



# Lambeth Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Summary

## Foreword

London is currently facing the most severe housing and homelessness pressures of anywhere in the UK. With half of England's homeless population in the capital, inner-London boroughs such as Lambeth, where there are high levels of housing need and a severe lack of affordable housing, are at the forefront of the crisis.

With 45,000 households on the Lambeth housing register, and over 4,700 in temporary accommodation, and only about 700 council and housing association tenancies available each year, we face an increasingly challenging task.

This task is all the more difficult against the backdrop of severely constrained financial resources. The cost of housing homeless families this year has gone up to £90 million - £30million more than what was available and in light of this, we are taking prudent steps to address this year's significant budget gap. **More challenging decisions and deeper savings will be necessary to maintain financial stability, so that we can continue to provide the vital services Lambeth's most vulnerable residents rely on. If we fail to make these decisions now, we risk worsening our financial position, which could lead to the need for even more drastic measures.**

Despite this stark financial situation, the council remains steadfast in its commitment to improving homelessness services where possible, through a people-centred approach, focusing on prevention and early intervention. Collaborating with partners, including London councils, Lambeth will continue to call for improved government funding to support efforts to tackle homelessness and ensure fair housing access for all residents within and outside the borough.

**Councillor Danny Adilypour**  
**Deputy Leader of Lambeth Council and Cabinet Member for Housing, Investment and New Homes**

# Strategic Priorities of the Draft Homelessness Strategy

## Priority 1: Ensuring Suitable Accommodation for Homeless People

The council aims to increase access to stable housing, improve TA quality and reduce time spent in TA. However, rising TA costs and budget constraints highlight the importance of finding affordable TA solutions including outside London.



- Increase supply of and access to affordable homes and homes at council-level rent
- Increase access to sustainable, affordable and suitable TA, instead of relying on costly and often low-quality nightly paid accommodation. This includes properties outside Lambeth and London
- Ensure TA is suitable, and compliant with Lambeth's Housing Placements Policy through the use of inspections
- Move more households out of temporary accommodation by allocating more dedicated officers to support households find suitable accommodation in line with our allocations policy of a single suitable offer which includes the use of private rented sector accommodation

## Priority 2: Reduction of rough sleeping

The strategy commits to preventing rough sleeping and supporting individuals off the streets quickly and effectively. Continuing work with outreach teams and partners such as provide practical assistance to rough sleepers in the borough.



- To prevent rough sleeping where possible and ensure it is rare, brief, and non-recurrent when it occurs
- Support rough sleepers into independent living with specialist assistance
- Enhance coordination between services to address the physical and mental health needs of individuals affected by rough sleeping.

## Priority 3: Collaborative Homelessness Prevention

Prevent residents from becoming homeless in the first place. Working with families when relationships breakdown, as well as providing practical assistance to allow individuals and households to remain in their existing accommodation, where appropriate. Working with partners such as the Royal Foundation's Homewards Project to provide tailored support to families as risk of homelessness. By addressing underlying issues early, the council aims to prevent homelessness and reduce the reliance on costly crisis interventions.



- Increase early intervention by raising awareness of prevention services, increasing the capacity of the prevention team and improving online resources.
- Collaborate across services, including adult social care, childrens' social care mental health, and financial wellbeing programmes, to deliver holistic support and maintain stable housing for at-risk residents where appropriate.

**We will also enhance our data collection and analysis to better understand homelessness trends and target interventions effectively.**

## Key Stats

- Overall the number of households in TA has **increased** from **2,500** in April 2019 to **4,700** in 2024.
- In June 2024, three quarters of TA occupants were in costly 'nightly paid' accommodation – the **annual cost** to the council for nightly paid accommodation is **£90m**.
- **70%** of our households in TA in June 2024 were in a different local authority area, principally in neighbouring boroughs - **up from 55%** in 2019.
- The majority of households in TA are **families with children**.



- The majority of TA residents are **from a Black background**, this is disproportionate to the borough population overall.
- In September 2024, there were around **6,000 children** living in TA in Lambeth.
- In March 2024 changes to the allocations scheme were approved including **higher priority for households** in TA and removal of Band D (to be phased in over 2024/25).
- Lambeth is the **4th most densely populated** borough in England and Wales.
- Families in Lambeth are **significantly more** likely to experience deprivation than the national average.
- In June 2024, the **average monthly private rent** in Lambeth was **£2,167**, compared to £2,098 in London and £1,271 across Great Britain.
- In April 2024 there were almost **45,000 households** on the housing register.
- 10 years ago we had around 1,200 social housing lets per year - there has been a **gradual decrease** and last year there were **just under 700 lets**.
- There were **72 people rough sleeping** at the last count in September. Most rough sleepers in Lambeth are male.

