

# **Barnet Housing Strategy 2019 – 2024**

**Draft October 2018**

## Housing Strategy 2019 – Executive Summary

The council last reviewed its Housing Strategy in 2015. The Strategy recognised that Barnet is a successful place where people want to live and work, with several challenges that needed to be met: a rising population, increasing demand for homes, financial constraints and the need to make our ambitious growth and regeneration plans a success.

A recent review of the evidence base that supports the Housing Strategy suggests a great deal of continuity with the trends which drove the 2015 strategy. The population is still increasing and housing demand remains high. The financial environment continues to be very challenging. In addition, it is as important as ever that our regeneration and growth plans are delivered in a responsible and sustainable manner.

There have also been significant changes which mean that our approach needs to be reviewed and updated. These include changes in government policy, a new London Mayor, and the passage of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. The Grenfell Tower fire disaster in 2017 underlined the fundamental importance of fire safety, and the need to ensure that people living in social housing are not marginalised.

The Government has published its Green Paper, *a new deal for social housing*, which aims to rebalance the relationship between landlords and residents, tackle stigma and ensure social housing can act as a stable base and support social mobility.

The Government has also announced plans to fund the construction of one million new homes by 2020, with £2 billion additional funding for affordable housing and £1 billion for new council housing, and has published its rough sleeping strategy which aims to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and eliminate it by 2027.

The Mayor of London has published his London Housing Strategy and Draft London Plan, setting out plans to deliver 65,000 new homes across London each year and start building 90,000 new affordable homes by 2021. The Mayor also wants a better deal for private renters and to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping.

At the same time, the council is in the process of updating its Local Plan which will translate our housing priorities into a statutory planning policy framework and preparing a Regeneration Strategy that will help to implement the Local Plan and objectives of ongoing responsible and sustainable development and growth in Barnet.

Housing costs have risen unexpectedly fast when compared to median incomes and local housing allowance rates, creating an affordability gap which presents a real

challenge for households seeking to buy or rent a home, as well as for the council's costs for providing temporary accommodation for homeless households.

The high cost of home ownership has also resulted in a tenure shift and a significant increase in the number of people in privately rented accommodation.

The council has therefore identified five themes that it believes the Housing Strategy needs to focus on. These are:

- 1) Raising standards in the private rented sector
- 2) Delivering more homes that people can afford
- 3) Safe and secure homes
- 4) Promoting independence
- 5) Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in Barnet.

### **Raising standards in the private rented sector**

The use of private rented sector accommodation has increased from 17% of households in 2001 to 26% in 2016. The loss of a private rented tenancy is the biggest reason for homelessness in Barnet.

Since 2015, the council has introduced an additional licencing scheme requiring all Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) to be licensed, and planning permission is now required for new small HMOs. Over the same period, the number of accredited landlords increased from 492 to 667, and Barnet Homes have recently established Bumblebee, a private lettings agency to provide a quality service for landlords and tenants.

It is important that the council supports responsible tenants and ensures that landlords provide a good quality offer. A fresh approach to the private rented sector will be adopted by the council, with a focus of **L**icensing, **E**nforcement, **A**dvice, and **D**ata. Our **LEAD** agenda will include consideration of the case for selective licencing, which means that all landlords in some areas would be required to obtain a licence, additional resources for the private sector enforcement team and improvements to the information and advice available to tenants on their rights and obligations. Information and evidence held about the private rented sector will be improved to ensure that our approach is targeted to areas where it will be the most effective.

### **Delivering more homes that people can afford**

The population in Barnet is expected to increase by 16% from 391,500 to 466,500 by 2041, and the recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment shows that there is a need to provide up to 3,060 new homes a year to accommodate this growth. The demand for homes generated by this population growth has resulted in average house prices increasing from £391,000 in 2014 to £545,000 in 2017, which is 15 times the median household income for Barnet.

Most rents in the borough are now higher than local housing allowances, and at £1350 a month, median rents in Barnet are higher than those across outer London.

Since 2011, over 10,000 new homes have been built in Barnet, including 2657 that are affordable. The council has established a pipeline of new homes on its own land, and the first 320 of these will be for affordable rent and are being delivered by the *Opendoor Homes*, a subsidiary of Barnet Homes. Good progress has been made on our estate regeneration schemes, where 2,400 new homes have been built and work at Stonegrove/Spur Road completed.

We will continue to explore innovative opportunities to accelerate the delivery of new homes through the Local Plan and our Regeneration Strategy, including making use of our land and assets and partnership with the Barnet Group. We will also aim to ensure that Barnet residents are prioritised for new homes in the borough.

Over the five years to 2021, we expect 12,255 new homes to be delivered across the borough with a further 9500 by 2026.

### **Safe and secure homes**

The tragic fire at Grenfell Tower in June 2017 drew attention to the fundamental importance of fire safety, particularly in high rise blocks.

The council has acted quickly and decisively to put in place a £30m investment improvement programme in its own high-rise housing beyond regulatory compliance and deliver best practice in fire safety. ACM cladding on tower blocks at Granville Road has been removed and its replacement with a safe non-combustible system will be completed by October 2018.

The council has worked with other housing providers including housing associations and private owners to ensure the safety of all residents living in high rise flats.

The council will continue to work with Barnet Homes to complete the programme of fire safety works over the next two years, and work with the Government and other agencies such as the London Fire Brigade to ensure residents safety in the borough.

### **Promoting independence**

The older population in Barnet is set to increase significantly, with the number of people over 60 living in the borough expected to rise by 68% from 75,519 to 121,701. Good housing can help to support other council objectives, such as helping older and vulnerable people to live independently and the council has already put in place a programme of providing new extra care housing schemes, the first of which at Ansell Court is due to be completed early in 2019.

The council already provides a range of housing options for vulnerable adults with a focus on helping people live as independently as possible. A key priority is to

increase the number of people with mental health issues living in stable accommodation.

The council is aiming to be the most 'Family Friendly' borough in London by 2020. The key aim to achieving this is by focusing on developing families' resilience. We particularly recognise the need to deliver high quality services for young adults and care leavers through closer working with our partners to provide better housing options and to prevent youth homelessness. We have recently adopted protocols to avoid placing 16-17 year olds in temporary accommodation, and are working to develop a more effective housing pathway for care leavers.

## **Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in Barnet**

Homelessness has continued to remain high with applications for assistance averaging 1,600 households a year since 2015, compared to 1,200 a year for the period 2012 – 2015. Barnet has successfully increased the number of people it prevents from becoming homeless from 870 in 2015/16 to 1,140 in 2017/18, and the number of households in temporary accommodation has fallen from a peak of 2,941 in March 2016 to 2,579 in 2018.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has introduced new duties for local authorities. In parallel with this Housing Strategy, the council is bringing forward a detailed Homelessness Strategy setting out how it will continue to tackle and prevent homelessness, with a focus on the following objectives:

- **Preventing homelessness.** Prevention remains the most effective way to manage homelessness. We will support people to stay in their own homes or help them to find new homes by developing personal housing plans to better meet their housing needs.
- **Reducing the use of Temporary Accommodation (TA) and securing suitable accommodation.** We aim to reduce the number of families living in TA significantly over the next five years by securing more affordable accommodation in the private rented sector at LHA levels alongside using our own surplus land and buildings to build more affordable housing in Barnet.
- **Establishing effective partnerships, working arrangements and support.** We will improve the strategic focus of tackling homelessness in Barnet by establishing a Homelessness Forum with representation from all key partners to ensure a multi-agency approach is being taken to prevent homelessness by building more resilient communities across the borough.
- **Supporting Rough Sleepers to address their housing and other needs.** We will recruit specialist outreach workers to support rough sleepers into accommodation that better meets their needs.

## **Conclusion**

Barnet's Housing Strategy sets out our approach to meeting the housing challenges facing the borough, with a focus on improving standards in the private rented sector,

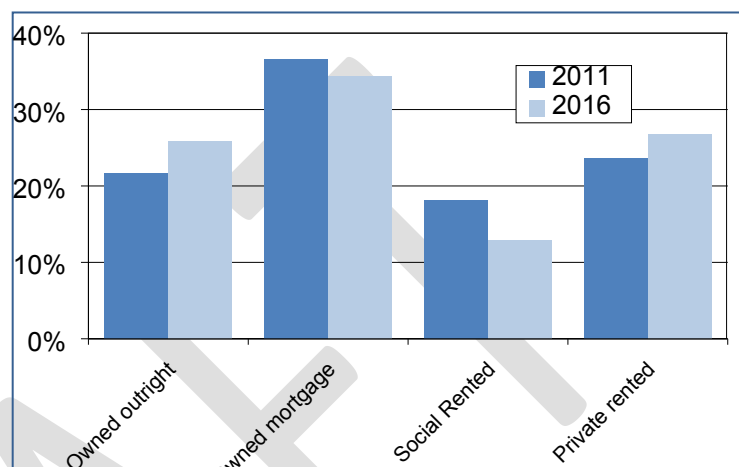
increasing the supply of homes that local people can afford, promoting independence and ensuring that homes are safe and secure.

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## 1. Raising standards in the private rented sector

The council is determined to see standards in the private rented sector rise, for the benefit of residents across the borough. We will pursue a fresh approach to the private rented sector in Barnet with a focus on **Licensing, Enforcement, Advice and Data**. Our **LEAD** agenda will work with tenants, agents and landlords in the task of professionalising the business of renting homes.

Figures from the Office of National Statistics shows that more than a quarter of households in Barnet now rent their home from a private landlord, and this number is likely to rise as house prices remain beyond the reach of many people.



Tenure change in Barnet source. ONS Annual Population Survey 2017

The council recognises that as more households rely on the private rented sector for a home, that it is important that the authority takes steps to ensure that responsible tenants are supported and that landlords provide a good quality offer. In view of this, the council has expressed its support for the Government's proposals to extend the minimum tenancy length to three years.

The council has also supported the establishment of a private sector lettings agency, Bumblebee, delivered by The Barnet Group to provide a quality service for landlords and tenants.

### Licensing

#### *Mandatory and Additional Licensing*

Barnet has already introduced measures to improve quality in the private rented sector.

In 2016, following extensive consultation, the council introduced an Additional Licensing scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

- Most privately rented properties occupied by people who do not form a single household now need a licence
- The HMO licence requires the landlord to demonstrate that they are meeting their obligations and that arrangements are in place to ensure that the property is properly managed and maintained

- The introduction of the Additional Licensing Scheme was supported by the introduction of an article 4 direction requiring planning permission for new small<sup>1</sup> HMOs from May 2016.

The onus is now on landlords to inform the council if their property is in multiple occupation and to ensure that minimum standards are met in licensed premises. In our response, care is taken to try and ensure that the highest risk HMOs are prioritised.

Since the introduction of additional licensing, the number of HMOs licenced in the borough has increased from 194 to 809. But it is estimated that there are still over 3,000 HMOs that should be licensed under the scheme. Securing applications has been difficult and the council therefore intends to put more resources into maximising the number of HMOs licensed in the Borough.

### *Selective Licensing*

As part of the strategy to improve standards in the private rented sector, the Council will consider making use of a Selective Licensing Scheme in areas, where there is evidence of a higher prevalence of poor conditions in the private rented sector, persistent anti-social behaviour, high levels of deprivation, high levels of migration or high levels of crime.

Selective Licensing would require all landlords in a specified area to obtain a licence from the council and ensure that their property meets the required standards. To ascertain the feasibility of this approach requires a review of evidence and a detailed consultation exercise. The council intends to progress this work and decide whether to implement Selective Licencing during 2019.

### *Accreditation*

In common with the rest of the country, the private rented sector includes many individual landlords each with relatively small portfolios. To ensure that landlords are fully aware of their responsibilities, the council encourages landlords to acquire formal accreditation through the London Landlords Accreditation Scheme (LLAS). For landlords with properties in poor condition, it is a condition of their HMO licence that they obtain LLAS accreditation within a timescale specified by the council.

The number of accredited landlords in Barnet has increased from 492 to 667 since 2015. The council will continue to promote LLAS and will also consider other ways in which best practise amongst landlords in Barnet can be improved.

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<sup>1</sup> where between three and six unrelated people share basic amenities such as a kitchen or bathroom, larger HMOs have always required planning permission



## Enforcement

The Housing and Planning Act 2016 extended the criteria for mandatory HMO Licensing, increasing the number of properties requiring a license. In addition, the Act introduced new powers for local authorities to deal with rogue landlords, including the power to issue civil penalties of up to £30,000 as an alternative to prosecuting landlords for failure to licence, and as an alternative to prosecuting a number of offences under the Housing Act 2004.

**Case Study** - The Council was made aware of an unlicensed, two-storey property following noise complaints from neighbouring residents.

Barnet's Enforcement Team found that nine different tenants under different letting agreements were sharing a single kitchen and bathroom, with no satisfactory means of fire escape or fire detection

One of the more dangerous lettings was formed by placing a partition in the kitchen which, in the event of a kitchen fire, would leave the tenant completely trapped.

After the District Judge had seen the photos of the undersized rooms, he concluded that the owner was aware that an HMO licence was required for the property and that the letting of undersized rooms was strictly prohibited.

The Act also enables applications to be made for Banning Orders preventing a person from being a landlord, engaging in letting agency work, and/or property management work, and creates a 'Rogue Landlord and Property Agent' database that local authorities must update following the making of a Banning Order, and may update following a conviction for a banning order offence.

Appropriate use of these powers will enable non-compliance, in relation to housing conditions in the private rented sector, to be addressed in a more effective way.

The council has implemented these new powers and issued its first two Civil Penalty Notices. Further Notices of Intention have also been served and this enforcement action will be used where appropriate in line with the council's Development and Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy.

The council intends to put more resources into enforcement with the aim of improving standards in the private rented sector. This will enable the council to ensure that landlords comply with their statutory obligations and licence conditions.

Barnet, along with other London authorities, meets regularly with the Greater London Authority to discuss ways of improving standards in the private rented sector. The council has signed up to the Mayor of London's Rogue Landlord and Agent Checker, a new public online database to protect people privately renting homes in the Capital. As well as records on prosecutions and enforcement action, the database offers tenants a tool for the easy reporting of landlords whom they suspect of unscrupulous practices.

The council will also review the viability of assisting private tenants with obtaining Rent Repayment Orders.

## Advice

The council currently provides support for private tenants through its Private Sector Housing Team, who can be contacted for advice if they are unable to resolve an issue with their landlord. The council's website includes information about the rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords.

In addition, Barnet Homes provide advice and support to private tenants who are threatened with homelessness.

The council will review the quality of information for tenants and landlords provided via its website and will consider other improvements that could be made to the advice provisions available to private sector tenants, for example by improving access to the Private Sector Housing Team.

## Data

It is important that our approach to improving the private rented sector is supported by good quality data and information. An opportunity to improve the information held about the sector will be provided by the evidence gathered for the consideration of Selective Licencing.

In addition, the council will review the data it already holds, consider whether there is additional information that it wants to collect on a regular basis. This might include mechanisms for tenants to provide feedback on their needs and concerns, such as an annual survey of resident satisfaction with their private sector rented accommodation.

More detailed proposals on our plans for raising standards in the private sector will be presented to the Housing Committee in January 2019, and these will be reflected in the final draft of the Housing Strategy.

### Progress since 2015

- Additional HMO licencing scheme for all HMOs implemented from July 2016
- Article 4 direction requiring planning permission for new small HMOs in force from May 2016
- Number of accredited landlords increased from 492 (Mar 2015) to 667 (Mar 2018)
- Number of HMOs licenced (mandatory scheme) increased from 151 (Mar 2015) to 398 (September 2018)
- Number of HMOs licenced (additional scheme) since July 2016 – September 2018 411
- Private lettings agency *Bumblebee* established by Barnet Group to provide quality service for landlords and tenants

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signed up to the London Mayor's Rogue Landlord and Agent Checker</li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the changes required through the Housing and Planning Act for example extensions to mandatory HMO licensing and minimum room sizes in HMOs</li> <li>Consider Selective Licencing – develop and review an evidence base</li> <li>Additional resources for housing enforcement and HMO licencing</li> <li>Review the viability of supporting tenants in obtaining Rent Repayment Orders</li> <li>Improve information and advice available to private sector tenants</li> <li>Review data held and identify gaps</li> </ul>
<b>Targets</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased number of Houses in Multiple Occupation licensed (Target to be agreed)</li> <li>Reduce Category 1 hazards in private rented properties to Category 2 – 165 a year</li> <li>Increase number of Landlords accredited under LLAS (Target to be agreed)</li> </ul>

## 2. Delivering more homes that people can afford

### Overview

In common with the rest of London, Barnet has seen significant increases in housing costs. Since 2014, the average house price in Barnet has increased from £391,000 to £545,000, and is now more than 15 times the borough median household income of £36,000. Barnet is a relatively expensive place with an average house price of £430,000 for Outer London as a whole.

Private sector rents have also increased and, at £1,350 a month, the median rent in Barnet is also relatively high when compared to the Outer London median of £1,295.

The council is committed to providing decent quality housing that buyers and renters can afford, prioritising Barnet residents.

### Increasing Housing Supply

Part of the answer to making housing more affordable is to increase housing supply, to ensure that there are enough new homes to meet the needs of a population that is expected to increase from 391,500 in 2017 to reach 466,500 by 2041.

Since 2011, over 10,000 new homes have been built in Barnet, including 2,657 which are classified as “affordable” for rent or for sale. Our Housing Trajectory estimates that 35,000 new homes will be delivered over the next 15 years.

A recently commissioned Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) completed by Opinion Research Services, to provide an objective assessment of housing need in Barnet. The SHMA’s provisional findings are that up to 76,500 new homes are needed in Barnet by 2041, including 17,600 affordable homes for rent and for sale. This equates to 3,060 new homes a year of which 704 are affordable.

Dwelling Type	2016-2041	Annual	%
Market Housing	GLA		
1 Bedroom	3900	156	5%
2 Bedroom	13,900	556	18%
3 Bedroom	23,800	952	31%
4 Bedroom	14,200	568	19%
5+ Bedrooms	3,100	124	4%
<b>Total Market Housing</b>	<b>58,900</b>	<b>2,356</b>	<b>77%</b>
Affordable Housing			
1 Bedroom	2,500	100	3%
2 Bedroom	7,700	308	10%
3 Bedroom	4,800	192	6%
4 Bedroom	2,000	80	3%
5+ Bedrooms	600	24	1%
<b>Total Affordable Housing</b>	<b>17,600</b>	<b>704</b>	<b>23%</b>
<b>Total Requirement</b>	<b>76,500</b>	<b>3,060</b>	

It should be noted that the Barnet SHMA highlights some issues with the methodology used in the GLA projections, from which a full objectively assessed need for housing of 76,500 homes is derived. Over a 25-year period (2016-41) this is equivalent to 3,060 new homes per annum. An alternative scenario which uses household types data provides a lower 25 -year requirement of 50,000 or 2,000 per annum. Both scenarios are challenging. The figure adopted by the borough will be determined via the council's new Local Plan, which is expected to be adopted during 2020.

Our Local Plan, which is under review, currently includes a target that 40% of new homes should be affordable. The SHMA identifies a need for 704 affordable homes a year which is 23% of the total annual requirement of 3060 suggesting that a lower requirement may be appropriate for Barnet. However, this needs to be set in the context of the draft London Plan which seeks a 50% affordable homes across the Capital. Barnet's new Local Plan, which is expected to be adopted by 2020, will establish the borough's approach to affordable housing requirements on new schemes going forward.

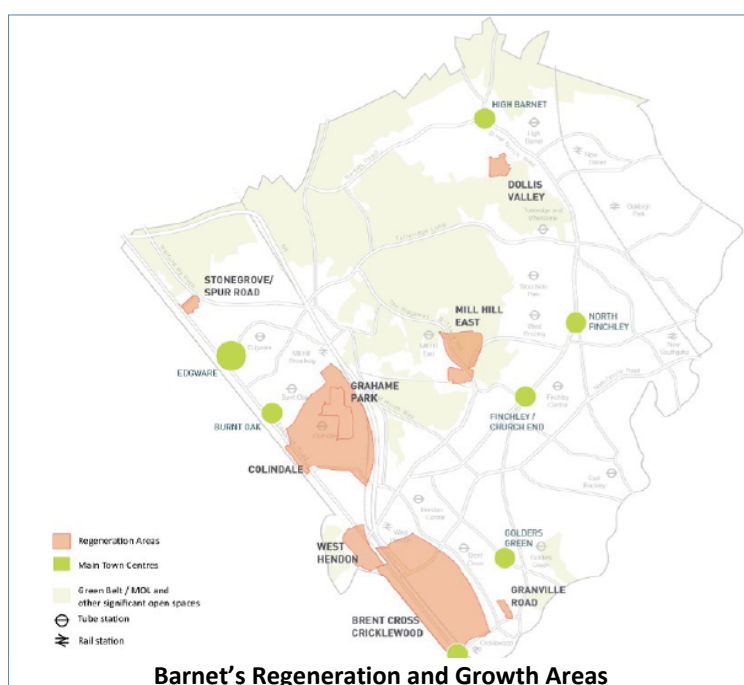
It is also necessary to recognise the need to prioritise larger family homes of three bedrooms or more in a market that is predisposed to provide smaller units. The 2018 SHMA supports this approach showing that more than half of the market housing need is for home with three or more bedrooms.

More information about the SHMA can be found in Appendix 1.

The council will also update its 2007 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for affordable housing. The SPD will update and clarify the council's approach to securing affordable housing from residential development through section 106 Agreements. Since 2007 there have been significant changes to the housing market as well as government policy on affordable housing accompanied by increased scrutiny of development viability.

## Regeneration and Growth

Much of our housing growth will be delivered through our ambitious growth and regeneration plans. As well as our estate regeneration schemes which are all now underway, this includes the wider growth areas of Brent Cross/Cricklewood, Colindale and Mill Hill East. Our aim has been to focus growth on the parts of the



borough that will benefit from regeneration and that have the capacity for growth, while protecting the qualities of the existing successful suburbs.

## **Estate Regeneration**

**Stonegrove/Spur Road** has set the standard for our approach to neighbourhood regeneration. As the first regeneration project in the borough to be completed, the site has been reconnected with the surrounding area. Having replaced the ageing tower blocks on the Stonegrove/Spur Road estate, the new neighbourhood now boasts a modern church and parsonage and a community facility at its heart.

The development comprises of 999 homes, 480 of which are affordable, built to modern standards, high quality public open spaces and communal gardens.

The good design and affordable housing provision has been recognised with:

- receipt of Architectural Award and award nominations for excellent neighbourhood design;
- receipt of ongoing positive feedback from residents of their experience of living in a regenerated neighbourhood;
- a visit from Prime Minister Theresa May in November 2017, to commend Barnet Council for its record on building affordable homes; and
- shortlisting for the Inside Housing “Best affordable Housing Development” in November 2017.

The exemplary Stonegrove/ Spur Road development provides an inspiring place to live with a strong sense of place which gives residents both a stake and a sense of pride in their neighbourhood.

**West Hendon** - located to the south-west of the borough, the West Hendon estate sits between a section of the A5 Edgware Road and the Welsh Harp Reservoir, a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

With the ambition to create a thriving new neighbourhood, re-development is underway to replace existing poor-quality homes with over 2,000 high-quality houses, 25% of which will be affordable, surrounded by improved public space and transport links, thriving shops and businesses, a community centre and a new primary school.

Construction started in 2011 with 552 new homes built to date. A new interim hub provides residents access to a community space until a permanent facility is delivered at a later stage.

Planning consent has been achieved for a new landmark facility, the new Phoenix Canoe Club. This will fully exploit the benefits of the Welsh Harp as an asset for water sports and recreational activities.

The council has enacted Compulsory Purchase Order powers to enable assembly of land and property for development.

**Dollis Valley estate** was in decline for many years, isolated from services and the surrounding area, poorly designed and with poor transport. The renamed 'Brook Valley Gardens' provides a new integrated community, with existing sub-standard properties being replaced with new mixed tenure homes built to modern standards.

The emerging Brook Valley Gardens features new green spaces, a community centre and pre-school nursery. These facilities, complemented by programmes to fund local initiatives, strengthen the existing Underhill community and provide employment and training opportunities for local people.

The scheme will see the demolition of several system built blocks which will be replaced with 631 new mixed tenure homes, 40% of which will be affordable.

To date, 164 new homes have been built and a new 'Hope Corner' community centre with nursery school facilities was officially launched in 2016.

The council has enacted Compulsory Purchase Order powers to enable assembly of land and property for development.

### **Grahame Park**

Grahame Park in Colindale is Barnet's largest housing estate, built in the 1960s and 1970s. It originally comprised 1,777 houses all built around a central concourse.

Plans are underway to create a more outward looking neighbourhood with new 2,756 mixed tenure homes, community facilities with accessible road, pedestrian and cycling networks.

Transformation of the estate is taking place over the next 15 years providing an improved layout and connection to the surrounding area, linking homes and services with other developments in Colindale.

To date 685 new homes have been built, of which 385 are affordable. A new 'City Square' (on Bristol Avenue) already plays host to a new Library, Centre for Independent Living, Barnet and Southgate College and a retail store. It will also soon see the completion of the Council's new offices providing accommodation for staff currently based at North London Business Park and Barnet House.

In January 2018, the Mayor of London gave direction to refuse the planning application for the 'Concourse' to provide approximately 1,000 new homes, new roads and open spaces and a major new community hub facility. A revised application is now required from developer Genesis.

We recognise that estate regeneration can be a disruptive process for residents, particularly those who have non-secure tenancies and are not entitled to a new

home on the estate. The council will seek to minimise disruption, by providing advice and support and by taking into account employment and education needs of families when making an offer of alternative accommodation to those who qualify.

## **Growth Areas**

**Brent Cross Cricklewood** is one of the largest regeneration schemes in Europe.

With an investment of £4.5 billion, comprehensive re-development and phased improvements are planned to take place over the next 20 years. Proposals include a new town centre, a residential quarter and expansion of the Brent Cross shopping centre.

This growth will be underpinned by a brand-new Thameslink railway station linking the new neighbourhood to central London in less than 15 minutes. The area will also be served by improved transport links including a new bus station.

Uniting the areas north and south of the North Circular, the redevelopment of Brent Cross Cricklewood will provide a vibrant place to live and work and contribute to the long-term prosperity of the borough.

The development of Brent Cross Cricklewood will deliver 7,500 new homes and up to 27,000 new jobs. At least 15% of new homes provided will be affordable in addition to the replacement homes for Whitefield Estate.

Given the scale of this development, the council has enacted Compulsory Purchase Order powers to enable assembly of land and property for development.

**Colindale** - with a potential for more than 10,000 new homes, Colindale will make the largest contribution to housing in the borough over the next 10 years. Already major mixed use residential schemes have been completed, totalling 4,084 homes built to date.

Redevelopment is focused on three key roads surrounding Colindale tube station in partnership with Transport for London (TFL), Colindale Avenue, Aerodrome Road and Grahame Park Way.

Housing growth will be served by improved public transport services and high quality open spaces. Plans for the reconfiguration of the Colindale tube station will provide enhanced capacity and step-free access to meet demand. Colindale Avenue will benefit from enhanced public spaces and mixed-use properties.

The new neighbourhood will be better connected with accessible, safe and attractive walking and cycling routes, connecting new and existing communities and links through to the tube station, bus stops and residential neighbourhoods.

**Mill Hill East** - the former Inglis Barracks site in Mill Hill is being redeveloped to provide new 2,240 affordable and market homes, a primary school, local shops, a



district energy centre and new parks and open spaces. Located on the edge of Mill Hill's conservation area, Millbrook Park is an exemplary Public Private Partnership creating a high quality new suburb at the heart of NW7. 300 new homes have already been delivered.

The Inglis Consortium of landowners, of which the council is a member, is involved in enabling site decontamination, building infrastructure and selling the serviced parcels of land. The Consortium deals with bids from developers taking into consideration price, design and credibility in the market place. The developers are then responsible for house building in line with planning consents.

## Transport for London (TFL) programme

TFL have commitments to make use of their estate to help meet London wide targets for housing deliver, which includes several sites in Barnet in addition to Colindale; these include tube stations at High Barnet and Finchley Central<sup>2</sup>, and Edgware bus garage.

The council are working with TFL to ensure that this programme is delivered in Barnet in ways that align with our local priorities, and has recently applied for support from the Housing Infrastructure Fund.

The Finchley Central Station scheme proposes to secure an estimated £240m of investment into the borough through delivery of a sustainable, high-density development around the existing station, encapsulating principles of Good Growth and Healthy Streets promoted by the GLA.

The initial feasibility work undertaken by TfL has established potential for over 600 residential units, which will be supplemented by retail and commercial space.

## Infill Regeneration Estates and Sites

**Granville Road** - situated at the southern end of the Borough, the 1960s housing estate currently consists of three tall tower blocks, as well as three lower rise blocks. The quality of the estate is generally poor and it includes large areas of under-utilised and unstructured land.

The aim of the scheme is to improve the estate environment and provide much needed new mixed tenure homes in a popular location.

**Upper & Lower Fosters** - built in the late 1960s, the Upper & Lower Fosters estate currently occupies 3.06ha and contains 211 existing homes (Cheshire Hall). The estate is built to a relatively low density despite its proximity to Brent Street town centre, a local high street with good transport accessibility.

This presents an exciting development opportunity in a town centre setting to create additional affordable, market and extra care housing. The intention is to optimise the use of the currently underused land to develop up to 200 new homes and includes

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that, at this early stage, no detailed proposals have been presented to the Council and any development would be dependent upon planning approval being granted

the demolition of the existing sheltered housing, to be replaced by a new extra care development.

This pioneering scheme aims to showcase best practice in community participation within estate regeneration, and deliver an outstanding quality of architecture and urban design.

## **Council Land Development Pipeline**

The council owns surplus land and buildings across the borough that could be used to provide more housing and has embarked on a programme of developing these sites itself. By building mixed tenure housing on smaller council owned sites across the borough, the aim is to provide housing choices that meet the needs and aspirations of Barnet residents.

Through partnership working between The Barnet Group, and Regional Enterprise (Re) and the current development pipeline includes building:

- new mixed tenure homes, with the affordable homes funded by private sales plus a return for the council
- new homes for affordable rent on existing council land
- extra care schemes and wheelchair accessible units improving the housing offer for older and vulnerable people and thereby reducing demand for care
- private housing for rent, and
- acquisition of housing for affordable rent and temporary accommodation

Subject to planning consent, there are 28 proposed schemes in the pipeline to be built by Open Door Homes, which is a registered provider established and owned by Barnet Homes Opendoor Homes. In total these schemes will deliver, 500 affordable homes for rent, including 179 extra care units. 10% of the newly built homes will be wheelchair accessible.



The council is considering ways to help Opendoor Homes establish itself, and this could include transferring ownership of some empty council homes to the organisation, to provide a capital base to support further development.

The council is currently in the process of bidding for additional funding from the Greater London Authority to deliver 100 new homes to be built on top of existing blocks of flats. If successful, these properties will be council homes for letting at London Affordable Rent.



As part of maximising the value of the Council's Estate, alongside more traditional developments



in partnership with or by selling to private developers, the Council will also explore offering long-leases for sites. Specialist developers can then bid for the lease, build-out the site and then hand back all assets to the council at the end of the lease period.

## **Acquisitions programme**

Since 2016 the council has operated a programme of acquiring homes on the open market for use as an affordable form of temporary accommodation and some homes for affordable rent in London.

This approach has provided a way of making properties available more quickly, complementing our development programme, and has also provided a more cost-effective way of providing temporary accommodation.

**New homes delivered by Open Door Homes at Elmhurst Crescent, before, during and after construction.**

Properties have been acquired in a number of areas, including within London and elsewhere including Luton and Bedford. So far over 100 properties have been acquired and the council has plans in place to acquire an additional 265 properties all of which will be in London.

The council will continue to acquire properties as part of its strategy for providing homes that people can afford, as well as providing a cheaper alternative to paying private owners to provide temporary housing.

## **Rent Policy**

In 2015, a rent policy was established for new council homes that are delivered through the development pipeline, whereby rents are to be charged at 65% of market rent. The council will adjust this policy to allow other rent levels to be charged for new council properties where this is a condition of grant; this means, for example, that if grant is received from the Greater London Authority, rents charged would be London Affordable Rents.

## **Low cost home ownership**

The council recognises that for many the desire to own their own home has become increasingly difficult to achieve, particularly for first time buyers.

Although the Right to Buy was reinvigorated in 2012 with higher discounts to help more tenants buy their own home, the increase in house prices has meant that the number of Right to Buy sales has fallen more recently. The recently published Social Housing Green Paper raises the possibility of tenants being able to buy a share in their existing home if they cannot afford to purchase it outright.

In addition, the Government is consulting on allowing councils to use Right to Buy receipts to support the development of shared ownership as well as homes for affordable rent as at present.

Some 794 residents have been able to take advantage of the Help to Buy scheme in Barnet, 772 of whom were first time buyers. This was the highest number of households in London, where the average was 300 per borough.

Since 2011, 785 homes have been delivered in Barnet for shared ownership. The council will continue to work with developers to deliver more homes for low cost ownership as part of our growth and regeneration plans.

## **Homes for local people**

Barnet's Housing Allocations scheme sets out how we give higher priority for affordable rented homes to people who have a local connection with the borough of at least five years.

Shared ownership is prioritised for those living or working in Barnet which can only be sold to those living and working in the borough for the first three months after completion.

The London Housing Strategy sets out how the Mayor is working with developers and housing associations to make more new homes available to Londoners, following evidence that overseas buyers were purchasing significant numbers of homes costing between £200,000 and £500,000. This approach entails restricting sales of new homes to UK based buyers for homes of up to £350,000 in value for three months before they can be marketed overseas, with additional exclusivity for people living and working in London. The council intends to develop a similar approach in Barnet working with local developers.

## **Empty Properties**

On-going pressure on the housing market means that it is important that the number of properties remaining empty in Barnet is kept to a minimum. This is also to the benefit of the property owners as their property would provide a rental income if it were made available for letting.

The council therefore aims to bring long term empty properties back into residential use. This may include long term vacant sites and redundant commercial units where there is the potential for conversion or redevelopment for housing purposes.

The council will assist empty property owners in bringing their property back into use through a combination of advice, and financial assistance in the form of Empty Property Grants. All Empty Property Grants will be administered in line with the council's Private Sector Housing Financial Assistance Policy. The council will gain nomination rights through this funding for homeless households.

In cases where the owner will not work with the council to bring a property back into residential use the appropriate enforcement action will be taken ranging from the service of minor works notices to Enforced Sale and Compulsory Purchase of the property.

The council currently has seven properties at varying stages of the Compulsory Purchase Order process. All enforcement action will be completed in line with the London Borough of Barnet's Development and Regulatory Services Enforcement Policy.

<b>Progress since 2015:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,827 new homes built in 2015/16 and 2,230<sup>3</sup> in 2016/17</li> <li>• 257 affordable homes built in 2015/16, 474 in 2016/17 and 303 in 2017/18</li> <li>• 40 new council homes completed</li> <li>• Pipeline of 320 new affordable homes for rent being delivered by Open Door Homes on council land has commenced</li> <li>• 100+ homes acquired on open market to provide affordable homes for homeless households</li> <li>• Regeneration of Stonegrove/Spur Road Estate completed providing 999 new homes</li> <li>• New homes completed on other regeneration estates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Grahame Park - 685</li> <li>▪ West Hendon- 552</li> <li>▪ Dollis Valley – 164</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 569 empty properties brought back into use between April 2015 and March 2018</li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barnet's Local Plan translates housing priorities into planning policy and is progressed through statutory public consultation and examination before adoption in late 2020</li> <li>• Continue to progress and develop plans for the delivery of new homes on council land, including completion of 320 affordable homes for rent delivered by Open Door Homes</li> <li>• Secure financial support from London Mayor for delivery 200 new homes on top of existing council housing blocks</li> <li>• Continue with programme of acquiring properties on the open market</li> <li>• Develop new supplementary planning guidance on affordable housing</li> <li>• Develop approach to prioritising new homes for local people with local developers</li> </ul>
<b>Targets</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15314 new homes to be completed across Barnet by 2024 including 1000</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> Provisional figure pending publication of GLA Annual Monitoring Report summer 2018

new homes at Brent Cross/Cricklewood and 3527 in Colindale

- 500 new homes to be delivered through development pipeline by 2024
- Net new homes to be delivered on regeneration estates by 2024
  - Grahame Park - 600
  - West Hendon- 439
  - Dollis Valley – 36
  - Granville Road -111
- Bring 100 empty properties back into use each year

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### 3. Safe and secure homes

The council takes its responsibilities around fire safety very seriously, and the Grenfell Tower fire disaster in June 2017 highlighted the importance of ensuring that blocks meet best practice in fire safety measures and providing reassurance to residents that their homes are safe.

The council has acted decisively to ensure that the safety of residents is assured, providing significant additional investment in fire safety measures for council homes, and working closely with housing associations and private owners to ensure that they are dealing with any issues relating to their properties.

#### Council Housing

A £31 million prioritised programme of works required to move beyond legislative compliance to deliver best practice in fire safety for the council's high-rise blocks has been agreed and is now being implemented by Barnet Homes.

Barnet Homes are now reviewing fire safety in low and medium rise council homes.

Three blocks at Granville Road were identified as having been clad with Aluminium Composite Panels, which failed government fire safety tests. The council moved quickly to remove these panels and a non-combustible replacement cladding has now been fitted.



Cladding replacement works underway at Granville Road

#### Housing Associations

Approximately 7,000 homes in Barnet are managed by Housing Associations and these are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). As Registered Providers, they are required to carry out fire risk assessments and operate in a similar way to Barnet Homes in managing fire safety in relation to the housing they manage.

The council has received confirmation that housing associations with high rise blocks in the borough all have up to date fire risk assessments, and that a small number of these that failed government safety tests have been or are being dealt with.

## Private Sector

In the case of privately owned high rise blocks, whilst Barnet is the planning authority for most new building works, the authority's building control service competes with the private sector for the building compliance work.

Owners are required to carry out fire risk assessments and spot checks are carried out by the London Fire Brigade. However, these are restricted to checking that fire doors, risers, and alarms are fully functional within the fabric of the building and therefore would not pick up faults in cladding systems or fire compartmentation outside the main structure.

Two high rise blocks in the private sector have been identified as having failed government tests for ACM cladding. The council's building control team have sought information from the owners of these buildings on remediation measures that they are taking.

To ensure compliance with a government direction on fire safety issued in May 2018, the council has carried out a review of cladding and fire safety in relation to high rise private residential buildings in the borough.

The Government has also announced that it will also give local authorities further levers to speed up identification and ensure remediation of unsafe cladding in the private sector during 2018.

<b>Progress since 2015:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Additional funding of £30m agreed for fire safety improvements in council homes</li><li>• Properties that fail government fire safety tests identified and mitigations confirmed with owners</li></ul>
<b>Next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implement programme of fire safety measures in council homes</li><li>• Identify any measures that are required in relation to low/medium rise council homes</li><li>• Continue to work with the government, the London Fire Brigade and property owners to improve fire safety in Barnet</li></ul>
<b>Targets</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 100% of scheduled fire risk assessments (council properties) completed on time</li><li>• 90% of High Priority fire safety actions (council properties) completed on time</li></ul>



## **4. Promoting independence**

Good housing can help to support other Council objectives, such as helping older people and people with health and social care needs to live independently. The council will promote the delivery of homes that meet the needs of older people and those with disabilities, as well as measures to support young people leaving care to make a successful transition to living independently.

Good quality, well designed housing can be further enhanced with the right assistive technology and the council has commissioned a specialist technology provider to increase the options available to residents.

### **Older People**

The older population in Barnet is expected to increase significantly over the next 25 years, with the over 60 population expected to increase by 68% from 72,500 to 121,700 by 2041 and the over 85 population expected to increase by 130% from 8,600 to 19,800 during the same period.

As the older population increases, the number of those with limiting long term illnesses are also expected to rise from 13,000 in 2017 to 21,000 in 2025, whilst the number of those with dementia is predicted to rise from 4,000 to 7,400 over the same period.

The council's strategy is to make it easier for residents to plan ahead as they approach old age, and to ensure that those with higher care needs have a non-residential care choice when their own home no longer meets their needs.

### **Advice and Support**

There are many sources of information, advice and support available to residents to promote their independence and wellbeing. This ranges from welfare benefits, housing and support services and health and wellbeing activities and can be accessed from a range of statutory services and local voluntary and community sector providers.

### **Housing Options for older people**

Many of our older residents own their own homes and through our planning policy we work with the private sector to ensure that new homes are accessible and offer the right alternatives for older people.

All new homes in the borough are required to meet Part M of the 2015 Building Regulations<sup>4</sup> which sets out requirements for ensuring that new homes are accessible and adaptable, meaning that many of them will be suitable for people as

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<sup>4</sup> 90% of new dwellings should comply with Building Regulation M4(2) – 'accessible and adaptable dwellings' and 10% should meet M4(3) – 'wheelchair user dwellings'

they grow older in a borough that is well connected with good transport and easily accessible amenities. In addition, 10% of new homes should be suitable for wheelchair users.

In addition, the council has identified a need for additional supported housing and is increasing the supply of extra care housing as an alternative to residential care homes, providing a more flexible and affordable approach that can help older people live more independent lives for longer.

Barnet Homes is currently building a new 53-unit extra care scheme at Ansell Court (formerly Moreton Close NW7), which will be completed during 2018. This scheme has been designed with a focus on the needs of people living with dementia to meet the growing need for these services. Sites for two more extra care schemes have been identified and construction on these is expected to start in 2019, providing a further 125 properties.



*Ansell Court under construction*

Good quality, well designed housing can be further enhanced with the right assistive technology and the council has commissioned a specialist technology provider to increase the options available to residents.

## **Adults with health and social care needs**

As more young people with complex needs reach adulthood, there is a national and local drive to help them to live as independently as possible within the community. This places significant pressure on ensuring appropriate housing and support services are available to meet their requirements. The council has addressed this by commissioning (2017) a wide range of accommodation and support services for adults with health and social care needs including those with complex needs supporting them to progress towards independent living through integrated care and support plans and clear move-on pathways. The council has commissioned care and support providers who have a strong track record of work with housing providers. The following options are available to adults assessed under the Care Act<sup>5</sup> by the council:

<b>Support at home</b>	Support to live independently, sustain tenancies or other living arrangements through visits and help from a support worker
<b>Neighbourhood</b>	Live independently, develop social skills and build community support networks within neighbourhoods - for adults with

<sup>5</sup>What the Care Act says – [barnet.gov.uk](http://barnet.gov.uk)

<b>networks</b>	learning disabilities.
<b>Supported living (low/medium/high needs)</b>	Supported housing person centered and tailored to meet the care support needs of residents; supporting independence, reducing risk of hospital admission or return to residential/nursing homes.
<b>Supported living for young adults</b>	Support to develop independent living skills and transition for young people with learning disabilities and/or autism to support independence
<b>Specialist step down mental health support</b>	Accommodation-based support to enable people with mental ill health to be safely discharged from hospital back to the community, avoiding re-admission and support continued recovery.
<b>Supported Living (Complex disabilities)</b>	Provides a well-coordinated combination of social care and clinical support for people with complex disabilities and health needs to maintain good health as well as independence.
<b>'Crash pad' (Home Instead)</b>	The aim of this service for people with learning disabilities and/or autism is to avoid a breakdown of living and support arrangements. Temporary additional care and support or assistance with a move to other suitable accommodation again on a short-term basis, if needed.
<b>Sheltered Plus</b>	Additional overnight support is provided in some sheltered housing schemes to enable older people to remain independent and within their own homes.
<b>Extra Care housing</b>	Designed specifically to ensure older people and those with disabilities can live independently, extra care housing schemes provide on-site 24-hour care and support. Residents have their own self-contained flats and access to communal facilities and services.
<b>Shared Lives</b>	Care and support within a families and local communities.

## Mental Health

Adults with severe and enduring mental illness face high rates of unemployment, social isolation, poorer physical health and insecure housing arrangements. Approximately a quarter of people with physical illness develop mental health problems as stress causes depression and anxiety. In 2015 there were 56,333 people aged 18-64 with a mental health problem and we expect the numbers to increase. By 2025 there are projected to be 65,280 people with a mental health condition in Barnet.

Mental illness can be caused by, or exacerbated by, an unsettled living situation. Mental health services are focusing on enablement to support people who develop

mental health problems to have a good quality of life: greater ability to manage their own lives, stronger social relationships, a greater sense of purpose, the skills they need for living and working, improved chances in education, better employment rates and a suitable and stable place to live.

Housing advice and support should be person-centred, offering an individual approach that recognises the person's own skills and strengths and promotes choice. It not only needs to focus on the security of accommodation, but to utilise prevention services that can enable a person to retain their home, such as debt counselling, cleaning and repair services and other support available to them.

## Physical Disability

The council recognises the need for homes which can offer level access for wheelchair users and those with decreased mobility. In addition to our local new build standards (see above) a number of wheelchair accessible homes will be provided on council owned land as part of our development pipeline, including 32 new fully accessible wheelchair properties currently.

Technology in the home can assist and promote greater independence. Our 'assistive technology' provider is working closely with the council to develop and innovate technology that will enable young people with complex needs and disabilities to live safely and with confidence.

### Assistive technology:

- Increases independence and confidence
- Provides reassurance to family, friends and carers
- Supports carers
- Ensures quick response when help it is needed

## Disabled Facility Grants (DFGs)

Disabled residents, and residents with a disabled child, may apply for help towards the cost of adaptation of their home, whether it is owner-occupied or rented from a council, housing association or private landlord. The grant must be for somebody who is disabled and where an adaptation is necessary and appropriate to meet the person's needs and practicable. How much a resident gets depends on an assessment of their income.

## Learning Disability and Autism

Demand for good quality housing is increasing and more specialist housing with support and technology is required to meet the needs of residents with learning disabilities and those with autism, enabling people to live independently. The Council has worked closely with health to move people with learning disabilities and autism with complex needs from hospitals. The Homestead (CrashPad) scheme has successfully supported a small number of clients for short periods and keeping them out of hospital.

Through our new accommodation and support pathway we are now working with our providers to ensure that people with learning disabilities and autism can be supported to further independence.

#### **Case studies: Barnet Mencap**

Barnet Mencap provides several supported housing schemes in the borough through Equality Housing.

**Equality Housing** is a supported housing project for people with learning disabilities. They aim to give people a chance to successfully live independently in the community by providing them with the skills they will need. This could be for people living in one of their 3 shared houses, their own flat or in the family home. People use their Personal Budgets to pay for services.

**Sherrick House** is a respite centre and enable people with learning disabilities and carers have the chance to take a break from each other and at present they support people with learning disabilities aged 18 plus.

## **Young People**

The Council is aiming to be the most 'Family Friendly' borough in London by 2020. The key aim to achieving this is by focusing on developing families' resilience. This will require universal services to build resilience and provide important protective factors. We also recognise the need to deliver high quality services for young adults through closer working with our partners to provide better housing options and to prevent youth homelessness.

### **Housing options for young adults**

A joint protocol between Family Services and Barnet Homes has already been agreed to ensure the needs of young homeless people aged 16-17 are met. The priority will be to try and maintain the young person in the family home by providing support unless it is unsafe for them to do so. When homelessness cannot be prevented young people will be explained the options open to them and suitable accommodation placements will be sort with the aim of avoiding the use of temporary accommodation.

The numbers of young people aged 16 -17 who are approaching as homeless has significantly dropped in the last year with 28 applying for support in 2017/18. Family mediation work has played a key role in this as has good working relationships with Family Services.

Barnet Foyer, run by Centrepont, provides 24 bed spaces of supported accommodation for 16-19 year olds who are homeless with low to medium support needs. Barnet Homes and Family Services refer clients into the Foyer. Officers at the Foyer provide floating support to young residents, and advisors assist young residents with employment and education support. Barnet Homes' close working with Barnet Foyer and Housing Needs Officers' successful mediation work has reduced placements into temporary accommodation for young people aged 16-24.

## **Care Leavers**

The Housing Options Team work closely with leaving care services to ensure that the transition of care leavers to independence is coordinated and provides the best possible start in their new home.

For those young people who go into care there is a risk that when they move into independent living that they are not able to cope and they struggle to sustain their tenancies. To support this transition, and to help limit the risk of homelessness in the future, Barnet Homes provides a training flat to Family Services so that care leavers have an assessment of how they can cope living independently. There are also partnership meetings between Barnet Homes and Onwards and Upwards, with dedicated officers working together to support the needs of care leavers in their homes.

Barnet Homes sit on the Corporate Parent Officers Group to ensure that processes are in place that support care leavers into suitable accommodation when their placements come to an end. A key objective is to ensure that appropriate accommodation options are worked through with care leavers well in advance of their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, minimising the possibility of them being placed into temporary accommodation.

The number of children leaving care is expected to increase significantly by 2020, making it a priority for the council to ensure that appropriate housing options and support are in place to cater for this.

<b>Progress since 2015:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Extra Care Housing Scheme at Ansell Court on site and due to complete by the end of 2018</li> <li>• New protocol in place to ensure needs of young homeless people are met</li> <li>• Significant reduction in the number of young people becoming homeless as a result of family mediation</li> <li>• New contracts with housing and support providers</li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress plans for 2 more extra care sheltered schemes at Cheshire House and Stag House, to provide a total of 125 new homes</li> </ul>

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with supported housing providers to increase step down opportunities for those ready to live more independently</li><li>• Contribute to advice on universal housing provision so that opportunities to develop housing that supports health and well-being are taken up</li><li>• Ensure that suitable housing options are identified for care leavers</li></ul> |
| <b>Targets</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maximise use of new extra care housing</li><li>• Review and refresh our Housing and Accommodation commissioning plan</li><li>• Reduce number of care leavers in temporary accommodation</li></ul>   |

## 5. Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping in Barnet

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 is one of the largest changes to housing and homeless legislation in recent times. With this, all local authorities have a duty to prevent homelessness for all residents, regardless of their priority need status. To address this significant change in legislation and to ensure homelessness in Barnet receives a more strategic focus the council has developed a separate Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, which is summarised in this section.

Barnet's Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019-2024 sets out the council's priorities to prevent homelessness and stresses the importance of working in partnership to address the wide range of issues that can be linked to homelessness.

The aims of the Strategy are:

- Preventing homelessness
- Reducing the use of temporary accommodation and securing suitable accommodation for those who are, or may become homeless
- Establishing effective partnerships, working arrangements and support to those who are or used to be homeless, to improve their resilience and reduce the risk of them from becoming homeless again
- Supporting rough sleepers to address their housing and other needs

### Priority 1: Preventing homelessness

Over 2,500 households a year approach the council for housing advice, and the number is projected to increase as a result of rising housing costs, the impact of welfare reform and population growth. Early intervention seeks to prevent homelessness. Actions include:

- Maximising the provision of appropriate advice and support to those at risk of homelessness, and intervening at as early a stage as possible.
- Establishing specialist teams to provide tailored advice to different household such as singles, families and vulnerable adults underpinned by the integration of the tenancy sustainment team to prevent homelessness.
- Providing all households with a personal housing plan to better address their individual housing and support needs.

### Priority 2: Reducing the use of temporary accommodation and securing suitable accommodation for those who are, or may become homeless

The council's first priority is to prevent homelessness occurring. Where homelessness cannot be prevented, we will provide emergency temporary accommodation whilst we assist households in finding a settled housing solution. Actions include:



- Expanding the remit of the 'Temporary Accommodation Reduction Team' to work closely with households in TA to establish accommodation solutions that will enable them to move into long term housing.
- Work with partners to increase the supply of affordable housing in Barnet as well as using our own surplus land and buildings to build additional affordable housing.
- Procure more properties at LHA rates in the private rented sector.

**Priority 3: Establishing effective partnerships, working arrangements and support to those who are or used to be homeless, to improve their resilience and reduce the risk of them becoming homeless again**

The council wants to improve the support available to households who could be at risk of becoming homeless in the future. In order to do this, the council will invite key partners to sit on its Homelessness Forum. Through this Forum, partners will oversee the delivery of a joint action plan which will look at tackling the underlying causes of homelessness and rough sleeping in Barnet. Actions include:

- Working with partners to improve the strategic focus of tackling homelessness in Barnet by establishing a Homelessness Forum with representation from all key partners.
- Improve resilience against homelessness through strengthened partnership working arrangements and developing clear referral pathways to provide early intervention to households at risk of homelessness.
- Support vulnerable adults, victims of domestic abuse, young adults at risk of homelessness and those impacted by welfare reform by commissioning additional support through the Welfare Reform Task Force and other partners to better address the housing and support needs.

**Priority 4: Supporting rough sleepers to address their housing and other needs**

The number of people sleeping rough on any one night in Barnet has steadily reduced over the past five years. But more work is required to get more entrenched rough sleepers off the streets, address their needs and help them into secure accommodation. Rough sleepers may experience a range of multiple and complex needs which are often not addressed by single services. Actions include:

- Recruiting specialist staff to oversee all rough sleeping cases in Barnet and to work closely with partners to support individual rough sleepers
- Increasing outreach and floating support for rough sleepers
- Work with partners to provide advice and support to rough sleepers around health, benefits, education and employment.

**Progress since 2015:**

- Homelessness preventions have increased from 1,017 in 2015/16 to 1,140 in 2017/18.
- Formation of a Welfare Reform Task Force to work closely with households affected by welfare reform to minimise the risk of homelessness having supported over 1,100 households in a variety of ways over the last 3 years.
- Increasing the effectiveness of our private rented sector procurement strategy, including the launch of the let2Barnet team and landlord incentive scheme for private sector landlords, so that the number of affordable private sector lettings to homeless households increased from 492 in 2015/16 to 649 in 2017/18.

**Next steps**

- Sustain tenancies and keep more households in current accommodation
- Support more households into better employment opportunities through the Welfare Reform Task Force to make them more resilient to market changes.
- Reduce the number of households in TA by providing more sustainable housing solutions
- Increase the supply of affordable housing by making better use of our surplus land and assets
- Procure more affordable accommodation in the private rented sector.
- Set up a homelessness forum to drive the strategic response with partners to tackling homelessness at a local level.
- Recruit specialist staff to oversee all rough sleeping cases in Barnet and to work closely with partners to support individual rough sleepers to address their housing and other needs.

**Targets**

- Prevent 6,000 households at risk from becoming homeless by 2024.
- Reduce the number of households in temporary accommodation from 2,759 to 1,750 by 2024.
- Establish a Homelessness Forum which will meet 4 times a year to monitor progress against Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy action plan with the aim of achieving at least 80% of targets annually.
- Procure 9 temporary accommodation units specifically for entrenched rough sleepers with complex needs and 12 units of accommodation for rough sleepers and low to medium support needs.

## **Appendix 1– Strategic Housing Market Assessment**

Along with other boroughs comprising the West London Alliance, a partnership with Ealing, Brent, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon and Harrow, Barnet commissioned Opinion Research Services (ORS) to prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

The SHMA used secondary data and seeks to provide evidence of the need and demand for housing based on demographic projections over a 25-year period from 2016 to 2041. This includes a consideration of market signals, the balance between market and affordable housing and the needs for different types and sizes of housing, including the need for family housing and for households with specific needs.

The SHMA takes account of a similar London wide exercise undertaken by the Greater London Authority (GLA), and of the introduction of a standard methodology for housing market assessments recently introduced by the Government.

The basis of both methodologies is household projection data, although the Government and GLA take different projections as their starting point.

The SHMA produced for Barnet and the other members of the West London Alliance uses the GLA projections as these inform the London Plan, which borough Local Plans are required to comply with. However, issues with the validity of the GLA demographic data are highlighted by ORS. These issues relate to conflicts between total household projections and household type projections. This essentially means that the same number of people will need to be accommodated in a higher number of smaller dwellings or a lower number of larger dwellings, depending on the scenario.

### **Market Signals**

The SHMA methodology considers a number of market signals which give an indication of the balance between the demand for and supply of dwellings and uses this information to make an adjustment to the level of baseline need based on demographic projections. For Barnet, the following market signals suggest that the housing market is under slightly more pressure than other parts of London, suggesting that an uplift of 20% on the baseline housing need shown in the table below would be reasonable:

- The increase in lower quartile house prices over the previous 5 years has been greater than for Greater London
- Average monthly rents have increased, although by less than for Greater London
- Affordability is worse than for Greater London

- The percentage of overcrowded households has increased by more than for Greater London
- Housing delivery relative to stock has increased by more than for Greater London

The overall housing need for Barnet once the adjustment for Market Signals is taken into account is 76,481 for the period 2016 to 2041, or 3,060 a year based on the GLA household projections. However, this figure reduces to 49,968 or 2,000 a year if the concerns identified by ONS are accounted for.

The following table sets out the methodology used for the SHMA by ORS to establish housing need in Barnet.

Stage	GLA Central Trends	GLA "Housing Types" scenario
Demographic starting point: CLG household projections 2016-41	68,905	
Difference between CLG and GLA	-7,019	-28,473
Baseline household projections based on GLA data 2016-41	61,886	40,432
Allowance for transactional vacancies and second homes	+1,848	+1,208
Housing need based on household projections taking account of local circumstances and vacancies and second homes	63,734	41,640
Adjustment for suppressed household formation rates. Concealed families and homeless households with allowance for vacancies and second homes	1,128 + 34 = +1,162	
<b>Baseline housing need based on demographic projections</b>	<b>64,896</b>	<b>42,802</b>
In response to market signals	20%*63,734 =12,747 -1,162 =+11,585	20%*41,640 =8,328 -1,162 =+7,166
Full Objectively Assessed Need for Housing 2016-41	76,481	49,968
Annual Requirement	3060	2000

### Affordable Housing Need

Based on evidence of current unmet need for affordable housing and the future household projections, the analysis has identified that the overall housing need should include 1,128 households to take account of concealed families and homeless households that would not be captured by the household projections. When the unmet needs from existing households living in unsuitable housing were also included, the analysis established there to be 8,769 households in need of affordable housing in 2016 in Barnet.

Based on the household projections, the SHMA has established the balance between the future need for market housing and affordable housing. Overall, there will be a need to provide additional affordable housing for 17,445 households (17,600 dwellings), which represents 23% of the total need of 76,481. This would provide for the current unmet needs for affordable housing in addition to the projected future growth in affordable housing need. Furthermore, any losses from the current stock (such as demolition or clearance, or sales through Right to Buy) would increase the number of affordable dwellings needed by an equivalent amount.

The following table provides a summary of the assessed need for affordable housing identified in the SHMA.

Barnet				
	Low Cost Rent	Intermediate		TOTAL
Size	Can't afford London Living rent	Able to afford London Living Rent but unable to afford affordable rent	Able to afford "Affordable rents"	
1 bedroom	2,090	20	380	2,500
2 bedrooms	5,890	450	1,330	7,700
3 bedrooms	3,740	520	570	4,800
4 bedrooms	1,570	280	170	2,000
5+ bedrooms	440	80	50	600
Total	13,700	1,400	2,500	17,600