

# Brentwood 2021-2026 Housing Strategy



**BRENTWOOD  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

*Where everyone matters*



# Action Plan



| Objective  | Area   | Actions   | Completion Date |
|--|--|---|-----------------|
| <b>Increasing the supply of affordable housing</b> | Build new homes supported by the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)             | Implement the approved 7 year Affordable Housing Delivery programme (as approved in 2020).  | Continue        |
|  |  | Report annually to the Housing Committee on the implementation of the Affordable Housing Delivery programme.                            | Continue        |
|  |  | Phase One - delivery of 145 new homes on HRA land.  | 2024            |
|  |  | Phase Two - develop a programme for phase two of Brentwood's direct delivery of new homes.  | TBC             |
|  | Develop a comprehensive 5 year new affordable housing investment programme | Report on the number of starts and completions of affordable housing dwellings in the Borough from all registered providers.            | March 2022      |
|  | Develop stronger partnerships with Registered Providers                    | Implement new approach to working with Registered Providers (RPs) to increase the development of new affordable housing in the Borough. | June 2021       |
|  |  | Identify opportunities to increase the supply of new homes with registered providers.   | December 2021   |





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|--|--|---|-----------------|
| <b>Make best use of the existing stock</b> | Improving the use of Brentwood's sheltered housing stock | Creating better opportunities for residents through developing alternative uses and options for out of date and under used sheltered housing stock.   | March 2022      |
|  |  | Develop an investment programme for the sheltered housing to be retained to improve the standard of communal areas and the offer to residents.  | March 2022      |
|  | Tenancy Fraud  | Take action on tenancy fraud - to ensure the social housing stock is fairly and appropriately tenanted by taking counter fraud actions to identify illegal sublets.   | Continue        |
|  | Free up family sized accommodation                       | Deliver a new incentive scheme to free up family sized accommodation - review the current approach to supporting residents to "downsize" and the opportunities to increase the number of completions per annum. | March 2022      |
|  | Support self build and custom build                      | Encourage and support Self and Customer build developers, through guidance in the Local Plan.   | December 2021   |
|  | Identify potential housing sites for regeneration        | Carry out an audit of Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land and sites to determine suitability for regeneration.   | March 2022      |
|  | Deliver a Decant Policy                                  | Deliver a Decant Policy to ensure that tenants are aware of the help that can be provided if they are asked to move temporarily or permanently from their home due to regeneration.                             | September 2021  |
|  | Define the Council's Meanwhile Offer                     | Write a document that sets the Council's Meanwhile Offer for residents whose homes will be regenerated and what will be provided until this is completed.   | September 2021  |



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|---|---|---|-----------------|
| <b>Delivery of good quality sustainable homes</b> | Improve the data and information held on Brentwood's HRA housing stock            | Complete an updated stock condition survey.   | March 2023      |
|   | Improve the management of the HRA assets  | Produce an asset management strategy covering the future investment plans for the HRA stock.  | March 2022      |
|   | Improve the energy efficiency of tenants' homes                                   | Assess the work needed to achieve an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C across the HRA stock.                           | March 2023      |
|   |   | Achieve an EPC rating of C across the Council's housing stock.  | 2030            |
|   | Achieve zero carbon emissions across the HRA stock                                | Assess the work needed to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050.  | 2026            |
|   |   | Achieve zero carbon emissions from the Council's HRA housing stock.   | 2050            |
|   |   | Applying for central government funding to support the changes needed to homes to achieve this target.                                | As available    |
|   | Invest in environmentally sustainable technologies across the New Homes programme | Develop an approach and specification for new homes, including fabric first approach to sustainability and low carbon energy systems. | March 2022      |



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|--|---|--|-----------------------|
| <b>Deliver good quality services for residents</b> | Improve energy efficiency in private sector homes           | Embed minimum energy efficiency standards in inspections of private sector housing.  | March 2022            |
|  | Improve the standard of Homes of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) | Target poor performing landlords and HMOs.   | Continue              |
|  |   | Support the proper management of Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMO) through effective licensing.   | Continue              |
|  |   | Review the documents relating to HMOs.   | March 2022            |
|  | Provide assistance to private households                    | Support private landlords through grants.  | Continue              |
|  | Take action on empty homes                                  | Implement the approach to empty homes and bring empty homes back into use with regular reporting on this area.   | Continue              |
|  |   | Review the resources available to bring empty homes back into use.   | March 2023            |
|  | Preventing and tackling homelessness                        | Implement the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.  | See separate document |
|  |   | Review progress with the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy actions on an annual basis and report to the Environment, Enforcement and Housing Committee. | Annual Review         |
|  |   | Review the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy's content and actions for any new or emerging issues.  | March 2022            |





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|-----------|------|--|-----------------|
|           |      | Work with Essex County Council on the approach with London Councils and the use of temporary accommodation in Brentwood to meet their housing needs. | Continue        |
|           |      | Develop a multi agency approach to the prevention of repeat homelessness based on agreed protocols.  | March 2023      |
|           |      | Ensure all clients who access the Housing Options service are provided with accurate, comprehensive advice on the housing options available to them. | Continue        |
|           |      | Ensure that all cases are accurately recorded to inform future strategies and prevention initiatives.  | Continue        |
|           |      | Ensure working relationships with registered providers continue to prevent homelessness and evictions.   | Continue        |
|           |      | Improve the supply of suitable temporary accommodation to reduce the use and cost of bed and breakfast accommodation.                                | March 2022      |



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|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Delivering resident-centred services for the Council's tenants and leaseholders</b> | Develop a revised approach to resident engagement                    | Prepare an updated approach to resident engagement based on a review of the range and effectiveness of resident groups, meetings and inspections. Consider the opportunities to use digital and online options. | March 2022  |
|  | Providing an Allocations Policy that meets the needs of local people | Review the existing Allocations policy with stakeholders to ensure a new policy reflects local priorities.  | April 2021  |
|  |  | New Allocation Scheme implemented.  | June 2021   |
|  | Provide a modern housing service                                     | Implement revised service standards following engagement with residents.  | April 2022  |
|  |  | Implement a revised set of performance indicators to support the delivery of the updated service standards.   | April 2022  |
|  | Improve resident satisfaction  | Prepare for the introduction of proposed customer satisfaction measures by the Housing regulator.   | March 2022  |
|  |  | Review the satisfaction surveys used and identify the areas for improvement.  | March 2022  |
|  | Continue to improve the repairs and maintenance service              | Annually review the service provided by AXIS through the 10 year partnering contract.   | Continue  |
|  |  | Review the handyman service provided by AXIS so that it continues to meet vulnerable residents needs.   | March 2023  |
|  |  | Equality and inclusion  | Review the approach to equality monitoring and inclusivity of services. |
|  | Review the existing tenancy strategy                                 | Review the impact of the existing tenancy strategy.   | September 2021  |



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|-----------|--|--|-------------------|
|           |  | Implement an updated tenancy strategy.   | March 2022        |
|           | Improve digital access for residents                       | Monitor the use of the online services for residents.  | June 2021         |
|           |  | Update the information available on the website.   | June 2021         |
|           |  | Continue to implement the digital transformation programme within the housing service to deliver an improved customer experience.  | Continue          |
|           | Investment programme                                       | Develop a 5 year planned and cyclical maintenance programme.   | March 2022        |
|           |  | Deliver an annual housing investment programme that improves council homes and estate areas to ensure that they meet required standards and contribute to reducing carbon emissions. | December 2021     |
|           | Improve the use of technology in homes to assist residents | Identify the technology that will assist with meeting residents needs in the long-term and implement pilots with suppliers to understand the impact and benefits.                    | March 2022        |
|           |  | Incorporate the improvements and investment required into the Asset Management Strategy.   | 2023              |
|           |  | Introduce "smart homes" technology into the properties to improve safety, reduce cost and enhance the customer experience.   | From 2023 onwards |
|           | Better use of garage sites                                 | We will review the local demand for and supply of garages and consider local initiatives to improve the use of the sites.  | March 2022        |





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|           | Consistent specifications for new and existing homes        | Establish an affordable homes standard across for new homes and investment programmes for existing homes.                          | April 2021      |
|           | Deliver innovative services for residents                   | Join the social housing Disruptive Innovation Network (DIN) to be informed of innovative good practice in social housing.          | September 2021  |
|           |   | Annual service improvement plan developed by the housing team is implemented and focuses on continuous improvement and innovation. | March 2022      |
|           | Improve tenancy sustainment and financial inclusion         | Implement a revised approach to tenancy support in sheltered housing and general needs housing.                                    | March 2022      |
|           |   | Review the approach to financial inclusion and arrears management due to the impact of Covid-19.                                   | September 2021  |
|           | Improve housing management services to vulnerable residents | Targeted housing management tenancy audits result in the identification of and support services for vulnerable tenants.            | March 2022      |
|           |   | Establish joint working protocols between Adult Social Care, Housing Management and Housing Needs.                                 | March 2022      |
|           |   | Review and improve the accessibility of the housing stock where feasible in the capital programme.                                 | 2022 to 2027    |
|           |   | Achieve the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation.  | March 2023      |
|           |   | Complete the review of the Community Alarm service.  | June 2021       |



| Objective                         | Area                                     | Actions  | Completion Date   |           |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|-----------|
| <b>Delivering Resident Safety</b> | Fire Safety                              | Develop the response to the recommendations from the Grenfell Inquiry and any changes to fire safety management.                                       | March 2022  |           |
|                                   | Ensure resident safety in HRA properties | Review and update key policies relating to safety: Asbestos, Electric, Fire, Gas, Water Hygiene.   | December 2021   |           |
|                                   |  | Review the performance monitoring and indicators in place for compliance and servicing.  | April 2021  |           |
|                                   |  | Implement external audits across all 5 areas of statutory compliance: Asbestos, Electric, Fire, Gas, Water Hygiene.                                    | September 2021  |           |
|                                   |  | Conclude the compliance improvement plan.  | March 2022  |           |
|                                   |  | Identify the opportunities to use technology to improve resident safety and include in the Asset Management Strategy and future investment programmes. | March 2022  |           |
|                                   |  | Ensure the safety and security of temporary accommodation.   | Review the arrangements in place for monitoring safety in temporary accommodation and nightly paid accommodation. | June 2021 |





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|--|---|--|-----------------|
| <b>New Social Housing Act - "The Charter for Social Housing Residents"</b> | Prepare for the introduction of the new housing act | Review Brentwood's practices against the current consumer standards and the proposed new consumer standards to be overseen by the regulator.                           | December 2021   |
|  |   | Identify the named persons for consumer standards compliance and health and safety compliance for the Council.   | December 2021   |
|  |   | Prepare to feed into consultations on changes to the consumer standards and new tenant satisfaction measures.  | March 2022      |
|  |   | Ensure current stock condition date is up to date to assist with assessing the impact of any proposed "Decent Homes 2" standard.                                       | March 2023      |
|  |   | Update the Environment, Enforcement and Housing Committee on the impact of the new Act and the implications of not meeting the new standards (e.g. any fines imposed). | TBC             |





| Objective                                | Area               | Actions  | Completion Date |
|--|--------------------|--|-----------------|
| <b>Community cohesion and resilience</b> | Community strategy | Develop a communities strategy which encourages greater cohesion and resilience. | March 2022      |

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|------------------|--|---|-----------------|
| <b>Resources</b> | Review the resources to deliver the Housing Strategy | Review the skills and experience available to deliver the new Housing Strategy and action plan. | September 2021  |
|                  | Update the 30 year Housing Revenue Act Business Plan | Produce an updated HRA Business Plan based on updated stock condition survey information.       | March 2023      |





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