 months</p> <p>Current and to be reviewed quarterly.</p> | <p>Southwark's Housing Needs service</p> <p>Homeless forum partner agencies, Community Southwark.</p> |

Appendix 4 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan 2025-2030

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>To develop relationships with other agencies local to housing provision for wider advice and support where required.</i> | | |
| 38. | | <p>To work with council colleagues to secure an increase in the delivery of genuinely affordable housing for Southwark residents, including new council homes and through innovative schemes such as that provided by Centrepoin in Peckham.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Working with our community partners to widen involvement with Council services and partner organisations.</i> - <i>Promoting forums with agencies and local partners to promote better joint working and raising the standards of accommodation</i> - <i>Ensure communication on the importance of this work is promoted through internal channels to ensure senior stakeholder buy-in</i> | <p>Ongoing – review at 6 months</p> <p>Current and to be reviewed quarterly.</p> <p>Ongoing – to review at 6 months.</p> <p>Ongoing – to review at 6 months.</p> | <p><i>Southwark’s Housing Needs service</i></p> <p><i>Homeless forum partner agencies, Community Southwark.</i></p> <p><i>Homeless forum partner agencies, Community Southwark, Southwark Private Rented Sector Advice and Supply Team, NLA</i></p> <p><i>Southwark Housing Directors and SLT</i></p> |

Priority five: Tackling Systemic Housing Insecurity

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| 39. | <i>Protecting communities and challenging inequality that results in housing insecurity. Working with internal and external partners to enhance this work.</i> | <p>To ensure our homelessness forum is continued and widened to partners working in health and justice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Working with our community partners to widen involvement with Council services and partner organisations.</i> - <i>To continue to benefit from the forums in identifying need, develop best practice and share information.</i> | Current and to be reviewed quarterly. | <i>Homeless forum partner agencies, Community Southwark.</i> |
| 40. | | <p>To work in partnership with Southwark’s private renter’s organisation in driving up standards in Southwark’s private rented sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>To support engagement exercises and surveys with our residents renting privately through this organisation.</i> - <i>To support facilitation of the Borough’s ‘know your rights’ sessions.</i> - <i>Attending forums with residents and agencies to promote better joint working and raising the standards of advice provision in the Borough.</i> | Commenced and reviewing quarterly. | <i>Southwark’s Housing Needs, Private Sector Housing Enforcement services and Citizens Advice Southwark</i> |
| 41. | | <p>To reintroduce a twice-yearly strategic roundtable, chaired by our Cabinet Member, to bring partners together to assess the progress of all stakeholders’ work against the strategy and our action plan.</p> | To complete and continue at 6 months from strategy implementation. | <i>Southwark and third sector partners and service user insight lead.</i> |

Appendix 4 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan 2025-2030

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>To scope for and invite all relevant stakeholders to attend this important series of meetings.</i> - <i>To establish our first of our twice-yearly series of roundtable meetings.</i> | | |
| 42. | | <p>To improve pathways and work with vulnerable communities such as those identifying as LGBTQ+</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Undertake training for all staff on LGBTQ+ identities and homelessness awareness so that we can offer an inclusive service, with effective signposting and good practice including an awareness of the importance of specialist provision and services for this group.</i> - <i>To invite organisations representing the LGBTQ+ community to join both the homelessness and prevention forums.</i> | <p>Ongoing – to review at 6 months.</p> <p>To have initial training delivered by end of Q4 2024-2025 and refresher courses annually.</p> | <p><i>Southwark's Housing Needs service, Stonewall, AKT and Galop organisations.</i></p> |
| 43. | <p><i>Improving resident access to employment, skills and eligible support to mitigate heightened financial pressures.</i></p> | <p>Improving the delivery of our Southwark Works programme and supporting expansion with partner agencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>To develop our programme and ensure our commissioned partner is connected to existing and new partnerships and fora in this area.</i> - <i>To monitor the outcomes of this programme and identify and overcome barriers for our shared service users.</i> | <p>Commenced and to review quarterly.</p> | <p><i>Southwark's Housing Needs and Stronger Neighbourhoods services and homelessness and prevention fora partners.</i></p> |
| 44. | | <p>Working with external providers in the community that deliver employment and skills support to those at risk of homelessness, homeless and rough sleeping.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>To explore wider employment and skills support available that can be accessed by our residents.</i> - <i>To develop our partnership with the DWP to improve our advice offer to residents and referrals links.</i> | <p>Commenced and to review quarterly.</p> | <p><i>Southwark's Housing Needs and Stronger Neighbourhoods services, Southwark Works Programme providers, homelessness and prevention fora partners including the DWP.</i></p> |
| 45. | <p><i>Empowering residents with a realistic and comprehensive appraisal of how they can resolve their housing issues where possible and make informed choices.</i></p> | <p>To ensure a realistic appraisal of support is given, that is understood and communicated through all partner agencies and those working with our residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>To provide clear and consistent advice across all channels of communication outlining service provision and standards and wider support available.</i> - <i>To ensure our advice is clear for our partners and consistent with our joint work.</i> | <p>Commenced and to review quarterly.</p> | <p><i>Southwark's Housing Needs service, Homelessness and prevention fora partner agencies and service users.</i></p> |
| 46. | | <p>That our support and advice is tailored to ensure residents can make informed choices that empower them to resolve their housing issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>To ensure that Council provision of advice and support is provided promptly and to a high quality through feedback and service performance reporting.</i> | <p><i>Ongoing and to be reviewed quarterly.</i></p> | <p><i>Southwark's Housing Needs service, Homelessness and prevention fora partner agencies and service users.</i></p> |

Appendix 4 – Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan 2025-2030

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>To be clear on the scope and scale of the Council's direct support.</i> - <i>To help identify wider provision available for residents.</i> - <i>To empower our residents to make best use of the support available and choices to help them address their housing insecurity.</i> | | |
| 47. | <i>Making the case for change to Government to communicate local and regional housing need and redress to wider impacts that lead to housing insecurity and inequality.</i> | <p>Develop incentives for landlords to participate in the lower end of the market.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Using landlord, agent and landlord body insight from our landlord forums to identify feasible Authority offers.</i> - <i>Developing our temporary accommodation and private rented sector procurement options.</i> - <i>Working with the Centre for Homelessness Impact to identify wider financial measures to attract accommodation partners.</i> | <p>To complete by end of Q2 2025-2026</p> <p>Current and under regular review.</p> | <i>Southwark Council's Housing Needs service, London Councils, Centre for Homelessness Impact and Homelessness, landlord and prevention fora partners</i> |
| 48. | | <p>Enable public acquisition of properties leaving the market for our procurement through grant programmes such as the Local Authority Housing Fund. Ensure these solutions have adequate levels of funding to make development and acquisition viable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Using data of Southwark housing stock and seeking grant funding from DLUHC for wider acquisition.</i> | Ongoing and to be reviewed quarterly. | <i>Southwark Council's Housing Needs service, London Councils, Centre for Homelessness Impact and Homelessness, landlord and prevention fora partners</i> |
| 49. | | <p>Support new development of social homes through a grant programme that properly funds the cost of supply and supports the removal of wider barriers to building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Develop evidence base to show the impact of barriers to development.</i> - <i>Work closely with the new homes team to support their work and understand the wider barriers to building new homes.</i> - <i>Explore opportunities to work with registered providers.</i> | On-going – to be reviewed on introduction of LHA changes and any subsequent legislative and policy changes | <i>Southwark Construction, Southwark Council's Housing Needs service, London Councils, Centre for Homelessness Impact and Homelessness, landlord and prevention fora partners</i> |

APPENDIX 5

Southwark Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030: Equality Impact and Needs Analysis

Guidance notes

Things to remember:

Under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) public authorities are required to have due regard to the aims of the general equality duty when making decisions and when setting policies. Understanding the effect of the council's policies and practices on people with different protected characteristics is an important part of complying with the general equality duty. Under the PSED, the council must ensure that:

- Decision-makers are aware of the general equality duty's requirements.
- The general equality duty is complied with before and at the time a particular policy is under consideration and when a decision is taken.
- They consciously consider the need to do the things set out in the aims of the general equality duty as an integral part of the decision-making process.
- They have sufficient information to understand the effects of the policy, or the way a function is carried out, on the aims set out in the general equality duty.
- They review policies or decisions, for example, if the make-up of service users changes, as the general equality duty is a continuing duty.
- They take responsibility for complying with the general equality duty in relation to all their relevant functions. Responsibility cannot be delegated to external organisations that are carrying out public functions on their behalf.
- They consciously consider the need to do the things set out in the aims of the general equality duty not only when a policy is developed and decided upon, but when it is being implemented.

Best practice guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission recommends that public bodies:

- Consider all the [protected characteristics](#) and all aims of the general equality duty (apart from in relation to marriage and civil partnership, where only the discrimination aim applies).
- Use equality analysis to inform policy as it develops to avoid unnecessary additional activity.
- Focus on the understanding the effects of a policy on equality and any actions needed as a result, not the production of a document.
- Consider how the time and effort involved should relate to the importance of the policy to equality.
- Think about steps to advance equality and good relations as well as eliminate discrimination.
- Use good evidence. Where it isn't available, take steps to gather it (where practical and proportionate).
- Use insights from engagement with employees, service users and others can help provide evidence for equality analysis.

Equality analysis should be referenced in community impact statements in Council reports. Community impact statements are a corporate requirement in all reports to the following meetings: the cabinet, individual decision makers, scrutiny, regulatory committees and community councils. Community impact statements enable decision makers to identify more easily how a decision might affect different communities in Southwark and to consider any implications for equality and diversity.

The public will be able to view and scrutinise any equality analysis undertaken. Equality analysis should therefore be written in a clear and transparent way using plain English. Equality analysis may be published under the council's publishing of equality information, or be present with divisional/departmental/service business plans. These will be placed on the website for public view under the council's Publications Scheme.

Equality analysis should be reviewed after a sensible period of time to see if business needs have changed and/or if the effects that were expected have occurred. If not then you will need to consider amending your policy accordingly. This does not mean repeating the equality analysis, but using the experience gained through implementation to check the findings and to make any necessary adjustments.

Engagement with the community is recommended as part of the development of equality analysis. The council's Community Engagement Division and critical friend, the Forum for Equality and Human Rights in Southwark can assist with this (see section below on community engagement and www.southwarkadvice.org.uk).

Whilst the equality analysis is being considered, Southwark Council recommends considering Socio-Economic implications, as socio-economic inequalities have a strong influence on the environment we live and work in. As a major provider of services to Southwark residents, the council has a legal duty to reduce socio-economic inequalities and this is reflected in its values and aims. For this reason, the council recommends considering socio-economic impacts in all equality analyses, not forgetting to include identified potential mitigating actions.

Similarly, it is important for the Council to consider the impact of its policies and decisions in relation to tackling the climate emergency. This includes both the potential carbon emissions of a policy or decision and its potential effect on the borough's biodiversity. You are asked to consider the impact on climate of your policy and decision under discussion by completing the Climate impact section below.

Section 1: Equality impact and needs analysis details

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| Proposed policy/decision/business plan to which this equality analysis relates | Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-30 |
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|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| Equality analysis author | Jerome Duffy; Programme, Policy and Change Manager | | |
| Strategic Director: | Hakeem Osinaike | | |
| Department | Housing | Division | Housing Needs and Support |
| Period analysis undertaken | Sep 2023 – June 2025 | | |
| Date of review (if applicable) | | | |
| Sig n-off | Candida Thompson | Position | Director; Housing Needs and Support |
| | | Date | |

Section 2: Brief description of policy/decision/business plan

1.1 Brief description of policy/decision/business plan

This Equalities and Health Analysis (EHA) assesses the impacts (individual and cumulative) of Southwark's Homelessness Strategy 2024-2029 that will provide a framework and plan for tackling homelessness and rough sleeping.

The intention of the strategy is to have a positive impact on all protected characteristic groups by reducing and preventing homelessness.

The strategy is being implemented 5 years after the introductions of the Homelessness Reduction Act which came into force in April 2018.

Legal framework

Southwark's statutory duties are primarily set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), including:

- Section 179: Duty to provide advisory services
- Section 184: Duty to make enquiries in respect of eligibility and duties owed
- Section 188: Interim duty to accommodate in cases of apparent priority need
- Section 189B: Relief duty to help to secure accommodation
- Section 193: Duties to people found to be in priority need and not homeless intentionally.
- Section 195: Prevention duty to those threatened with homelessness
- Section 198: Referral of case to another local housing authority

The 2002 Homelessness Act also introduced a requirement on Local Authorities to take a strategic approach to dealing with homelessness. This is done by:

- Carrying out a review of homelessness in their area, and
- Based on the findings of the review, developing and publishing a strategy to tackle and prevent homelessness.

The Homelessness Reduction Act (commenced April 2018) changed the way homelessness advice and assistance is provided by local authorities in England and Wales. The aim of the Act was to reform the current homelessness duties to ensure that local authorities provide meaningful advice and assistance to those people who do not fall into a priority need category or who have been found to be intentionally homeless.

Southwark was one of three early adopter trailblazer local authorities, along with Newcastle and Manchester, which trialled and developed new services reflecting the reforms to provide early feedback to the Department for Communities and Local Government (now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities).

The Act introduced the following:

- The definition of being threatened with homelessness be extended from 28 days to 56 days.
- Local authorities must accept a valid S.21 notice as evidence that the tenant is threatened with homelessness.
- The creation of a stronger advice and information duty.
- The creation of a stronger prevention duty for anyone threatened with homelessness and eligible for assistance.
- Introduce a new relief duty for all eligible applicants who have a local connection meaning local authorities must take reasonable steps to secure accommodation regardless of priority need status.
- Incentivise people to engage in prevention and relief work by allowing local authorities to discharge their duties if an applicant unreasonably refuses to cooperate with the course of action proposed.
- Introduce a right to judicial review at the prevention, relief and main duty stages to ensure local authorities are held to account.
- Collect data in order to monitor the overall effectiveness of the new legislation.

In addition, a number of other Acts in recent years have shaped the national framework for homelessness services:

The Localism Act (2011) also amended the 1996 Housing Act by allowing local authorities to discharge their homelessness duty by arranging a suitable offer of accommodation in the private rented sector.

The Homelessness Reduction Act (2017) made significant changes to the Housing Act (1996) and placed a number of new duties upon local authorities. These include:

To assess the cause of homelessness, circumstances and needs of all household members, including children.

To develop and agree with applicants a personalised plan of the steps that will be taken to prevent or relieve homelessness.

Extending the time frame a household is threatened with homelessness from 28 days to 56 days, meaning that local authorities have a duty to prevent homelessness from an earlier stage.

New duties to assess all eligible applicants (not just those unintentionally homeless and in priority need), and new duties to take reasonable steps to prevent and relieve homelessness.

A duty on public authorities to refer service users who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness to the housing authority (with the consent of the individual)

Services must be designed to meet the needs of specific groups including care leavers, people leaving hospital / prison and victims of domestic abuse.

The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) places a duty on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children. It makes provision that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have 'priority need' status for homelessness assistance.

The Homelessness Act 2002 and the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) requires a homelessness strategy for every housing authority district, to be renewed at least every five years and consulted upon by other local or public authorities or voluntary organisations.

The Government Rough Sleeping Strategy 2018 delivery plan set out the Government target of halving rough sleeping by 2022 and eradicating all street homelessness by 2027. It provided the following updates:

All local authorities must update their homelessness reviews and strategies and re-badge them as homelessness and rough sleeping strategies.

Strategies are made available online and submitted to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Local authorities report progress in delivering these strategies and publish annual action plans.

In September 2022 the Government updated the 2018 Strategy and set out a clear definition of what the Government means by ending rough sleeping, which is that it is prevented wherever possible, and where it does occur it is rare, brief and non-recurrent.

It grouped activities under four key themes - Prevention, Intervention, Recovery and a Transparent and Joined up System.

Reasons for the strategy

Overall this strategy is intended to ensure that the council delivers the most effective service possible whilst ensuring value for money and a regard to providing a high quality service to those who need it. Homelessness services

frequently encounter very vulnerable households and the strategy takes account of how the services should be provided so that they are well looked after within the framework of the current legislation and guidance.

The net cost of temporary accommodation to the council were £12.9m in 2022-2023 and projected to be £16.7m in 2023-2024, at a time when, in common with other local authorities, it faces medium-term financial pressures. This means that it cannot sustain an uncontrolled increase in costs.

The strategy sets out plans for how we aim to off-set the impact of continuing high numbers of homeless households presenting to the council and the reduction in the supply of affordable suitable settled accommodation.

The main objectives for the strategy are to offer a high-quality and innovative service to homeless households, to encourage self-service where possible and assist households in crisis to explore all the options available to them and to find long-term housing solutions for people threatened with homelessness.

What is being assessed

The following initial assessment of impacts compares the new strategic approach with the existing practices in place. In making it, the council acknowledges that homelessness is in itself a very difficult experience for any household. In summary the differences are:

Improving the timeliness and quality of initial advice.

Ensuring residents can easily access and be supported to understand their entitlements and budgets as part of our advice and assessment processes.

Improving the timeliness and quality of homeless applications.

Improving the support to resolve and sustain accommodation arrangements.

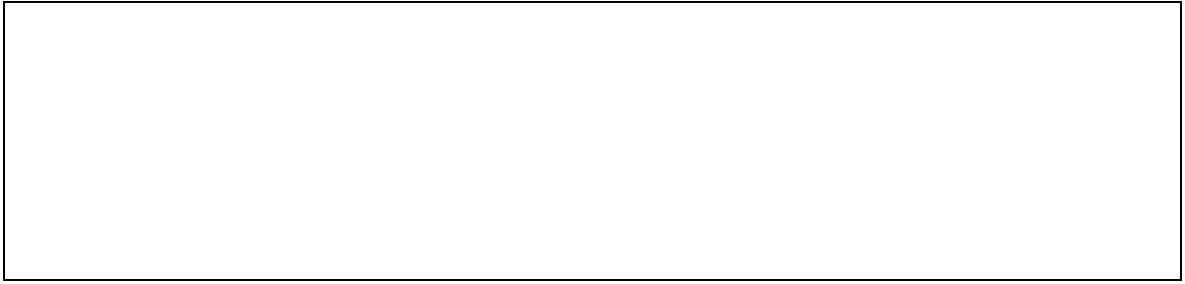
Improving the partnership and joint work across Council service and its external partners.

Commencing prevention forums and rogue landlord taskforce meetings.

Improving the use of data held by the Council and partners to identify those at risk and tailoring targeted support.

Improving customer feedback and insight.

Improving our online advice provision and access.



Section 3: Overview of service users and key stakeholders consulted

| 2. Service users and stakeholders | |
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| Key users of the department or service | <p>All customers who approach or are referred to the service for housing advice, assistance and support through the related homelessness legislation.</p> <p>Third sector partners who work with the council in delivering its duties.</p> |
| Key stakeholders were/are involved in this policy/decision/business plan | <p>The following stakeholders were involved in reviewing this strategy -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Homelessness Impact • Change Please • Children and Adults Services • Citizens Advice Southwark • DWP • Environment and Leisure • Guys and St Thomas Hospital NHS • Homeless link • Homeless Outreach Team (START) • Housing Action Southwark and Lambeth • Hyde Housing • It takes a village • Kineara • The Manna Society • Public health • Robes Society • Service users with lived experience • Shelter • Southwark Council Public Health • Southwark Wellbeing Hub • Social Prescribers Southwark • Southwark Law Centre • Southwark Housing Solutions • Single Homeless Project |

Section 4: Pre-implementation equality impact and needs analysis

This section considers the potential impacts (positive and negative) on groups with 'protected characteristics', the equality information on which this analysis is based and any mitigating actions to be taken, including improvement actions to promote equality and tackle inequalities. An equality analysis also presents as an opportunity to improve services to meet diverse needs, promote equality, tackle inequalities and promote good community relations. It is not just about addressing negative impacts.

The columns include societal issues (discrimination, exclusion, needs etc.) and socio-economic issues (levels of poverty, employment, income). As the two aspects are heavily interrelated it may not be practical to fill out both columns on all protected characteristics. The aim is, however, to ensure that socio-economic issues are given special consideration, as it is the council's intention to reduce socio-economic inequalities in the borough. Key is also the link between protected characteristics and socio-economic disadvantage, including experiences of multiple disadvantage.

Socio-economic disadvantage may arise from a range of factors, including:

- poverty
- health
- education
- limited social mobility
- housing
- a lack of expectations
- discrimination
- multiple disadvantage

The public sector equality duty (PSED) requires us to find out about and give due consideration to the needs of different protected characteristics in relation to the three parts of the duty:

1. Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advancing equality of opportunity, including finding out about and meeting diverse needs of our local communities, addressing disadvantage and barriers to equal access; enabling all voices to be heard in our engagement and consultation undertaken; increasing the participation of underrepresented groups
3. Fostering good community relations; promoting good relations; to be a borough where all feel welcome, included, valued, safe and respected.

The PSED is now also further reinforced in the two additional Fairer Future for All values: that we will

- Always work to make Southwark more equal and just
- Stand against all forms of discrimination and racism

| <p>Age - Where this is referred to, it refers to a person belonging to a particular age (e.g. 32 year olds) or range of ages (e.g. 18 - 30 year olds).</p> | |
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| <p>Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan; this also includes needs in relation to each part of the duty.</p> | <p>Potential Socio-Economic impacts/needs/issues arising from socio-economic disadvantage (positive and negative)</p> |
| <p>Those aged 35-49 are disproportionately represented among lead applicants from homeless approach households (26% of applicants compared to 22% of Southwark population). Conversely, those aged over 65 are under-represented and so less likely to be directly affected (8.5% of the population compared to 5% of main applicants). Households with children are proportionately represented among homeless approach households (25%).</p> <p>Southwark's population is predominantly young: The average age is 33.4 years compared to 36 in London as a whole. 41% of Southwark's population is aged 20 to 39.</p> <p>Age - Children Children will potentially be negatively affected if they need to move outside of Southwark and London as they will be more likely to have to start new schools, which can be disruptive particularly if they are at key exam stages. Children with special educational needs or those that are working with Family Services may be particularly affected by changing school.</p> <p>Age – Young adults More single people have been able to access advice and assistance as a result of the increased assistance and advisory services included in the Homelessness Reduction Act. Single people can of course be any age but a large cohort is likely to be younger as they do not yet have dependent children, although the advice and assistance should have a positive impact on all age groups.</p> | <p>57% of parents report that their children's health has been harmed by being in temporary accommodation. 47% reported that their children have had to move school as well as 52% reporting that their children have missed days of school due to the disruption of temporary accommodation (Shelter, 2023)</p> <p>1 in 4 parents of children who are in temporary accommodation say their children are often unhappy or depressed as a result of their living situation. (Shelter, 2022).</p> <p>Living in temporary accommodation affects children's attendance to school as well as 45% arriving late, tired or hungry. (Shelter, 2022)</p> <p>Male life expectancy is 78.4 years compared to 78.6 years in England. Female life expectancy is 83.2 years compared to 82.6 years in England.</p> |

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| <p>Age – Older people</p> <p>Older people eligible for Sheltered housing will not be made private rented offers. However older people could be offered temporary accommodation outside Southwark and London until this type of housing is available. They may potentially be negatively impacted by this, if they have long established links to the local area and also as they are more likely to receive care and support packages which would need to be transferred. Also they may be more likely to receive informal support, possibly from family members, which might be harder to sustain at a distance. The data shows that people in these age groups are significantly under-represented among homeless people however (5% of approaches in 24/25 compared to 8% of the population in Southwark).</p> <p>It is identified that those in the community over the age of 60 are more likely to be digitally excluded than those who are younger; 26% of those over 75. (Ofcom 2022). This increases further when looking at access to the internet when over 70 and with a limiting condition.</p> <p>Again, though the data shows that people in these age groups are significantly under-represented among homeless people however. Some of the impacts are expected to be positive. Old age is linked with mobility and improvements to online self-serve and telephone advice will allow customers continual access to services from their home.</p> | |
| <p>Equality information on which above analysis is based</p> | <p>Socio-Economic data on which above analysis is based</p> |
| <p>JSNA, Annual Report 2024, Southwark Public Health</p> <p>Age profile of statutorily homeless households</p> | <p>Shelter 2022 - https://blog.shelter.org.uk/2022/12/not-a-home-temporary-accommodation/</p> |

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| <p>(Derived from HCLIC data).</p> <p>ONS Census 2021 data</p> <p>A review of Ofcom's research on digital exclusion among adults in the UK, 2022</p> <p>Southwark Homelessness Data Review, 2023</p> <p>Shelter's Growing Up Homeless Research, 2022</p> <p>Shelter, Not a Home, Temporary Accommodation, 2022</p> | <p>Shelter 2023 – Still Living in Limbo, Why the Use of Temporary Accommodation Must End.</p> |
| <p>Mitigating and/or improvement actions to be taken</p> <p>A new Older Persons Housing Strategy is being developed which will support and bolster information about the needs and best response to this group.</p> <p>A review of the approach to sheltered and the identification of sheltered needs will also be part of our strategic priorities of support and quality outcomes to ensure improved assessments of resident need and easier access to specialist accommodation types such as sheltered and extra care are achieved.</p> <p>We will be working with Children's Services to deliver a Housing and Children's Services Care leaver Protocol which will harness the work of Council services and key partner organisations to achieve the best outcomes to care leavers.</p> | |
| <p>Age – Children</p> <p>Some children and families will be prioritised for in borough/adjacent borough accommodation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Households where at least one of the children has a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan, is receiving education or educational support in Southwark and where it is demonstrated that a placement would be significantly detrimental to their wellbeing Households where there is a recommendation through a joint | <p>See mitigation actions which also cover health aspects.</p> <p>In addition, we will increase our access to the private rented sector to seek more suitable accommodation for households to reduce lengthy stays in temporary accommodation.</p> <p>Improvements to the access of advice around debt and entitlements for residents will likely mitigate the risks of housing insecurity or loss of homes.</p> <p>Improvements in the coordination of agencies through prevention forums and expanding the network of the homelessness forum will help align and</p> |

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| <p>assessment with Children's and Adult's Services</p> <p>Some children and families will be prioritised for accommodation in Greater London, where a child is at their final year of Key Stage 4 (generally Year 11) or in Key Stage 5 (A levels or equivalent Level 3 vocational courses, such as BTECs, or GCSE re-sits in English and Maths) at a school or further education college in London. These families will be prioritised for 'zone b' accommodation - Zone B: London area and adjoining Counties with reasonable travel connections</p> <p>Any special circumstances demonstrating a compelling need for accommodation in a certain area will be considered and this might particularly benefit children. It will be our duty to determine that the accommodation provided is not for a short period and that the household will be able to plan for the longer term. It is also our duty to ensure that we have confirmed that places are available at local schools subject to specific admission criteria for some schools.</p> <p>The Council recognises that in many cases it may be in the best interests of children to remain at existing schools where they are settled. Unfortunately, due to the difficulties in procuring accommodation referred to above it is not always possible to offer accommodation which avoids the need for parents to consider moving their child's school and we have to prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable children.</p> <p>Resettlement support will be offered for some private rented offers. This could include help to enrol children in new schools and to find nursery places</p> <p>Southwark's 16/17 pathway for those at risk or presenting as homeless has been an effective joint working initiative between Housing and Children's services. Accommodation provision and advice and</p> | <p>enhance prevention work for families in the Borough.</p> <p>Greater use of Council and partners' data to identify those at the earliest stages of risk and provide tailored, targeted advice will likely mitigate risk to children and families.</p> |
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support is delivered well and approaches from 16/17 year olds is small.

With Southwark's off the street provision and offer when a rough sleeper is identified, those in this age group would be supported quickly to access accommodation and support.

Age – Young adults

Care leavers from 18 years considered here -

The development of Southwark's joint housing protocol has greatly improved homeless prevention from care placements, access to supported or private rented accommodation and securing permanent accommodation through our choice-based lettings scheme.

Age – Older people

Some older households will be exempt from private rented sector offers i.e. those that are eligible for sheltered housing and disabled households needing wheelchair accessible housing.

Support will also be offered to households moving into temporary accommodation outside London and this could involve help to transfer any care and support packages

'Digital literacy' is improving with every generation, so over time, the risk of inequality is reduced.

We will monitor customer satisfaction and aim for year-on-year improvement in satisfaction with fewer formal customer complaints made.

We will ensure alternative service access remains available such as face to face appointments, so that no one is excluded from accessing the service.

Our partners such as Citizens Advice Bureau offer weekly sessions for helping people with no access to online resources.

Disability - A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Please note that under the PSED due regard includes:

Giving due consideration in all relevant areas to "the steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities." This also includes the need to understand and focus on different needs/impacts arising from different disabilities.

| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan; this also includes needs in relation to each part of the duty. | Potential socio-economic impacts/needs/issues arising from socio-economic disadvantage (positive and negative) |
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| <p>Only a small proportion of accepted homeless households have members needing a wheelchair adapted property or a level access property.</p> <p>Statistics in the Census 2021 shows that Southwark has 14% of people reporting a disability under the equality Act. This is slightly less than the national average of 17%.</p> <p>Of those who approached as homeless, 26% of households reported mental health as a support need. It is important to note that it is likely, that other applicants and members of their households may have mental health problems, but this information cannot be easily accessed as it is self-reported. 33% reported a physical disability of ill health (compared to 15% of England as a whole) which shows an over representation of this group in the borough.</p> <p>Nationally, 65% of working age disabled people are in work compared to 83% of non-disabled people. In London, 22.6% of disabled people are unemployed which is one of the lowest rates in the country (joint with the West Midlands). Employment rates vary greatly according to the type of impairment a person has, for example people with severe or</p> | <p>A national survey conducted by Shelter of 1,112 people in Temporary accommodation, found that two thirds reported a negative impact on their physical or mental health. (Shelter, 2022)</p> <p>Around 35% of those in Temporary Accommodation have a reported disability which is higher than the national average. There is a shortage of suitable housing placements that meet the needs of disabled people,</p> |

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| <p>enduring mental health conditions are more likely to move in and out of work more often. (ONS, 2023)</p> <p>Accommodating households in temporary accommodation for long periods could have a detrimental impact on mental and physical health.</p> <p>Placing disabled households away from their support networks and associated facilities could have a detrimental impact on their health.</p> | <p>e.g. with adaptations.</p> |
| <p>Equality information on which above analysis is based</p> | <p>Socio-economic data on which above analysis is based</p> |
| <p>ONS, Employment of disabled people 2022</p> <p>JSNA, Annual Report 2024, Southwark Public Health</p> <p>ONS Census 2021 data</p> <p>HCLIC data 2023/24 2024/25</p> | <p>Still Living in Limbo, Shelter, 2022</p> <p>What needs to change for disabled people in temporary accommodation, Just Life, 2023</p> |
| <p>Mitigating and/or improvement actions to be taken</p> | |
| <p>The delivery of some aspects of service remotely has the potential to have a positive impact on disabled households, particularly those with mobility issues, as it can allow them to access services from the convenience of their own accommodation or avoid travelling to the Homesearch Centre.</p> <p>The private rented sector offer policy excludes some disabled households who would not be able to manage a private rented tenancy (for example, those who may have care and support needs or a mental health condition which prevents them from managing a tenancy).</p> <p>Some people with particular health problems or disabilities will be prioritised for in borough/adjacent borough accommodation, these include:</p> | |

- Households where at least one member has a severe health condition or disability (including a severe mental health condition) that requires intensive and specialised medical/mental health treatment/aftercare that is either (a) only available in Southwark or (b) where a transfer of care would create a serious risk to their safety or the sustainability of the treatment or care
- Households where at least one member is receiving support through a significant commissioned care package or package of health care options provided in Southwark, where a transfer of care would create a serious risk to their safety or the sustainability of the care
- Some carers, and people being cared for, will be prioritised for in borough/adjacent borough accommodation
- Resettlement support will be offered to households being made private rented offers who are relocating out of London, and where needed where they are moving from Southwark to another London borough. This support could include help to transfer care and support packages.
- Support will also be offered to households moving into temporary accommodation outside London and as above this could include help to transfer care and support packages.

Our partners such as Citizens Advice Bureau offer weekly sessions for helping people with no access to online resources.

We will keep all types of service access (e.g. telephone, face to face and online) available so that people with different needs can find an access route which suits them best. The redesign of the Homeseach centre will give opportunity to ensure appropriate access if provided for those with physical disabilities and provide opportunity to access services in person.

Our website has a Read Speaker facility for visually impaired as well as offering different font size. Different coloured font is also available for people with colour vision deficiency.

The Personal Housing Plan takes account for every household's unique circumstances and households will collaboratively work on what realistic steps they can take to attempt to resolve their own homelessness situations.

We will be improving additional assessments to identify eligibility for supported accommodation and improving the move on plans of residents.

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| <p>We will improve the timeliness of access to specialist accommodation such as sheltered and extra care so the needs of those with disabilities can be met more quickly.</p> <p>With the development of feedback and insight sessions from residents and partner agencies, we will be able to gather information to improve service access and outcomes for those with disabilities.</p> <p>Staff will have regular training on trauma informed case and Make Every Contact Count to ensure a quality service is provided for all applicants regardless of disability.</p> | |
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| Gender reassignment - The process of transitioning from one gender to another. | |
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| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan; this also includes needs in relation to each part of the duty. | Potential socio-economic impacts/ needs/issues arising from socio-economic disadvantage (positive and negative) |
| <p>Having assessed our HCLIC reports on this subject to see if there is a link between homelessness and gender re-assignment we do not hold sufficient data in this area to determine & analyse.</p> <p>The council began including equalities questions about the sexual orientation and gender reassignment of the lead applicant for homeless households in the homelessness application in 2017. However, applicants can decline answering these and as this was only included in HCLIC return data in early 2023 so analysis is limited. We have amended our system to assess those who approach to ensure it is mandatory to enquire and record this protected characteristic and help tailor and inform our support.</p> <p>Data on LGBTQ+ youth homelessness is limited, particularly on trans youth homelessness. akt (young people's LGBTQ+ charity) found that only one third (35 per cent) of LGBTQ+ young people recall "being asked to provide information about [their] gender identity and sexual orientation". As a result, the</p> | <p>Southwark is ranked 5th highest local authority in England for residents identifying as Trans or non-binary. – JSNA, 2024</p> <p>77% of LGBTQ+ young people gave, 'family rejection, abuse or being asked to leave home' as a cause of their homelessness. - Crisis, 2022</p> <p>The most common cause of young trans people's homelessness is family abuse and rejection. Young trans people's exclusion from their family home is usually related to their gender identity: most trans young people cite this exclusion because of coming out or being outed. - akt & Homeless Link, 2022</p> <p>"Improving data collection practices, with a particular focus</p> |

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| <p>needs, and experiences of trans young people aren't captured and are often missing from the homelessness narrative - akt & Homeless Link, 2022</p> | <p>on gender identity, adopting an intersectional approach, increasing awareness of LGBTQ+ identities and LGBTQ+ homelessness Developing LGBTQ+ inclusive operational policies, strategies, and procedures, including trans inclusive policies, strategies, and procedures" were all identified by akt in their paper 'Building Inclusive Housing Support for LGBTQ+ communities' (2022)</p> <p>"Trans residents were more likely to rent privately (47.4%) than cisgender residents (31.0%), and half as likely to own their own home as cisgender residents (17.2% vs 31.0%)." – LGBTQIA+ Health and Wellbeing 2025, Southwark Council</p> |
| <p>Equality information on which above analysis is based.</p> | <p>Socio-economic data on which above analysis is based</p> |
| <p>JSNA Annual Report 2024</p> <p>ONS, Census 2021</p> <p>Building inclusive housing support for LGBTQ+ communities (2022)</p> <p>Homeless link: Supporting LGBTQ+ people in homelessness services</p> <p>About LGBTQ+ homelessness, Crisis, 2022</p> <p>How Homeless Services can be more Inclusive and Support Young Trans People, akt & Homeless Link, 2022</p> <p>LGBTQIA+ Health and Wellbeing 2025, Southwark Council</p> | |
| <p>Mitigating and/or improvement actions to be taken</p> | |
| <p>Staff will be put forward to attend training on inclusive language and awareness of LGBTQ+ identities. Housing has a determinant on health which can cause health inequities for this</p> | <p>We will ensure staff are aware of local and regional support services available to those who would like to be referred or</p> |

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| <p>group. Staff should be able to recognise the possible discrimination this group may face when accessing housing.</p> <p>We will improve our data collection on LGBTQ+ homelessness and ensure experiences of trans people are being recorded by increasing reporting on gender identity. It is also important to note that there will be options for those who wish not to disclose this information to the council.</p> <p>We will make sure partners who work in this area are aware of our referral pathways to ensure that we are as accessible as possible to this cohort.</p> | <p>signposted for more specialist assistance and advocacy.</p> <p>Organisations representing LGBTQ+ community to be invited to the Homelessness Forum & Prevention Forum.</p> |
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| <p>Marriage and civil partnership – In England and Wales marriage is no longer restricted to a union between a man and a woman but now includes a marriage between a same-sex couples. Same-sex couples can also have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must not be treated less favourably than married couples and must be treated the same as married couples on a wide range of legal matters. (Only to be considered in respect to the need to eliminate discrimination.)</p> | |
| <p>Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan</p> | <p>Potential socio-economic impacts/ needs/issues arising from socio-economic disadvantage (positive and negative)</p> |
| <p>In terms of treating marriage or civil partnership more or less favourably, no issues have been identified.</p> | <p>Please see comments to the left</p> |
| <p>Equality information on which above analysis is based</p> | <p>Socio-economic data on which above analysis is based</p> |
| <p>No current data available.</p> | <p>No current data available.</p> |
| <p>Mitigating actions to be taken</p> | |

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| None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate and any negative impacts from our service delivery will be sought through feedback and insight initiatives. | None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate |
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| Pregnancy and maternity - Pregnancy is the condition of being pregnant or expecting a baby. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman less favourably because she is breastfeeding. | |
| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan; this also includes needs in relation to each part of the duty. | Potential socio-economic impacts/needs/issues arising from socio-economic disadvantage (positive and negative) |
| <p>A significant number of lead applicants from accepted households are pregnant women. 5% (35 of 692) of accepted homeless households were pregnant with no other children in 2022/23.</p> | <p>The majority of households living in TA are families with children, and over 50% of these are lone mother led. (Shelter 2023)</p> <p>99% of midwives reported seeing mothers who were homeless, 66% felt the numbers were higher than ever before (Centre Point, 2020)</p> <p>Access to appropriate healthcare can be a challenge when living in TA with 4 in 10 reporting TA made it harder to access services. (Groundswell)</p> |

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| Equality information on which above analysis is based | Socio-economic data on which above analysis is based |
| <p>- Internal data review of households in Temporary Accommodation.</p> | <p>Pregnant and homeless: a guide to support during pregnancy – Centre Point, 2020</p> <p>Improving the health of people living in Temporary Accommodation in London, Groundswell, 2023</p> |
| Mitigating and/or improvement actions to be taken | |
| <p>Reducing the amount of time spent in temporary accommodation and limiting the number of moves between accommodation is part of the aim of our TA policy which should have positive health impacts.</p> <p>Every offer of accommodation will take into account the household's individual circumstances and suitability of the accommodation offered to meet their needs. Any special circumstances will be taken into account when making offers to households – taking into account if there is a compelling need for the accommodation to be in a particular location.</p> <p>Resettlement support will be offered to households being made private rented sector offers or temporary accommodation where they are relocating out of London and where needed when they are moving from Southwark.</p> <p>As noted above, the Temporary Accommodation policy has mitigations for those with children with particular needs to be accommodated close to Southwark or in London and those who care for them.</p> <p>The Council recognises that pregnant women and new mothers could be especially vulnerable when facing homelessness. Therefore, we will ensure extra support is provided through also through our resettlement services. Where any special circumstances are identified, we will</p> | <p>The expanded provision and access to advice around entitlements and affordability will likely have a positive impact on residents expecting or with young children.</p> |

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| look at available options to transfer the household into alternative suitable temporary accommodation when it becomes available should their offer not meet the households needs. | |
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| Race - Refers to the protected characteristic of Race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins. N.B. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller are recognised racial groups and their needs should be considered alongside all others | |
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| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan; this also includes needs in relation to each part of the duty. | Potential socio-economic impacts/needs/issues arising from socio-economic disadvantage (positive and negative) |
| <p>A great proportion of homeless approaches are made by ethnic minority households (based on main applicant data) and therefore the policies will have a disproportionate effect on ethnic minority households.</p> <p>There may also be fewer cultural facilities for some ethnic groups in locations outside London, although this would very much depend on the area where the offer was made.</p> <p>English not first language – Language barriers create difficulties providing advice on personal resilience, collaborating on the Personal Housing Plan and receiving housing advice. There is disadvantage with access to the same materials and advice on rights, entitlements and options under the Homelessness Reduction Act.</p> <p>Members of gypsy and travelling communities may be reluctant to approach the Council for help due to suspicion of official organisations. In addition to this, a lack of understanding of homelessness in gypsy and traveller communities means that this group may not be adequately planned for.</p> <p>Southwark is a diverse borough, with 51% of residents being of white ethnicity, 25% Black, 10% Asian, 7% from mixed ethnicities & 6% of other ethnicities. In 2023/24 24% of applicants were of a white ethnicity, 36% were of a black ethnicity and Asian applicants made up 6%. This shows that black homeless households are over represented in our</p> | <p>Over half of households in TA identify as Black, Asian, or Mixed ethnicity which is an over representation as just 15% of people are from a ethnic minority group in England (Shelter 2023)</p> <p>Black households are 11 times more likely to be in TA than white households. (Shelter 2023)</p> <p>In 18% of households in Southwark, English is not the main language spoken. (Census 2021)</p> |

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| <p>approach figures compared to the overall makeup of ethnicity in the borough. This is a statistic reflected nationally also (although on a smaller scale), Black main applicants accounted for 11% of those owed a prevention or relief duty in England in 2023-24, but Black people make up only 4% of England's population (according to the 2021 census).</p> <p>Analysis of HCLIC data shows that 36% of approach households for homelessness assistance in Southwark identified as Black/African/Caribbean/Black British which shows this group is overrepresented in approaches.</p> | |
| <p>Equality information on which above analysis is based</p> | <p>Socio-economic data on which above analysis is based</p> |
| <p>HCLIC data returns, 2023/24</p> <p>JSNA, Southwark Council 2024</p> <p>Census data, 2021</p> | <p>Still Living in Limbo – Shelter 2023</p> |
| <p>Mitigating and/or improvement actions to be taken</p> | |
| <p>Households will also be given opportunities to identify areas of preference taking account of affordability and availability when looking for private rented properties. Procurement of properties outside London will, wherever possible, be focussed on areas with reasonable transport links to Southwark – in order to help households maintain local connections. This might particularly benefit households of different ethnic origins.</p> <p>Discharge into the private sector decisions will be monitored by ethnicity. As applicants move on in the process, progress is monitored through the iWorld Northgate (NEC) housing system which enables a series of reports that monitor by relevant equality characteristics.</p> <p>The Service ensures that people from any ethnicity can apply for assistance on an equal basis; this includes Gypsy and traveller communities.</p> <p>Translation services are made widely available upon request or where required, including British Sign Language. We are considering the need for</p> | <p>Services commissioned to provide employment and skills support will likely improve outcomes in this area.</p> <p>Data collected in performance reviews with our partners will enable insight into those being supported and identify service delivery improvements.</p> |

induction loops.

Literacy is an issue that is not specifically related to ethnicity but is relevant as a general issue. The homeless application process is designed so that council officers record the application details for 100% of cases, so this avoids the requirement of homeless applicants from making their own application. We are continuing to provide more information online which can be freely translated through internet services such as Google Translate. Google Translate is also embedded in our Homeseach website.

The employment of resettlement officers will assist households to resolve any issues and also signpost and link to other services which can assist in resolving the impact of decisions. A focus on support to access move on accommodation will also help those who may not speak English as their first language.

The overall aim of this policy is to prevent homelessness and reduce the necessity for people to remain in less suitable temporary accommodation. The delivery of the actions identified will have positive impact for everyone of any race, disabled people, vulnerable individuals, young people and women, all of whom are over represented amongst those who are at risk of homelessness.

Religion and belief - Religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan; this also includes needs in relation to each part of the duty.

Potential socio-economic impacts/needs/issues arising from socio-economic disadvantage (positive and negative)

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| <p>According to census data, 43% of Southwark residents are Christian, 37% reported no religion and 10% are Muslim. The remaining 10% are made up of other religions.</p> <p>Of those who responded to the question on their religion when applying for a homelessness assessment 25% reported they were Christian, 8% reported they were Muslim, 10% selected 'prefer not to state', 4% chose 'other'.</p> <p>Homeless applicants may, for example, regularly attend a place of worship. If they are allocated a private sector accommodation out of the borough it may make it difficult for them to continue to attend regularly. Whilst the detailed recording of homeless applications and housing applications by people of different faith groups can pinpoint adverse trends in relation to individual faith groups, the information should be treated only as an issue for further investigation since much will depend on the respective priorities of applicants and the particular areas they are aspiring to. Therefore, close monitoring in this area is essential to identify any patterns that may arise.</p> | |
| <p>Equality information on which above analysis is based</p> | <p>Socio-economic data on which above analysis is based</p> |
| <p>ONS, 2021 - Religion - Census Maps, ONS</p> | |
| <p>Mitigating and/or improvement actions to be taken</p> | |
| <p>Under the Homelessness Reduction Act, the aim is for the household to receive advice but ultimately have a say in deciding which area they would realistically like to be housed in based on their preferences and taking account of aspects such as their income. Places will be identified where their diversity as far as possible reflects that of Southwark, focussing on more urban areas where there are likely to be more facilities and support networks for people. This might particularly benefit people with different faiths and beliefs.</p> <p>Procurement of properties outside London will, wherever possible, have reasonable transport links to Southwark – in order to help households maintain local connections. This might particularly benefit people with different faiths and beliefs.</p> | <p>None at this point. Will be reviewed as appropriate.</p> |

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| <p>During the homelessness application, information is collected which ensures that a suitable offer of accommodation can be made in the private rented sector. Religious beliefs can be taken into account by reviewing the suitability of accommodation and its proximity to relevant places of worship.</p> <p>We will continue to collect information on all protected characteristics through our assessment forms, as this improves our data collection and helps inform best practise.</p> | |
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| Sex - A man or a woman. | |
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| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan; this also includes needs in relation to each part of the duty. | Potential socio-economic impacts/needs/issues arising from socio-economic disadvantage (positive and negative) |
| <p>Implementing our new strategy and expanding our off the street provision to secure accommodation should positively impact on reducing rough sleeping, which will predominantly impact on men because 88% of Southwark's rough sleepers are male. (CHAIN data)</p> <p>Women are disproportionately represented among lead applicants from approach households (59% compared to 52%). (ONS)</p> <p>People with children, and lone parents (who are more likely to be women) in particular, will potentially be negatively affected if they move outside Southwark and London as they are more likely to rely on local support networks for child care arrangements.</p> <p>Women of a working age are less likely than men of a working age to be in employment – 72% compared to 79% (Commons Library). Those not in work are more likely to be offered a private sector tenancy further away from Southwark where nothing nearer is available and so could be more impacted by PRSO placements.</p> | |

| Equality information on which above analysis is based | Socio-economic data on which above analysis is based |
|--|--|
| <p>ONS, Census 2021 data</p> <p>CHAIN Annual Report, Southwark, April 23-March 24</p> <p>Commons Library - Women and the UK economy - House of Commons Library (parliament.uk)</p> | <p>No data available currently.</p> |
| Mitigating and/or improvement actions to be taken | |
| <p>The cumulative effect of the policies is intended to help provide households with greater certainty, which may make it easier to establish lasting care networks and support, than if those concerned were likely to face repeated relocation as can be the case with temporary accommodation.</p> <p>A commitment to provide specialist and rapid advice and assistance to those who are experiencing domestic abuse will have a positive impact on women and their families.</p> <p>Mitigations for households with children are set out in the Section 4: Age – Children. Resettlement support will be offered for private rented offers which are out of London, and for moves within London where they are needed and this could include help to register children in local schools</p> <p>Support will also be offered to households moving into temporary accommodation outside London and as above this could include help to enrol children in local schools and to find nursery places.</p> | <p>Improving access to debt advice and support will help those who are not in work or not working full time and will help both men and women.</p> <p>Support will also be offered to households moving into temporary accommodation outside London and as above this could include help to enrol children in local schools and to find nursery places.</p> |

| Sexual orientation - Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes | |
|---|--|
| Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan; this also includes needs in relation to each part of the duty. | Potential economic and socio-economic impacts/ |

| | needs/issues arising from socio-economic disadvantage (positive and negative) |
|--|---|
| <p>According to the JSNA Annual Report 2022- “Southwark has one of the largest LGBTQI+ communities in the country. There is increasing academic evidence that key public health challenges disproportionately impact this population group, with higher levels of smoking, alcohol use, incidence of some cancers and mental ill-health. LGBTQI+ individuals also experience discrimination and homophobia when accessing health, care and other services. While the evidence base continues to improve, robust data on health outcomes is lacking at both a national and local level. As with ethnicity, additional work is required to collect data on sexual orientation within local services to enable better monitoring and tackle local inequalities”</p> <p>ONS data (2021) indicates that LGBTQI+ residents are more likely to live in private rentals and much less likely to live in social rentals areas which means they could be disproportionately affected by housing insecurity.</p> <p>The proportion of the LGBTQI+ population in England is estimated to be 3.2% compared to Southwark’s 8%. There may be impacts arising from the relative lack of support and other services designed specifically for LGBTQI+ people in some places outside London, but again this would very much depend on the area where the offer was made.</p> | <p>“The evidence for the general cohort of homeless individuals, young people who identify as LGBTQI+ reported that the top three reasons for their homelessness were parental rejection, abuse within the family, and aggression/violence in the family. Nearly one in five LGBT people (18%) including 25% of trans people and 28% of LGBT disabled people have experienced homelessness at some point in their lives” - Homeless Link 2020</p> <p>“LGB+ residents were more likely to rent privately (48.9%) than heterosexuals (29.5%), and much less likely to socially rent (15.7% vs 40.3%, respectively). Overall home-ownership levels were higher among LGB+ residents (35.4%) than heterosexuals (30.2%), but within-group analysis shows home-ownership levels were lowest among bisexuals (24.4%) and those with ‘other’ sexual orientations (16.7%).” – LGBTQIA+ Health and Wellbeing 2025, Southwark Council</p> |
| Equality information on which above analysis is based | |

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|---|--|
| | Socio-economic data on which above analysis is based |
| JSNA Annual Report 2022 JSNA Annual Report 2024 ONS, Census 2021 | Supporting LGBTIQ+ people in homelessness services – Homeless Link, 2020. LGBTQIA+ Health and Wellbeing 2025, Southwark Council |
| Mitigating and/or improvement actions to be taken | |
| <p>To coordinate tailored support for our residents by improving data collections on vulnerable groups, especially those who identify as LGBTQ+ to ensure we are offering an inclusive service that meets the needs of residents. The importance of this data collection and the need to create a safe environment to disclose information needs to be promoted through training and regularly raised in team meetings and in staff forums where appropriate to improve knowledge and confidence in this area.</p> <p>Services representing LGBTQI+ communities to be invited to the Homelessness Forum & Prevention Forum.</p> | <p>Through joint work with specialist advocacy services such as Stonewall, a positive impact in this area would be likely.</p> <p>We need to ensure all services are welcoming and inclusive of all groups through training on best practise, inclusive language and signposting to support services specific to this group.</p> |

Human Rights

There are 16 rights in the Human Rights Act. Each one is called an Article. They are all taken from the European Convention on Human Rights. The Articles are The right to life, Freedom from torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, Freedom from forced labour, Right to Liberty, Fair trial, Retrospective penalties, Privacy, Freedom of conscience, Freedom of expression, Freedom of assembly, Marriage and family, Freedom from discrimination and the First Protocol

Potential impacts (positive and negative) of proposed policy/decision/business plan

According to some estimates there are over 16,000 refugees in Southwark and this group are adversely affected by the current economic climate and the aftermath of the pandemic which has increased isolation, unemployment, poverty,

ill health and significant delays in claims being processed by the Home Office. (SDCAS)

In 2023/24, 30% of those recorded as rough sleeping in Southwark were homeless on departure from NASS accommodation provided by the Home Office. (CHAIN Report)

Information on which above analysis is based

SDCAS, [Our impact - Southwark Day Centre for Asylum Seekers \(sdcas.org.uk\)](https://sdcas.org.uk)

CHAIN Borough report, Southwark 2023/24

Mitigating and/or improvement actions to be taken

Support services and agencies working with asylum seekers to be further encouraged to join our Homelessness Forum.

Training for staff on Trauma informed care as well as the redesign of the Homesearch centre will provide a better equipped service to have sensitive conversations around homelessness for this group and other vulnerable residents.

Targeted work with asylum seeker applicants who have recently gained their status from the Home Office is ongoing and will form part of the work within this strategy.

We will work with partners including advice services, specialist refugee agencies and rough sleeping services to ensure that this cohort are assisted as quickly and effectively as possible. Targeted work with those given 56 day notice period by the Home Office to ensure we are assessing cases quickly.

This will be through co-location, new referral pathways and better more joined up working. Working groups will be continued with local services to help to encourage joined up and cooperative working for this vulnerable group.

We will create a new Task and Targeting forum to meet with multi-agency peers to mitigate and plan within the rough sleeping space.

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Conclusions

Summarise main findings and conclusions of the overall equality impact and needs analysis for this area:

Section 149 of the Equality Act, lays out the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which requires public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out their day to day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. The council's Approach to Equality ("the approach") commits the council to ensuring that equality is an integral part of our day-to-day business.

The strategy's focus on preventing homelessness and access to high quality and accessible advice generally will benefit communities. Improvements to the access of advice around debt and entitlements for residents will likely mitigate the risks of housing insecurity or loss of homes. Improvements in the coordination of agencies through prevention forums, the better use of data to target interventions and expanding the network of fora will help align and enhance prevention work for residents in the Borough.

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2024-25

NOTE: Original held by Constitutional Team; all amendments/queries to Paula Thornton Tel: 020 7525 4395

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