

**Report for:**  
ACTION

**Item Number:**

<b>Contains Confidential or Exempt Information</b>	No
<b>Title</b>	Housing Strategy
<b>Responsible Officer(s)</b>	Peter George Strategic Director Economy & Sustainability  Nicky Fiedler Strategic Director Housing & Environment
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<b>Portfolio(s)</b>	Cllr. Shital Manro Cabinet Member for Good Growth & New Housing  Cllr. Bassam Mahfouz Cabinet Member for Safe & Genuinely Affordable Homes
<b>For Consideration By</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date to be Considered</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
<b>Implementation Date if Not Called In</b>	Subject to following Public Consultation.
<b>Affected Wards</b>	All
<b>Keywords/Index</b>	Affordable Housing, Broadway Living, Climate Change, Climate Emergency, Communities, Delivery Plan, Developers, Empty Homes, Energy Efficiency, Fuel Poverty, Genuine Affordable Housing, GLA, Homelessness, Homeowners, Housing, Housing Crisis, Housing Market, Inequality, Landlords, Local Plan, Neighbourhoods, Private Sector Housing, Retrofitted Homes, Rough Sleeping, Seven Towns, Strategy.

## **Purpose of Report:**

'Great Homes, Better Lives: A Housing Strategy for Ealing's Residents' represents a forward-thinking and transformative five-year strategy, aimed at ensuring that everyone in Ealing has access to a genuinely affordable home, underpinned by a stable and sufficient income. This ambitious strategy outlines the Council's dedicated efforts to address the pressing housing crisis, with a commitment to providing safe, healthy, and secure housing for all residents in Ealing.

Spanning all housing types, the strategy comprehensively addresses owner-occupied, privately rented, and social housing sectors, alongside targeted initiatives to combat homelessness and rough sleeping. Integral to this approach is the development of a new comprehensive Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy, designed to augment and support the overarching goals of the Housing Strategy, which is currently being finalised. Central to the strategy is the empowerment of local communities, harnessing the collective resources of the borough to innovate and improve the delivery of housing services. This strategic approach is not just about housing; it's about enhancing the quality of life in Ealing, making it a more prosperous and enjoyable place for everyone. The strategy is action-oriented, with a clear focus on both immediate solutions and sustainable, long-term change. It prioritises the delivery of genuinely affordable homes, strategically located based on the specific housing needs of the diverse communities across Ealing's seven towns.

This Strategy marks the commencement of an ambitious journey towards a thriving, healthy, and sustainable future for Ealing. With the steadfast commitment of the Council, coupled with the invaluable support of residents, landlords, and collaborative partners, we stand poised to make a profound and positive impact on the lives and wellbeing of the residents of Ealing.

The final version of the strategy following public consultation, will have an agreed delivery plan detailing how it will be monitored and regularly reviewed; a foreword by the Leader; be professionally designed meeting corporate standards; and contain supporting images, statistics, and graphics.

## **1. Recommendations for DECISION**

- 1.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- 1.2 Agree that there should be public consultation on the draft Housing Strategy 2024-2029 (Appendix A).
- 1.3 Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Economy & Sustainability to consider the outcome of the consultation and the Equalities Analysis Assessment, make amendments and approve the final version of the Housing Strategy 2024-2029.
- 1.4 Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Economy & Sustainability to approve the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan.

## 2. Reasons for Decision and Options Considered

2.1 The Council is proposing a new Housing Strategy to provide safe, healthy, and secure homes for all its residents. The proposed strategy aims to deliver a step change to secure more good homes for Ealing and improve the borough's existing stock, while also addressing urgent areas of improvement.

2.2 The Council's immediate focus is on working for those most impacted by the housing crisis. The strategy includes four strategic priority themes to provide the foundations for long-term change in the borough.

- I. *Increasing the supply of genuinely affordable homes*
- II. *Quality housing: homes that are healthy, safe, and sustainable*
- III. *Supporting people to live well in the community*
- IV. *Promoting resilience, inclusion, and fighting inequality*

These are underpinned by four commitments about the way we will work:

- *Empowering communities*
- *Being bold and innovative*
- *Delivering through partnership*
- *A polycentric approach –Ealing's seven towns*

2.3 Each in turn and together support the Council's three primary strategic goals:

- ***Creating Good Jobs***
- ***Tackling the Climate Crisis***
- ***Fighting Inequality***

2.4 The strategy is driven by the fact that Ealing is changing, and the Council is transforming its relationship with residents to modernise local government in a way that empowers communities and liberates the workforce. Housing is one of the most fundamental determinants of quality of life and is key to the borough's journey. The proposed strategy is built around the principle that every resident should have the best possible experience of living in Ealing, with their home being the basis for a prosperous and enjoyable life in the borough.

2.5 The Council recognises that the housing system needs to be underpinned by fundamentally different ways of working to tackle the climate emergency and drive an improved quality of life for residents. The proposed strategy and subsequent delivery plan include immediate actions along the above four interconnected strategic priorities, which will provide the foundations for long-term change in the borough.

It has been produced at a challenging time of a troubled economy, highest levels of inflation in a generation, and increasing demand for the Council's statutory services, where local authority budgets are being squeezed to their limits.

- 2.6 The proposed strategy is based on evidence showing the scale of the challenge faced by Ealing. The Council aims to make a measurable difference to the lives of residents in Ealing by providing the foundation for a thriving, healthy, prosperous, and green borough.
- 2.7 The strategy is informed by conversations with residents and tenants, reflecting the findings of the broader borough engagement undertaken in 2022, which highlighted key local issues, such as a lack of social housing, family-sized homes, and energy-efficient homes. The proposed strategy aims to respond to these and other key issues throughout its implementation.
- 2.8 The Council commissioned consultants Campbell Tickell to write the new Strategy to address the borough's complex housing challenges, ensuring it aligns strategically with the Council's other strategies and plans to meet Ealing's high expectations and ambitions. Subject to approval by Cabinet, the next step will be to carry out extensive public consultation, which will enable direct feedback to be incorporated into the strategy.
- 2.9 Focusing on the key areas below, the strategy aims to create inclusive, sustainable, and thriving communities, that complement and enhance the unique characteristics and needs of our seven towns. At its core the new strategy will provide the strategic direction to ensure that all residents of Ealing have access to safe, affordable, and suitable homes.

## **2.10 What is a Housing Strategy**

- 2.11 A housing strategy is a comprehensive plan developed by local authorities to address the unique housing needs of its communities. While not a statutory requirement, it is essential for effective housing management and development. It serves as a blueprint guiding the council's actions in the housing sector, aligning with broader social, economic, and environmental objectives of the borough.

## **2.12 Why is a Housing Strategy Needed**

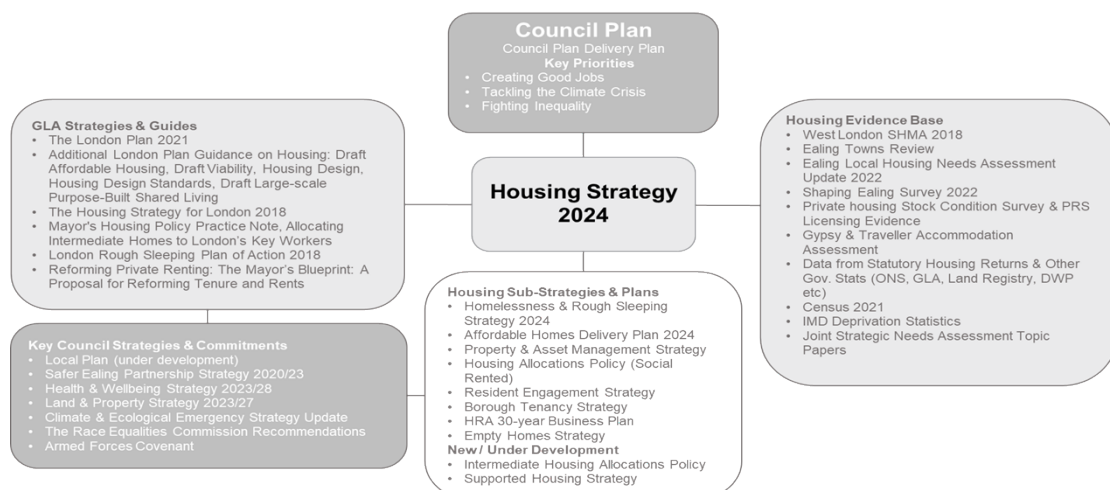
- **Diverse Housing Needs:** Ealing, like many London boroughs, is characterised by a diverse population with varying housing requirements. A housing strategy helps to identify and address these different needs systematically
- **Affordability Challenges:** Affordability is a significant concern. The strategy seeks to provide solutions for more affordable housing options
- **Development:** With ongoing development, a housing strategy ensures that growth is sustainable, balancing the need for new housing with the preservation of community character and environment

- **Homelessness and Social Issues:** Addressing homelessness and providing support for vulnerable populations is a critical aspect of the strategy, reflecting the council's commitment to social responsibility
- **Economic Growth and Stability:** Good housing policy is integral to the economic vitality of the borough, attracting investment and supporting a stable, prosperous community

## 2.13 Main Components of a Housing Strategy

- **Assessment of Housing Needs:** An in-depth analysis of current and future housing demands across different demographics and socio-economic groups in Ealing
- **Affordable Housing Development:** Strategies to increase the supply of affordable housing, including partnerships with developers, housing associations, and government schemes
- **Homelessness Reduction:** Initiatives and programmes aimed at reducing homelessness and rough sleeping, through prevention, support services, and provision of emergency housing
- **Quality and Sustainability:** Ensuring that new and existing housing meets high standards of quality and sustainability, contributing to the overall health and wellbeing of residents
- **Community Engagement:** Actively involving local communities in housing decisions, ensuring that the strategy reflects the needs and aspirations of Ealing's residents
- **Integrated Approach:** Collaboration with other policy areas such as education, health, and transport, to create a holistic approach to housing and community development
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Establishing clear metrics and regular reviews to assess the effectiveness of the strategy and adjust as needed

## 2.14 Strategic Context Overview



2.15 In summary, a housing strategy is a vital tool in shaping the future of the borough, ensuring that housing development is aligned with the needs of its communities and contributes positively to the overall quality of life in Ealing.

### 3. Key Implications

3.1 The new comprehensive Housing Strategy, is focused on ensuring affordable homes for everyone, which carries several significant implications:

- **Addressing Affordability and Quality of Housing:** The strategy confronts the stark challenges of high housing costs and the scarcity of affordable homes. It aims to make housing more accessible to all residents, particularly young families and those in the private rented sector who are increasingly priced out. This approach includes enhancing the quality, safety, and sustainability of homes in Ealing
- **Strategic Focus on Diverse Housing Needs:** Recognising the growing and diverse population of Ealing, the strategy aims to cater to varying housing needs, including the requirement for larger, family-sized homes and support for older residents to live independently
- **Community Engagement and Regeneration:** A significant emphasis is placed on engaging with the community to shape the future of housing in Ealing. This includes developing Town Plans and local interventions, fostering a culture of inclusion and transparency, and focusing on regeneration that benefits all seven towns within the borough
- **Combating Homelessness and Housing Vulnerabilities:** The strategy prioritises addressing homelessness and rough sleeping through various measures, including the development of a new homelessness and rough sleeping strategy. There is a commitment to providing support for the most vulnerable, including those with mental or physical health needs
- **Sustainable and Healthy Living:** Aligning with the borough's ecological goals, the strategy underscores the importance of sustainable housing that contributes positively to residents' health and well-being. This includes efforts to retrofit homes for better energy efficiency and to promote healthier living environments
- **Private Rented Sector (PRS) Improvements:** The strategy acknowledges the issues within the PRS, including poor property conditions. Measures like Selective Licensing aim to raise standards and ensure safe, quality housing in the private rented market
- **Empowering Residents and Tackling Inequality:** The strategy recognizes the need to fight inequality and promote resilience in housing. This includes empowering tenant groups, establishing community hubs for housing advice, and actively working to reduce disparities, particularly those that affect minority and vulnerable groups

- **Promotion of Employment and Economic Growth:** The strategy links housing with economic development, aiming to create jobs and improve residents' access to employment opportunities. This approach recognises that economic stability is crucial for addressing housing issues
  - **Collaborative Efforts for Housing Delivery:** The strategy highlights the necessity of collaboration with various partners, including private sector entities, to meet housing goals. This collaborative approach is seen as vital for funding and delivering new, genuinely affordable homes
- 3.2 In summary, Ealing's new Housing Strategy is an ambitious and multifaceted plan that aims not only to address the current housing crisis but also to improve the overall quality of life for its residents through sustainable, inclusive, and community-focused initiatives.

#### 4. Financial

- 4.1 The strategy will contain a detailed Delivery Plan, setting out the proposals to deliver the strategy priorities and objectives over the next five years, along with the timescales for implementation. Where a proposal is defined as a 'key decision' under the council's constitution with a significant financial implication, then it will be brought to Cabinet for decision separately, with a detailed breakdown of the financial implications.
- 4.2 Financial implications arising from the objectives outlined within the Housing Strategy will be met by the Housing General Fund revenue budgets, and the HRA where expenditure relates to Ealing's housing estates and wider council housing stock.
- 4.3 There are no direct financial implications from the strategy itself.

#### 5. Legal

- 5.1 Since 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015, the obligation to have a housing strategy only applies to local housing authorities in Wales.
- 5.2 Although the Secretary of State has not exercised the power contained in section 87 of the Local Government Act 2003 to require local authorities to produce housing strategies, in practice most authorities do produce strategies.
- 5.3 Under the Greater London Authority Act 2007 any housing strategies produced or revised by the Council must be in general conformity with the London Housing Strategy.
- 5.4 A local authority is required to have a Homelessness Strategy pursuant to the Homelessness Act 2002.

- 5.5 Consultation needs to take place at a formative stage at a point where the mind of the decision-maker is still open to change and can, therefore, be influenced by the responses to the consultation. Conscientious consideration must be given to the consultation responses by the decision maker.

## **6. Value For Money**

- 6.1 Value for money is a theme running through the strategy in the priorities, objectives, and actions. There are some key objectives which will provide significant value for money and contribute direct savings to the council's budgets, including: 'making the most efficient use of the existing housing stock'. Increasing the supply of housing will help meet housing need, reduce overcrowding, and reduce the need for using expensive temporary accommodation for homeless households.

## **7. Sustainability Impact Appraisal**

- 7.1 One of the key priorities is '*Quality housing: homes that are healthy, safe, and sustainable*'. This priority contains several objectives and associated actions to improve sustainability:
- Improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty.
  - Invest in and improve communities.
  - Ensure new homes are of a high-quality design and environmentally sustainable.

## **8. Risk Management**

- 8.1 The delivery of many of the actions in the strategy are reliant on Government grant, such as the GLA Affordable Housing Programme. Some actions are reliant on partner organisations progressing key actions. The evidence base and delivery plans will be kept under review to identify and manage risks. Risk registers will be maintained for major projects, and the risks reported to Cabinet as part of any decision-making process.

## **9. Community Safety**

- 9.1 The strategy will make a positive contribution towards improving community safety.



## **10. Links to the 3 Key Priorities for the Borough**

10.1 The strategy includes four strategic priority themes to provide the foundations for long-term change in the borough.

- I. Increasing the supply of genuinely affordable homes*
- II. Quality housing: homes that are healthy, safe, and sustainable*
- III. Supporting people to live well in the community*
- IV. Promoting resilience, inclusion, and fighting inequality*

10.2 Each in turn and together supporting the Council's three primary strategic goals.

- **Fighting inequality**
- **Tackling the climate crisis**
- **Creating good jobs**

## **11. Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion**

11.1 A full equalities analysis assessment will be undertaken following the public consultation.

## **12. Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications:**

12.1 No direct implications.

## **13. Property and Assets**

13.1 No direct implications.

## **14. Any other implications:**

14.1 None.

## **15. Consultation**

15.1 Full public consultation will follow approval at Cabinet to proceed.

## **16. Timetable for Implementation**

16.1 A final implementation date will be agreed following public consultation.

## **17. Appendices**

17.1 Appendix A: Housing Strategy.

## **18. Background Information**

18.1 None.

## Consultation

<b>Name of consultee</b>	<b>Post held</b>	<b>Date sent to consultee</b>	<b>Date response received</b>	<b>Comments appear in paragraph:</b>
<b>Internal</b>				
Cllr. Shital Manro	Cabinet Member for Good Growth & New Housing	Throughout	Throughout	Throughout
Cllr. Bassam Mahfouz	Cabinet Member for Safe & Genuinely Affordable Homes	Throughout	Throughout	Throughout
Peter George	Strategic Director Economy & Sustainability	Throughout	Throughout	Throughout
Nicky Fiedler	Strategic Director Housing & Environment	Throughout	Throughout	Throughout
Alice Rowland	Head of Legal (Commercial)	Throughout	Throughout	Throughout
Justin Morley	Head of Legal (Litigation)	Throughout	Throughout	Throughout
Shabana Khan	Lawyer (Litigation)	Throughout	Throughout	Throughout
Russell Dyer	Head of Accountancy	Throughout	Throughout	Throughout
Adam Towle	Head of New Business, Housing Development	Throughout	Throughout	Throughout

## Report History

<b>Decision type:</b> EITHER: Key decision OR Non-key decision OR For information (delete as applicable)	<b>Urgency item?</b>
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