

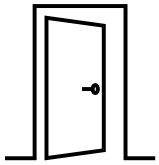
Housing Strategy 2024 – 2029

Year One
Case Studies
2024-25

Housing Strategy 2024-2029

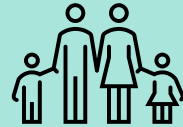
Outcomes

1



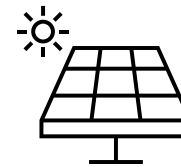
Homelessness and rough sleeping are prevented so that it becomes rare, brief and non-recurrent

2



Residents can access homes that meet their needs as their circumstances change

3



Every home in the borough is healthy, safe and affordable to live in

4



Development enhances neighbourhoods and supports stronger, fairer, and safer communities

Outcome 1

Homelessness and rough sleeping are prevented so that it becomes rare, brief and non-recurrent



Case Study: Housing Sustainment Team

This multidisciplinary team, focused on early intervention, works with families living in private rented accommodation who may be at risk of losing their home.

Since April 2024, the team has completed **263 assessments** and supported **households** to successfully sustain their tenancy, as well as engage with employment and employment related training.

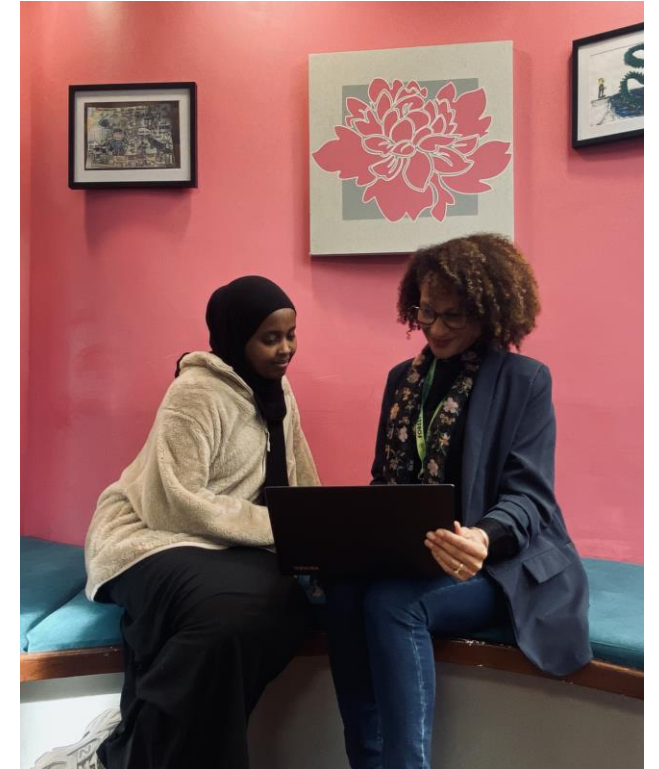
The team uses a Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT) software to run campaigns targeting particular groups, such as a campaign earlier this year focusing on families in the private rented sector who are affected by the Local Housing Allowance cap.

This allow us to target support towards residents who need it the most, identifying families who are struggling but have not engaged with council services before.

Housing Sustainment team

The focus going forward will be on improving collaboration across teams to deliver LIFT campaigns that directly engage our most vulnerable families to help them stay in their homes. The third LIFT campaign launches in July 2025 and engages with families with non-dependant NEETs age 16-24.

April was our most impactful month so far for Income Maximisation support. The team were able to help 9 families increase their income to a total of £36,760.26 for the month. The praise for the support provided by our IMAX support officer, Oliver McGill has been resoundingly positive.



Outcome 2

Residents can access homes that meet their needs as their circumstances change



Case Study: Private Rented Sector Strategy 2024-2029

As part of our borough mission to tackle the housing crisis head on, we have promised 'a new deal for private renters' by launching a Private Rented Sector (PRS) Strategy 2024-2029.

The strategy seeks to ensure that Waltham Forest has a well-managed and equitable PRS, with good quality, safe and secure homes and where landlords and tenants are all aware of their rights and responsibilities and are properly supported by the Council.

This strategy has been developed through engagement with staff in Housing, Homelessness, Private Sector Housing & Licensing, Public Health, Climate Emergency and Behaviour Change Services and partners.

As part of the development of our overarching Housing Strategy, we engaged with residents through focus groups to understand the experience of residents renting privately in Waltham Forest and their priorities for change within the sector.

Why do we need a Private Rented Sector strategy?

A case study - Sita's story

"Seven years he's been our landlord and suddenly he's asking for more rent. He's renovated next door and he's getting more money, and he's told us to move. I'm looking and looking, but I can't find anywhere. Whoever can pay more gets the flat, it's very expensive and I cannot afford it".

Sita is one of our residents from our focus groups in the private rented sector who has been looking for alternative accommodation but has been unable to find anywhere. She does not reach the income threshold most letting agencies require to rent a property equivalent to the one she rents currently. Sita therefore considers herself and her partner to be at risk of eviction.



How will our strategy help Sita?

- Our mapping and communication of the support available to private tenants will enable Sita to better access the statutory and voluntary sector support she needs.
- Our revised service level agreements with providers will mean Sita gets the advice and support she needs when she needs it from our voluntary sector partners.
- Our Housing Sustainment Team can increase Sita's ability to pay higher rents in the short term through income maximisation and benefits advice and support.
- Our Housing Sustainment Team can increase Sita's ability to pay in the longer term by referral to our employment and skills team to improve employment options.
- In the longer term our work through the local plan to increase the supply of different types of homes in Waltham Forest will provide residents like Sita with more affordable options.

Outcome 3

Every home in the borough is healthy, safe and affordable to live in



Case Study: Retrofit of Southfield Court hostel

Southfield Court is a 40 flat hostel, built in 1970s. At the start of this project, the average building Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating was D, indicating poor energy efficiency. Heating was delivered by electric night storage heaters, which were inefficient and hard to control. A combined heat and power unit was at the end of life, and multiple other building and fabric upgrades were required.

We took this opportunity to complete a holistic retrofit resulting in a major energy efficiency upgrade.

We installed multiple retrofit measures including:

- Air source heat pumps
- Solar panels
- External wall insulation (EWI)
- Roof insulation
- New triple glazed windows and doors
- Automatic air vents (AOV)

Retrofit outcomes

Interim results show that the average EPC rating is **B** and the building is using **up to 60% less energy**, saving **74.5 tonnes** of carbon emissions per annum. It is estimated to save over **£17,000 per annum** on the council's energy bills.

What residents told us about the works

Andrea, Resident Liaison Officer for Aston Group, said *'It was shabby, it was run down, it was dated. I mean we have had one resident say to us that she was really embarrassed about coming here with her friends, but since she's visually seen what has gone on, she's happy to bring her friends here now.'*

One resident told us that before the works were completed, *'It was cold and with the baby as well....'* She was given heaters by the resident liaison officer and used those most of the time. She told us that, after the works were completed, her baby is *'happy. We don't have to put extra clothes on her to keep it warm...No cold, no coughs. She's fine.'* Regarding the external improvements, she said *'it's just beautiful...you're happy to come home'*



Outcome 4

Development enhances neighbourhoods and supports stronger, fairer, and safer communities



Case Study 4: How local residents benefit from housing development

Whilst developing our Housing Strategy, residents told us their concerns about new housing development in the borough, with many feeling that it is putting **additional strain on local services and infrastructure**.

They told us they **valued living close to amenities and services** they need to use, and that they wanted to see developments **benefiting local people**.

Taking this feedback on board, alongside input from the Affordable Housing Commission, we know we need to do more to promote the new infrastructure that is funded and delivered as a result of development, as well as the improvements we have planned over the next few years to support a growing population.

This may include new or improved health, education, sports and leisure facilities, green spaces, community safety and transport infrastructure.

Coronation Square, Leyton

On completion, the new Coronation Square development, on council owned land, will provide 796 new homes, with 50 per cent of them affordable.

The development will also deliver:

- a new health hub
- an enhanced pre-school nursery, doubling the capacity of the nursery in the existing Score Centre
- an enhanced indoor sports and leisure centre with community facilities
- an attractive public square with a fountain
- new commercial space for shops and businesses
- a District Heating Network capable of serving 2,250 homes

Funding from the Coronation Square development was used to pay for the new facilities at the Feel Good Too Centre.



In November 2024, the council held the grand opening of the leisure centre, the Score Centre, at which residents were able to have a tour and take part in taster sessions. This was promoted to borough residents via our online Residents News newsletter.

Juniper House, Walthamstow

This new development provided 91 new homes for local people. 50 per cent of these were affordable homes (of which 23 were social rent) and included three- and four-bedroom properties suitable for families

The development provided a **new pre-school nursery**, which opened in July 2024, with its **own play area on a site** close to Walthamstow Central Station, making it easy for commuters to use.

The development has provided more green space for local residents, including a **pocket park** at the junction of First Avenue and Hoe Street.

The new site has also provided a **base for the University of Portsmouth's new London campus**.

This new development and benefits it brings to local residents has been promoted via the council's Residents News newsletter.

