

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All Wards
REPORT TITLE Insight, Learning and Impact Report – Homes and Communities Directorate - Quarter 4/End of Year 2025-26	
REPORT OF Executive Director, Corporate Services	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Housing Scrutiny Committee	DATE 1 July 2026
<p>SUMMARY OF REPORT</p> <p>This report focusses on the performance over the year 2025-26 for each division across the Homes and Communities Directorate. In this report, Council Directors have been asked to provide a narrative covering key areas of challenge, opportunity, and learning.</p> <p>This report is divided into three main sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A summary table which highlights key responses from individual services for the year 2025/26 across each of the three divisions in the Homes and Communities Directorate. • A more detailed narrative of those service responses • Appendix A contains the data dashboard. <p>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information No documents that require listing have been used in the preparation of this report.</p> <p>Contact Officer: James Coumbe – Insight, Learning and Impact Lead London Borough of Camden 5 Pancras Square, London N1C 4AG Email: james.coumbe@camden.gov.uk Tel: 020 7974 5965</p>	
<p>RECOMMENDATION: The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report, including the most recent data and trends and the emerging challenges identified.</p>	



SIGNED

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Executive Director, Housing and Communities

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1** The Insight, Learning and Impact (ILI) Q4/End of Year report covers the period between April 2025 – March 2026.
- 1.2** The ILI report is submitted to all scrutiny committees twice a year (mid-year at Q2 and end of year at Q4). The report will go to all the scrutiny committees but they will no longer receive the full report, instead just the extract from the report relating to the committee's remit.
- 1.3** The ILI report includes both service narratives and the data dashboard. The service narratives (in the body of this report) provide an overview of the key issues identified by officers for each service. The data dashboard (Appendix A) gives Scrutiny Committees the opportunity to view service performance data collected across the year and compared to previous years.
- 1.4** To produce the service narrative, all Camden Council Directors were asked to provide a narrative covering key areas of challenge, opportunity, and learning, looking back over 2025/26 on the following points:
- What were the biggest challenges to your service delivery i.e. what challenges are going to require the organisation's attention and focus
 - What are the biggest opportunities i.e. where could you most benefit from support to deliver improvement?
 - What have your services learned and what do you need to learn in the future e.g. from data or evaluation, regional or national research.
- 1.5** The main report begins with a tabled summary of service issues for Q4 2025/26 in responses to the three key questions above. That is followed by a more detailed narrative of those individual service responses.
- 1.6** The Corporate Performance Data Dashboard is at Appendix A which provides the latest performance data and previous years for the key measures from the services, and which accompanies this report.

2. Summary of responses

2.1 Homes and Communities summary

	Challenges	Opportunities	Learning
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand relating to anti-social behaviour (ASB) remains high, placing pressure on frontline neighbourhood management services across 4 estates. • Leaseholder arrears and cost recovery also remain a significant area of focus. • Recruitment challenges and wider service capacity pressures have further impacted the consistency of tenancy management and estate services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work is progressing on the renewal and enhancement of the Mobyssoft system to strengthen income collection • A wider payment and billing transformation programme is also being developed • A Sheltered Housing Review and the development of an Older Person's Housing Strategy are progressing in line with the Supported Housing Act 2023 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rent collection performance exceeded target, achieving 101.1% by year-end and also been sustained progress in reducing high-value rent arrears • The rollout of the new home visit application, which has improved tenancy visit completion rates and strengthened neighbourhood engagement
Communities and Housing Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising homelessness demand continues to increase pressure on temporary accommodation • Impacts homelessness, housing advice and rough sleeping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New outreach arrangements with Single Homeless Project • Licensing processes of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) are being streamlined • Partnership work with accommodation providers and external agencies to increase accommodation pathways and move-on opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Sector Housing Team completed more than 1,000 HMO licences • Social housing lettings increased significantly in the final quarter of the year, rising by 20% and supporting improved move-on opportunities for households in housing need.
Property Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pace and scale of the new statutory requirements created significant additional operational pressures • Heating challenges over the winter period and particularly the performance of a heating contractor (contract ended March 2026) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval and Mobilisation of a £670 million capital investment programme • Continued development of the MadeTech and ROCC systems to improve services for residents • Regulatory change through Awaab's law is driving innovation and improving transparency for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new in house 'Rapid Response Team', created for Awaab's Law, is consistently closing 95% of emergency repairs orders within target timescales showing how regulatory change can drive improvement. • From our complaints analysis, we have learned some of our most challenging

	Challenges	Opportunities	Learning
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capital works delivery to tall buildings much delayed by new Gateway procedures.• Legal fees payable in relation to disrepair cases place considerable pressure on the revenue budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A new Head of Voids Programme appointed to drive performance across teams.• New contractors for communal heating systems and the new in-house team for domestic heating provides an opportunity to implement change and improve performance for residents	<p>cases relate to complex issues such as structural work, our lessons learned lead is working with delivery teams on this and how to improve communication during complex works for residents</p>

3. HOMES AND COMMUNITIES

3.1 Housing

3.1.1 Challenges

Demand relating to anti-social behaviour (ASB) remains high, placing continued pressure on frontline neighbourhood management services and requiring sustained operational focus across estates. At the same time, limitations within existing IT systems continue to affect ASB case management, with fragmented and non-integrated platforms creating inefficiencies and limiting operational effectiveness.

Leaseholder arrears and cost recovery also remain a significant area of focus, despite the progress achieved during the year in reducing outstanding debt levels.

Recruitment challenges and wider service capacity pressures have further impacted the consistency of tenancy management and estate services delivery across the housing management function.

3.1.2 Opportunities

A number of significant improvement programmes are now underway across housing management services. Work is progressing on the renewal and enhancement of the Mobyssoft system to strengthen income collection performance and improve predictive arrears management capability. A wider payment and billing transformation programme is also being developed, including improvements to direct debit arrangements, invoice-based billing, sub-account functionality and preparations for changes relating to former tenant arrears from 2027 onwards. Reviews of housing investigations and fraud prevention arrangements are underway to improve processes, mapping and resourcing across the service.

In supported and older persons' housing, a Sheltered Housing Review and the development of an Older Person's Housing Strategy are progressing in line with the Supported Housing Act 2023 and the future operating model for these services. Further work is also being undertaken to strengthen neighbourhood management arrangements, tenancy sustainment support and estate services through service reviews and benchmarking activity. Alongside this, key housing management processes — including succession, decants and temporary accommodation arrears management — are being mapped and redesigned to improve consistency and efficiency. Work is also progressing on Traffic Management Orders to support improved estate management, accessibility and the overall resident environment across housing estates.

3.1.3 *Learning*

Rent collection performance exceeded target, achieving 101.1% by year-end and reflecting strong income recovery activity across the service. There has also been sustained progress in reducing high-value rent arrears, with the number of accounts over £10,000 reducing from 304 to 259 during the year. Significant reductions were also achieved in leaseholder service charge debt, despite increased invoice activity and wider financial pressures affecting residents.

Operational improvements have continued through the rollout of the new home visit application, which has improved tenancy visit completion rates and strengthened neighbourhood engagement. Increased officer training alongside revised procedures is also helping to embed a more consistent and effective ASB response across estates and neighbourhoods. Collectively, these improvements have demonstrated the value of investing in targeted digital tools, staff development and clearer operational processes to strengthen service delivery and resident engagement.

3.2 **Communities and Housing Support**

3.2.1 *Challenges*

Rising homelessness demand continues to increase pressure on temporary accommodation (TA), with 1,393 households currently in TA. A small number of households have been accommodated in bed & breakfast accommodation for more than 6 weeks. The financial and human impact of the increase in households in TA is significant, and it is a directorate priority to address and mitigate these impacts. The demand challenge also impacts upstream with pressures brought to bear across the Private Rental Sector (PRS) and wider affordability challenges are increasing demand on homelessness and housing advice services and increasing numbers of applications are being received at relief stage, reducing opportunities for earlier prevention. Rough sleeping figures remain volatile, with ongoing challenges around data accuracy and sustaining reconnections into accommodation.

Families living in Refugee resettlement housing in Camden are continuing to experience rent arrears and barriers to income maximisation. Work is progressing across teams to address consistent arrears and also ensure the right support is in place especially around barriers to employment.

3.2.2 *Opportunities*

A number of significant opportunities and improvement programmes are underway to strengthen homelessness prevention, housing management and accommodation pathways. The new outreach arrangements with Single Homeless Project are expected to improve intelligence gathering, prevention activity and service outcomes for people experiencing rough sleeping. In the private rented sector, the licensing

processes of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) are being streamlined, including the introduction of low-risk desktop assessments, are expected to improve throughput and increase operational efficiency.

There is also an increased strategic focus on homelessness prevention and earlier intervention, with the aim of reducing demand entering temporary accommodation and improving long-term housing outcomes for residents. This is being supported through continued partnership work with accommodation providers and external agencies to increase accommodation pathways and move-on opportunities. Reviews of hostel provision and off-the-street accommodation pathways are also progressing to improve move-on outcomes and ensure the best use of available resources.

Alongside this, work is progressing on allocations policy redesign, revised temporary accommodation procedures and improvements to void turnaround performance, all of which are intended to strengthen the effectiveness and responsiveness of housing services. Further opportunities are being developed through the creation of a revised PRS policy, stock condition survey work and selective licensing proposals, supporting the delivery of wider housing priorities and manifesto commitments. Improvements to management information systems, alongside a review of the Housing Renewal Assistance Policy, are also expected to strengthen oversight, governance and overall service delivery.

The Council has been awarded a grant deliver new TA properties of decent standard under the Local Authorities Housing Fund (LAHF) Round 4. The award also entails delivery of 11 units of refugee resettlement properties, 5 of them being larger 5 bed properties. A working group under the Director for homes and communities has been convened to determine the best landlord/tenure scenario, rent levels as well as learning from previous rounds under the Camden Pledge.

The Money Advice Camden service is continuing to process change and opportunity as new funding arrangements from central government take effect, especially the crisis and resilience.

3.2.3 *Learning*

The Private Sector Housing Team continued to perform strongly throughout the year, with HMO licensing performance exceeding target and 1,041 licences completed. This has supported improved regulation and standards within the private rented sector while demonstrating the team's ability to maintain high levels of delivery despite sustained demand pressures.

Social housing lettings increased significantly in the final quarter of the year, rising by 20% and supporting improved move-on opportunities for households in housing need.

Outreach services also continued to support people experiencing rough sleeping into accommodation, alongside reconnections and wider tenancy sustainment activity aimed at reducing repeat homelessness.

A key development during the year was the launch of the new Single Homeless Project outreach service in April 2026, which is improving engagement with rough sleepers and strengthening the quality and consistency of homelessness and outreach data. This is expected to support more targeted interventions and improved service planning over time.

In response to continued demand pressures across homelessness and temporary accommodation services, resources are being refocused and reprioritised to stabilise the temporary accommodation overspend and improve move-on options for vulnerable individuals and families.

The Equalities team are continuing to drive improvement in terms of the quality, consistency and governance around equality impact assessments. This has led to a more cohesive and integrated approach. Work is now progressing to understand how improving the reach and strength of EQIA can also reduce the level of grievances and tribunals in Camden

3.3 Property Services

3.3.1 Challenges

The introduction of Awaab's Law during Q3 of 2025/26 was successfully implemented by the service, however the pace and scale of the new statutory requirements created significant additional operational pressures throughout Q4. In particular, the new reporting and compliance requirements required extensive officer time and rapid adaptation of processes, systems and oversight arrangements to ensure compliance with statutory timelines.

A major operational challenge during the year was responding to heating challenges over the winter period and particularly the performance of the heating contractor, GEM, in the final months of the contract. This created significant additional pressure for frontline officers and required intensive intervention to recover heating outages and manage resident impact. Alongside this, wider budgetary pressures remain acute, particularly in relation to disrepair. While work undertaken with Camden's third-party solicitors has helped bring cases to conclusion more quickly and improve risk management, this has also accelerated expenditure on legal fees and settlements within the year.

Significant risks remain across the repairs, compliance and capital delivery programmes. Gateway 2 approval processes continue to create substantial delays to the Better Homes, M&E and fire safety programmes, with considerable officer and consultant engineer resources required to prepare and manage a high volume of applications for works packages. At the same time, the need for additional capital

investment is placing increasing pressure on the revenue repairs budget, with capital expenditure expected to accelerate further during 2026/27 as new frameworks become fully operational.

3.3.2 *Opportunities*

A number of significant opportunities are emerging through the Council's wider capital investment, compliance and service transformation programmes. The delivery of the £670 million capital investment programme, alongside releasing a small number of poorly performing assets, will support improved asset performance, reduce exposure to disrepair liabilities and help the Council make better long-term use of resources. Further opportunities are also being created through the continued development of the MadeTech and ROCC systems, which are expected to improve resident experience, strengthen order management and enable greater levels of self-service, particularly once new M&E contractor interfaces are fully embedded.

The appointment of a new Head of Voids Programme is expected to improve performance management and address operational barriers currently impacting key-to-key turnaround times. By Autumn 2026, the Chalcots major works programme is expected to conclude and the majority of Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) actions are anticipated to be substantially complete, subject to access arrangements and Gateway approvals. Work is also progressing to fully embed True Compliance and strengthen the management and closure of FRA actions, with the aim of substantially completing works under the Council's Voluntary Undertaking by Q3 2026/27 and transitioning to sustainable business-as-usual arrangements thereafter.

Significant work is also underway to strengthen operational resilience and contractor performance across M&E services, particularly communal heating. This includes enhanced KPI management arrangements, service improvement activity with new contractors, troubleshooting legacy issues and implementing comprehensive winter planning arrangements. Alongside this, preparations for Awaab's Law Phase 2 are progressing through policy development, systems testing, operational reviews and communications planning to ensure the Council can respond effectively and efficiently to the expanded regulatory requirements.

A number of large capital works schemes are being progressed, including at Rowley Way, where the heating system is to be comprehensively renewed. Procurement of this work will be completed in 2026/27 with the whole scheme spanning 2-3 years.

3.3.3 *Learning*

Despite significant operational pressures, the Rapid Response Team continued to perform strongly, consistently closing 95% of emergency repair orders within target timescales and contributing to a reduction in escalations to out-of-hours services. This has demonstrated the effectiveness of strengthened operational management and responsive frontline delivery in maintaining critical services for residents. The new ROCC system also helps by allowing real time tracking of appointments by our work planners. The Lessons Learned Lead is also looking into appointments that are either

arrived at late or missed to understand which areas of work are affected most and the factors behind these. The team will also look to introduce multi-visits in 2026/27 which allows tasks to be brought together into a single timeslot, e.g. electrical testing and a responsive repair.

The Council also successfully onboarded its in-house domestic heating engineers during Q4, with the new service going live as planned in April 2026. In parallel, new mechanical and electrical (M&E) contractors were mobilised during Q4 2025/26 in preparation for service commencement on 1 April. This included extensive familiarisation with housing stock, site reviews with engineers and the implementation of required system changes to support mobilisation. These activities have provided important learning around contract transition, mobilisation planning and operational resilience within critical building services.

The capital programme also continued to perform strongly, with capital expenditure of £109m delivered within 0.2% of the profiled budget. This reflects effective programme management and continued progress across the Chalcots major works, fire safety and Better Homes programme despite challenging market and regulatory conditions.

4. Finance Comments of the Director of Finance

4.1 The Director of Finance has been consulted on this report and has no additional comments.

5. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

5.1 The Borough Solicitor has been consulted and has no further comments to add.

6. Environmental Implications

6.1 There are no proposals with environmental implications made in this report.

7 Appendices

7.1 Appendix A: Corporate Data Dashboard 2025/26– Housing Scrutiny

REPORT ENDS