

Housing Strategy 2021 - 2026 Action Plan



Priority
1

Build new council homes - increase the supply of genuinely affordable, low carbon homes in Islington

Goal

1. Deliver 1,900 genuinely affordable homes by 2022, including 550 new council homes, prioritised for local people

Actions

- Ensure at least 50% of new homes on all eligible sites in the borough are genuinely affordable homes, including the Holloway Prison site
- Maximise the delivery of genuinely affordable housing through the Local Plan
- Deliver a policy for intermediate housing
- Support local Housing Associations to develop homes for social rent

Lead council service area(s)

- New Build Team
- Planning and Development

Key external partners

- Housing Associations
 - GLA
 - Council contractors
-

Goal

2. Maximise our opportunities to build and fund new homes by maximising access to available funding

Actions

- Continue to lobby Government to remove hurdles to develop new council homes

Lead council service area(s)

- New Build Team
- Planning and Development

Key external partners

- Housing Associations
 - GLA
 - Council contractors
-

Goal

3. Build council homes that meet the needs of our residents now and in the future

Actions

- Build homes that can adapt to changing needs e.g. Lifetime Home Standard, HAPPI homes and understand the needs of particular groups on the housing register through an annual audit of lettings.
- Increase renewable technologies in our schemes and underpin the council's green agenda by reducing carbon emissions in the new build developments through installing renewable energy sources such as solar panels at each site, using well-insulated materials in the new homes, fitting LED lights and installing efficient communal heating and hot water systems

Lead council service area(s)

- New Build Team
- Planning and Development

Key external partners

- Housing Associations
 - GLA
 - Council contractors
-

Goal

4. Improve our estates through redevelopment and provide extra benefits for all residents and the wider community

Actions

- Use landscaping to design out anti-social behaviour and improve green spaces and playgrounds for all residents
- Provide apprenticeship opportunities for local people on new build schemes
- Increase provision for electric charging points and cycle storage to encourage residents to choose greener modes of transport

Lead council service area(s)

- New Build Team
 - iWork
-

Goal

5. Communicate our ambitions to build new homes clearly to our residents

Actions

- Develop ways to consult people on the housing waiting list to redress the balance between those who do and do not have adequate housing
- Consult and communicate with local people, including young people and resident groups

Lead council service area(s)

- New Build Team
- Communications Team
- Housing Needs and Strategy(Resident Involvement)

Priority
2

Provide safe, comfortable homes and estates

Goal

1. Invest in our housing to deliver safe, energy efficient and comfortable homes for our current and future residents

Actions

- Deliver our maintenance programme to ensure our homes are kept in good condition, that we are making the best use of our resources and that our residents understand our approach
- Work with the London Fire Brigade to continue our programme of fire safety and ensure we comply with all the recommendations from the national public inquiry into the Grenfell Tower fire
- Identify opportunities to increase the energy efficiency of individual and communal heating systems to help tackle fuel poverty and minimise emissions
- Carry out annual gas safety checks and other regular safety checks to tenants homes and in communal areas

Lead council service area(s)

- Housing Property Services
- Homes and Communities Neighbourhood Services

Key external partners

- London Fire Brigade
 - Council contractors
 - PFI contractor
 - Tenant Management Organisations
-

Goal

2. Deliver a high quality and responsive repairs service focused on the needs of residents

Actions

- Provide services that are convenient for residents and which minimise the need to return for follow up visits
- Directly deliver repairs services where possible to ensure quality and efficiency
- Maintain resident satisfaction with our repairs service
- Maximise opportunities to deliver employment and training opportunities for residents to our direct workforce and contract arrangements

Lead council service area(s)

- Housing Property Services
- iWork

Key external partners

- Council contractors
-

Goal

3. Develop a proactive approach to address damp and condensation

Actions

- Identify and address factors within our buildings that contribute towards damp conditions in council homes
- Work with SHINE and other services to offer advice to residents on ways they can reduce and avoid damp and condensation in their homes

Lead council service area(s)

- Housing Property Services (lead)
- Homes and Communities (Tenancy Services)

Key external partners

- SHINE
-

Goal

4. Make people feel safer in their homes

Actions

- Inspect council-owned assets and access our homes more frequently to assess health and safety risks including fire hazards, making contact with hard-to-reach residents
- Communicate fire safety advice and evacuation plans effectively and support our vulnerable residents during emergency incidents
- Work with the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) to improve our support for those experiencing domestic violence
- Take stronger action to exclude perpetrators from their victims' homes
- Support and deliver engagement activities including Women's Walks to ensure that all our residents feel safe in their communities.

Lead council service area(s)

- Homes and Communities (Neighbourhood Services, Tenancy Services)
- Property Services
- Community Safety Team

Key external partners

- London Fire Brigade
- DAHA
- Solace

Goal

5. Reduce levels of crime and anti-social behaviour

Actions

- Support victims and communities to report anti-social behaviour on our estates
- Reduce the level of crime and anti-social behaviour by working in partnership with the police and the local community through targeted response and enforcement powers
- Work with our community partners to tackle hate crime
- Support vulnerable perpetrators of anti-social behaviour through intensive support

Lead council service area(s)

- Homes and Communities (Tenancy Services)
- Community Safety

Key external partners

- Age Concern
 - Community and Resident groups
 - Ward Partnerships
-

Goal

6. Maintain and improve where appropriate the visual appearance of the communal area of our estates

Actions

- Maintain caretaking standards across all our council estates and ensure our communal areas are clear and safe through an inspection regime and by providing additional storage solutions and using tenancy enforcement action when necessary
- Work across housing and with our community partners and residents to make our estates clean, attractive spaces where our residents feel safe, using lighting, CCTV and environmental improvements to do this
- Develop and improve greenspace to benefit all residents.

Lead council service area(s)

- Homes and Communities (Neighbourhood Services)
- Property Services

Key external partners

- TMOs
- Ward Partnerships

Priority
3

Support residents to live well in their homes and communities

Goal

1. Provide targeted support to our tenants most at risk of financial exclusion to help them maintain their tenancies

Actions

- Provide welfare, benefit, housing and debt advice to tenants at risk of falling into arrears or losing their tenancies
- Identify and tackle economic abuse across tenant services

Lead council service area(s)

- Homes and Communities (Tenancy Services)
- IMAX

Key external partners

- VCS Partners
-

Goal

2. Improve and expand our online services making it easier for residents to interact with us in ways that best suit them, whilst addressing digital exclusion

Actions

- Encourage residents to report repairs issues online and use a self-service model of accessing tenancy services where possible
- Encourage residents to learn IT skills

Lead council service area(s)

- Homes and Communities (Tenancy Services and Communities Teams)

Key external partners

- Community Centres
-

Goal

3. Co-design our services with residents, with an emphasis on resilience in interactions and increased use of digital technology

Actions

- Develop our Expert by Experience co-design model and seek qualitative face-to-face feedback from our residents on our services
- Encourage and support council tenants and residents in housing association properties to set up residents' groups and to have more say over how their estates are run
- Deliver our Landlord Plus offer
- Homes and Communities
- Housing Needs and Strategy(Resident Involvement)

Lead council service area(s)

Key external partners

- Housing Associations
-

Goal

4. Work with residents and stakeholders to encourage a sense of belonging and participation in our local community

Actions

- Build strong, meaningful and person-centred relationships with residents, enabling staff to intervene early, appropriately and effectively
- Work effectively in partnership with the voluntary and community sector and statutory services to enable residents to navigate, access, engage with and benefit from the full range of services and support that enables residents to thrive, connect and give
- Provide feedback on the outcomes from consultations and improve our services in response to residents' feedback including targeted, qualitative interviews
- Increase access to cultural institutions using Arts on Estates programme
- Require all relevant council-provided and commissioned services to reduce loneliness

Lead council service area(s)

Key external partners

- Homes and Communities (Communities Team)
- VCS Partners - Arts on Estates

Goal

5. Establish strong links with health agencies to help reduce accidents in the home, improve housing conditions for older and vulnerable residents

Actions

- Develop Older Persons and Complex Cases Specialist roles within Tenancy Services
- Expand MECC programme and use disabled adaptations programme to encourage independent living
- Develop and implement protocols between housing, public health and social care to provide better support for our residents
- Work with SHP to enable a smooth transition from hospital to home
- Improve seasonal health through the SHINE network

Lead council service area(s)

- Homes and Communities (Tenancy Services)
- Energy Team

Key external partners

- SHP
- SHINE

Goal

6. Make best use of green spaces, to increase the likelihood of physical activity and improved mental health and wellbeing for all

Actions

- Develop communal and play areas, make best use of community resources, including community centres, improve greenspace to benefit all residents.
- Encourage positive activities for young people on our estates and using the shared external environment and communal facilities to support health, play, physical activity and access to activities

Lead council service area(s)

- Homes and Communities (estate services)
- VCS partners
- Health and social care partners
- Property Services

Priority
4

Prevent homelessness and support rough sleepers off the streets

The goals and actions for this priority are set out in the [Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy](#).

Priority
5

Improve conditions in the private sector

Goal

1. Improve housing conditions for private tenants

Actions

- Improve standards in the private rented sector through property licencing schemes. Such schemes will help to provide a level playing field for all landlords through prescribed property standards and will help identify rogue landlords.
- Embed the borough wide HMO licencing scheme and the ‘all privately rented property’ selective licencing scheme in the Finsbury Park ward.
- Use data to consider the case for extending selective licencing to other parts of the borough and to develop and consult on proposals accordingly
- Use the full range of enforcement powers including the use of civil penalties, and Housing and Planning Act powers against rogue landlords, and publish penalties issued.
- Monitor standards in the private rented sector (including housing associations) and take action against rogue landlords and lettings agents and any poorly performing housing associations
- Promote awareness of the rights and responsibilities of private sector tenants
- Continue to promote high standards of professionalism amongst landlords and managing agents through our Landlords Forum, and accreditation schemes.
- Work with private sector landlords and housing associations to improve conditions including those relating to energy efficiency, taking enforcement action if appropriate

Lead council service area(s)

- Public Protection (Environmental Health)
- Communications

Key external partners

- Private landlords
- Housing Associations
- Private tenants

Goal

2. Help residents live independently

Actions

- Enable occupants to remain in their homes by maximising use of Disabled Facilities Grants in the private sector
 - Continue with our grants programme to help improve housing standards through programmes such as our 'safe and warm' programme
-

Goal

3. Ensure older people have choices about their housing options including to remain in their own home

Actions

- Develop strategies to explore options for older people across all housing tenures and how these will be delivered in Islington

Do you need this information in another language or reading format such as Braille, large print, audio or Easy Read? Please contact 020 7527 2000.

To find out more information please contact:

Anna Vincini

 Service Improvement Manager, Islington Council, 222 Upper Street, London N1 1RX

 020 7527 4138

 anna.vincini@islington.gov.uk

 www.islington.gov.uk/housing

Published July 2021