

Overview & Scrutiny

Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

All Members of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission are requested to attend the meeting of the Commission to be held as follows

Wednesday 22 November 2023

7.00 pm

Assembly Room 3, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, London E8 1EA

This meeting can be viewed (or replayed) via the following link:

<https://youtube.com/live/GZbhVhzpbJ4>

A back up link is provided in the event of any technical difficulties:

<https://youtube.com/live/ZD8Es9fUo5U>

Should you wish to attend the meeting please give notice to the contact below and note the guidance included in the frontsheet.

Contact:

Craig Player

☎ 020 8356 4316

✉ craig.player@hackney.gov.uk

Dawn Carter-McDonald

Interim Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney

Members: Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Soraya Adejare (Chair), Cllr Clare Joseph (Vice-Chair), Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Ali Sadek, Cllr Zoe Garbett, Cllr Caroline Selman and Cllr Yvonne Maxwell

Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Urgent Items / Order of Business
- 3 Declaration of Interest

- 4 Supported Accommodation for Rough Sleepers & Single Homeless People with Complex Needs (Pages 9 - 32)
- 5 Draft Housing Strategy & Private Sector Housing Strategy: Evidence Base (Pages 33 - 76)
- 6 Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-25: Recommendations & Findings (Pages 77 - 86)
- 7 Resident Engagement for Estate Regeneration: Findings & Executive Response (Pages 87 - 98)
- 8 Overarching Scrutiny Panel Review into Net Zero: Executive Response (Pages 99 - 190)
- 9 Minutes of the Meeting (Pages 191 - 204)
- 10 Living in Hackney Work Programme 2023/24 (Pages 205 - 218)
- 11 Any Other Business

Access and Information

Public Involvement and Recording

Public Attendance at the Town Hall for Meetings

Scrutiny meetings are held in public, rather than being public meetings. This means that whilst residents and press are welcome to attend, they can only ask questions at the discretion of the Chair. For further information relating to public access to information, please see Part 4 of the council's constitution, available at <https://hackney.gov.uk/council-business> or by contacting Governance Services (020 8356 3503)

Following the lifting of all Covid-19 restrictions by the Government and the Council updating its assessment of access to its buildings, the Town Hall is now open to the public and members of the public may attend meetings of the Council.

We recognise, however, that you may find it more convenient to observe the meeting via the live-stream facility, the link for which appears on the agenda front sheet.

We would ask that if you have either tested positive for Covid-19 or have any symptoms that you do not attend the meeting, but rather use the livestream facility. If this applies and you are attending the meeting to ask a question, make a deputation or present a petition then you may contact the Officer named at the beginning of the agenda and they will be able to make arrangements for the Chair of the meeting to ask the question, make the deputation or present the petition on your behalf.

The Council will continue to ensure that access to our meetings is in line with any Covid-19 restrictions that may be in force from time to time and also in line with public health advice. The latest general advice can be found here - <https://hackney.gov.uk/coronavirus-support>

Rights of Press and Public to Report on Meetings

Where a meeting of the Council and its committees are open to the public, the press and public are welcome to report on meetings of the Council and its committees, through any audio, visual or written methods and may use digital and social media providing they do not disturb the conduct of the meeting and providing that the person reporting or providing the commentary is present at the meeting.

Those wishing to film, photograph or audio record a meeting are asked to notify the Council's Monitoring Officer by noon on the day of the meeting, if possible, or any time prior to the start of the meeting or notify the Chair at the start of the meeting.

The Monitoring Officer, or the Chair of the meeting, may designate a set area from which all recording must take place at a meeting.

The Council will endeavour to provide reasonable space and seating to view, hear and record the meeting. If those intending to record a meeting require any other reasonable facilities, notice should be given to the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting and will only be provided if practicable to do so.

The Chair shall have discretion to regulate the behaviour of all those present recording a meeting in the interests of the efficient conduct of the meeting. Anyone acting in a disruptive manner may be required by the Chair to cease recording or may be excluded from the meeting.

Disruptive behaviour may include moving from any designated recording area; causing excessive noise; intrusive lighting; interrupting the meeting; or filming members of the public who have asked not to be filmed.

All those visually recording a meeting are requested to only focus on recording Councillors, officers and the public who are directly involved in the conduct of the meeting. The Chair of the meeting will ask any members of the public present if they have objections to being visually recorded. Those visually recording a meeting are asked to respect the wishes of those who do not wish to be filmed or photographed. Failure by someone recording a meeting to respect the wishes of those who do not wish to be filmed and photographed may result in the Chair instructing them to cease recording or in their exclusion from the meeting.

If a meeting passes a motion to exclude the press and public then in order to consider confidential or exempt information, all recording must cease, and all recording equipment must be removed from the meeting. The press and public are not permitted to use any means which might enable them to see or hear the proceedings whilst they are excluded from a meeting and confidential or exempt information is under consideration.

Providing oral commentary during a meeting is not permitted.

Advice to Members on Declaring Interests

Advice to Members on Declaring Interests

Hackney Council's Code of Conduct applies to all Members of the Council, the Mayor and co-opted Members.

This note is intended to provide general guidance for Members on declaring interests. However, you may need to obtain specific advice on whether you have an interest in a particular matter. If you need advice, you can contact:

- Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services
- the Legal Adviser to the Committee; or
- Governance Services.

If at all possible, you should try to identify any potential interest you may have before the meeting so that you and the person you ask for advice can fully consider all the circumstances before reaching a conclusion on what action you should take.

You will have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter if it:

- i. relates to an interest that you have already registered in Parts A and C of the Register of Pecuniary Interests of you or your spouse/civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse/civil partner;
- ii. relates to an interest that should be registered in Parts A and C of the Register of Pecuniary Interests of your spouse/civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse/civil partner, but you have not yet done so; or
- iii. affects your well-being or financial position or that of your spouse/civil partner, or anyone living with you as if they were your spouse/civil partner.

If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest in an item on the agenda you must:

- i. Declare the existence and nature of the interest (in relation to the relevant agenda item) as soon as it becomes apparent to you (subject to the rules regarding sensitive interests).
- ii. You must leave the meeting when the item in which you have an interest is being discussed. You cannot stay in the meeting whilst discussion of the item takes place, and you cannot vote on the matter. In addition, you must not seek to improperly influence the decision.
- iii. If you have, however, obtained dispensation from the Monitoring Officer or Standards Committee you may remain in the meeting and participate in the

meeting. If dispensation has been granted it will stipulate the extent of your involvement, such as whether you can only be present to make representations, provide evidence or whether you are able to fully participate and vote on the matter in which you have a pecuniary interest.

Do you have any other non-pecuniary interest on any matter on the agenda which is being considered at the meeting?

You will have 'other non-pecuniary interest' in a matter if:

- i. It relates to an external body that you have been appointed to as a Member or in another capacity; or
- ii. It relates to an organisation or individual which you have actively engaged in supporting.

If you have other non-pecuniary interest in an item on the agenda you must:

- i. Declare the existence and nature of the interest (in relation to the relevant agenda item) as soon as it becomes apparent to you.
- ii. You may remain in the meeting, participate in any discussion or vote provided that contractual, financial, consent, permission or licence matters are not under consideration relating to the item in which you have an interest.
- iii. If you have an interest in a contractual, financial, consent, permission, or licence matter under consideration, you must leave the meeting unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Monitoring Officer or Standards Committee. You cannot stay in the meeting whilst discussion of the item takes place, and you cannot vote on the matter. In addition, you must not seek to improperly influence the decision. Where members of the public are allowed to make representations, or to give evidence or answer questions about the matter you may, with the permission of the meeting, speak on a matter then leave the meeting. Once you have finished making your representation, you must leave the meeting whilst the matter is being discussed.
- iv. If you have been granted dispensation, in accordance with the Council's dispensation procedure you may remain in the meeting. If dispensation has been granted it will stipulate the extent of your involvement, such as whether you can only be present to make representations, provide evidence or whether you are able to fully participate and vote on the matter in which you have a non-pecuniary interest.

Further Information

Advice can be obtained from Dawn Carter-McDonald, Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services via email dawn.carter-mcdonald@hackney.gov.uk

Getting to the Town Hall

For a map of how to find the Town Hall, please visit the council's website <http://www.hackney.gov.uk/contact-us.htm> or contact the Overview and Scrutiny Officer using the details provided on the front cover of this agenda.

Accessibility

There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall.

Induction loop facilities are available in the Assembly Halls and the Council Chamber. Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

Further Information about the Commission

If you would like any more information about the Scrutiny Commission, including the membership details, meeting dates and previous reviews, please visit the website or use this QR Code (accessible via phone or tablet 'app')

<http://www.hackney.gov.uk/individual-scrutiny-commissions-living-in-hackney.htm>



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<p>Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission</p> <p>22nd November 2023</p> <p>Item 4 – Supported Accommodation for Rough Sleepers & Single Homeless People with Complex Needs</p>	<p>Item No</p> <p>4</p>
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Outline

The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission is keen to hear about the current provision and future need in Hackney for supported accommodation for rough sleepers and single homeless people with multiple and complex needs.

The Commission sees this discussion as timely given the increasing levels of homelessness in Hackney and increased levels of support required for those faced with homelessness since the Council changed its model of housing related support services for adults with complex needs in 2016.

As part of the scrutiny process, members will undertake site visits to supported accommodation schemes in both Camden and Hackney. The aim of these site visits is to gain an understanding of the supported accommodation provision across both boroughs, and the experiences of residents, staff and providers.

Report(s)

The following documents are included for information:

- Item 4a. Presentation from Benefits & Housing Needs on Supported Accommodation for Rough Sleepers & Single Homeless People

Invites Attendees

- Councillor Sade Etti, Deputy Cabinet Member for Homelessness & Housing Needs
- Rob Miller, Strategic Director Customer & Workplace
- Jennifer Wynter, Assistant Director Benefits & Housing Needs
- Andrew Croucher, Operations Manager
- Beverley Gachette, Strategic Commissioning Lead, Rough Sleeping and Homelessness

Invited External Attendees

- Dr Adi Cooper OBE, Independent Chair of City & Hackney Adult Safeguarding Board

- Catherine McElroy, Mental Health Community Service Manager & Social Work Lead for City & Hackney
- Anthony Simmons, Service Manager St Mungos
- Becky Rice, Research & Evaluation Consultant
- Sally Caldwell, Strategy & Transformation Consultant

Action

Members are asked to consider the written submission and ask questions of those in attendance.



Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

Page 11

Supporting Homeless Residents with complex needs



Our statutory duties



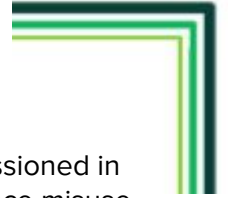
- Statutory requirements placed on local authorities in assisting homeless applicants which are framed within the 1996 Housing Act and Homeless Reduction Act 2017;
- Some will be in priority need (for example if they are vulnerable as a result of mental illness or physical disability) and owed statutory duties to be accommodated. Others will not be in priority need but, if eligible, will be owed the “relief” duty under section 189B of the Act.
- Related to the provision of accommodation, the Council may have a duty of support. The Care Act 2014 introduced the National Minimum Eligibility Criteria (NMEC).



Previous provision

- In 2016, the council changed the model of housing related support services for adults with complex needs achieving a reduction of £3.9m across 2017/18 - 2019/20.
- This included reducing the number of supported accommodation units by 149 providing for homeless residents with mental health, learning disabilities and those exiting prison.
- Three SHRS schemes were decommissioned with these residents being helped into housing or approaching the Council as homeless and being provided with temporary accommodation.
- Floating support provision was expanded but on reflection has not provided for those with complex needs.

Gabriel's experience



Previously lived in a high needs mental health supported accommodation at Marsh Hill, which was unfortunately decommissioned in 2018. He can be extremely volatile. Suffers from paranoid schizophrenia. Has a history of intimidation. G also has a substance misuse support needs. G is an accepted main rehousing duty case with an effective date of 2013. Was one of the first cases brought onto the HHH MDT. The social worker pilot became involved in 2020.

From 2012 until 2017, whilst at Marsh Hill G was supported by the assertive MH outreach team but this service was also decommissioned in 2017. His previous key worker at March Hill recently informed us that during his years in the hostel he didn't engage with support and his room was always in poor condition over the years. Although G had few hospital admissions during this time these were significantly less than since he lost the accommodation. Since losing his MH supported accommodation he has had periods when he has slept rough in between varied placements.

G is suspected having an unhealthy history with boys, however unproven, which has restricted his housing options. MH professionals in the past recommended that he required his own flat and this was seen to support his MH condition. Has an on-and-off violent relationship with another well known Hackney resident. G has been referred to MARAC on few occasions due to his aggressive behaviour towards his male partner. Partner is now housed through housing first project delivered by a third sector partner and it is unclear whether they are still in contact or together.

G has had several temporary accommodation placements, which have all broken down due to ASB and keeping his room in inhabitable condition. G would qualify for sheltered as he is 55 years old but is too high needs for this type of accommodation.

In 2021, Hackney Housing made a direct offer of social housing for him. Unfortunately, G's tenancy setup was not smooth due to professional's annual leave and lack of positive engagement by RW. Shortly after moving in G's MH crisis escalated and he ended back in the hospital under a section. Due to the number of serious incidents at his building leading up to this point he lost his accommodation.

G has been rehoused within the MH supported accommodation pathway with an expensive spot purchase provider in Newham.

G's 2012-present



Mental Health (MH) Supported accommodation
(HB £168 per week)



ELFT assertive outreach team

Page 15
2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022



ELFT assertive outreach team disbanded



MH Supported accommodation closed
(HB £209 per week)
2 x TAs



1 x hospital admission



Abusive & aggressive towards staff, removed from TAs



TA, hospital & ELFT staff



Social worker pilot becomes involved



1 x TA
Street homeless
Location unknown



2 x hospital admission



Substance misuse
Abusive & aggressive towards staff



End of Mental Health support pathway
Beginning of St Mungo's pathway



Evicted from HH tenancy



Rehoused by the MH supported accommodation pathway in expensive spot purchase arrangement (**£690 for support per week**)



1 x St Mungo's high needs hostel (**HB £350 per week**)
Street homeless
1 x NHS Travelodge
1 x Hackney Homes property
Due for eviction 15th October - next accommodation unknown



3 x hospital admissions



4 x police arrests



Abusive & aggressive towards staff & public
Doesn't seem capable of setting up new flat



Engage, Community Care Coordinator, Hospital Work Rights Officer, Police, MH Community Team, Hackney Homes, Housing Needs

Increasing demand



- Hackney is at the epicentre of a housing and temporary accommodation crisis. Levels of homelessness are increasing rapidly; Approaches from households in June 2023 up by 17% when compared to the same period in 2018-19.

Page 16

Increased level of support required beyond that which has traditionally been provided for people in general needs temporary accommodation. This includes people with needs that have not reached the threshold yet for adults' social care or NHS support.

- Approaches made by single homeless residents show that 2 in 5 have support needs and 1 in 5 have multiple and complex support needs.
- 2022/2023 Hackney saw 1038 single people who had support needs and 519 with multiple support needs.

Increasing demand and forecasted demand



As of June 2023 there were 443 single adults placed with one or more support needs in temporary accommodation. An initial breakdown of needs has been assessed as:

	<u>Support Need</u>	<u>Number of People</u>
Page 17	Mental Health	198
	Substance Use	74
	Physical Health	158

The majority of people have a combination of two or more needs. Based on recent analysis of numbers accessing TA, we predict that the demand for temporary accommodation will grow at around **8% per year** in the short to medium term

Benchmarking: Homeless with complex needs supported units comparison



Page 18	High/med/low	High/Med	Medium	Medium-Low	Low	Med/Low Men only	High/Med Men only	High/Med Women only	Specialist SU High	Specialist PIE/TI Very Complex Needs Men only	Housing First	Specialist Offenders	TOTAL Bed Spaces
Hackney	-	102	28	-	-	-	-	29	-	-	20	-	179
Camden	-	441	-	49	-	48	60	-	77	18	50	-	743
Tower Hamlets	81	268	-	33	35	-	-	-	35	-	-	-	452
Islington	281	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	32	313

Current Provision in Hackney



Page 19

Service Type	Client Type	No. of Units	Funding Source
SHRS Pathway	High-medium - male/female	68	LB Hackney
SHRS Pathway	High-medium - female only	29	LB Hackney
SHRS Pathway	Medium - male/female	28	LB Hackney
SHRS Pathway (Finsbury)	High-medium	10	RSI
Housing First	High - male/female	20	RSI
Assessment Service	High - male/female	17	RSI
Staging post	High-medium - male/female	7	RSI
TOTAL		179	

What we need

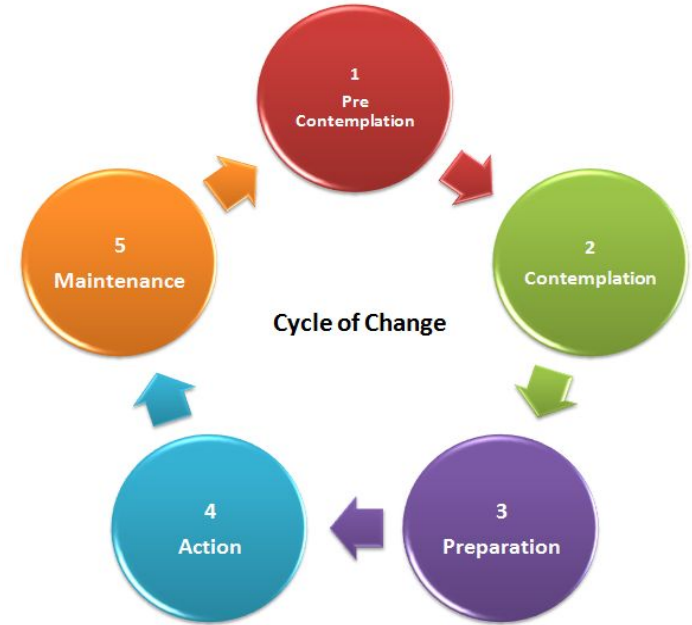


- A recent assessment (June 2023) of the client group who have been placed in TA identified a total of 433 people with support needs and approximately 75% of that group have high to medium support needs.
- To enable this group to recover, thrive and not deteriorate further thereby meeting the threshold for costly ASC services, current supported accommodation capacity must be increased by an additional 325 beds.
- Current provision that is directly funded by the Council is 125 (currently an additional 52 units are funded through short term grants) therefore increased capacity will deliver a total of c450 bed spaces.

What we need

We need more capacity to properly facilitate the recovery cycle of change. The current Pathway journey is phased, built on personalised outcomes, trauma informed and focused on recovery. However, because of limited capacity, the journey is compressed:

Recovery cycle of change



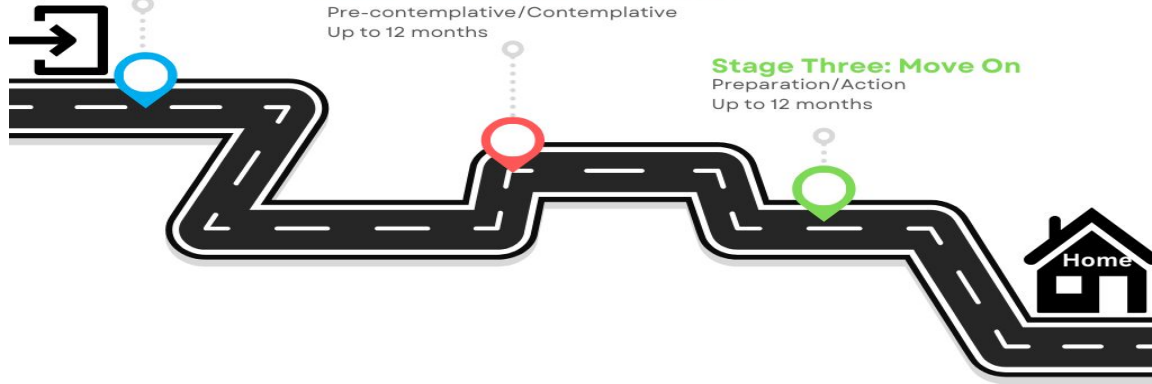
Page 21

Hackney Adult Pathway Three Stages

Stage One: Assessment
Pre-contemplative
Up to 8 weeks

Stage Two: Engaging Support
Pre-contemplative/Contemplative
Up to 12 months

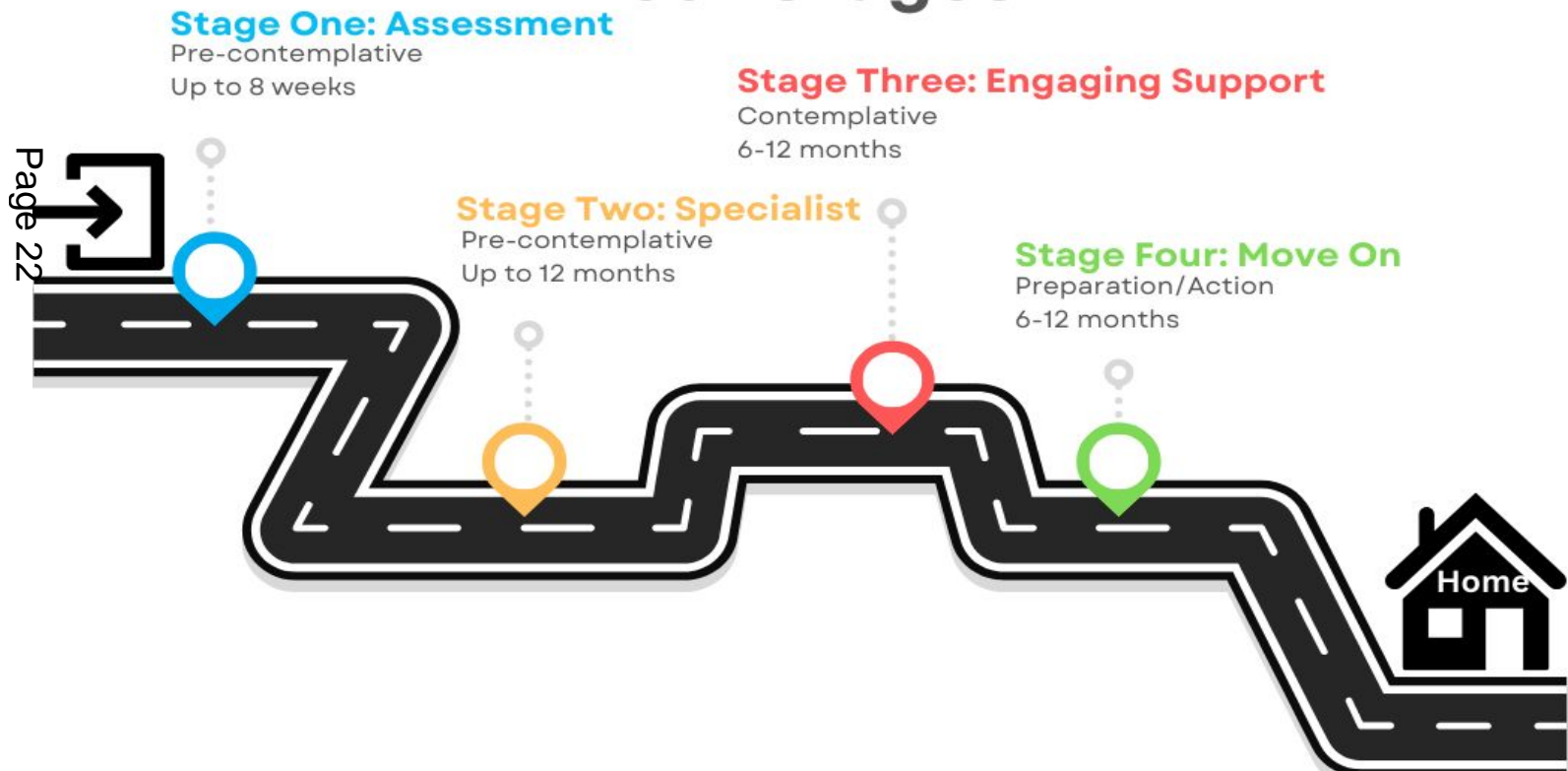
Stage Three: Move On
Preparation/Action
Up to 12 months



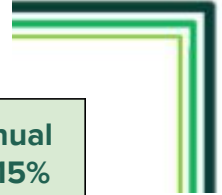
What we need



Hackney Adult Pathway Four Stages



What we need - units and support provision costs



Service Type	No. Units	Avg Unit Cost per week* £	Avg Annual Value £	Avg Annual Value +11% £	Avg Annual Value +15% £
Stages 1,3 and 4: 'Generic' Complex Needs (including holding/EBS beds)	220	187.08	2,140,195.00	2,375,616.65	2,461,224.25
Stage 2 Specialist: Continued Use - SMU/Complex Needs	100	267.9	1,393,080.00	1,546,318.80	1,602,042.00
Stage 2 Specialist: VCN - High level complex needs (multiply excluded)	14	600	436,800.00	484,848.00	502,320.00
Stage 2 Specialist: Women with high level complex needs	30	267.9	473,647.20	525,784.00	544,694.00
Stage 2 Specialist: Older RS (alcohol - longer term)	26	187.08	252,932.16	280,754.69	290,871.98
Stage 2 Specialist: Culturally specific high level complex needs	20	267.9	278,616.00	309,264.00	320,408.00
Stage 2 Specialist: Housing First (longer term)	40	226.76	471,660.80	523,543.00	542,410.00
Total	450	(Avg) 286.37	5,446,931.16	6,046,129.14	6,263,970.23

Cost Benefits of Supported Housing



The National Housing Federation commissioned Imogen Blood & Associates in partnership with the Centre for Housing Policy at the University of York, to research how supported housing specifically impacts homelessness, health and wellbeing. The research took account of the wider system, including the NHS, social care, the justice system and other public services. The summary report published earlier this year can be found [here](#):

Were it not for the supported housing sector, there would be*:

Page 24

An increase in core homelessness of around 41,000 people, with a further 30,000 people at significant risk of future homelessness (the cost to the public purse of long-term homelessness has been estimated at over **£40,000** per person per year).

- A need for 14,000 additional inpatient psychiatric places (each costing around **£170,000** per year).
- Increased demand, from the transitional and short-term sector alone, for a further 2,500 places in residential care, many for people with complex needs (each costing in the region of **£45-£50,000** per annum).
- A need for a further 2,000 prison places (each costing an average of **£32,700** per annum), due to licences or court orders being revoked.

**The research comprised a snapshot survey of 2119 individuals living in supported housing projects for working age adults on 1 August 2022, applied to the national estimates of user characteristics including people with a history of mental ill health, problematic substance use and an offending history*

Local Costs



- As of June 2023 there were **443** single adults with one or more support needs living in Hackney TA. Applying the proportions set out in the National Housing Federation Report the potential costs to the local public service system are set out below:
 - Up to 75 are likely to be long term homeless representing an annual cost to the public purse of **c£3M**
 - Up to 26 are likely to require additional inpatient psychiatric places representing an annual cost of **c£4.4M**
 - Up to 4 are likely to require residential care, representing an annual value of **c£200K**
 - Up to 3 may be recalled to prison, representing an annual value of **c£98K**

Total costs which can be viewed as savings with the new model:

c£7.6M PER YEAR

What happens if we do not increase provision?



- Needs become acute with more people reaching the threshold for adult care services; BHN HRS vs Care - HRS currently £187 per bed space per week as opposed to £1345 per bed space per week (average)

Page 26

Increased costs to the public service system: Council, NHS, CJS and ELFT

Increased safeguarding incidents, ASB and health deterioration in TA

- Early death - the mean age of death is typically 44 for homeless men and 42 for homeless women compared to the general population which is 79 and 83 respectively
- Fewer people engaging with targeted services likely to increase street-based ASB and more people rough sleeping
- Increased likelihood of recidivism/being recalled
- Staff burn out and extremely likely that the existing Pathway will become overwhelmed



Becky Rice/ Sally Caldwell

Sector Research

Page 27

Challenges in accessing the right support for
single homeless people in Hackney



Dr Adi Cooper



Co-Chair of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) Safeguarding Adults Policy Network. She is the **Independent Chair of both the City and Hackney and the Haringey Safeguarding Adults Boards** and the Care and Health Improvement Advisor for London for the Local Government Association. Adi is Visiting Professor at the University of Bedfordshire and works as an independent consultant and coach.

Page 28

Adi was the Strategic Director of Adult Social Services, Housing and Health in the London Borough of Sutton for 9 years. She is a qualified social worker, social work manager and professional leader in adult social care for over 20 years, working in several London Boroughs. She has contributed to national policy development, service improvement, Care Act guidance on adult safeguarding, and developed the Making Safeguarding Personal program. Adi is also an author - *Adult Safeguarding and Homelessness: Understanding Good Practice (Knowledge in Practice)* by Adi Cooper and Michael Preston 2021





Page 29 Catherine McElroy - MH ELFT Viewpoint



Page 30

Anthony Simmons - St Mungo's Provider view



Next steps

- Enhance our preventative approach by introducing diversity in terms of support and support provider
- Develop a whole systems approach working in partnership with Health and other anchor institutions
- Prioritise and identify funding for much needed provision with partners in health
- Programme of accommodation included in the Housing Strategy with delivery plans for minimum number of units pa - purchase/ lease/ refurbish/ build
- Close the circle in respect of the HRS Review

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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 22nd November 2023 Item 5 – Draft Housing Strategy & Private Sector Housing Strategy: Evidence Base	Item No 5
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Outline

The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission is keen to hear about the evidence base for the draft Hackney Housing Strategy & Private Sector Housing Strategy.

To facilitate work on the new strategies, an evidence-based housing needs survey and strategic housing market assessment (SHMA) have been completed, alongside various other evidence gathering exercises.

The Commission sees this discussion as timely, giving members an opportunity to challenge assumptions and the robustness of evidence-gathering at an early stage.

The Commission also plans to look at any emerging priorities, how the strategies will be delivered, how the Council has considered key risks and key measures of success in the new year before the strategies are adopted.

For additional context, the [Hackney Housing Strategy Position Paper 2023](#) sets out the housing position statement to bridge the period between the end of the current 2018 Housing Strategy and the start of the next.

Report(s)

The following documents are included for information:

- Item 5a. Presentation from Housing Policy on Evidence Base for Housing Strategy & Private Sector Housing Strategy

Invites Attendees

- Councillor Guy Nicholson, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration
- Rickardo Hyatt, Group Director Climate, Homes & Economy
- James Goddard, Assistant Director Strategy, Assurance & Private Sector Housing

Action

Members are asked to consider the written submission and ask questions of those in attendance.

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Evidence Base, Private Sector Housing Strategy & Housing Strategy

November 2023

Contents

- The Commission
- The Evidence Base
- Private Sector Housing Strategy
- Emerging Priorities for the Housing Strategy
- Discussion, feedback and next steps

Page 36



The Commission



Page 37

Strategic Context

Development of new strategies must respond to:

- Social Housing Regulation Act & Housing Ombudsman
- Renters Reform Bill provisions
- Higher interest rates, mortgage (un)affordability and private landlords exiting the market
- Record high levels of temporary accommodation, rising homelessness and rough sleeping
- Inflationary pressure and impact on development viability
- Investment in existing stock rather than new supply
- GLA Pathway to Net Zero by 2030
- Increased poverty and 'Cost of Living' challenges
- Refugee & Migrant crisis
- Political uncertainty (prospect of General & Mayoral Elections in May 2024)

Page 38



Landlord Challenges

- The Council manages a wide range of building types and different tenures
- Fire safety and compliance, decarbonisation, major works and Decent Homes
- Damp and mould action plan with dedicated line to help speed up dealing with requests
- HRA pressures – rent increase below inflation
- Improve repairs performance and enhance role of DLO
- New housing management system to be introduced
- Resident Engagement Strategy for Housing Services
- Introduction of a new regulatory regime from April 2024

Page 39



Consumer Regulation

- Social Housing Regulation Act passed July 2023
- New social housing regulatory regime to be introduced from April 2024
- Increased oversight of local authority landlords, including accountability for TMOs
- Potential for unlimited fines, short-notice inspections and orders to carry out repairs
- Concerning trend of local authority landlords being subject to regulatory judgements and/or Housing Ombudsman maladministration findings (e.g. Camden, Lambeth, Southwark)

Page 40



Methodology

Page 41

Secondary source
evidence data

Household survey
(1,213 responses from
19,802 households)

Strategic
documents review

Agent review

Stakeholder review
(partners, tenants and
landlords)

Officer discussions

Community
consultation
(573 responses)

Focus groups
(x5)

Community Consultation

- Inclusive research designed to enhance the evidence
- Trained 7 young Hackney residents to carry out face-to-face research
- Key areas across Hackney were targeted and the team linked into existing projects and activities
- Sites included community centres, local markets and parks, fun fairs, foodbanks and street interviews
- Covered Dalston, Shoreditch and Hoxton, Homerton, Clapton and Lea Bridge, Stamford Hill, Hackney Wick, Manor House and Hackney Central

Page 42



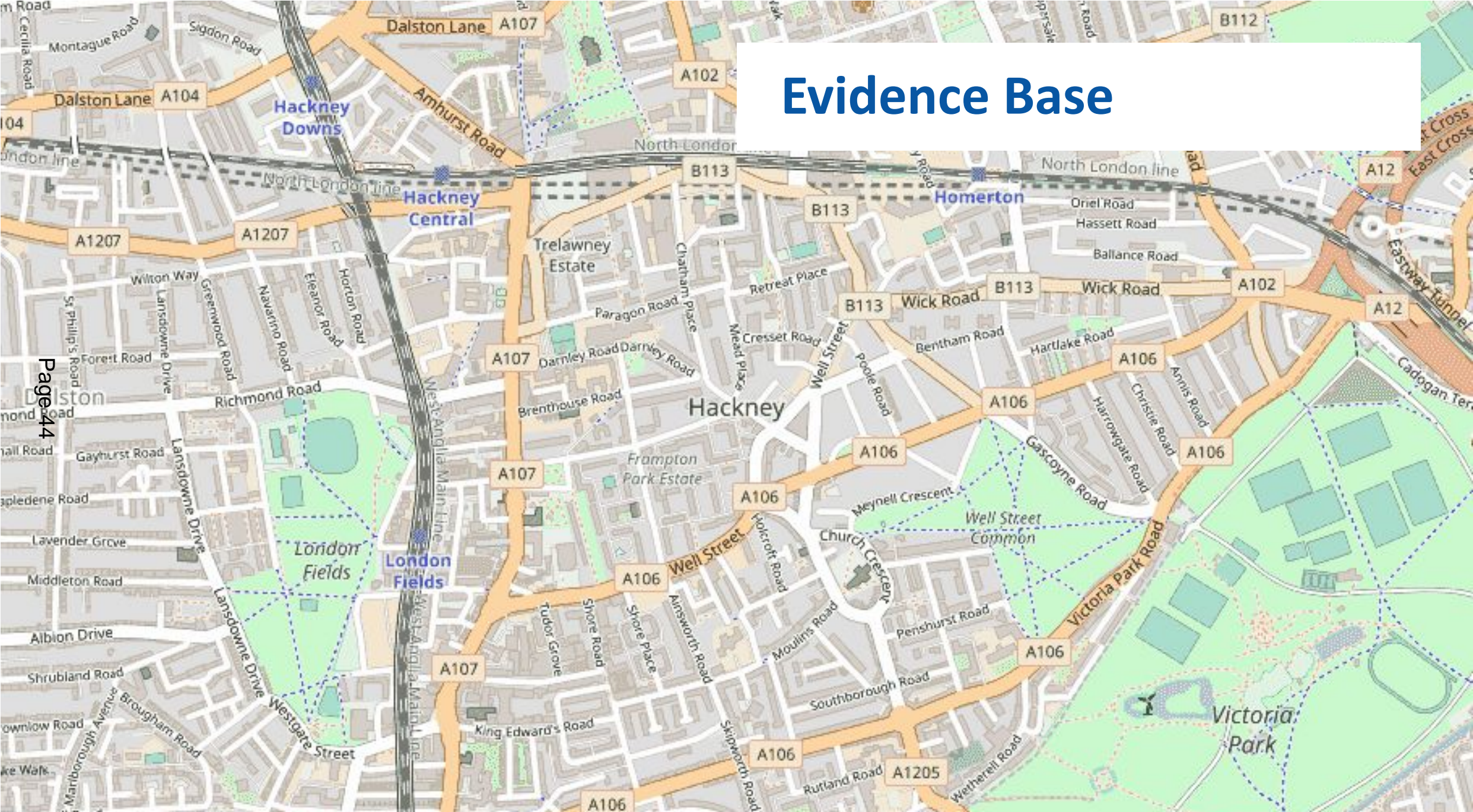
Focus Groups

- Five focus groups scheduled – two online and three in-person
- Attendees to be recruited from ‘Hackney Matters’ panel to be reflective of borough demographics
- Co-facilitated by young researchers trained during community consultation
- To discuss the following topics:
 - Affordability & Choice
 - Housing Conditions
 - Area, Culture & Employment
 - Health & Wellbeing

Page 43

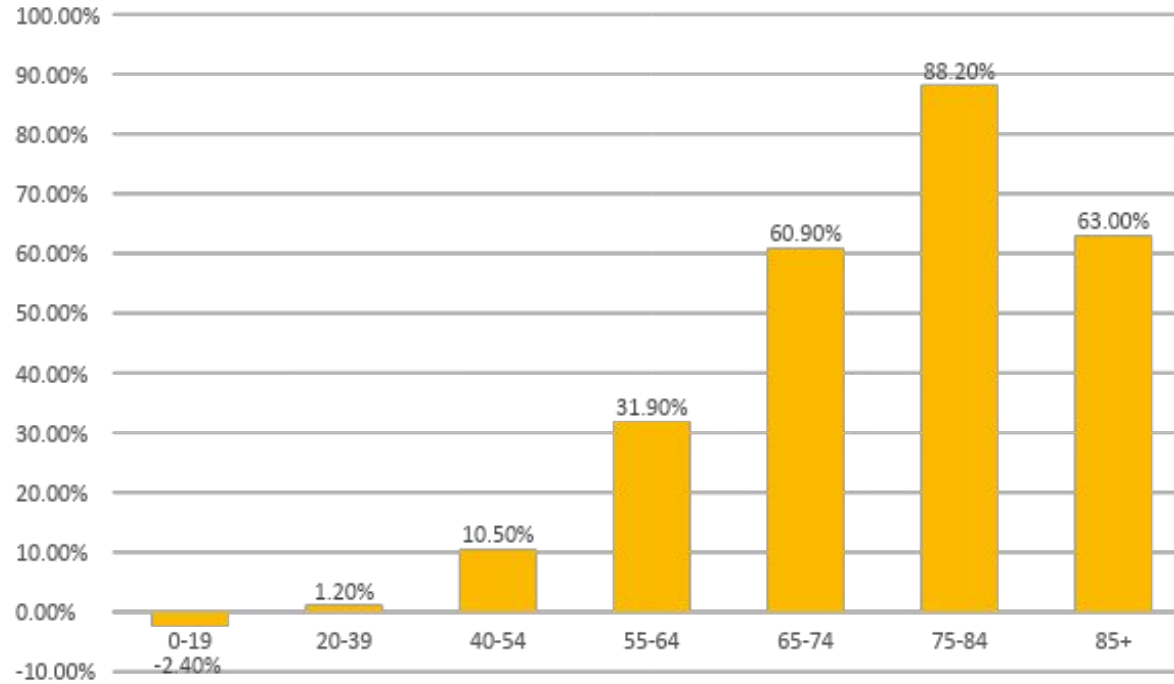


Evidence Base



Population

Page 45

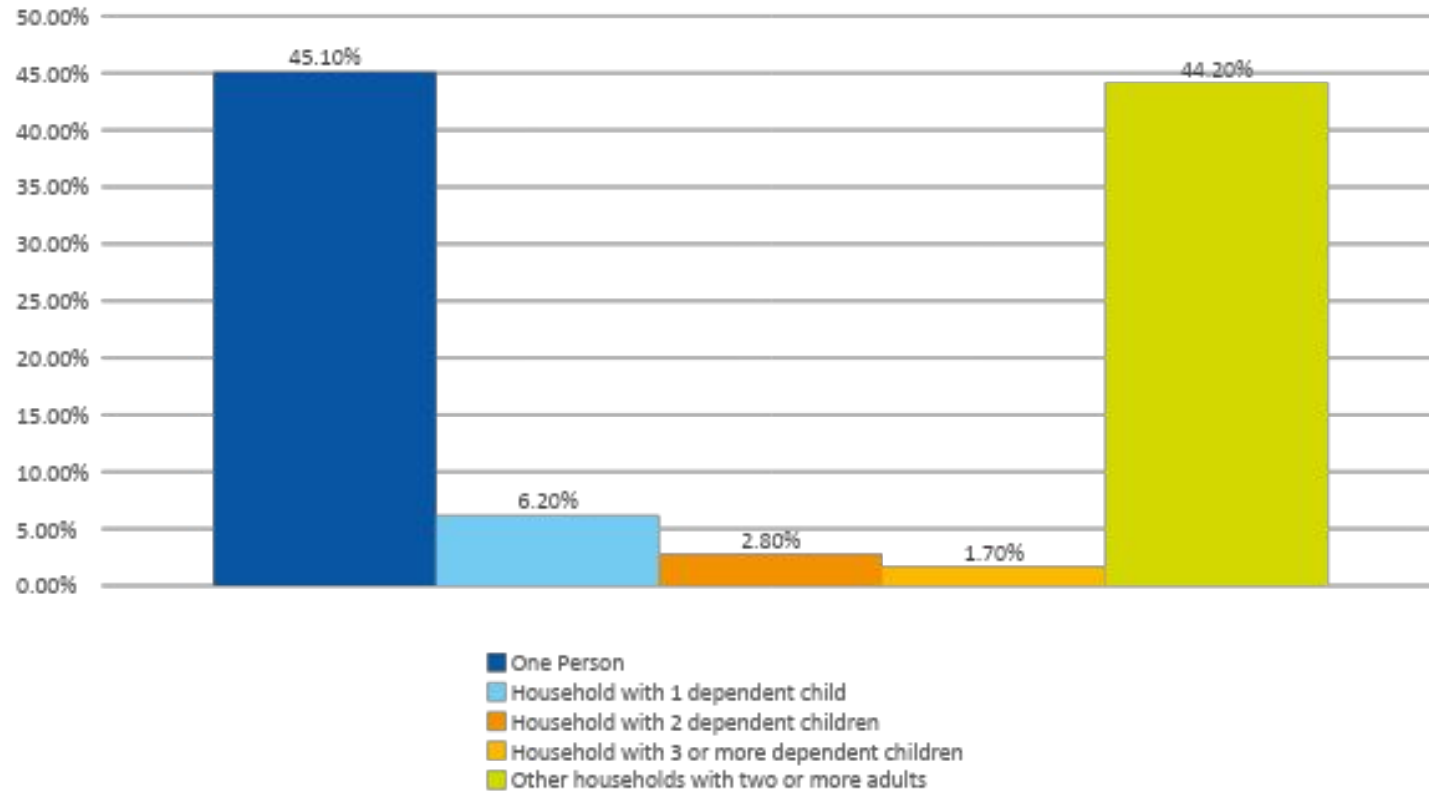


Source 2018-based ONS population projections

Age groups	2022	2039	Number change 2022-2039	% change 2022-2039
0-19	70,374	68,675	-1,699	-2.40%
20-39	114,854	116,246	1,393	1.20%
40-54	57,236	63,271	6,035	10.50%
55-64	24,444	32,233	7,790	31.90%
65-74	14,097	22,678	8,581	60.90%
75-84	6,939	13,062	6,122	88.20%
85+	2,948	4,806	1,858	63.00%
All Ages	290,891	320,970	30,079	10.30%

Pronounced rise in older population and slight fall in child population projected

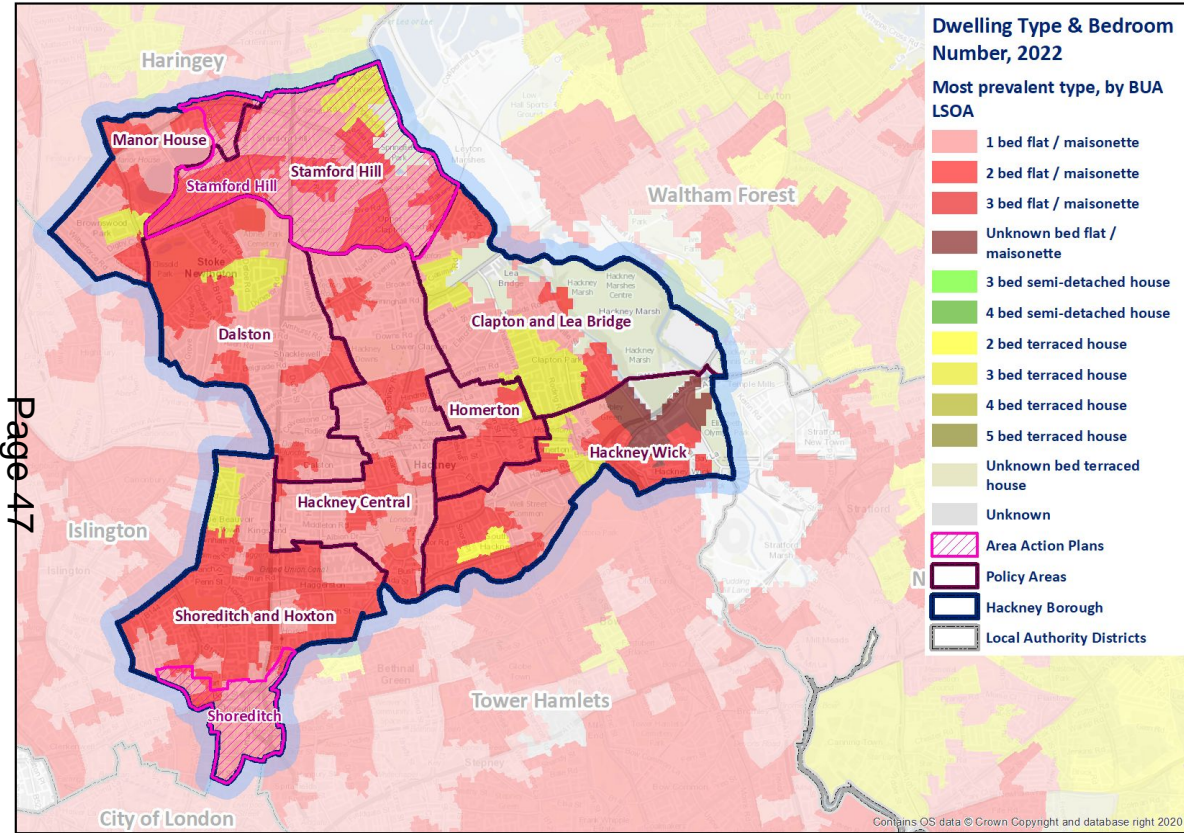
Household types and change 2022 to 2039 (by age of household reference person)



Significant growth of single and co-habiting adults compared to families

Source: ONS 2018-based household projections (Principal projection)

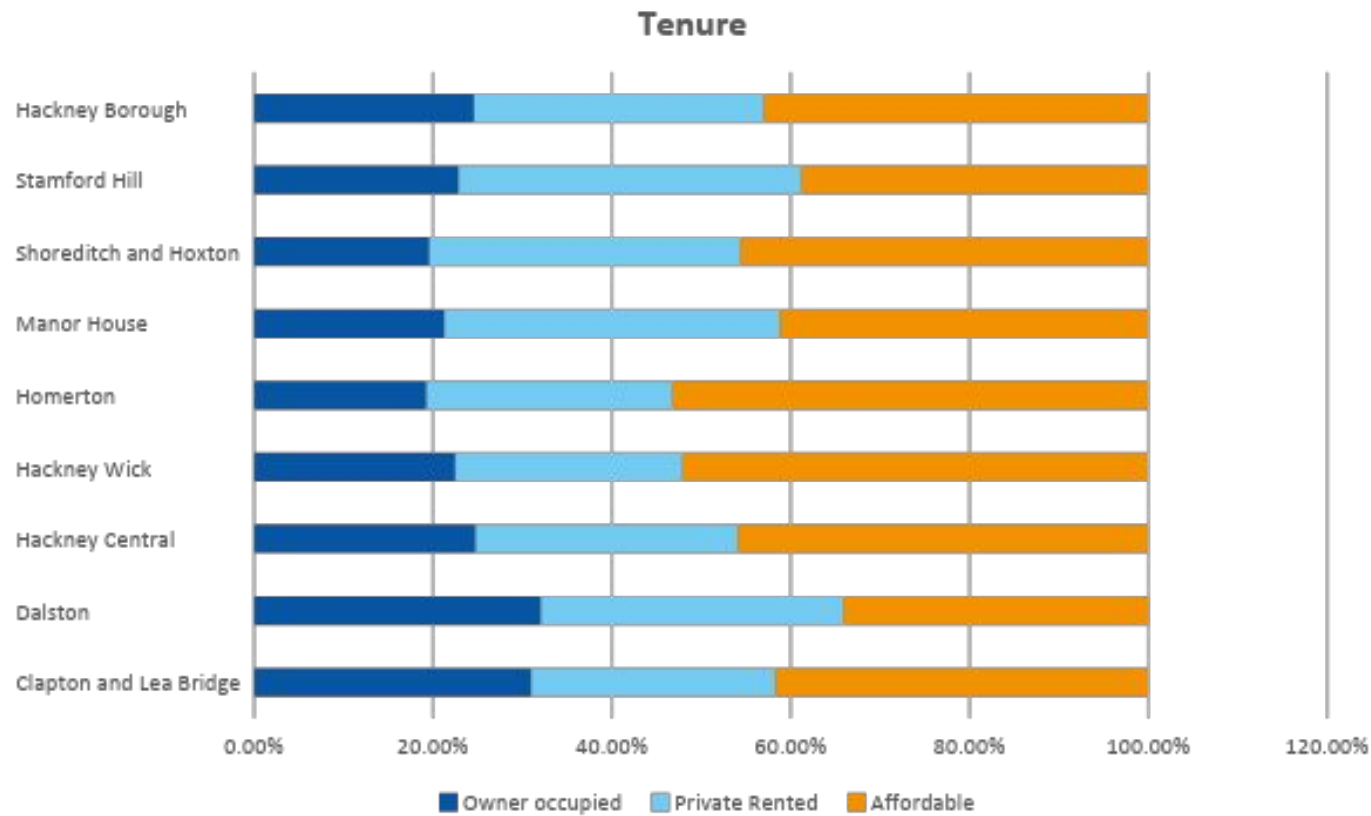
Hackney in Numbers



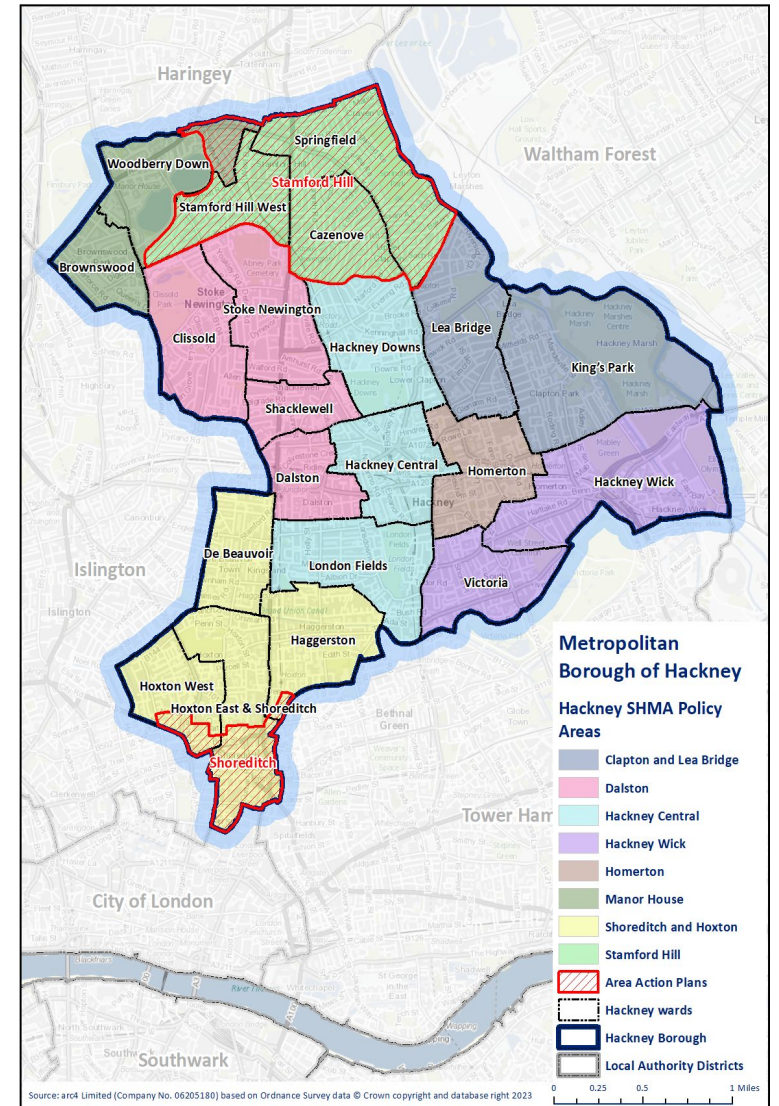
- 119,090 dwellings
- 106,087 households across the borough in 2022. The vacancy rate is 2.0%
- Most dwellings are flats (83.8%)
- 15.9% are houses
- 0.2% are bungalows
- 24.6% of households are owner occupiers
- 32.4% privately rent
- 43.0% live in affordable housing.

Page 47

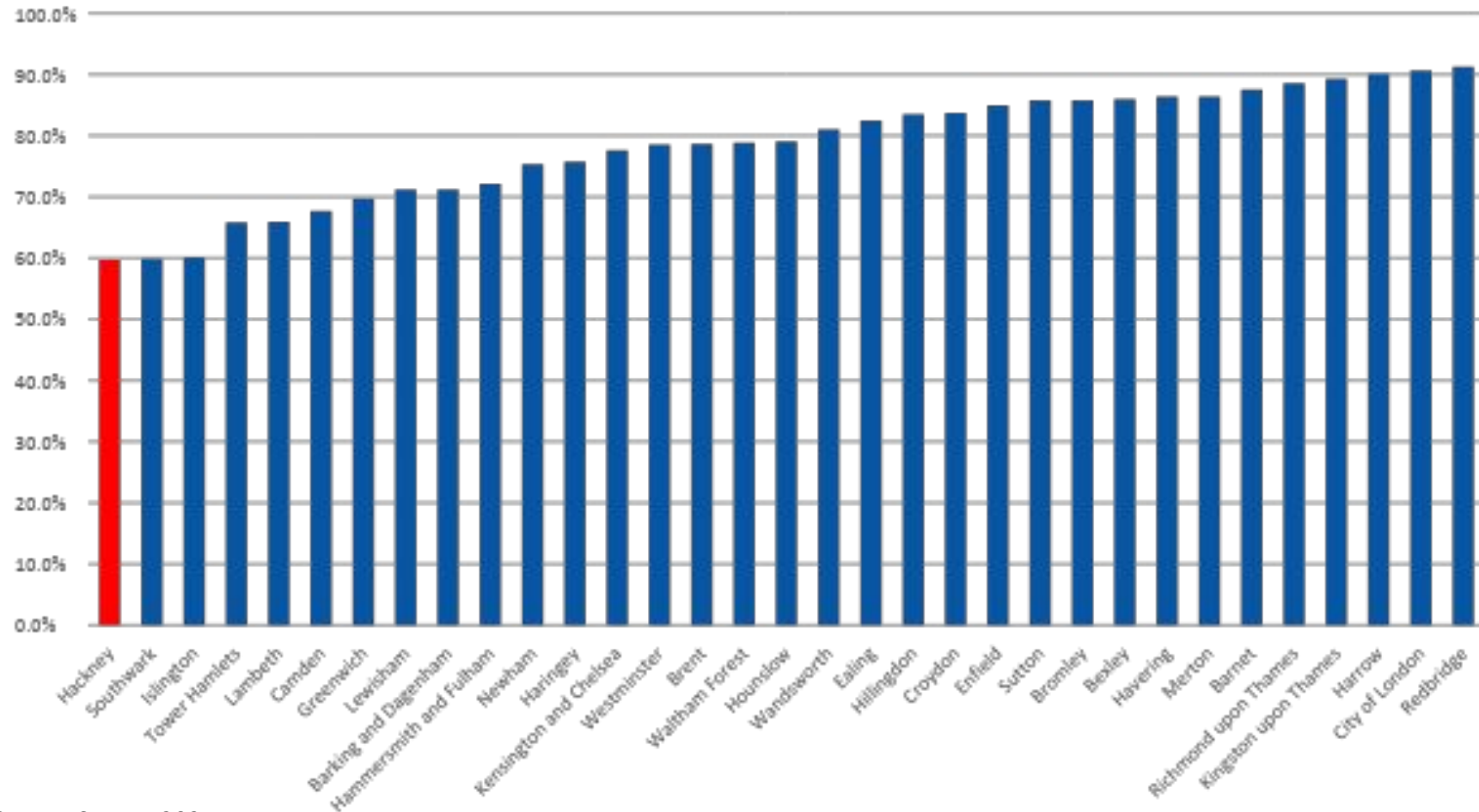
Source: Source: Valuation Office Agency 2022



Source Census 2021

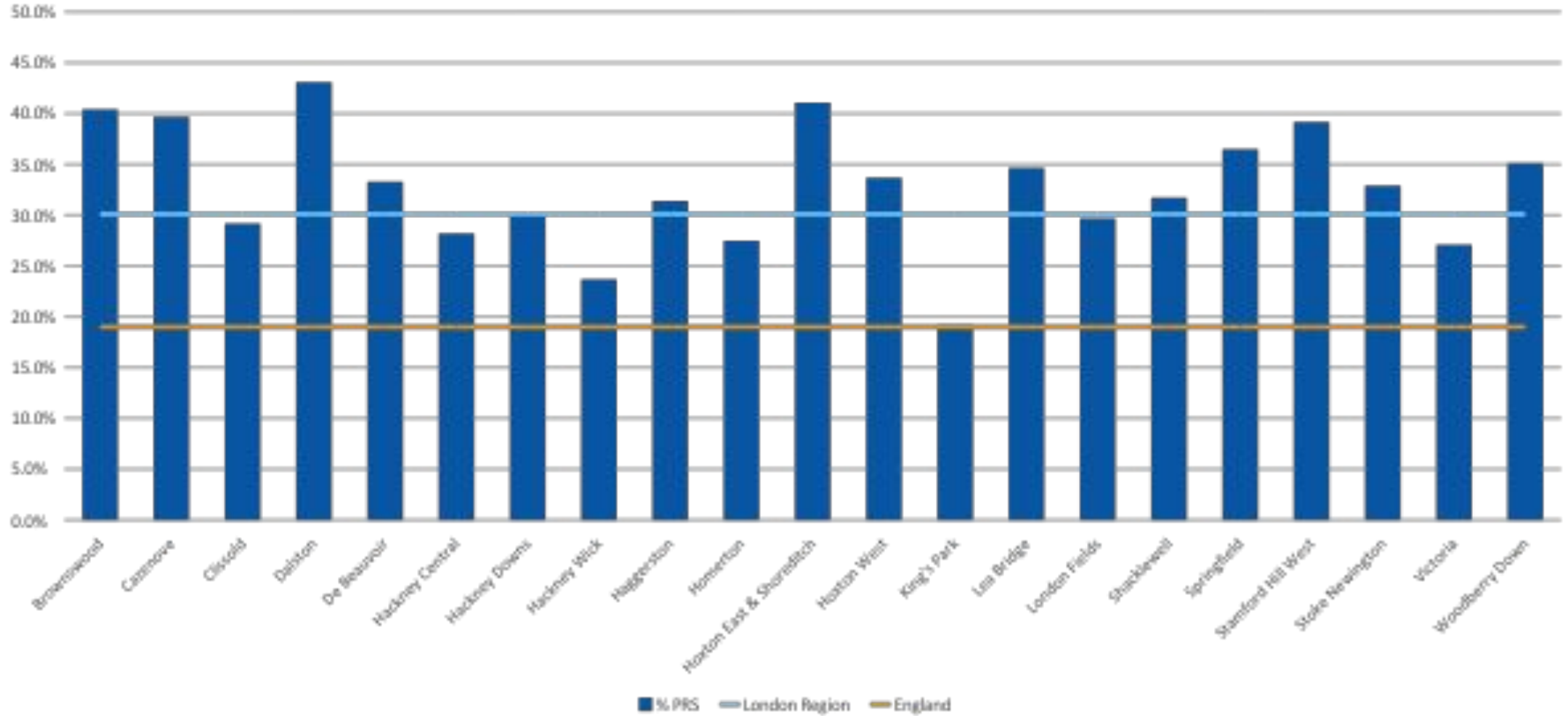


% Private Sector Stock by London Borough



Source Census 2021

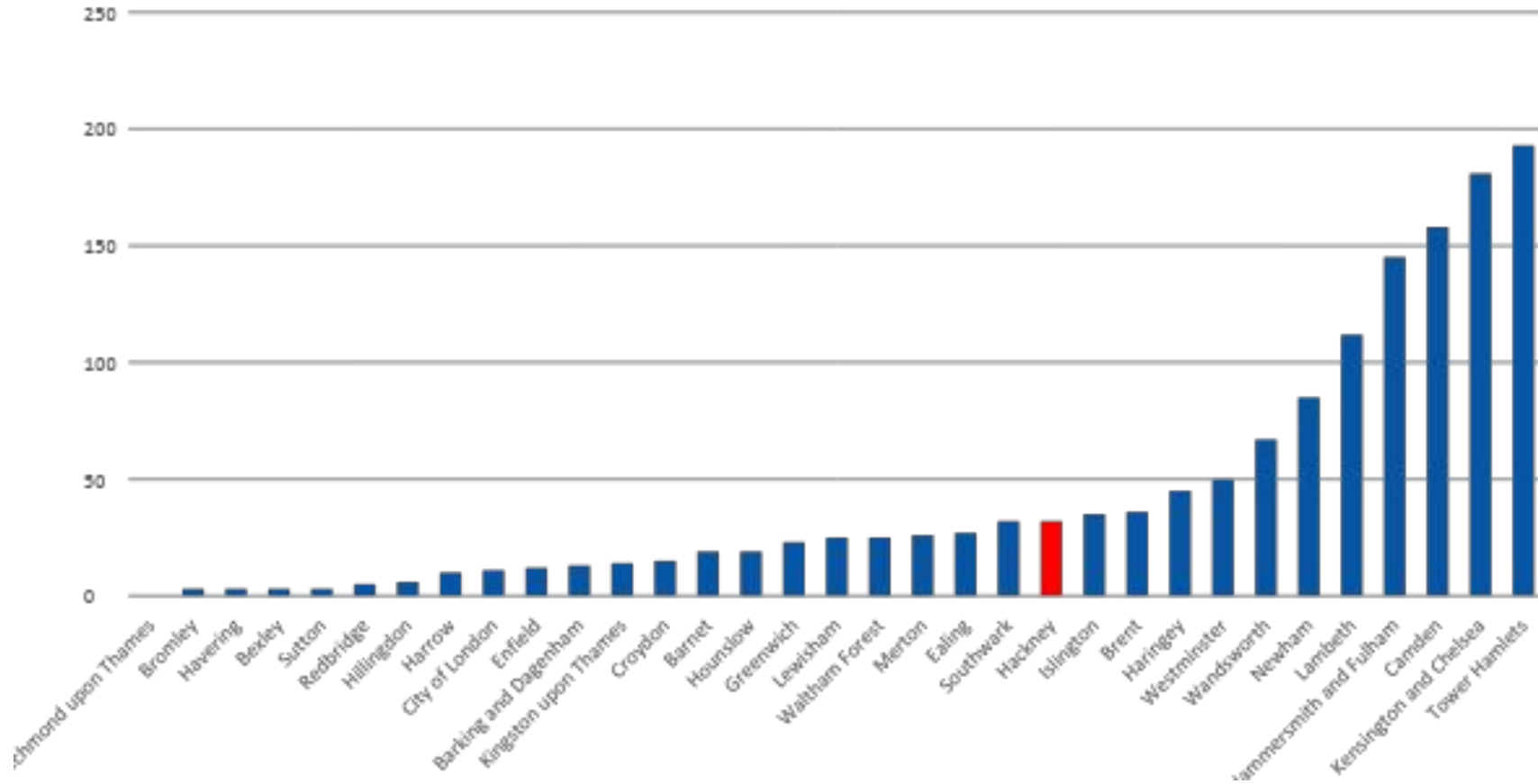
Size of the Private Rented Sector by ward (%)



Page 50

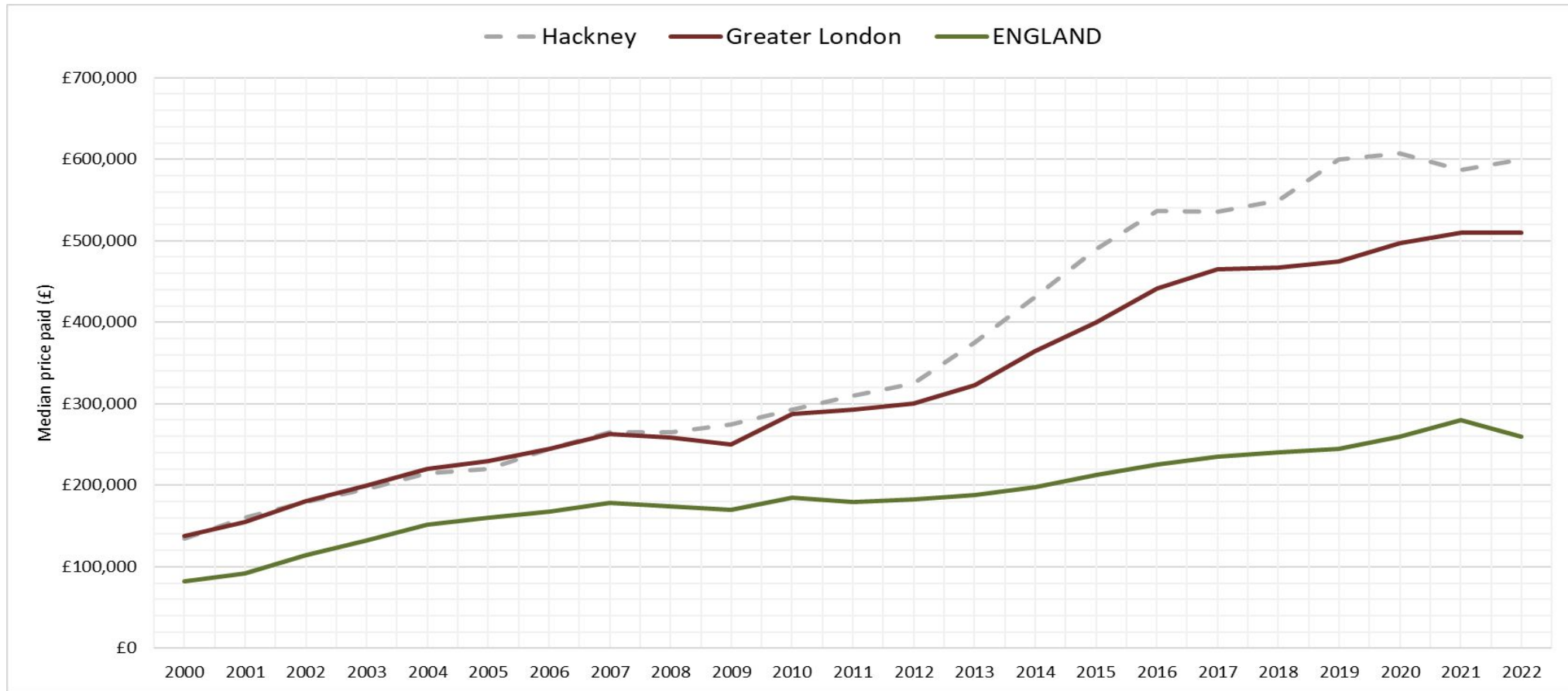
Build to Rent March 2023

Page 51



In total there were 1,413 Build to Rent units advertised of which 2.3% (32) were in Hackney

Source: Build to Rent io

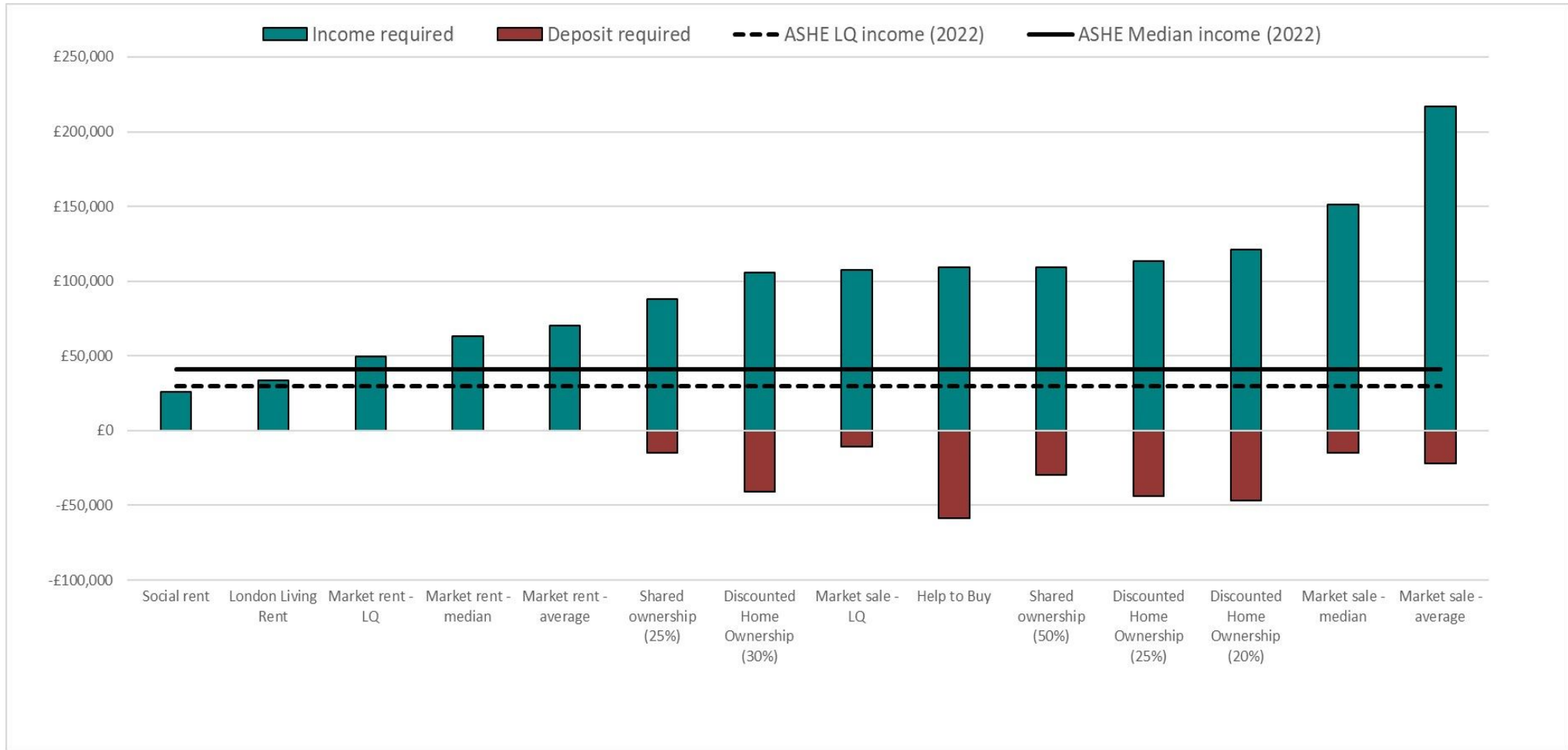


Source: ONS House Price Statistics for Small Areas (HPSSAs) LQ and Median comparator 1995 onwards

House prices in Hackney have outgrown the London average and are now more than double the national average

Challenges of Affordability

Page 53



Affordability of private rents by area

Sub-area	LQ Rent and Income				Median rent and income			
	Actual LQ rent 2022	LQ Gross household income 2022 (Monthly £)	% LQ income required to be spent on LQ rent	What would be an affordable rent based on actual LQ income	Actual Median rent 2022	Median Gross household income 2022 (Monthly £)	% median income required to be spent on median rent	What would be an affordable rent based on actual median income
Clapton and Lea Bridge	£1,406	£1,250	112.5	£313	£1,751	£1,250	140.1	£313
Dalston	£1,599	£1,250	127.9	£313	£1,898	£2,917	65.1	£729
Hackney Central	£1,560	£1,250	124.8	£313	£1,931	£2,083	92.7	£521
Hackney Wick	£1,651	£1,250	132.1	£313	£2,002	£2,083	96.1	£521
Homerton	£1,499	£1,250	119.9	£313	£1,850	£1,250	148.0	£313
Manor House	£1,651	£1,250	132.1	£313	£2,002	£1,250	160.2	£313
Shoreditch and Hoxton	£1,950	£1,250	156.0	£313	£2,535	£2,083	121.7	£521
Stamford Hill	£1,278	£1,250	102.2	£313	£1,599	£2,083	76.8	£521
Hackney Borough	£1,651	£1,250	132.1	£313	£2,102	£2,083	100.9	£521
Area Action Plan								
Shoreditch	£2,167	£2,083	104.0	£521	£2,799	£2,917	96.0	£729
Stamford Hill	£1,300	£1,250	104.0	£313	£1,651	£2,083	79.2	£521

Page 54

Affordability of home ownership by area

Page 55

Sub-area	LQ Rent and Income				Median rent and income			
	Actual LQ price 2022	LQ Gross household income 2022 (Annual £)	Income multiple required (assumes 10% deposit)	What would be an affordable property based on a 3.5x income multiple	Actual median price 2022	Median Gross household income 20212(Annual £)	Income multiple required (assumes 10% deposit)	What would be an affordable property based on a 3.5x income multiple
Clapton and Lea Bridge	£400,000	£15,000	24.0	£52,500	£603,000	£15,000	36.2	£52,500
Dalston	£495,000	£15,000	29.7	£52,500	£665,000	£35,000	17.1	£122,500
Hackney Central	£445,000	£15,000	26.7	£52,500	£598,250	£25,000	21.5	£87,500
Hackney Wick	£420,000	£15,000	25.2	£52,500	£640,000	£25,000	23.0	£87,500
Homerton	£350,000	£15,000	21.0	£52,500	£409,000	£15,000	24.5	£52,500
Manor House	£416,000	£15,000	25.0	£52,500	£535,000	£15,000	32.1	£52,500
Shoreditch and Hoxton	£425,000	£15,000	25.5	£52,500	£600,000	£25,000	21.6	£87,500
Stamford Hill	£346,896	£15,000	20.8	£52,500	£445,000	£25,000	16.0	£87,500
Hackney Borough	£418,000	£15,000	25.1	£52,500	£587,750	£25,000	21.2	£87,500
Area Action Plan								
Shoreditch	£480,000	£25,000	17.3	£87,500	£765,000	£35,000	19.7	£122,500
Stamford Hill	£363,000	£15,000	21.8	£52,500	£460,000	£25,000	16.6	£87,500

Home ownership remains unaffordable to almost all households on low to median incomes, except Shared Ownership for some

Property Prices			LQ	Median	Shared ownership (50%)	Shared ownership (25%)	Help to buy	Discounted Home Ownership (30%)	Discounted Home Ownership (25%)	Discounted Home Ownership (20%)
Price>>			£418,000	£587,750	£293,875	£146,938	£440,813	£411,425	£440,813	£470,200
Price after deposit/loan>>			£376,200	£528,975	£264,488	£132,244	£382,038	£370,283	£396,731	£423,180
Gross household income 2021 (Annual £)			Ratio of house price to income							
CAMEO UK Household Income	LQ income	£15,000	25.1	35.3	17.6	8.8	25.5	24.7	26.4	28.2
	Median income	£25,000	15.0	21.2	10.6	5.3	15.3	14.8	15.9	16.9
	Average income	£31,580	11.9	16.8	8.4	4.2	12.1	11.7	12.6	13.4
ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings	ASHE LQ	£29,526	12.7	17.9	9.0	4.5	12.9	12.5	13.4	14.3
	ASHE Median	£41,085	9.2	12.9	6.4	3.2	9.3	9.0	9.7	10.3
	ASHE Average	£57,397	6.6	9.2	4.6	2.3	6.7	6.5	6.9	7.4
Occupation		Wage	Ratio of house price to income							
Police officer*										
	Pay Point 0	£21,402	17.6	24.7	12.4	6.2	17.9	17.3	18.5	19.8
	Pay Point 2	£25,902	14.5	20.4	10.2	5.1	14.7	14.3	15.3	16.3
	Pay Point 4	£28,158	13.4	18.8	9.4	4.7	13.6	13.2	14.1	15.0
Nurse**										
	Band 1	£20,270	18.6	26.1	13.0	6.5	18.8	18.3	19.6	20.9
	Band 3	£21,730	17.3	24.3	12.2	6.1	17.6	17.0	18.3	19.5
	Band 5	£27,055	13.9	19.6	9.8	4.9	14.1	13.7	14.7	15.6
Fire officer***										
	Trainee	£24,191	15.6	21.9	10.9	5.5	15.8	15.3	16.4	17.5
	Competent	£32,244	11.7	16.4	8.2	4.1	11.8	11.5	12.3	13.1
Teacher****										
	Unqualified (min)	£18,419	20.4	28.7	14.4	7.2	20.7	20.1	21.5	23.0
	Main pay range (min)	£25,714	14.6	20.6	10.3	5.1	14.9	14.4	15.4	16.5
Minimum/Living Wage*****										
	Single household (25 and over)	£16,216	23.2	32.6	16.3	8.2	23.6	22.8	24.5	26.1
	1xFull-time, 1xPart-time	£24,324	15.5	21.7	10.9	5.4	15.7	15.2	16.3	17.4
	Two working adults	£32,432	11.6	16.3	8.2	4.1	11.8	11.4	12.2	13.0
	Single household (21-24)	£15,215	24.7	34.8	17.4	8.7	25.1	24.3	26.1	27.8
	1xFull-time, 1xPart-time	£22,823	16.5	23.2	11.6	5.8	16.7	16.2	17.4	18.5
	Two working adults	£30,430	12.4	17.4	8.7	4.3	12.6	12.2	13.0	13.9

Page 56

Key

Up to 3.5x	2.9
Between 3.5x and 5x	4.2
5x or more	6.5

Affordable Need

- Gross annual need for 3,342 affordable dwellings
- Net annual need for 1,780 affordable dwellings
- Housing needs survey will help to determine tenure and dwelling mix
- Affordable tenure split 80:20 rented vs affordable home ownership

Over 8,500 households on the waiting list
 – rising number in priority need
 (increased from 18% in 2014 to 34% in 2021)

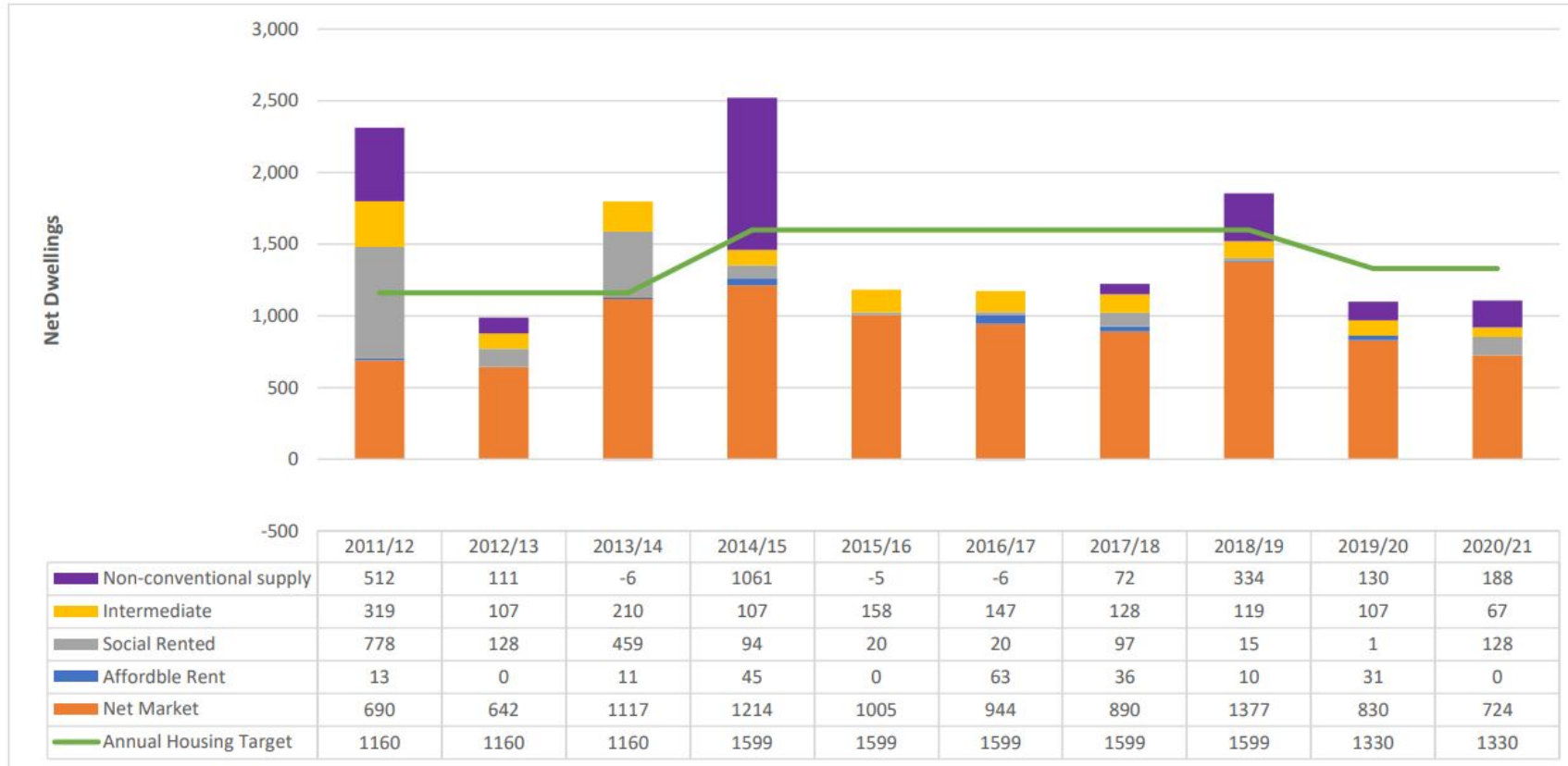
Average waiting time for 1 bed is 3 years, while
 2/3/4-bed units are 13 years and 5-bed units have a
 waiting time of 39 years.

Page 57

Sub-area	Social rent / Affordable Rent(%)	London Living Rent	Total Rented (%)	Shared ownership (%)	Discounted Market Sale (%)	First Homes (%)	Rent to Buy (%)	TOTAL Intermediate tenures (%)
Clapton and Lea Bridge	51.0	38.1	89.1	1.8	2.8	4.5	1.8	10.9
Dalston	39.6	25.7	65.3	5.8	8.9	14.2	5.8	34.7
Hackney Central	52.7	38.5	91.2	1.5	2.3	3.6	1.5	8.8
Hackney Wick	44.4	33.9	78.3	3.6	5.6	8.9	3.6	21.7
Homerton	50.0	34.8	84.8	2.5	3.9	6.2	2.6	15.2
Manor House	47.7	36.6	84.3	2.6	4.0	6.4	2.6	15.7
Shoreditch and Hoxton	43.5	28.8	72.3	4.6	7.1	11.3	4.7	27.7
Stamford Hill	42.7	30.3	73.0	4.5	6.9	11.0	4.5	27.0
Hackney Borough	46.4	32.8	79.2	3.5	5.3	8.5	3.5	20.8

Housing Supply

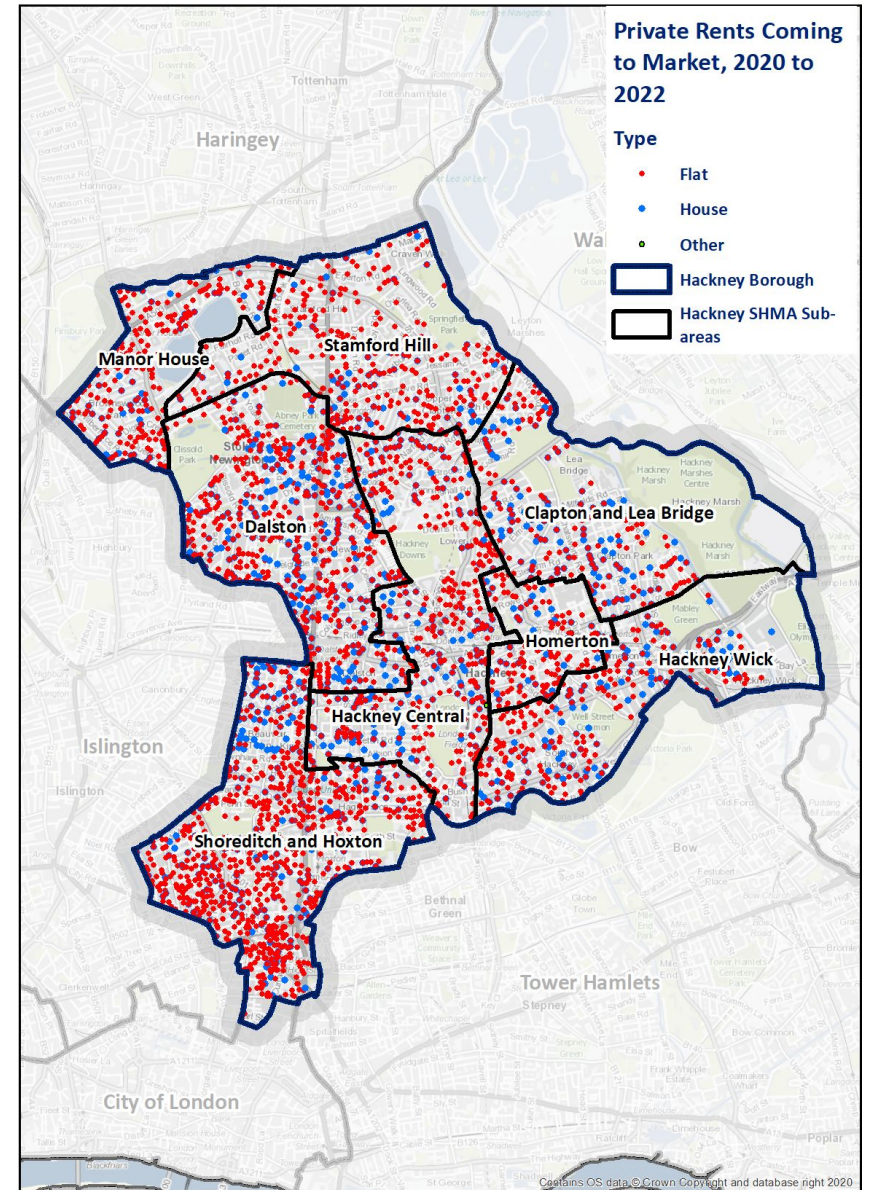
Dwelling completions compared with the annual requirement, 2011/12 to 2020/21



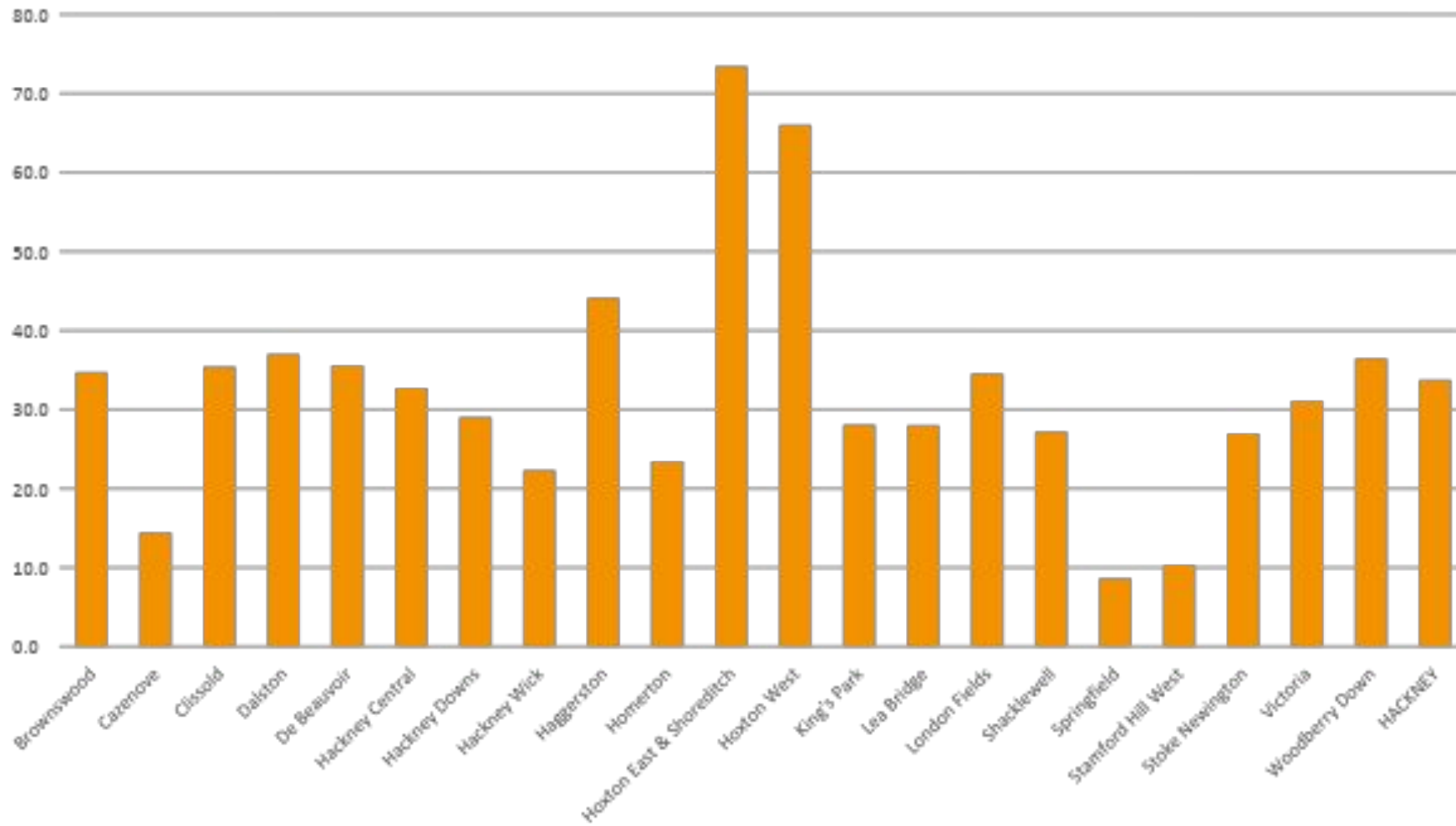
Source: Council Annual Monitoring Returns/Reports



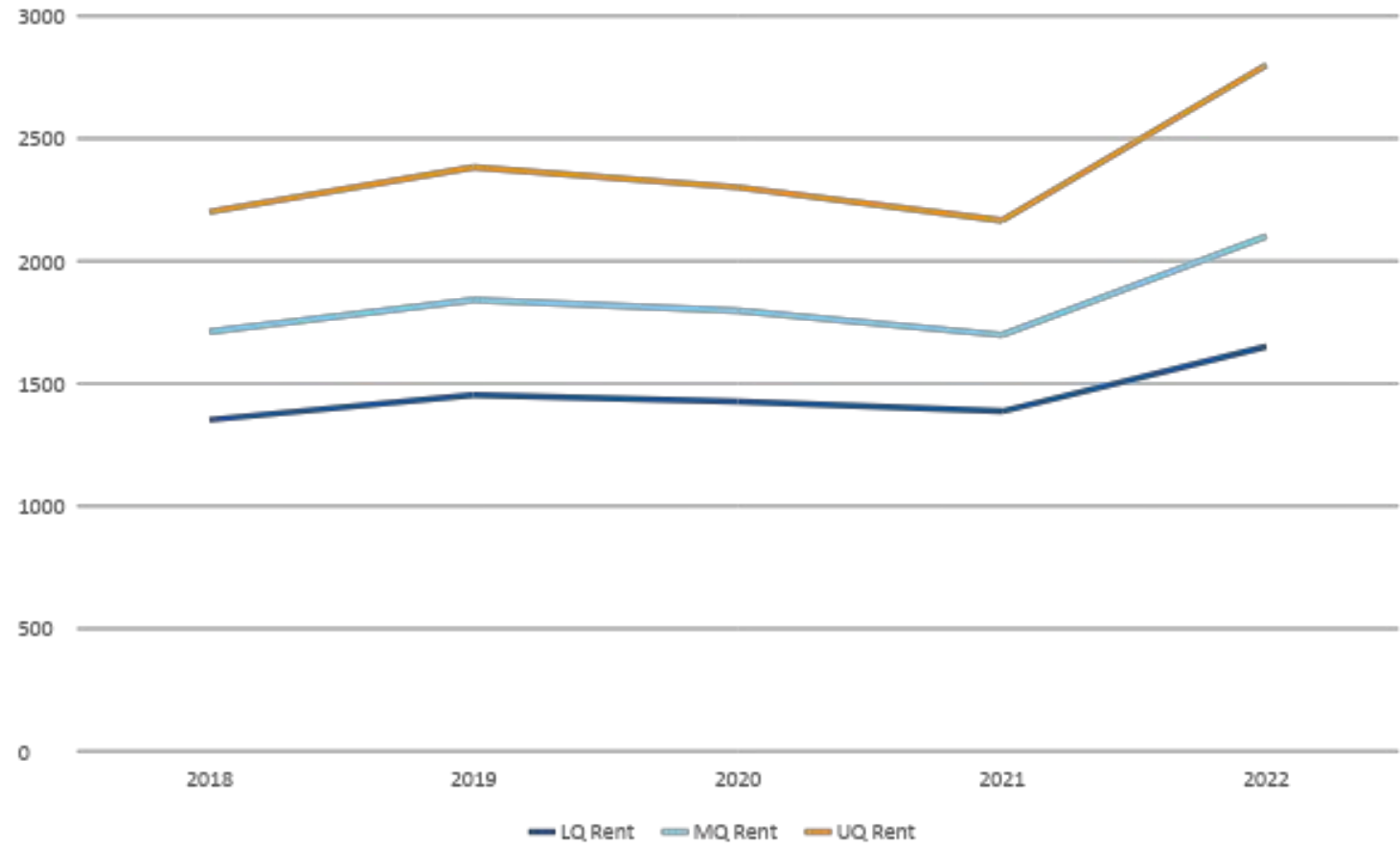
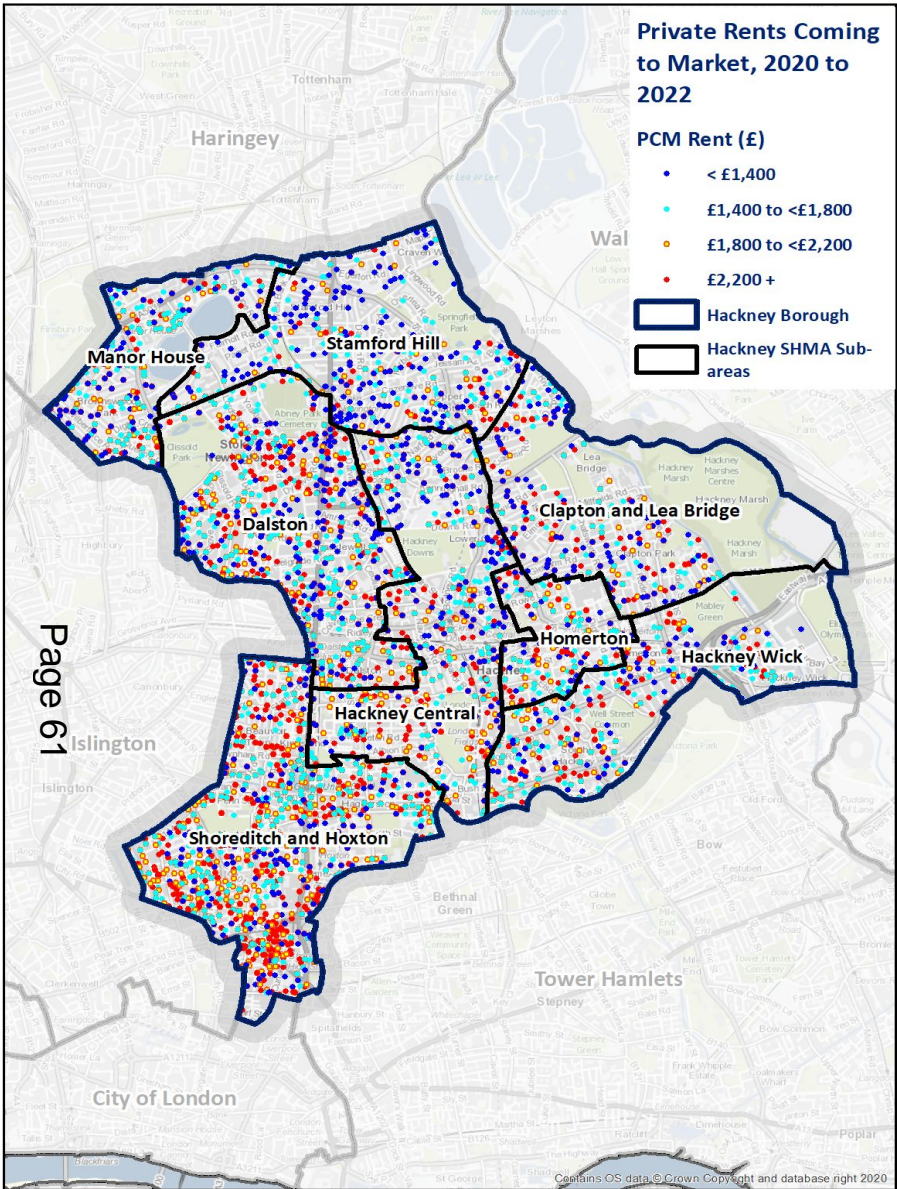
Source Zoopla Lettings 2022



Lettings Turnover 2018-2022



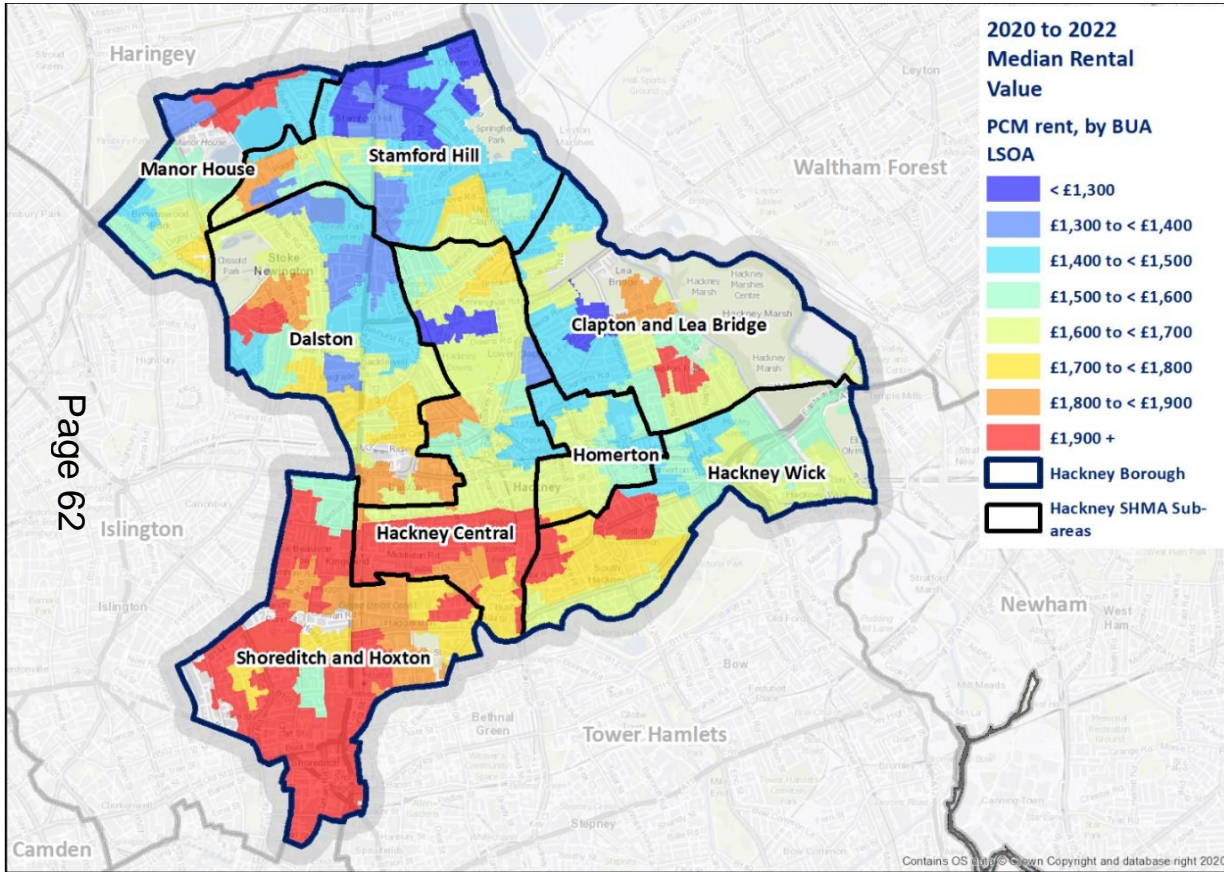
Source Zoopla Lettings 2022 and census 2022



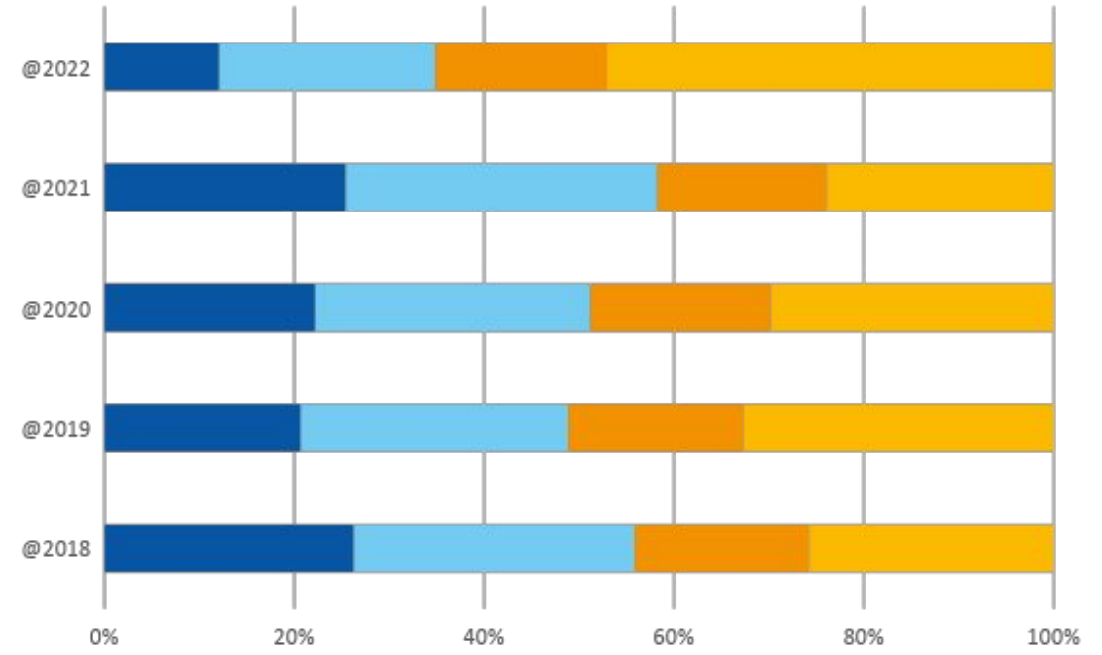
Source Zoopla Lettings 2022

Lower, Upper & Median Quartile rents all increased significantly since 2021

Significant shift towards higher value rents, particularly over 2021/22. But still significant geographical differences between cheaper north and more expensive south.



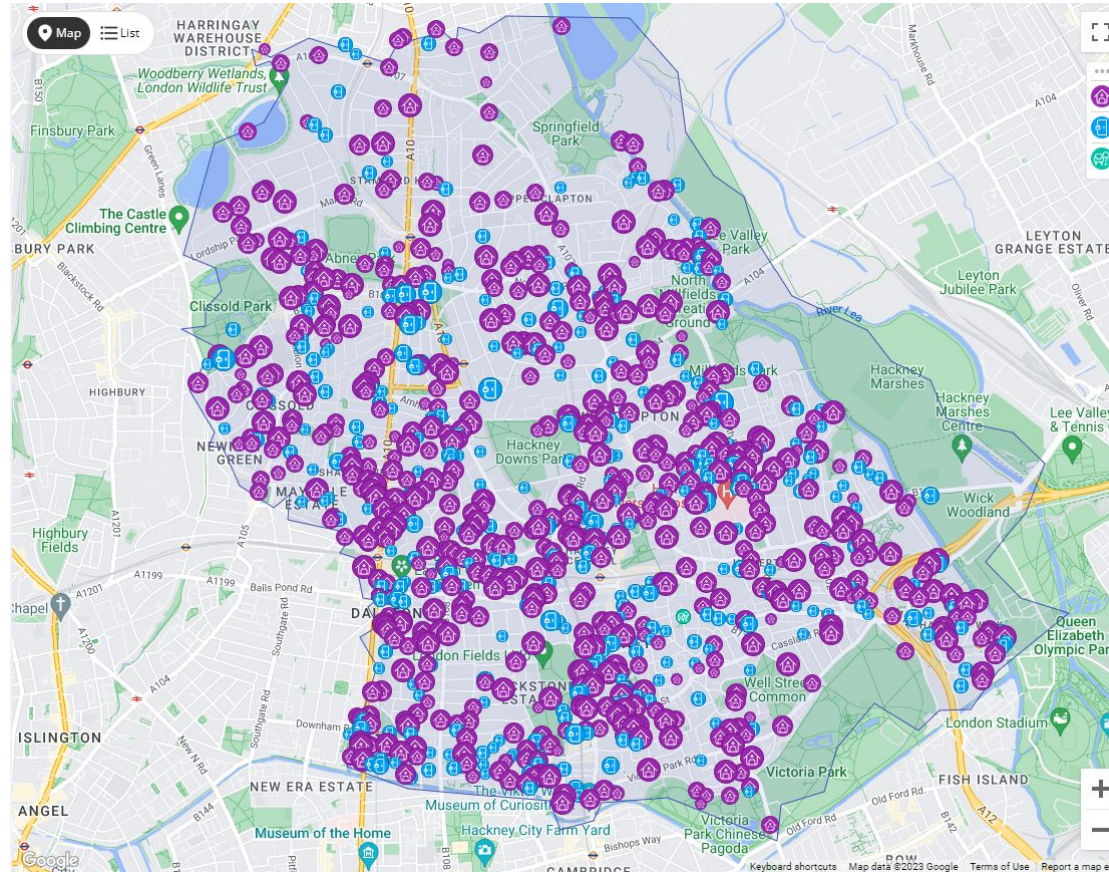
Page 62



Source Zoopla Lettings 2022

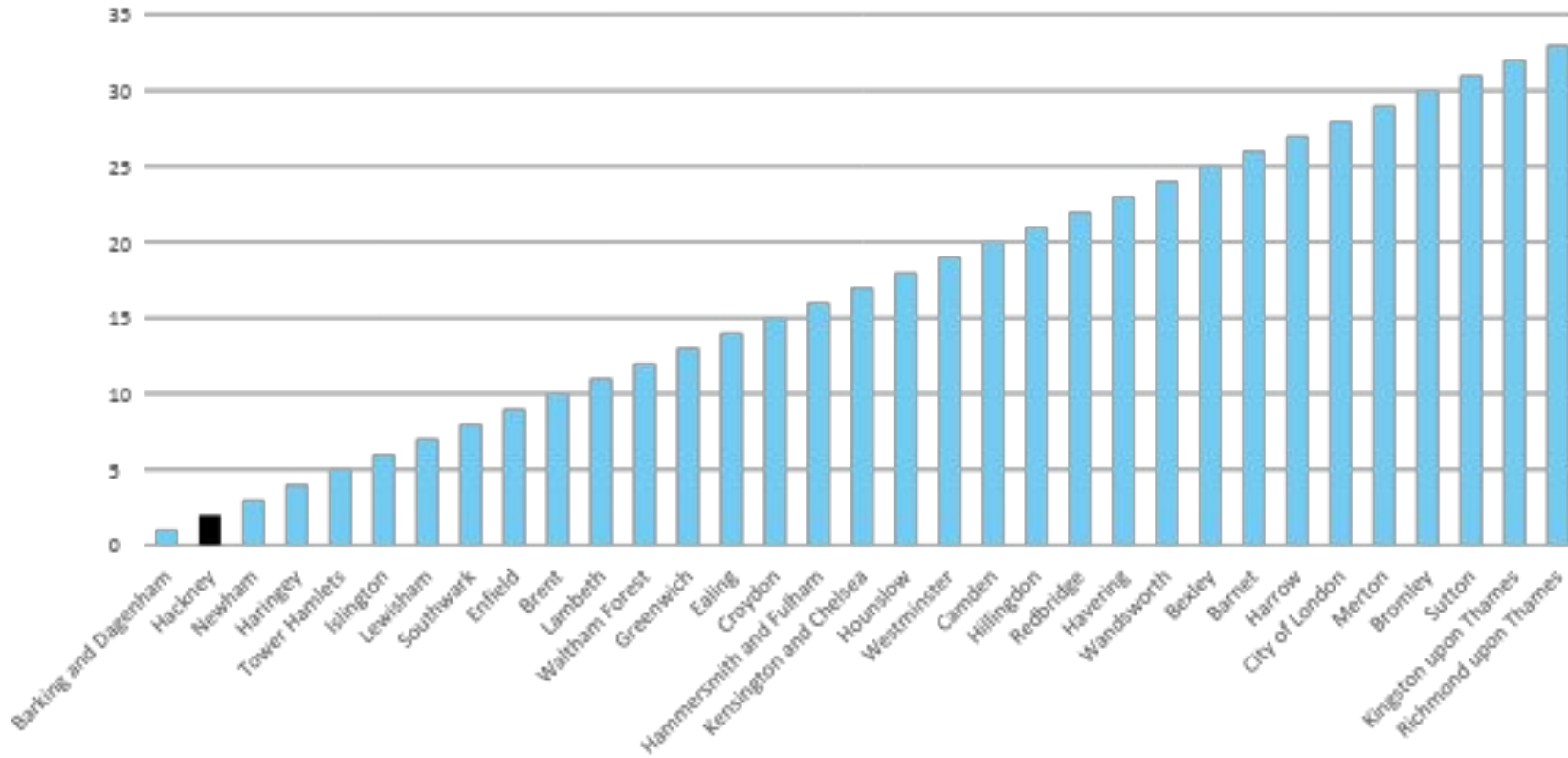
Short Term Lets

Q4 2022- there were 15,827 properties listed and 1,532 active



Source <https://www.airdna.co/>

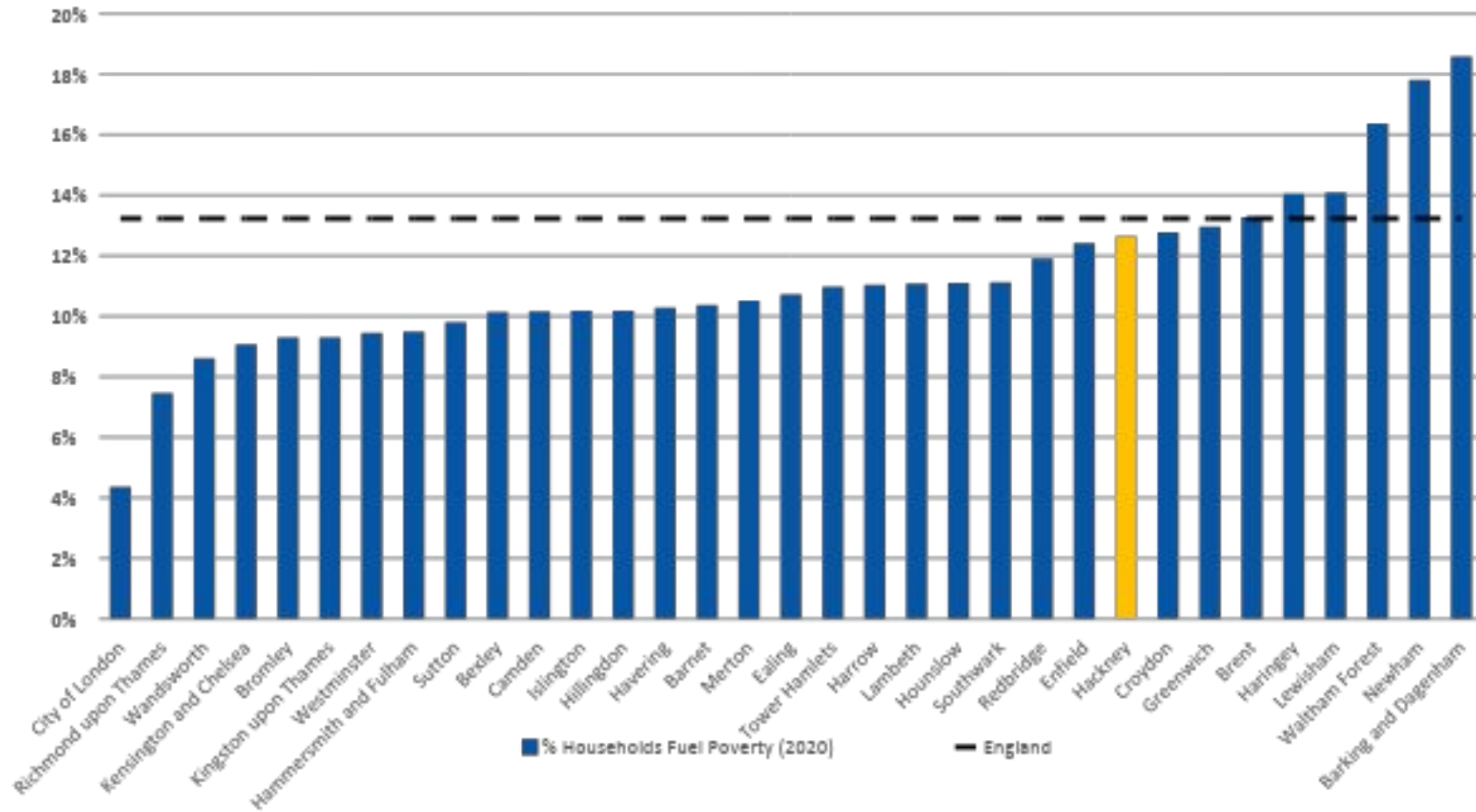
Deprivation by London borough



Hackney is the 22nd most deprived borough across all English Districts and the 2nd most deprived across London.

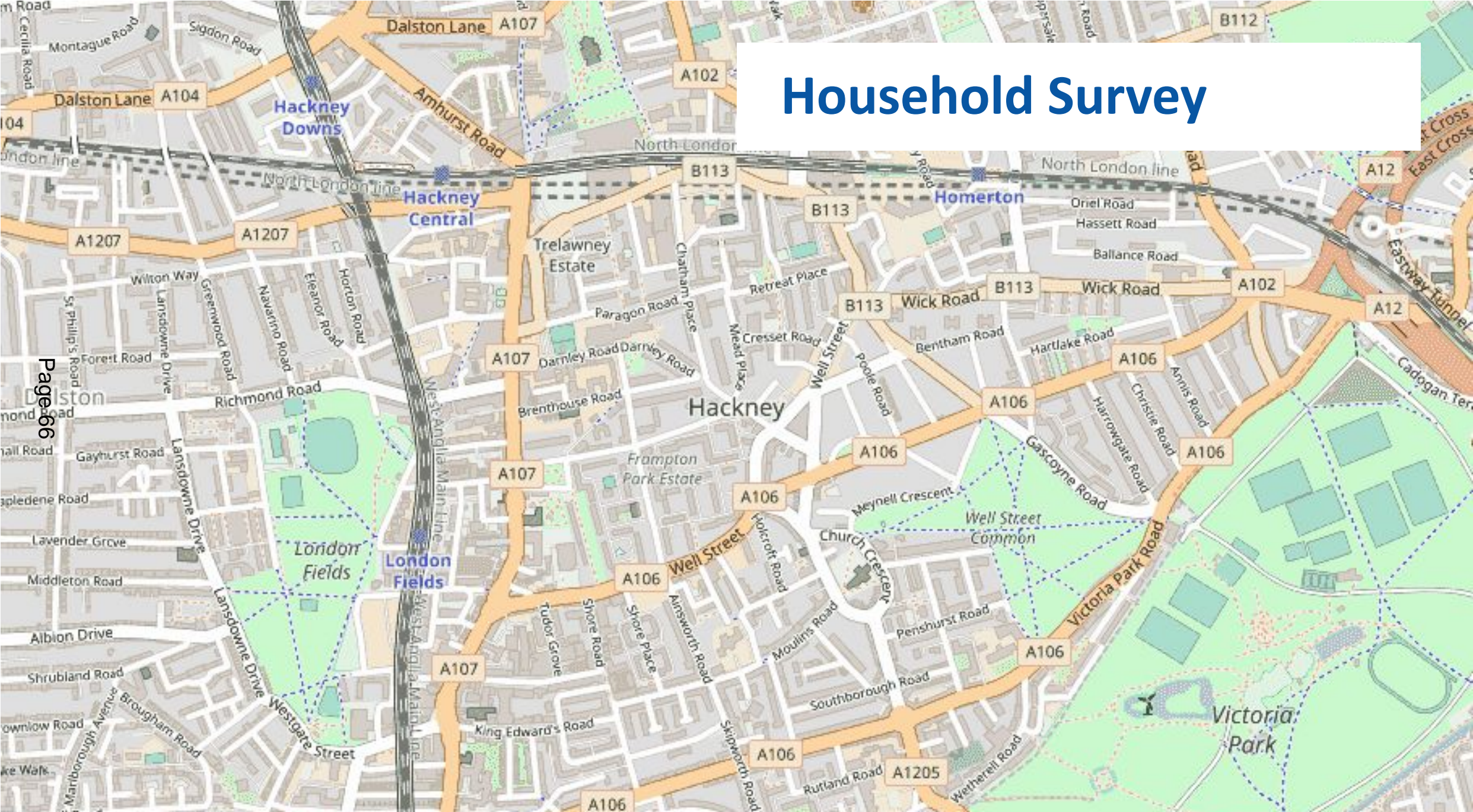
Source: The English Indices of Deprivation 2019

% Living in Fuel Poverty by London Borough

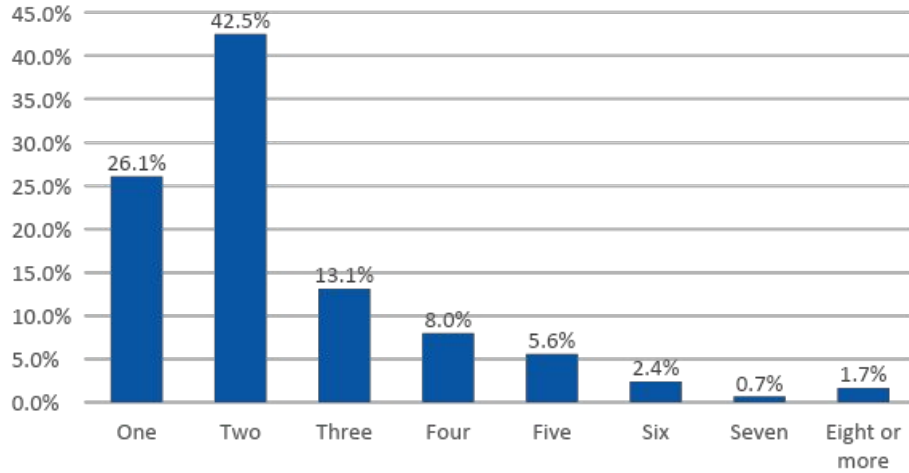


Below the national average for fuel poverty but one of the most effected boroughs in London. Likely owing to property age and household income

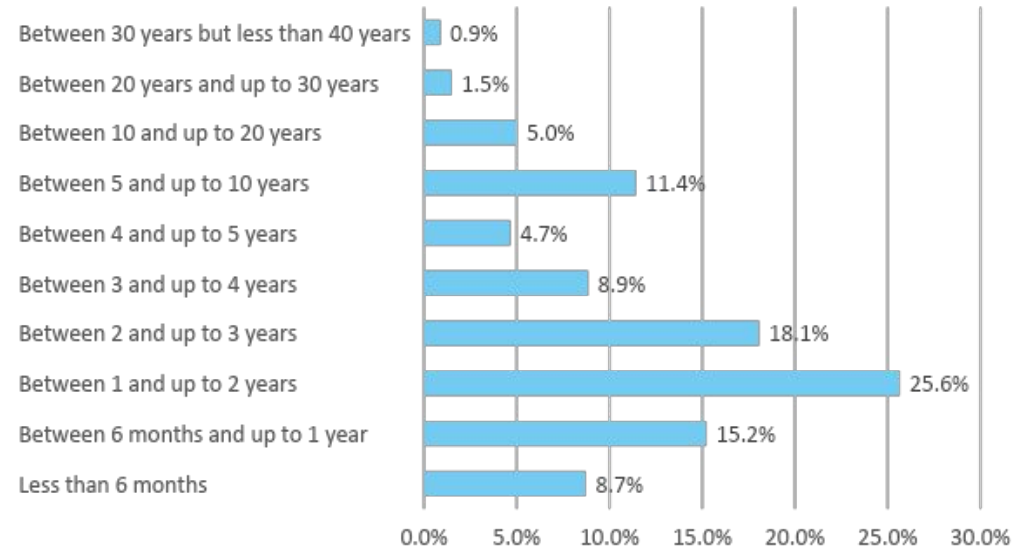
Household Survey



How Many?

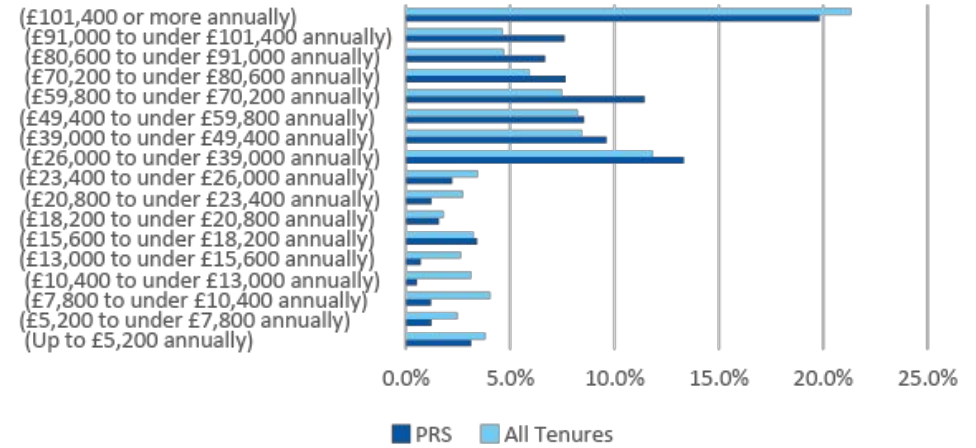
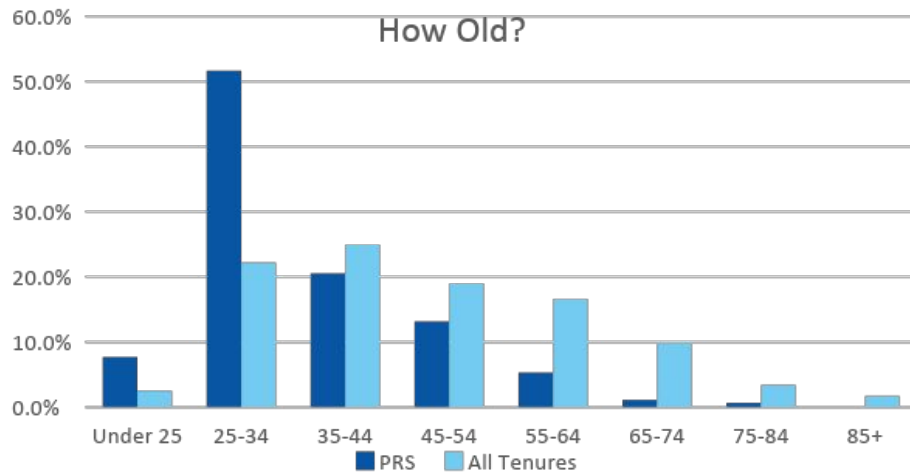


How Long?



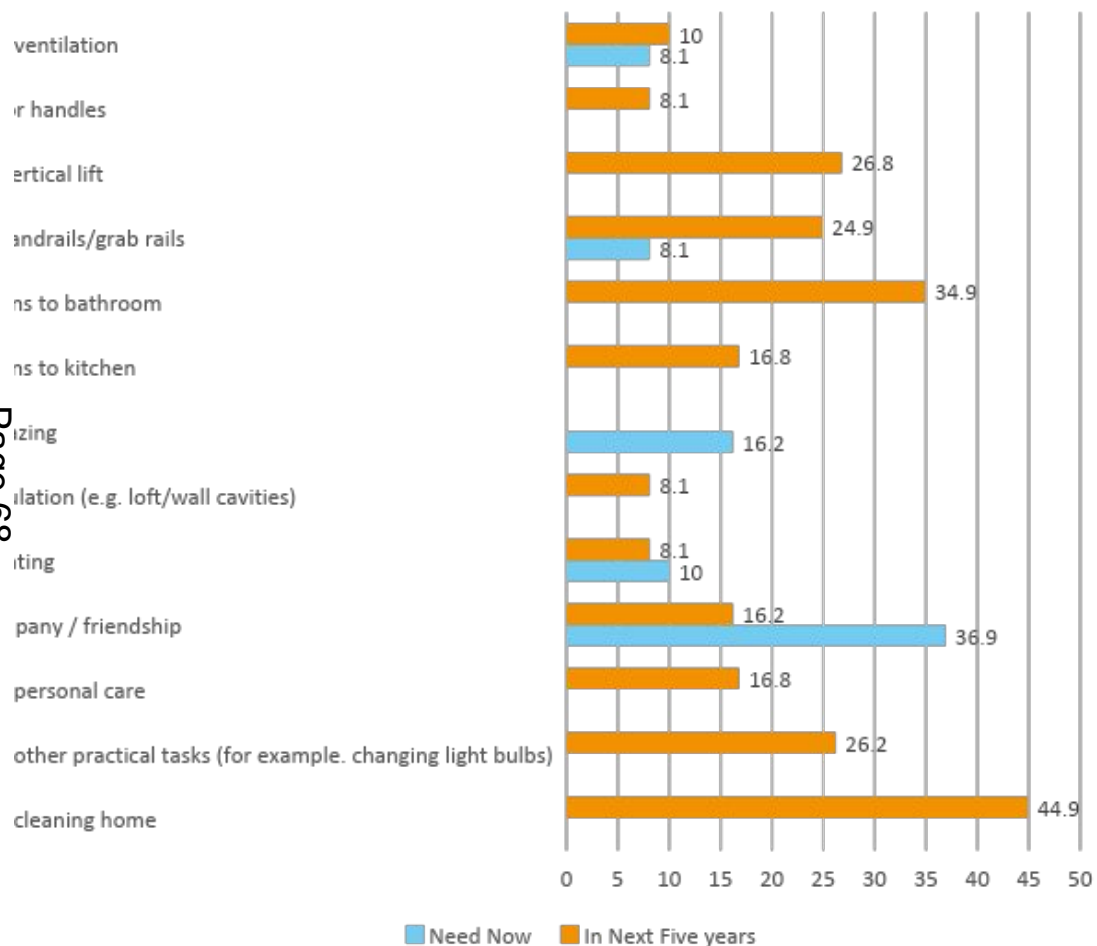
Page 67

How Old?

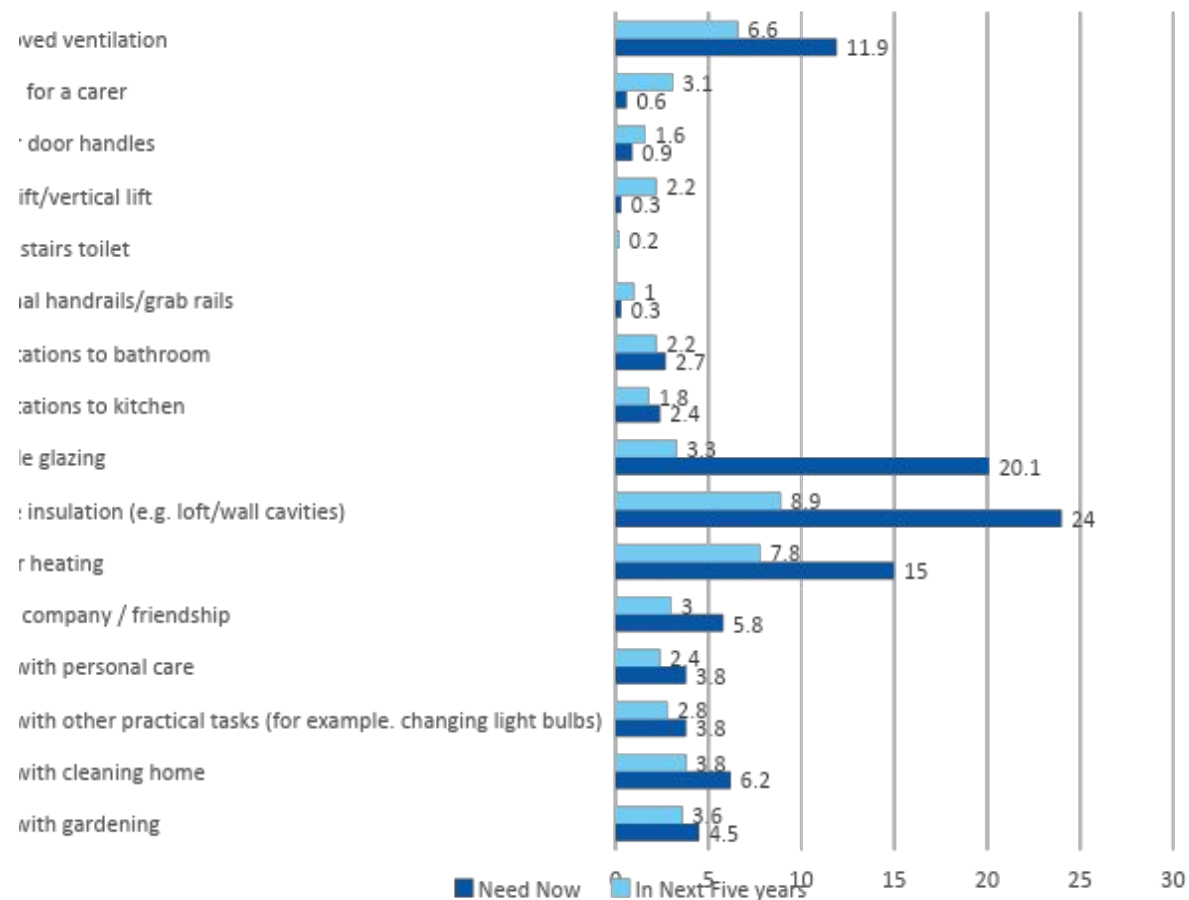


Source: Household survey 2023

Support Needs Above 65

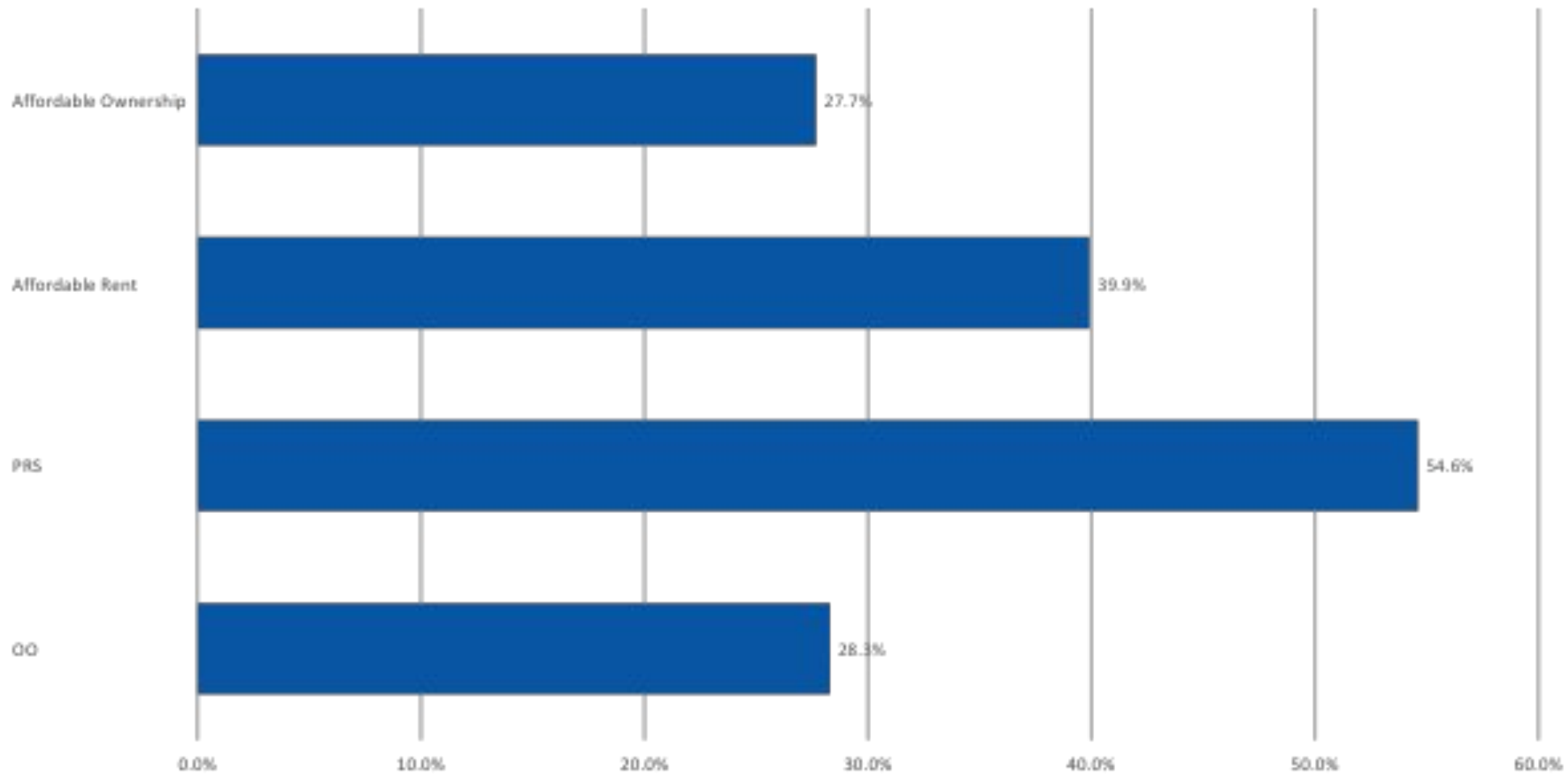


Support Needs below 65



Source: Household Survey 2023

Plans of Newly Forming Households



Source: Household Survey 2023

The Needs of Older People

- The number of people aged 65+ is expected to increase by 24% by 2037
- 80% of stakeholders disagreed that Hackney has enough provision of specialist accommodation for people as they age
- 50% of older people want to remain in their current home with help and support when needed
- 8% of all households require care and support to enable them to stay in their home. This is highest amongst the 75-84 age group and those living in social housing
- 10% of older people planning to move would like to move to a property with fewer bedrooms, 56% would like to move to a property with the same number of bedrooms, and 35% would like a larger property
- The Household Survey also provides information on a range of practical assistance required from households by age group (*see right*)
- There are 1,991 units of specialist older persons accommodation, whilst need analysis confirms a net need for 3,547 additional units over the period 2022 to 2039
- The Household Survey identified a total of 808 households interested in co-housing

Page 70

Type of help needed now or in next 5 years	% households needing help by age group of HRP			
	Under 65	65-74	75+	All
Help with repair and maintenance of home	28.4%	48.7%	39.5%	30.8%
Help with gardening	9.2%	15.8%	24.9%	10.5%
Help with cleaning home	13.1%	33.2%	28.2%	15.7%
Help with other practical tasks	11.4%	29.6%	29.9%	14.0%
Help with personal care	8.6%	22.0%	26.2%	10.7%
Want company / friendship	9.4%	18.3%	13.9%	10.5%
Base (all households)	91,286	10,138	4,678	106,102

Housing For People with Specific Needs

Page 71

- The Household Survey suggests there was at least one person with an illness/disability in 32% of households
- Stakeholders report difficulty in obtaining the capital investment needed to deliver new supported housing schemes
- Overall, 37% of Black and Global Majority households were in some form of housing need compared with 20% of all households
- Over-crowded households and people with mobility issues/other special needs were key reasons for Black and Global Majority housing need
- There are currently 18 allocated tenancies available for over 400 care leavers annually

Illness/disability	Number of people	% of total Population
Physical/mobility impairment	11,201	3.9%
Learning disabilities	4,225	1.5%
Autism ⁶³	6,173	2.1%
Mental health issue	16,584	5.7%
Visual impairment	2,941	1.0%
Hearing impairment	4,128	1.4%
Long-standing illness or health condition	232	0.1%
Older age related illness or disability (e.g. dementia, stroke)	4,975	1.7%
Other	14,323	4.9%
Total population	290,891	
Total number of people with an illness/disability	44,241	15.2%
Households with at least one person with an illness/disability	Number of households	% of households
Total	34,376	32.4%

How are residents doing?

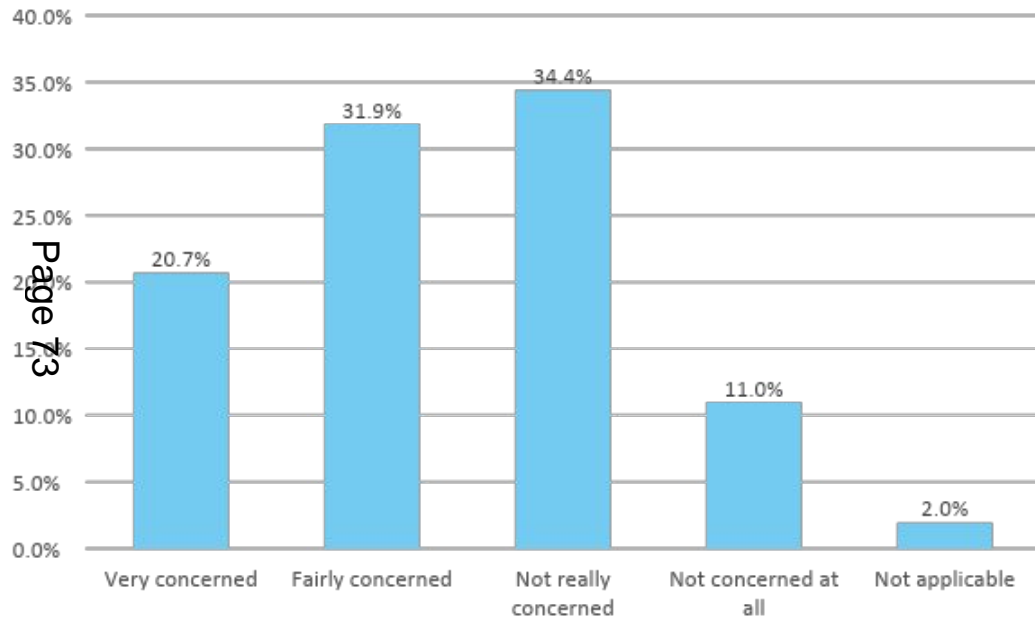
Page 72

Tenure	Living comfortably %	Doing alright %	Just about getting by %	Finding it quite difficult %	Finding it very difficult %	Total	Base	% just getting by or experiencing difficulties
Owner occupied	38.7	44.8	11.0	4.6	1.0	100.0	31,128	16.5
Private Rented	18.9	42.0	23.1	10.6	5.4	100.0	19,031	39.1
Social rented	5.7	27.9	39.3	16.3	10.8	100.0	29,947	66.4
Total	21.6	37.8	24.5	10.4	5.7	100.0	80,106	40.5
Tenure	Living comfortably %	Doing alright %	Just about getting by %	Finding it quite difficult %	Finding it very difficult %	Total	Base	% just getting by or experiencing difficulties
< 25	12.8	36.5	20.4	26.3	4.0	100.0	1808	50.7
25-34	26.4	41.1	22.0	8.1	2.4	100.0	17,461	32.5
35-44	22.3	42.7	18.9	10.4	5.7	100.0	19,949	35.0
45-54	17.4	36.4	30.0	10.5	5.7	100.0	14,544	46.2
55-64	22.4	32.9	25.2	10.0	9.4	100.0	12,798	44.6
65-74	19.9	33.5	24.3	15.8	6.5	100.0	8,039	46.6
75-84	31.2	35.6	31.2	0.0	2.0	100.0	2,143	33.2
85+	0.0	80.3	0.0	19.7	0.0	100.0	684	19.7
TOTAL	21.6	37.8	24.5	10.4	5.7	100.0	80,106	40.5

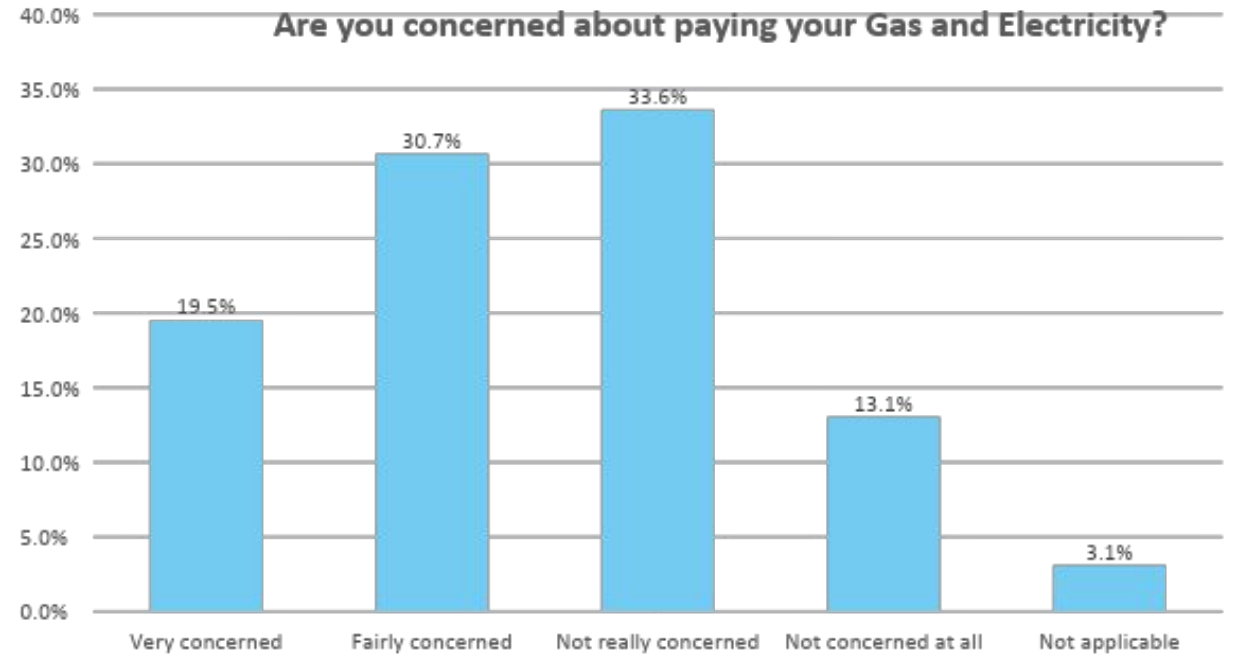
47% of respondents identified financial security as one of the top issues that impact on their health and wellbeing and reducing the cost of living was identified as the top priority that would have the biggest impact on health and wellbeing.

Source: Household Survey 2023

Are you concerned about paying your rent?



Are you concerned about paying your Gas and Electricity?



Stakeholder feedback

Page 74

67% of stakeholders agreed or strongly agreed that Hackney needs more low-cost housing options such as shared ownership

88% of residents considered improving repair services as important or very important

Stakeholders identified a need for all forms of affordable housing, but particularly for social rented homes which are in very short supply

55% of residents considered building new council and housing association homes for social rent to be “important” or “very important”

88% prioritised housing those on the waiting list as “important” or “very important”

Post-pandemic agents report receiving 10-15 offers per rental property

The poor condition or quality of existing homes in Hackney was considered as one of the top 5 challenges facing Hackney.

77% of residents are satisfied or very satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live. 32% consider their neighbourhood has got better in the past two years and 21% think it has got worse

17% said they don't feel safe because of the high volume of crime, and especially serious crimes (mugging, stabbing, shooting) happening in their area with no visible police presence, no lighting and not enough CCTV.

Discussion & Feedback



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<p>Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission</p> <p>22nd November 2023</p> <p>Item 6 – Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-25: Recommendations & Findings</p>	<p>Item No</p> <p>6</p>
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Outline

On 18th September 2023 the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission held a discussion on the draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-25. This enabled members to constructively challenge how the strategy will be delivered, how the Council had considered risks, and the key measures of success before it is adopted by Cabinet.

Prior to this, the Commission held a discussion on the provision of temporary accommodation in Hackney on 22nd March 2023, with a particular focus on what is driving demand across London, how the Council is responding locally, and how it ensures temporary accommodation is of a high standard and meets the needs of the most vulnerable residents.

The Commission has now brought together its findings and recommendations from these pieces of work and sent a letter to the Executive for response.

Report(s)

The following documents are included for information:

- Item 6a. Letter to Executive regarding work undertaken in relation to the draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-25

Action

Members are asked to note the agreed letter to the Executive regarding work undertaken in relation to the draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-25.

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Overview & Scrutiny

Room 118, 2nd Floor
Hackney Town Hall
Mare Street
London, E8 1EA

9th November 2023

craig.player@hackney.gov.uk

To:

Cllr Sade Etti, Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing Needs & Homelessness

Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-25 (Findings & Recommendations)

The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission held a discussion on the development of the Council's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy on 18th September 2023. This was a helpful meeting which enabled members to constructively challenge how the strategy will be delivered, how the Council had considered risks, and the key measures of success before it is adopted by Cabinet.

Prior to this, the Commission held a discussion on the provision of temporary accommodation in Hackney on 22nd March 2023, with a particular focus on what is driving demand across London, how the Council is responding locally, and how it ensures temporary accommodation is of a high standard and meets the needs of the most vulnerable residents.

As part of the scrutiny process, the Commission also undertook [site visits](#) to temporary accommodation settings. This allowed members to gain a further understanding of the standard of temporary accommodation, as well as to hear about some of the experiences of residents, staff and providers.

The video recordings, alongside the agenda papers and minutes provide a public record of these meetings:

- Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 22nd March 2023: [video recording](#), [agenda papers](#) and [minutes](#)
- Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 18th September 2023: [video recording](#), [agenda papers](#) and [draft minutes](#)

The Commission would firstly like to place on record its thanks to Rob Miller, Strategic Director Customer & Workplace, Jennifer Wynter, Assistant Director Benefits & Housing Needs, Beverley Gachette, Strategic Commissioning Lead Rough Sleeping & Homelessness and Andrew Croucher, Operations Manager for their valuable contributions to both meetings. Similarly, we would like to thank Sally Caldwell, Strategy & Transformation Consultant and Helen Lewis, Associate Consultant at Homeless Link for sharing their insights and research.

Overview & Scrutiny

The Commission would also like to thank Cllr Sade Etti, Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing Needs & Homelessness for her contributions and ongoing engagement with the scrutiny process.

On the evidence provided and through consultation with officers, members of the Commission have outlined their findings and made four recommendations for consideration, which it is hoped will contribute further to the positive work that is already taking place.

We look forward to receiving an update on the progress of the development of the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy Action Plan and the success of its implementation at a later date.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Soraya Adejare

Chair, Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

Councillor Clare Joseph

Vice Chair, Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

Cc:

- Jackie Moylan, Group Director Finance & Corporate Resources
- Rob Miller, Strategic Director Customer & Workplace
- Jennifer Wynter, Head of Benefits & Housing Needs
- Ben Bradley, Head of Mayor and Cabinet Office

Overview & Scrutiny

Recommendations of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

The Commission welcomes the refreshed Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-25, and commends the evidence gathering and stakeholder engagement work undertaken to develop the key priorities. We feel assured that the Council's approach to homelessness and rough sleeping continues to meet its responsibilities for carrying out day to day administration and delivery of homelessness services and, in many places, go well beyond them.

We recognise, however, that there have been significant changes to the local, regional and national context which makes it ever more difficult for the Council to plan its services to meet its statutory obligations and support all residents approaching it for assistance. House and rental prices in Hackney continue to grow, and the supply of new affordable housing remains limited. The pandemic and current cost of living crisis has also intensified inequalities for vulnerable groups in Hackney, and there are increasingly competing demands on housing resources.

In addition, the Council can only do so much within the funding, policy and legislation parameters set by the government, particularly in regards to Local Housing Allowance rates, Homelessness Prevention Grant funding and welfare reform. The Commission strongly believes that regulation and leadership must come from the national government to tackle homelessness and its related issues, backed by adequate funding.

Collaboration and joint working

The Commission heard about the importance of the Council's departments and services working closely together, and collaborating with health, criminal justice and employment sectors, other London boroughs, and people with lived experience of homelessness, in order to effectively prevent and reduce homelessness in Hackney.

The Commission strongly supports a collaborative approach, and believes it is important that the strategy is viewed holistically and responsibility for its delivery is shared across the Council and in partnership with other agencies and organisations, moving towards a whole system approach to homelessness. Some leadership will certainly need to be devolved to external partners who can drive the work via the Homelessness Partnership Board.

We have already heard about positive examples of joined-up working in Hackney, such as the Greenhouse Day Centre (Single Homeless Hub) and the Housing First Scheme. Continuing in this vein and working together to explore further opportunities for collaboration will be important in identifying more people at the point where they are at risk of losing their home, finding ways to help them stay in secure housing, and ensuring holistic support to those with complex and multiple needs.

We welcome that, whilst Benefits and Housing Needs will hold responsibility for maintaining the action plan and reporting against performance, there is an ongoing expectation that colleagues, stakeholders and partners report regularly on progress to ensure the action plan is up-to-date and reflects current performance.

Overview & Scrutiny

Increasing affordable permanent and temporary housing

The Commission heard that the steady rise in statutory homelessness over the last decade is attributable to a range of factors, which includes the continuing shortfall in the delivery of new affordable housing relative to the levels of need in Hackney. We will continue to retain oversight over the Council's plans to build genuinely affordable housing and explore alternative methods of housing delivery, and plan to provide our views on the emerging priorities and delivery mechanisms for the Housing Strategy before it is adopted in 2024.

The Commission also heard that the Council's access to suitable temporary accommodation is diminishing due to the reducing availability of privately provided stock, largely due to the withdrawal of private landlords, other boroughs seeking temporary accommodation placements and government resettlement schemes. We therefore welcome the commitments made not only to explore all possible avenues to increase the supply of the Council's own temporary accommodation stock, but also to explore new ways of working with landlords who are interested in long-term investment in the borough.

Of particular importance to these areas of work will be the collaboration between Benefits & Housing Needs, Housing Services, Regeneration and Private Sector Housing to increase both affordable housing and temporary accommodation supply, obtain private rented accommodation and reduce the use of nightly-paid temporary accommodation, and continue to tackle disrepair, fuel poverty and illegal evictions in private rented properties. We hope that this is reflected throughout the Housing Strategy, and that proactive measures to try to intervene earlier by supporting residents at risk of homelessness feature prominently.

Improving the quality of temporary accommodation

Whilst the Commission is supportive of exploring innovative approaches to increasing the supply of temporary accommodation, we think it is of the utmost importance that providing a good standard of temporary accommodation remains a key component of the service. This is especially important as households are increasingly spending an extended period in temporary accommodation.

We recognise that Hackney is better at this than most - we heard that the Council currently makes 87% of private placements into registered buildings which meet quality standards (much higher than the London average of 30%) - and work is in progress to invest in the repair and maintenance of the Council's own hostel properties. Having said this, we feel more can be done to lobby central government to improve minimum basic facilities in temporary accommodation, ensure the Council's own temporary accommodation units go beyond statutory standards where possible, and that best practice is shared with other providers in the borough to encourage improved basic facilities and adaptations.

The Commission recognises that temporary accommodation was never intended to exist outside of emergencies, but we know that it is often far from a temporary arrangement. We therefore also came away with a sense that more needs to be done to ensure that there is greater input from people in temporary accommodation so that they can express their views

Overview & Scrutiny

on what needs to change and receive meaningful engagement with these views from providers and statutory agencies.

The Commission therefore recommends that:

- 1) The Council lobbies central government to include all accommodation provided under the Homelessness Legislation Act in the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill, and for an update to legislation and the Homelessness Code of Guidance to include minimum basic facilities and adaptations for temporary accommodation.
- 2) Benefits & Housing Needs ensures that the Council's own temporary accommodation stock in all cases includes minimum basic facilities and adaptations which go beyond those currently set out in legislation and the Homelessness Code of Guidance, such as the provision of WIFI, laundry facilities, adequate space for children to learn and play, safer sleeping equipment and enough bedrooms to accommodate family size.
- 3) Benefits & Housing Needs explores the options for funding and encouraging the creation of Temporary Accommodation Action Groups (TAAGs) or equivalent bodies in which residents have an active and inclusive role in every locality, so that people living in temporary accommodation don't feel isolated, and can express their views on what needs to change and receive meaningful engagement with these views from providers and statutory agencies.

Supporting residents with multiple and complex needs

The Commission heard that people approaching the Council for homelessness support increasingly require additional support beyond that which has traditionally been provided, including people with needs that are not eligible for adults' social care or NHS support. It is important that work to develop tailored accommodation and support pathways for people with complex needs continues, alongside ensuring all staff working with people experiencing homelessness have the right skills to help them feel better equipped to deal with their jobs and support their caseloads.

We were therefore pleased to hear that mental health and social workers have been embedded into the service to support staff to provide a holistic, wraparound and psychologically-informed service for vulnerable residents. It is also encouraging that multi-disciplinary meetings are utilised regularly to support complex needs individuals, facilitating collaboration with a range of services including Adult Social Care, Hackney Children's Services, mental health teams, commissioned providers for substance misuse and neighbourhood health structures.

We also heard about how the service is exploring possibilities to develop additional supported housing for people with multiple and complex needs and rough sleepers, and increase the capacity of available dedicated support. We look forward to supporting and challenging the service's work in this area, with a scrutiny session on the commissioning and provision of supported accommodation for rough sleepers and single homeless people scheduled on 22nd November 2023.

Overview & Scrutiny

Addressing homelessness amongst young people

The Commission heard about how the pandemic and cost of living crisis has affected young people in Hackney, and how it has led to an increase in homeless approaches to the Council from 17-24 year olds. In addition, we heard that it can be challenging to offer timely help to young people at risk of homelessness as they are more likely to approach the Council once they are already in housing crisis, and young people sleeping rough are more likely to be in less visible locations and tend to utilise different support networks to adults.

We were encouraged by areas of good practice in Hackney, including the Council's Edge of Care service and the youth-targeted pathway delivered collaboratively through the London Youth Gateway project. However, this trend is nonetheless concerning and we welcome the steps outlined in the draft strategy to meet these challenges, particularly in terms of developing youth-specific housing officers and encouraging young people at risk of homelessness to engage with services and support early intervention with their housing needs.

The Commission will seek to retain oversight over any developments in this area, and will explore the options for scrutiny involvement in developing solutions alongside the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission where appropriate. Any future work would look to build upon the findings and recommendations made in regards to the recent joint scrutiny into housing support for care leavers.

Addressing inequalities in the housing market

The Commission heard that the pandemic and cost of living crisis has intensified inequalities in Hackney, with more and more households experiencing financial hardship, rent arrears and risk of homelessness. We were pleased to hear examples of positive joint working to mitigate impacts such as targeting vulnerable households in need of support through the Household Support Fund, utilising the Hackney Money Hub and making better use of data to understand housing and homelessness issues for specific groups.

We heard that LGBTQIA+ residents face significant challenges in accessing affordable and secure housing, with transgender individuals in particular experiencing higher levels of discrimination and risk of homelessness. We therefore welcome the emphasis in the strategy on addressing issues around accessibility and service provision, with a particular focus on young LGBTQIA+ residents, which coincides with ongoing council-wide work to develop and implement the new Equality Plan and LGBTQIA+ Strategic Framework.

Whilst stakeholder engagement has been broad, the Commission did come away with a sense that there is room for further engagement and consultation with local LGBTQIA+ organisations, groups and residents with lived experience of homelessness to ensure that housing solutions and wraparound support truly meets their needs. Looking at different and creative ways to allow people to participate will be key, especially in terms of young LGBTQIA+ residents.

The Commission therefore recommends:

- 4) Benefits & Housing Needs undertakes further consultation with LGBTQIA+ organisations, groups and residents (including young LGBTQIA+ residents) to ensure homelessness services meet their needs, and engages those involved to hold the Council to account during the implementation of the strategy.

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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 22nd November 2023 Item 7 – Resident Engagement for Estate Regeneration: Findings & Executive Response	Item No 7
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Outline

The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission held a discussion on the Council's approach to resident engagement for estate regeneration in Hackney on 20th April 2023. This enabled members to further understand the Council's approach to engaging and consulting residents when making decisions about the future of council managed estates.

Following the meeting, the Commission brought together its findings and sent a letter to the Executive outlining its findings and recommendations.

The response from the Executive to the letter was received on 3rd October 2023.

Report(s)

The following documents are included for information:

- Item 7a. Letter to Executive regarding work undertaken in relation to resident engagement for estate regeneration schemes
- Item 7b. Response from Executive to findings and recommendations on resident engagement for estate regeneration schemes

Action

Members are asked to note the agreed letter to the Executive and response regarding work undertaken in relation to resident engagement for estate regeneration schemes.

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Room 118, 2nd Floor
Hackney Town Hall
Mare Street
London, E8 1EA

7th September 2023
craig.player@hackney.gov.uk

To:

Cllr Guy Nicholson, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy & Regeneration
Cllr Clayeon McKenzie, Cabinet Member for Housing Services and Resident Participation

Resident Engagement for Estate Regeneration Scrutiny Session - 20th April 2023 (Recommendations)

The Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission held a discussion on the Council's approach to resident engagement for estate regeneration in Hackney on 20th April 2023. This was a helpful meeting which enabled members to further understand the Council's approach to engaging and consulting residents when making decisions about the future of council managed estates.

The [video recording](#) of the meeting, alongside the [agenda papers](#) and [minutes](#) provide a public record of the meeting. As part of the scrutiny process, the Commission also held a [focus group](#) with residents living in council managed estates that have been affected by estate regeneration schemes to understand their experiences of engagement and consultation, and what they may like to see happen additionally or differently in the future.

The Commission would firstly like to place on record its thanks to Rachel Bagenal, Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration & Delivery and Hermoine Brightwell, Project Manager Woodberry Down for their valuable contributions to the meeting. Similarly, we would like to thank Paul Watt, Professor of Urban Studies at Birkbeck University for sharing his insights and research into estate regeneration schemes across London.

The Commission would also like to thank Cllr Guy Nicholson, Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy & Regeneration and Cllr Clayeon McKenzie, Cabinet Member for Housing Services & Resident Participation for their contributions and ongoing engagement with the scrutiny process.

Overview & Scrutiny

The Commission thanks those residents from across Colville, Kings Crescent, Woodberry Down and Regents Court estates for giving up their time to share their views and experiences of resident engagement for the schemes underway on their estates. Their engagement with the scrutiny process is a testament to their commitment to holding the Council to account, playing an active role in improving local services, and championing the housing issues that matter to them.

On the evidence provided and through consultation with officers, members of the Commission have made five recommendations to both Housing Regeneration & Delivery and Housing Services, recognising the importance of these services working closely together to ensure joined up and efficient housing related services for residents on council owned and managed estates.

It is hoped that these will contribute further to the positive work that is already taking place, including during the refresh of the new Housing Strategy and subsequent delivery, and we look forward to receiving an update on the recommendations that are taken forward at a future scrutiny meeting.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Soraya Adejare
Chair, Living in Hackney Scrutiny
Commission

Councillor Clare Joseph
Vice Chair, Living in Hackney Scrutiny
Commission

Cc:

- Rickardo Hyatt, Group Director Climate, Homes & Economy
- Stephen Haynes, Strategic Director Inclusive Economy, Regeneration & New Homes
- Steve Waddington, Strategic Director Housing Services
- Rachel Baganel, Strategic Head of Housing Regeneration & Delivery
- Ben Bradley, Head of Mayor and Cabinet Office

Recommendations of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

The Commission was encouraged to hear about the Council's approach to engaging with residents affected by estate regeneration schemes, which has evolved over the last decade and is a culmination of an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and innovation in regard to resident participation.

The Commission strongly supports a collaborative approach to estate regeneration, which puts local people at the heart of proposals and gives them the opportunity to be involved in making decisions about their homes throughout the regeneration process. When done in this way, estate regeneration can offer existing residents better homes, more new and affordable housing, and improvements to the local environment.

The Commission heard about the [Residents' Charter](#) and [Housing Services Resident Engagement Strategy](#), both of which play a positive role in informing the Council's approach to engagement and setting out a range of principles which aim to ensure it is timely, informs meaningful change, includes under-represented groups, and gives residents a leading role in the future of their estates.

We also heard about the encouraging work going on across a number of estates in Hackney, for example in Woodberry Down. The Commission views this as an example of good practice, and was pleased to hear that residents on the estate had been extensively engaged with on the masterplan, design of each phase and rehousing process, and that the Council positively engages with community leaders such as the Woodberry Down Community Organisation and Independent Tenant and Leaseholder Advisors.

During the Commission's focus group with residents affected by estate regeneration schemes, many examples of good practice were identified by the residents we spoke with, particularly around the Council's efforts to provide residents with the opportunity to have their say on proposals and act on their feedback where appropriate.

Having said this, residents did raise some concerns around open and transparent early engagement with residents on proposals and how they will affect them, being kept informed and updated about the progress of the proposals (and specifically the impact of the high turnover of regeneration staff on this process), and the Council's ongoing role in maintaining homes to a good standard and promoting better community cohesion and integration through engagement activity.

It is recognised that these issues are not isolated to regeneration schemes in Hackney, with similar issues being highlighted to the Commission across several other schemes in London. For example, the high turnover of regeneration staff is

Overview & Scrutiny

reflective of the difficulties seen across the sector in attracting and retaining suitably qualified regeneration personnel, and the extended periods of time regeneration projects often go on for. The Commission was encouraged to hear that the Council nonetheless recognised its impact on residents, and was looking at an area based staffing model to allow staff to build an in-depth knowledge of estates, and closer relationships with residents.

On reflection, the Commission feels that Housing Regeneration & Delivery and Housing Services could work more closely together to ensure existing homes on regeneration estates are of a decent standard, and help build social networks and promote community cohesion between residents living on regeneration estates.

Moreover, the Commission believes more can be done to ensure that Housing Regeneration & Delivery is as clear as possible with residents about the aims, benefits and potential issues that may arise for regeneration projects on estates, and explore the ways it can measure, demonstrate and learn from the impact of its engagement with those residents affected.

The Commission therefore recommends:

- 1) Housing Services should recognise the positive impact of regular, efficient and egalitarian maintenance and repairs' provision on residents' trust in the estate regeneration process, and look to prioritise addressing repairs and maintenance issues across estates affected by regeneration (including temporary accommodation units).
- 2) Housing Services should take proactive and long term steps to socially integrate new residents into estates affected by regeneration (including temporary tenants), and work closely with Housing Regeneration & Delivery to ensure a smooth transition from the regeneration process.
- 3) Housing Regeneration & Delivery should work collectively to set out clear parameters from the outset when presenting residents with regeneration proposals for their estates by acknowledging the potential challenges regeneration and rehousing may create, as well as clarifying the aims and potential benefits of regeneration and to whom they will apply.
- 4) Housing Regeneration & Delivery should create a bespoke resident charter, such as that adopted in Tower Court estate, for every estate regeneration scheme which can be referred to during and after the regeneration process, to ensure that promises and/or guarantees made at the outset are fulfilled.
- 5) Housing Regeneration & Delivery should explore the ways it can measure the impact of its approaches to all encompassing resident engagement for regeneration schemes, as well as the opportunities for learning and improvement, such as monitoring levels of participation, engagement (including diversity profiling) and satisfaction with the regeneration process and end result.

Executive response to the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission's recommendations from the Resident Engagement for Estate Regeneration session held on 20th April 2023

Recommendation one

The Commission recommends:

Housing Services should recognise the positive impact of regular, efficient and egalitarian maintenance and repairs' provision on residents' trust in the estate regeneration process, and look to prioritise addressing repairs and maintenance issues across estates affected by regeneration (including temporary accommodation units).

Response

Housing Services recognises the positive impact of a good maintenance and repairs regime on residents' trust, not only on regeneration estates, but across the whole housing stock.

Housing Services provides repairs / improvements services in two main ways, responsive repairs and capital improvements. Repairs are provided in line with the council's repairs policy that sets out the priorities for responding to repair requests. It is not felt appropriate to provide a different speed of response or priority because a property falls within a regeneration estate.

The approach to capital improvements is set out within the council's HRA Asset Management Strategy. Work is undertaken on a 7 year cycle with each property being assessed every 7 years. This does not mean that each property will receive improvement works every 7 years, a property is assessed against the Decent Homes Standard both in terms of internal improvements and the external fabric of the building. Should work be required, this will be undertaken as part of the capital improvement cycle, if no work is required it will be reviewed again on the next 7 year cycle.

Where estate regeneration projects are planned, should these plans include the demolition of any homes, historically these properties have been taken out of the 7 year cycle (the main reason being that they are to be imminently demolished). However, in recent years we have seen some regeneration programmes delayed due to cost inflation impacting on the viability of schemes or some schemes run over many years, with some properties earmarked for demolition in 10 to 15 years time. Clearly these properties should not be excluded from the capital improvement programme and individual decisions should be made based on the condition of the building elements and the length of time to demolition.

We are also conscious that even if existing homes are not to be demolished, regeneration can have a significant impact on the wider community. In these

cases efforts are made to coordinate the 7 year capital improvement work to align with the regeneration works.

Recommendation two

The Commission recommends:

Housing Services should take proactive and long term steps to socially integrate new residents into estates affected by regeneration (including temporary tenants), and work closely with Housing Regeneration & Delivery to ensure a smooth transition from the regeneration process.

Response

Housing Services takes proactive and long term steps to socially integrate new residents into estates affected by regeneration and works with Housing Regeneration & Delivery to ensure a smooth transition.

Housing Services are committed to facilitating effective resident engagement across all our estates. A new Resident Engagement Strategy (RES) was approved by Cabinet in December 2022 under key decision CHE S135. This strategy equally applies to regeneration estates and supporting new residents to socially integrate and existing residents.

We are committed to supporting residents to provide feedback on our services, have the opportunity to directly influence our services, policies and decisions and to contribute to (or benefit from) the development of communities and neighbourhoods through local action or engagement.

The RES co-produced with our engaged residents groups and five priority themes were identified:

- Embed a 'Resident First' culture across Housing Services - *A positive culture of resident engagement starts at the top. Through our behaviours and working practices, Housing Service leaders will demonstrate that the voice of residents is at the heart of good service delivery and lay the foundations for continuous listening and learning across the service.*
- Support our residents' groups to thrive - *We want all our residents' groups to have the support and resources they need to ensure good governance, play an active role in improving our services and promote community activities on their estates.*
- Widen the ways residents can engage with us - *We want our residents to play a greater role in informing our decisions and driving improvement in our services. With more pressure on our budgets, we need to work together to make sure our service planning reflects residents' priorities and concerns.*

- Ensure residents influence our decision-making and drive service improvements - *We want our residents to play a greater role in informing our decisions and driving improvement in our services. With more pressure on our budgets, we need to work together to make sure our service planning reflects residents' priorities and concerns.*
- Promote engagement activity that strengthens our communities - *We will continue to invest in community projects and initiatives that promote the resilience of our housing communities and promote community cohesion on our estates. We will focus on building the capacity of community groups to run projects and activities successfully, and developing strong partnerships with stakeholders who can support us in our work.*

Embedding these five priorities in all our work as well including our approach to working with residents in regeneration areas throughout the regeneration phase should have the positive impact of supporting new residents to socially integrate.

Recommendation three

The Commission recommends:

Housing Regeneration & Delivery should work collectively to set out clear parameters from the outset when presenting residents with regeneration proposals for their estates by acknowledging the potential challenges regeneration and rehousing may create, as well as clarifying the aims and potential benefits of regeneration and to whom they will apply.

Response three

- The Housing Regeneration and Delivery service is committed to collaborating with local residents on regeneration projects from start to finish.
- The service is currently reviewing the approach to resident engagement and participation on regeneration/housing delivery projects.
- The intention is to further refine the approach to resident engagement and participation to ensure that residents feel informed, involved and empowered in the process from the outset. This will include clarifying the aims and potential benefits of regeneration to residents.
- For the New Homes Programme that was approved by Cabinet in December 2022 under key decision CHE S142, a number of consultation and engagement events have already been held on estates earmarked for future development sites, and a proactive approach has been taken to engaging residents across all tenures to participate in new Resident Steering Groups (RSGs).
- The New Homes Programme seeks to expand and deepen resident participation by involving residents from the very beginning before the design process has started, by transparently clarifying the aspects and

issues which are open to shaping (and those which are determined by the Council's approvals, requirements and constraints), and ensuring participation is enabled and focused on meaningful aspects.

- Each project will develop its own Community Participation Strategy at the start of the design process to ensure a collaborative approach that facilitates residents' voices at every stage of the development process.
- Each project will also establish an RSG made up of local representatives including Council tenants, private renters, and owner occupiers. The role of the RSG is to represent the wider community; advise the Council on how to effectively engage neighbours; and influence and make decisions on clearly defined aspects of the scheme by attending site visits, regular thematic training workshops, and engaging wider residents.
- Each project will host wider community participation events on a regular basis.
- Some elements of the project and design have to satisfy certain statutory, regulatory and/or Council obligations and therefore are not suitable for extensive participation by the RSG, residents and local community organisations. This will be communicated and explained transparently at the outset, so that RSG members and residents understand the envelope they are working in, and why.

Recommendation four

The Commission recommends that:

Housing Regeneration & Delivery should create a bespoke resident charter, such as that adopted in Tower Court estate, for every estate regeneration scheme which can be referred to during and after the regeneration process, to ensure that promises and/or guarantees made at the outset are fulfilled.

Response four

1. Hackney's Cabinet adopted a Residents Charter in March 2022 under key decision NH Q78.
2. This Residents Charter underpins our approach to regeneration and makes a number of commitments and key promises to residents.
3. For example, these key promises include a commitment to ensuring that Council tenants whose home is demolished will be guaranteed a new, modern Council home on their estate that better meets their needs. Along with a key promise that resident leaseholders and freeholders will be guaranteed the right to purchase a new, modern home from the Council on their estate.
4. The Residents Charter applies the Local Lettings Policy ('Keeping Communities Together') to new-build social homes, giving priority to Council tenants in housing need living on the estate. This includes residents with medical or accessibility needs not met by their existing home, or households currently living in an overcrowded home.

5. The Residents Charter also makes a commitment to the Housing Regeneration and Delivery programme being not for profit and council-led.
6. Further to this, there are clear commitments in the Residents Charter to holding meaningful engagement on our proposals and where appropriate, changing our ideas in response to residents' feedback, and explaining how we have done this.
7. All of the homes that we build through regeneration comply with or exceed space and sustainability standards required in national planning policy, the London Plan and Building Regulations.
8. Some existing and completed estate regeneration schemes such as Woodberry Down and Tower Court already have a bespoke residents charter. These pre-dated the overarching Residents Charter adopted in March 2022.

Recommendation five

The Commission recommends:

Housing Regeneration & Delivery should explore the ways it can measure the impact of its approaches to all encompassing resident engagement for regeneration schemes, as well as the opportunities for learning and improvement, such as monitoring levels of participation, engagement (including diversity profiling) and satisfaction with the regeneration process and end result.

Response

- The Housing Regeneration & Delivery service already monitors residents' levels of satisfaction with their new homes by asking all residents to complete a Post Occupancy Review Resident Survey. This asks for feedback on residents' satisfaction with many elements of the regeneration - including the design of the new homes, the finishes and fittings, the public realm and communal areas. Residents are asked to complete a survey 3 months after they move into their new homes and again after 12 months.
- Residents are also asked in the survey about how they found the experience of moving into their new home and how this experience could be improved.
- The forthcoming New Homes Programme that was approved by Cabinet in December 2022 under key decision CHE S142 will involve significant levels of engagement with residents who live adjacent and nearby to the sites being developed for housing.
- As part of developing the Community Participation Strategy for each New Homes Programme project, the Project Team and RSG will identify barriers to participation such as language, education, childcare, and accessibility and look to mitigate these. For example, by providing childcare or producing participation content in multiple languages.

- The Housing Regeneration & Delivery team will develop and implement a strategy to measure the impact of resident engagement in these schemes. This will include monitoring levels of participation and diversity profiling.



<p>Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission</p> <p>22nd November 2023</p> <p>Item 8 – Overarching Scrutiny Panel Review into Net Zero: Executive Response</p>	<p>Item No</p> <p>8</p>
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Outline

The Net Zero Review was established by the Scrutiny Panel in October 2021. It was set up to look at what is needed to meet both national and local net zero targets, and to ask how the Council could better meet its ambitions in a manner that is affordable, efficient and fair.

The review was an amalgamation of work undertaken by the overarching Scrutiny Panel and the thematic Scrutiny Commissions: Health in Hackney, Living in Hackney and Skills, Economy and Growth.

Following the review, a report was sent to the Executive outlining its findings and recommendations.

The response from the Executive to the review was considered at the Cabinet meeting held on 23 October 2023.

Report(s)

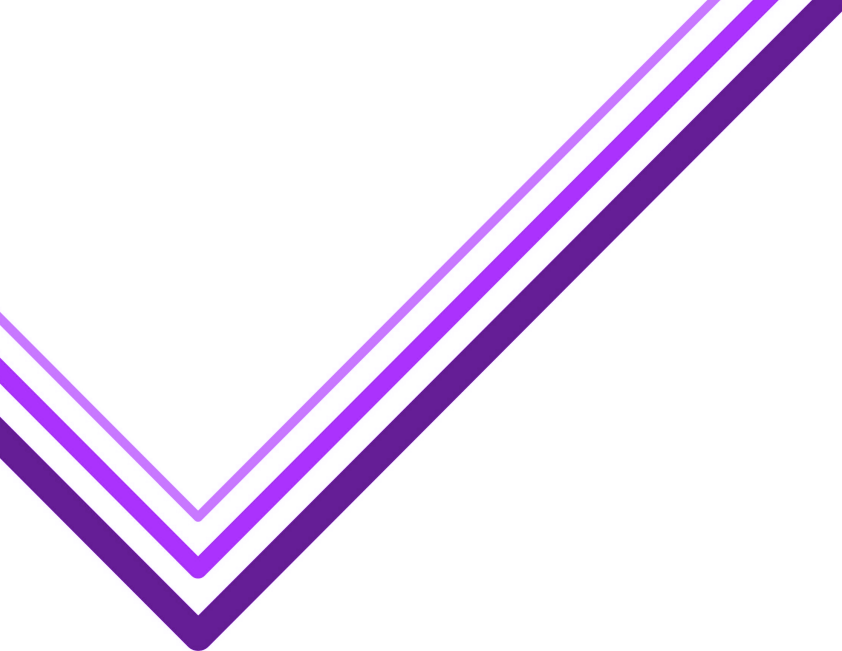
The following documents are included for information:

- Item 8a. Full Report from the Overarching Scrutiny Panel Investigation into Net Zero
- Item 8b. Cover Letter: Executive Response to the Overarching Scrutiny Panel Investigation into Net Zero
- Item 8c. Appendix 1 - Executive Response to the findings & recommendations of the Scrutiny Panel Overarching Review into Net Zero

Action

Members are asked to note the Executive response to the Overarching Scrutiny Panel Investigation into Net Zero.

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Net Zero

Overarching Scrutiny Panel Review



Table of Contents

Chair’s Foreword	4
Introduction	5
Methodology	6
Recommendations	6
National Policy and Context	9
The role of central government	9
National progress against net zero	10
Local Policy and Practice	11
The role of regional and local government	11
The case for local climate action	12
Hackney’s Climate Action Plan	13
Monitoring, Governance and Leadership	14
Political leadership	14
Corporate governance	15
Monitoring	16
Stakeholder engagement	17
Investment and Finances	18
Cost of transitioning to net zero	18
Sources of finance	19
Housing and Corporate Property	21
Council housing	21
Private sector housing	22
New homes delivery	23
Council strategic property	24
Transport	26
Public transport	26
Active travel	27
Electric vehicles (EV) charging infrastructure	28
Energy	30
Planning policy	30
Renewable energy generation	32
Purchasing renewable power	33
Education, Skills and Economic Development	35
Consumption	35
Supporting local businesses to decarbonise	36
Education and skills	37
Conclusion	41
Finance Comments	41
Legal Comments	41
Appendices	41

Membership	41
Participants	42
Meetings	44
Bibliography	45
Glossary of Terms	48
List of Abbreviations	50

Chair's Foreword

The climate emergency has a daily impact on our lives in Hackney. As residents we experience soaring temperatures and sudden floods. Climate change has a very real impact on our activities and well-being and impacts our physical and mental health. Poor air quality in London shortens lives disproportionately impacting residents who are more vulnerable economically and socially. Climate Justice is inextricably linked to economic, social and racial justice.

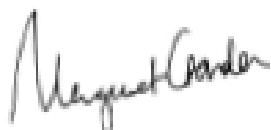
Many of us living in Hackney have close ties with the global south who experience even more devastating extremes of climate change. Hackney's communities have a proud tradition of campaigning and activism and many of our residents are at the forefront of climate activism.

In the May 2022 elections the vast majority of residents voted for parties committed to tackling climate change. With this background and Mayor Glanville's role as chair of the London Council's Transport and Environment Committee it is essential that Hackney is ambitious and innovative in tackling the climate emergency.

Following Mayor Glanville's declaration of a climate emergency and the council setting a target of net zero across council functions by 2040 Scrutiny Panel and the Scrutiny Commissions were determined to take central role holding the executive to account for the implementation of the policy. This report and its recommendations reflect an innovative way of working for Scrutiny in Hackney as it draws together thematic work across the commissions as well as by Scrutiny Panel.

All of the scrutiny work underpinning this report took place prior to the consultation of Hackney's draft Climate Action Plan. We welcome the ambitions of the plan particularly where it reaches beyond council functions but will continue to interrogate its delivery. In particular, it is a priority for us that the council engages widely across our communities that the developing plan draws on the lived experience of all Hackney's residents and that ensuring a just transition for all parts of our community is central to delivery.

I would like to thank the chairs, vice-chairs and all scrutiny commission members and everyone who gave evidence to the commissions for their contributions to this work as well as the Scrutiny team.



Councillor Margaret Gordon

Chair of the Scrutiny Panel

Introduction

The climate and ecological crisis is already having visible effects on the world - the earth is warming, rainfall patterns are changing and sea levels are rising. These changes are leading to increased extreme weather events, such as flooding and drought, are risking the supply of natural resources and are having a detrimental impact on human health. In Hackney we have seen this first hand, with a number of major floods being experienced in recent years - most notably in Finsbury Park.

Internationally, policy and decision makers are beginning to act. The Paris agreement underlines the need for net zero, requiring countries and territories like the UK to transition to a state in which the greenhouse gases going into the atmosphere are balanced by removal of greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere. Achieving net zero will require changes that are unprecedented in their overall scale, and meeting the national net zero target is considered one of the biggest, most complex and cross-cutting challenges that the UK faces.

Reaching the UK's net zero ambitions will require all tiers of government, businesses, institutions and communities to work closely together. In response, the Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and has been building its vision to transition to net zero since. Hackney, and the UK generally, has made good progress in reducing emissions over the last decade, but it is recognised that faster and coordinated action will be needed to protect communities and the environment from the effects of climate change.

It is within this context that the Net Zero Review was established by the Scrutiny Panel in October 2021. It was set up to look at what is needed to meet both national and local net zero targets, and to ask how the Council could better meet its ambitions in a manner that is affordable, efficient and fair. We felt we could play an active role in stress-testing and querying assumptions in the development of local climate action, particularly in light of the pandemic, and support the Council to engage with key stakeholders in the locality to better understand and align priorities.

The way in which the review was approached reflects the scale of the net zero challenge and its cross-cutting nature. Through the Scrutiny Panel and thematic Scrutiny Commissions, we engaged, listened and learned from a range of organisations, businesses, industries and communities on a number of issues and policy areas from decarbonising buildings, transport and waste, to supporting the delivery of clean energy projects, managing a transition to a low carbon, circular economy and enabling green growth.

The recommendations made in the review reflect this extensive engagement, and we have sought to understand not only the barriers which are challenging the delivery of local action, but also the opportunities that can support local stakeholders in their net zero journey. While our recommendations are directed at the Council and key stakeholders, tackling climate change is a shared responsibility and we recognise the importance of ensuring that all of Hackney's stakeholders are actively involved in climate action.

Methodology

The review was an amalgamation of work by the overarching Scrutiny Panel and the thematic Scrutiny Commissions: Health in Hackney, Living in Hackney and Skills, Economy and Growth.

We gathered a range of qualitative and quantitative evidence to meet the aims and objectives of the review. The methods and sources used to gather this evidence are summarised below.

Desktop research and analysis

Desk based research was used to help establish the national legislative and policy framework which guides the UK's transition to net zero and to review key national data and trends, academic research and policy analysis in relation to climate change and net zero.

Consultation with local stakeholders

A range of local stakeholders were consulted as part of the review to establish local policy and practice in relation to climate change and net zero. As well as providing an opportunity to review localised data, consultation with local stakeholders facilitated a more qualitative assessment of climate action in Hackney.

Comparisons with other local authorities

To support comparative analysis of local climate action across the capital, London Borough of Harrow, London Borough of Waltham Forest, the Greater London Authority (GLA) and London Councils were invited to contribute to the review. Their involvement helped us to compare and benchmark policy and practice, and helped us to identify additional good practice where relevant.

Specialist contributions

Expert independent analysis helped us to gather further insight into the Council's path to net zero. This was provided through direct submissions to the review from Buro Happold, as well as desktop research and analysis.

Recommendations

	Monitoring, Governance and Leadership	Page
1	The Council should report back on how progress against the objectives of the Climate Action Plan will be measured and monitored, and how oversight structures including the Audit Committee, Scrutiny Panel and Scrutiny Commissions will fit into the monitoring framework.	17

2	The Council should explore establishing an appropriate and robust external governance framework to reflect that the transition to net zero is not focused only on its own activities, but also on those borough-wide emissions for which it is not responsible.	17
3	The Council should demonstrate how each service department will contribute in concrete terms to the management and delivery of the Climate Action Plan, and in particular the accompanying Three Year Implementation Plan , (both in terms of implementing actions, budgeting and continuing to innovate) for those areas that relate to their remits.	17
4	The Council should explore the ways in which it can improve its engagement on net zero with harder to reach groups and those least likely to engage in formal ways , such as those whose first language is not English, people with disabilities, young people, the elderly, people with low literacy levels and the digitally excluded.	17/18
	Investment and Finances	
5	The Council should undertake more detailed modelling on current and future spending on net zero-related policies, as well as the benefits derived from this expenditure , to develop a fuller understanding of the finance and resourcing needs of the transition to net zero.	20
6	The Council should collaborate with other boroughs and regional authorities to lobby central government to get external funding for the net zero agenda, and should proactively identify and respond to new funding opportunities as they arise.	20
	Housing and Corporate Property	
7	The Council should ensure its tenants and leaseholders are supported as much as possible to engage in low-carbon lifestyles , for example through welcome packs providing information and discounts at reuse and repair shops.	25
8	The Council should demonstrate how it will work with registered social landlords operating within the borough to coordinate actions on retrofit and other decarbonisation measures, and share examples of good practice for mutual benefit.	25
9	The Council should explore broadening the licensing requirements for additional houses in multiple occupation (HMO) and selective licensing schemes to cover the whole borough and include energy efficiency, retrofitting and fuel poverty requirements.	25
10	The Council should investigate and report back on the options and implications for expanding the provision of retrofitting and net zero advice to owner-occupiers and the private rented sector, and consider identifying retrofit champions who are willing to talk about their experiences of retrofitting.	25

11	The Council should report back on its longer term plan on how it intends to bring the corporate estate in line with the net zero goal , including its retrofitting programme and exploration of clean energy projects.	25
12	The Council should explore including within lease agreement requirements for its commercial property tenants to use renewable electricity, monitor usage and make energy-related information available .	25
	Transport	
13	The Council and Transport for London should review decarbonisation pathways for bus services in Hackney , particularly around the opportunities to accelerate the rollout of electrification technologies.	29
14	The Council should explore the ways in which it can improve the evidence base for increasing the uptake of active and sustainable travel choices across the borough, with a particular focus on the links with health, education and the local economy.	29
15	The Council should undertake a business perceptions survey to measure how local businesses view active travel and its impact on them, and how best to share information and engage with businesses on this agenda.	29/30
16	The Council should review current activity in promoting electric vehicles (EVs) across London and explore ways in which it can work more closely with vehicle manufacturers and operators to deliver consistent and high-quality provision that removes all barriers to uptake.	30
	Energy	
17	The Council should embed the use of Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE) and data sharing in its planning policy, on all developments where the building has been in use for a minimum of three years to ensure robust monitoring processes for energy performance and enable constructive dialogue with developers on energy efficiency.	34
18	The Council should report back on the current London-wide picture of decentralised energy projects and pipeline schemes that could provide opportunities for future programmes, and explore collaborative procurement/investment opportunities for renewable power with other boroughs and regional authorities such as the North London Waste Authority.	34
19	The Council should enhance communications around the benefits of installing solar panels and the support available to businesses and households .	34
20	The Council should keep the hydrogen production market under review , and where possible ensure all new or replacement boilers are considered for hydrogen gas heating .	34
	Education, Skills and Economic Development	

21	The Council should outline the progress it has made in embedding actions to reduce carbon emissions into internal procurement and management processes, and the options it is exploring to go further.	40
22	The Council should report back on the impact of waste management work and objectives to reduce waste arisings and improve recycling and food composting rates , and with particular consideration given to commercial waste.	40
23	The Council should undertake local business surveys to identify the nature and level of support needed for local businesses to decarbonise, and to map existing green businesses in the borough.	40
24	The Council should work with neighbouring boroughs and partner organisations to identify new solutions and traffic management options to reduce carbon emissions from freight and logistics.	40
25	The Council should work with other boroughs, training and education partners and businesses to map out the scale and nature of green jobs in London and in Hackney, to consider the implications this will have on education and skills training provision.	40
26	The Council should work with schools and educational settings to enhance the quality of climate education, create hands-on opportunities for children and young people during the development and retrofitting of council-owned properties, and encourage carbon reduction measures in play areas and grounds such as tree planting, Sustainable Drainage Systems and natural play spaces.	40
27	The Council should report back on its plans to align, expand and grow its Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) to be able to undertake carbon reduction measures, such as installing low carbon heat sources and retrofitting, as well as the progress it has made to date.	40

National Policy and Context

The role of central government

In 2018, central government set the UK's first net zero target to be reached by 2050 - the first major economy to do so worldwide. To guide this transition, central government has published its Net Zero Strategy, which sets out a wide-ranging set of policies and proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for each sector in the economy, including the UK's share of aviation and shipping.¹

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) has overall responsibility in government for achieving net zero. Historically, the Department for Environment, Food

¹ [Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener, UK Government](#)

and Rural Affairs (Defra) and the Treasury (HMT) have also played important roles in designing UK climate policy. The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Department for Transport (DfT) are responsible for policies that affect buildings and transport emissions, which will have an increasingly important role to play in reaching net zero. Having said this, the all-encompassing nature of achieving net zero means that all government bodies, including departments, arm's-length bodies and executive agencies have a role to play.

The Climate Change Committee (CCC) is a non-departmental public body that advises central government on the climate, and publishes progress and advisory reports. It provides a national recommended Carbon Budget (the limit for UK net greenhouse gas emissions over a period of time), which acts as stepped reduction targets to achieve the central government net zero target of 100% reduction by 2050. These are then set in law, following which the government is required to bring forward policies to deliver the targets.²

The latest is the Sixth Carbon Budget (which runs from 2033 to 2037), outlining the required greenhouse gas emissions reductions, along with the current policy gap to help the country achieve them. It requires a 78% reduction in UK territorial emissions between 1990 and 2035. If this budget is met it would reduce the UK's annual per capita greenhouse gas emissions by 2035 in line with pathways consistent with meeting the Paris 1.5°C goal.³

These are comprehensive targets covering all greenhouse gases and all sectors, including international aviation and shipping, intended to be delivered entirely in the UK without recourse to international carbon credits. Meeting the targets requires action from businesses and people across all sectors, led by central government.

National progress against net zero

The UK has a leading record in reducing its own emissions. The CCC's Sixth Carbon Budget estimates that, as of 2021, the UK had reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 47% below 1990 levels. Between 2008 and 2018, the UK's emissions reduced by 28%, faster than any other G20 economy. There was a decrease of 10% on 2019 greenhouse gas emissions but an increase of 4% on 2020, as greenhouse gas emissions in 2020 had been significantly impacted by the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Most of this reduction has come from changes to how electricity is generated, with a switch away from coal and increasing amounts coming from renewable sources such as wind, nuclear and solar power. Reducing emissions further to achieve net zero will require wide-ranging changes to the UK economy, including further investment in renewable electricity generation, as well as changing the way people travel, how land is used and how buildings are heated.

The CCC also reports on the UK's progress against achieving net zero by 2050. In its latest progress report to Parliament in 2022 the CCC stated that although central government now

² [Sixth Carbon Budget, Climate Change Committee](#)

³ [The Paris Agreement, UNFCCC](#)

has a Net Zero Strategy in place and positive progress has been made, important policy gaps remain.⁴ For example, the CCC suggests clear progress has been made in the sales of electric cars, although the development of charging infrastructure for electric vehicles is not making fast enough progress.

Rates of improvement in building energy efficiency continue to be below the necessary level. Limitations include the cost of retrofitting, mainly weighted towards the homeowner and the potential difficulties of retrofitting in older properties, including those listed or in conservation areas. Deployment of renewable electricity capacity, especially offshore wind, has been strong, although additional renewables and nuclear power are needed to meet the 2035 national grid decarbonisation goals.

The CCC's latest progress report also outlines a number of major risks to the UK achieving its targets including policy gaps associated with 57% of future greenhouse gas emissions, a lack of clarity over public engagement, the need to ensure effective governance of the Net Zero Strategy, and the availability of skilled workers to fill the needs of new low carbon markets.

Local Policy and Practice

The role of regional and local government

The Greater London Authority Act 1999 sets out environmental improvement and sustainable development as core aspects of the Mayor of London's role. They also have a duty to publish a 'London Environment Strategy' which covers an assessment of, and policies related to, biodiversity, waste management, climate change adaptation and mitigation, energy and air quality.⁵

Some of the most visible powers of the Mayor are in their control of London's transport network which gives them considerable scope over the capital's carbon emissions and air quality, alongside substantial powers over planning (although the role does not have significant responsibility for land management).

The Mayor of London has set a target for London to be net zero carbon by 2030 and selected a preferred pathway to net zero - the Accelerated Green pathway. Amongst other things, achieving this will require a nearly 40% reduction in the total heat demand of London's buildings, 2.2 million heat pumps in operation in London by 2030, 460,000 buildings connected to district heating networks by 2030, a 27% reduction in car vehicle km travelled by 2030 and fossil fuel car and van sales ended by 2030 and enforced in line with government's existing commitments.⁶

Local government has a key role to play in delivering net zero by 2050. Many local authorities have declared climate emergencies, and some have developed strategies and

⁴ [2022 Progress Report to Parliament, Climate Change Committee](#)

⁵ [London Environment Strategy, Greater London Authority](#)

⁶ [London Net Zero 2030: An Updated Pathway, Greater London Authority](#)

action plans to deliver net zero targets by 2050 and in some cases sooner. Local authorities play an important role in decarbonising local transport, buildings, energy and waste, and the overarching powers held by local authorities such as for spending, borrowing, investment and procurement will also be important in reducing carbon emissions.

Not only does local government drive action directly, but it also plays a role in communicating with, and inspiring action by, local businesses, communities and civil society. Although few emissions are within their direct control, 82% are within the scope of influence of local authorities, and around a third are dependent on sectors that are directly shaped or influenced by local authority practice, policy or partnerships.⁷

We know that local leaders are well placed to engage with all parts of their communities and to understand local policy, as well as political, social and economic nuances relevant to climate action. They can decide how best to serve communities and how to integrate activity so that action also delivers wider benefits - such as for fuel poor households, the environment and biodiversity, and the provision of green skills and jobs.

The case for local climate action

In 2020, the Council undertook an assessment of where Hackney's greenhouse gas emissions come from, looking at most recent available data at the time (2018).⁸ It showed that the type and amount of fuel used in buildings and vehicles are the biggest part of Hackney's territorial emissions, and most of these were from the fuel used in buildings, like gas-powered heating and using electricity for lighting and appliances. Cars and motorbikes create about 44% of emissions and LGVs about 37%, and buses emit the remainder. 74% of emissions are from consumption emissions, which come from a diverse range of goods and services.

The Council has also modelled the 'pathways' of actions and changes that would reduce emissions from buildings and vehicles, which requires direct changes to the energy systems and roads within Hackney. The modelling showed the actions that need to occur in Hackney include supporting the retrofit of public and private buildings, swapping gas boilers for low-carbon heat sources, tightening controls on the emissions produced by existing and new buildings, encouraging active travel and transitioning to electric vehicles and supporting businesses and communities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the products and services they use.

Reaching net zero will therefore require not only changes to energy systems and low-carbon infrastructure but behaviour shifts in how we travel, what we buy and how we use energy in our homes. The CCC's 2021 progress report estimates that practical solutions alone can only deliver 41% of required national greenhouse gas reductions - 59% of emission reductions will rely partially or wholly on behaviour changes.⁹

⁷ [Local Authorities and the Sixth Carbon Budget, Climate Change Committee](#)

⁸ [Net Zero Energy Strategy, London Borough of Hackney](#)

⁹ [2021 Progress Report to Parliament, Climate Change Committee](#)

Hackney has made progress in reducing emissions - the Council has committed to a 45% reduction in its own emissions (which equate to around 5% of the whole borough's emissions) by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2040. While the Council's emissions only account for about 5% of the borough's overall emissions, it also has a number of regulatory levers that can influence change on an estimated 25% of borough-wide emissions. Since 2010, borough-wide emissions from buildings and road transport in Hackney have fallen by about 27%.

Other organisations in the borough are taking a lead, too - Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, for example, has achieved the Planet Mark in recognition of its efforts to reduce emissions and report its progress. It is the first hospital in the country to achieve this, and has maintained its certification since 2017, and the hospital has successfully cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 9.2%.¹⁰

Hackney's Climate Action Plan

Hackney's Climate Action Plan (CAP) was presented to Cabinet in October 2022. It provides a framework for businesses, organisations and individuals in Hackney to take action to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change.¹¹

We heard that the CAP will continue to be developed to keep pace with shifts across society, technology and wider policy, including the changing needs of communities, groups and organisations in Hackney.

The CAP aims to:

- Outline what a greener Hackney could look like by 2030 based on a fair and just transition.
- Build a shared understanding of the climate crisis and how stakeholders can work together to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change.
- Identify areas where local partners can collaborate on key strategic challenges such as financing and policy change.
- Outline proposals for monitoring and governance arrangements, as well as future stakeholder engagement.

Alongside this plan is a Three Year Implementation Plan, which provides a set of proposed actions for the Council to undertake over the next three years that contribute to delivering the goals and objectives of the CAP.¹²

A number of implementation levers have been identified by the Council:

- Strategies, research and plans such as better planning guidance to enable domestic retrofit and new housing and transport strategies.

¹⁰ [Homerton Hospital Trust, Planet Mark](#)

¹¹ [Hackney Climate Action Plan 2023-30, London Borough of Hackney](#)

¹² [Hackney Implementation Plan 2023-26, London Borough of Hackney](#)

- Partnerships and private sector collaboration and convening such as working with London Councils, other local authorities, housing associations, anchor institutions and key utility providers.
- Education and training such as better signposting and reskilling staff
- Delivery and flagship projects such as business as usual work and retrofit pilots of social housing.
- Regulations, licensing and planning such as lobbying for changes in domestic and non-domestic minimum energy efficiency standard (MEES) regulations and the scheduled Local Plan 33 update.

Monitoring, Governance and Leadership

Climate action cuts across all council departments and functions, and will involve the continued engagement of key stakeholders across Hackney. While every local authority's response is different, there are likely to be common themes underpinning good governance, leadership and political direction.

We therefore queried whether there was clear political and corporate leadership of the response to climate change in Hackney, how the Council will approach stakeholder engagement and whether there was a committed governance and monitoring process driving the response forward.

Political leadership

We heard that there are two Cabinet Members with overall responsibility for driving the Council's transition to net zero. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport has overall responsibility for climate change, including responding to the climate emergency, mitigation, adaptation and public awareness. The Cabinet Member for Families, Parks and Leisure has responsibility for the Council's tree programme and cross-cutting work on green infrastructure, nature recovery and biodiversity.

Having said this, due to the cross-cutting nature of the transition to net zero, all Cabinet Members will have a role to play and will need to work closely together if the Council is to achieve its ambitions. For example, the Cabinet Member for Housing has some responsibility for the retrofitting of council homes, the Cabinet Member for Employment, Human Resources and Equalities for green skills and jobs and the Cabinet Member for Delivery, Inclusive Economy and Regeneration for the planning service and economic development.

The Mayor of Hackney also holds a number of key roles regionally in respect of the climate crisis, as Chair of London Council's Transport and Environment Committee and a Member of its Leader's Committee. The Mayor is also Co-Chair of the Green New Deal Advisory Group which supports the Green New Deal workstream of the London Recovery Board.

Corporate governance

The Council's transition to net zero of solely its corporate functions will require mobilisation and leadership across the organisation, ownership of particular elements of the overarching CAP and involve transformational work across almost all functions.

We heard that work is ongoing to establish whether additional internal governance structures are needed to manage this area of work in the future and maximise its impact. This is coupled with work to develop a clearer picture of corporate roles and responsibilities to ensure the Council reduces duplication or overlaps, makes clearer distinctions between strategic and delivery roles and confirms key accountabilities for targets and progress.

The Environmental Sustainability Board was established in 2019 to coordinate the work across the many functions of the Council that were either in train or needed in response to the risks associated with climate change, loss of biodiversity and pollution and waste. The Board is Co-Chaired by the Group Director for Finance and Corporate Resources and includes in its membership Cabinet Members and key officers covering a range of functions.

The Strategic Officers Climate Group is the key tool for delivering the Council's Three Year Implementation Plan and is made up of leads for each thematic area, as well as expertise in communications, engagement, finance, procurement, economic development and employment and skills. It meets bi-monthly, and can also establish task and finish groups to address specific challenges and work streams that may arise where appropriate.

We were told that the London Councils Climate Change programmes were established in 2019 to develop common priorities for climate action plans across London Boroughs, establish a common approach to climate change data and reporting and coordinate climate change action across the capital and nationally.¹³ The Strategic Director for Sustainability and Public Realm and the Group Director for Finance and Resources are members of the Cross Director Climate Coordination Group.

As part of this work, the Council was chosen to lead on the low carbon development programme which seeks to support local authorities to secure low carbon buildings and infrastructure via borough planning. The Head of Planning and Building Control is a member of the Lead Borough Coordination Group.

There are also a number of other programmes being led by boroughs across the capital:

- Retrofit London - London Boroughs of Enfield and Waltham Forest
- Low Carbon Transport - London Borough of Kingston and City of Westminster
- Renewable Power for London - London Borough of Islington
- One World Living - London Borough of Harrow
- Building the Green Economy - London Borough of Hounslow
- Creating a Resilient and Green London - London Borough of Southwark

While each local area is different, each will also share many challenges and opportunities in their journeys to net zero. We were pleased to hear that the Council was committed to building on its existing relationship with London Councils on the climate change agenda to

¹³ [Climate Change Programmes, London Councils](#)

develop better regional and sub regional relationships to promote collaboration and enable stronger collective advocacy.

Monitoring

A key part of future governance arrangements will be to monitor, evaluate and report the progress of action against the objectives of the transition to net zero. It should be noted, however, that local authorities do not currently have to monitor or report reductions in their own or area emissions, and reporting remains inconsistent across local government without national guidance and standardisation.

Since undertaking the review we have heard that the Council expects to adopt the monitoring approach proposed by London Councils using the London Energy and Greenhouse Gas Inventory for borough-wide greenhouse gas emissions, and the Local Partnerships Greenhouse Gas accounting tool for greenhouse gas emissions.¹⁴ This will be cross referenced with other data sources including the BEIS UK greenhouse gas emissions statistics published annually (though these only include territorial emissions).¹⁵

We were pleased to hear that a defined monitoring framework for Council emissions is scheduled to be presented to Cabinet in May 2023, and that there is ongoing work with other boroughs via London Councils to look at ways of coordinating reporting and monitoring processes. Progress against the objectives of the transition to net zero will be reported through the Environmental Sustainability Board, as well as through existing commitments to produce an annual report to the Full Council. We look forward to receiving a clearer outline of the outcome measures and monitoring framework at a future Scrutiny Panel meeting.

We heard that the Audit Committee had undertaken a deep dive review to seek assurance that internal governance and monitoring arrangements are robust and the future delivery programme is aligned with the capital programme. However, it was not clear what future role it would have in the oversight of climate action, and we came away with a sense that there is a need for structures such as the Audit Committee and the Scrutiny Panel and Commissions to retain a close interest in the delivery of local climate action.

We also heard that the Council recognised that broader external governance and oversight arrangements will need to be developed to ensure it is not solely focused on council activities, but also on a range of borough-wide greenhouse gas emissions for which the Council is not responsible and may have lesser influence. We feel this is important as it will not only allow the Council to monitor borough-wide progress, but also help to develop trust and buy-in from key stakeholders and communities.

Stakeholder engagement

The success of the transition to net zero also depends on the continued involvement of Hackney's residents, businesses and organisations, and climate action across the UK has

¹⁴ [London Energy and Greenhouse Gas Inventory \(LEGGI\), London Datastore](#)

¹⁵ [UK greenhouse gas emissions statistics, UK Government](#)

emphasised the need for a more in depth and longer term approach to the engagement of key stakeholders in local areas.

We heard that current plans in this area include developing a future Hackney Net Zero Partnership to convene partners and businesses (including major landowners, public institutions, large businesses and large housing associations), aligning existing networks and key partnerships with the objectives of the CAP and developing a more diverse range of engagement and participatory methods.

So far, the Council has led a mix of project-based statutory consultations and broader digital and place-based resident engagement on Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs), School Streets, the Parking Enforcement Plan and other walking and cycling proposals. In addition to these projects, the Council has worked with already-engaged residents, external stakeholders and experts and local groups on its Air Quality Action Plan and Local Nature Recovery Plan.

We were told that there have so far been two large scale public engagement events on the transition to net zero in Hackney. The first was held with voluntary and community organisations and the second with a demographically representative group of residents who debated the key elements of the Council's net zero ambitions. Whilst this is encouraging, we feel that more can still be done to ensure that the voices of harder to reach groups and those least likely to engage in formal ways are included in the transition to net zero.

Climate action cuts across all council departments and functions, and involves the engagement of a number of key stakeholders across the borough. For an effective response there needs to be visible ownership and leadership - both collectively and individually.

We have been encouraged to hear about the Council's leadership championing and directing action on climate change, and feel that a shift in mindset and culture is beginning to be seen across the organisation. However, we feel that more can be done to establish clear governance and monitoring arrangements, ensure staff from all departments are clear on their role in helping the Council reach its climate goals, and ensure all of Hackney's stakeholders are active partners in the journey to net zero.

Key recommendations:

Recommendation 1

The Council should **report back on how progress against the objectives of the Climate Action Plan will be measured and monitored, and how oversight structures including the Audit Committee, Scrutiny Panel and Scrutiny Commissions will fit into the monitoring framework.**

Recommendation 2

The Council should **explore establishing an appropriate and robust external governance framework** to reflect that the transition to net zero is not focused only on its own activities, but also on those borough-wide emissions for which it is not responsible.

Recommendation 3

The Council should **demonstrate how each service department will contribute in concrete terms to the management and delivery of the Climate Action Plan, and in particular the accompanying Three Year Implementation Plan**, (both in terms of implementing actions and budgeting) for those areas that relate to their remits.

Recommendation 4

The Council should **explore the ways in which it can improve its engagement on net zero with harder to reach groups and those least likely to engage in formal ways**, such as those whose first language is not English, people with disabilities, young people, the elderly, people with low literacy levels and the digitally excluded.

Investment and Finances

Access to finance is a key cross-cutting issue for local authorities in delivering net zero across all sectors. Reaching net zero will require major investment from both the public and private sector and a realignment of council finances to ensure climate change is embedded in all financial decisions.

We therefore sought to understand the likely cost of transitioning to net zero, as well as the various sources of financing available to local authorities, businesses, organisations and individuals.

Cost of transitioning to net zero

The CCC's Sixth Carbon Budget estimates that UK low carbon investment each year will need to increase from around £10 billion in 2020 to around £50 billion by 2030. Other analyses have come to broadly similar conclusions - in a July 2021 report on fiscal risks, the Office for Budget Responsibility estimated a net cost of the UK reaching net zero by 2050 to be £321bn, or just over £10bn per year.¹⁶ In London, the Mayor's Accelerated Green Pathway is estimated to require at least £75 billion of investment between now and 2030 in infrastructure and £108 billion in total by 2050.

At the same time, continuing economic volatility is impacting Hackney's residents at a local scale through the cost of living crisis - reducing take home pay for many, alongside the rise in costs of basic essentials such as food or energy. The Council itself continues to face significant financial challenges over the medium term and the resources needed to finance the transition to net zero are significant.

Looking at wider plans for decarbonisation across the Council's estate, for example, major investment will be needed in the short/medium term to retrofit Council owned buildings, including social housing stock, and to improve insulation and energy systems, even if there may be savings to be derived in the long term from reduced waste collections, energy efficiency and energy generation activities. Other Hackney stakeholders will share similar

¹⁶ [Fiscal risks report July 2021, Office for Budget Responsibility](#)

challenges in funding their journey to net zero, too - for example, homeowners and landlords will need access to affordable financial products, such as loans and green mortgages, and large organisations will need to work together to attract private investment.

We heard that the Council will therefore need to target available budgets where it will have the most impact either by match funding to pull in external grants or by investing in projects that draw in other investment. All of the actions needed to transition to net zero requiring additional funding will need to be considered in light of budgetary cost pressures, both revenue and capital, and the external factors impacting its finances, such as increasing inflation (especially in the construction sector), the impact of the cost of living crisis on income collection and the rising cost of borrowing.

In the near term, however, investment could support the UK's economic recovery following the pandemic and seek to mitigate the impacts of the current energy crisis. In the medium and longer term, investment could generate substantial fuel savings, as cleaner, more-efficient technologies replace fossil fuel and, in time, these savings could cancel out the investment costs entirely. The CCC's Sixth Carbon Budget estimates that net costs for the transition will be below 1% of GDP throughout the next 30 years. In addition to cash returns, investment may also unlock wider benefits such as local economic stimuli, improved health outcomes reducing the ongoing cost of healthcare services, job creation and opportunities to reskill and the alleviation of fuel poverty.

Sources of finance

We heard that, unlike businesses, local authorities have to run balanced budgets and cannot borrow for day-to-day spending, though they can undertake longer term borrowing at low rates (for example for capital programmes). On average, around 40% of local authority income is from Council Tax, nearly half is from government grants and the rest from business rates, and well over half of these resources are spent on education services and adult and children's social care (much of which is allocated in ringfenced grants).

As of October 2022, £25 million from 2022/23 to 2024/25 had been earmarked as part of the Council's existing programme of climate related works, and private sector investment worth £11.56 million had been secured to support the transition to net zero. We were pleased to hear that the Council is taking the next steps in identifying sources of funding and capital investment for itself and other key stakeholders across Hackney such as grant funding from central government, borrowing, local climate bonds, private sector capital and carbon offsets. However, it was clear that there was still significant work to do in this area, especially in terms of planning for the period 2025 to 2030.

An important part of the funding landscape is the diverse range of grant funding schemes provided by central government to support local delivery. However, we were told that central government has not yet provided certainty on its long-term funding plans for key areas of the transition such as retrofit and energy efficiency, and that some characteristics of the funding landscape have caused barriers to take-up and the effective delivery of climate objectives. For example, fragmentation of funding into multiple schemes for specific purposes makes it more complex to find funding and limits delivery across multiple objectives, and short

delivery timescales limits the ability to plan for the longer term and develop the capacity and skills needed for net zero.

We heard that as a result of the pandemic and cost of living crisis, some major funders such as Transport for London (TfL) and the GLA are facing uncertainty with their finances, making it difficult to state what level of funding will be granted for future years. Like the Council, they too are dealing with risks associated with high inflation and interest rates and increasing energy prices. Clearly, there is a huge gap in funding and innovative funding solutions need to be explored as well as leveraging in funding from central government.

In many ways the cost of net zero and the availability of finance is the most significant challenge for the Council in meeting its net zero goals, given the need to realign already stretched finances and mobilise substantial investment from a wide range of organisations outside of its direct influence.

We were reassured there is a clear recognition across the organisation of the scale of investment needed, and that some work has been undertaken to identify possible partners and sources of funding to support local climate action. Having said this, more work needs to be done to establish the finances needed for net zero-related policies, and to work in partnership to ensure sources of funding are available for the net zero agenda.

Key recommendations:

Recommendation 5

The Council should **undertake more detailed modelling on current and future spending on net zero-related policies, as well as the benefits derived from this expenditure**, to develop a fuller understanding of the finance and resourcing needs of the transition to net zero.

Recommendation 6

The Council should **collaborate with other boroughs and regional authorities to lobby central government to get external funding** for the net zero agenda, and should **proactively identify and respond to new funding opportunities** as they arise.

Housing and Corporate Property

Housing stock across the borough varies significantly – from modern stock built at a small scale (such as infill in existing estates) through to larger scale post-war and interwar estates (some involving high-density blocks) to individual homes purchased on an ad hoc basis to meet local need. So too does the Council’s corporate estate, which includes offices, depots, libraries and community halls, all of which are hugely varied and range in design, construction and use.

We queried how the Council is planning to understand and act on the need to adapt existing housing stock and its corporate portfolio to address the impacts of climate change, as well as how it is planning to ensure new homes are climate resilient.

Council housing

The Council manages and maintains over 30,000 homes (a third of Hackney's housing stock), approximately two-thirds of which are tenanted and one-third of which are leasehold. More than 90% of its homes have one, two or three bedrooms, and the majority (55%) date from the mid-century period of 1945 to 1970, with a further 31% dating from between 1970 and 2000. It also has a small but significant proportion of older and very new properties, each of which have specific maintenance requirements.¹⁷

We heard that energy consumption in council housing can be reduced through retrofits, such as adding insulation to roofs and walls, installing double glazing and replacing existing power sources with renewable sources like heat pumps and solar panels. However, like many other local authorities, the Council anticipates various challenges in retrofitting its housing stock. Perhaps the greatest challenge is the availability of finance - at a time in which the Council has limited means due to competing demands for its resources.

We were told that the capital investment levels required across the Council's housing stock, including the level of external funding available, puts the average costs between £20,000 to £70,000 per unit. Based on funding and assumptions as of late 2021 and taking the mid-range cost of £50,000, the estimated shortfall per unit was £30,000. This is the equivalent of £700 million of funding which cannot be funded through the Housing Revenue Account without external funding. While government schemes have increased the public funds available, but not yet to the level required, and private finance solutions are not yet widely available.

The Council will also need to consider the cost of retrofitting to those living in council housing - electricity is more expensive than gas (even with recent gas price increases), and any move to low carbon heat solutions across its housing stock will likely see average household energy costs increase. There will also be cost implications for leaseholders, and leasehold properties will require the agreement of the freeholder to undertake modifications, adding further complications. We came away with a feeling that, for those tenants and leaseholders who may be worried about what retrofit means for their homes, lifestyles and finances, coproduction and engagement will be crucial.

Clearly, there needs to be a significant amount of public and private finance measures mobilised for retrofit, and for this to happen there needs to be local and regional coordination. We were encouraged to hear that the Council is engaging with London Council's Retrofit London workstream which, amongst other actions, seeks to identify the ways in which boroughs can coordinate applications for government funding and assess borrowing and private investment opportunities, as well as to introduce a series of metrics and reporting measures to guide boroughs' retrofitting activity.

We know that housing associations make up a large proportion of landlords in Hackney and manage a significant number of homes across the borough. We were told that, while there are significant differences between the Council and housing associations both in terms of their approach to stock management and their underlying economic model, there is a wide

¹⁷ [Housing Asset Management Strategy 2019-27, London Borough of Hackney](#)

range of retrofit actions and activities which will need to be undertaken by housing associations for Hackney achieve its net zero ambitions. We came away with a sense that, while these could happen in parallel, there is every reason to build bridges between the two programmes where appropriate.

Private sector housing

The private rented sector (PRS) has approximately 35,000 units across the borough, and has seen a significant increase over the last 10 to 15 years. Around a third of Hackney residents now live in the private sector - it represents the fastest growing private rented stock in the UK over the last 20 years, increasing from around 3,000 units in that time. We heard that around a quarter of Hackney's housing stock belongs to homeowners, which is around half the London average and significantly lower than the national average of 63%.¹⁸

There are steps that the Council and its partners can take to promote better energy use in existing private stock, but the limits to council action will be especially keenly felt in this area. In most respects, influence on private sector housing is likely to be limited to new builds and overall planning policy. We were told that the Council has more leverage over private rented stock than it does over owner-occupier stock, as powers and funding schemes do not extend to the owner-occupier sector.

We heard that the Council is looking to increase retrofits and energy monitoring in private properties, and encourage retrofits in conservation areas and heritage buildings where appropriate. Good work is already underway in this area - for example, Hackney Light and Power is supporting private rented and owner-occupier households to improve the energy efficiency of their homes through the Green Homes Programme.

We were encouraged to hear that the Council had been giving advice to renters, landlords and owner-occupiers about the steps they can take to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. This includes basic information on what retrofit is and why it is important, as well as signposting to relevant support and further guidance. It was clear, however, that such support is limited by a lack of resourcing and capacity amongst officers, despite the willingness and skillset to do so.

However, like the Council, landlords and homeowners will face their own set of challenges when it comes to retrofit. For landlords, the cost of retrofitting is high - we heard that 85% of landlords in Hackney are amateur landlords (owning 1-3 properties), and that many found retrofitting to be too expensive. The financial benefits are uncertain or unclear for some, especially as the main beneficiaries of retrofit action in the short-term tend to be tenants rather than landlords themselves. In response, landlords in the borough are increasingly reviewing their stock (e.g. selling properties that are complicated/expensive to retrofit) which could have an impact on the local housing market.

We heard that the PRS in Hackney is mainly made up of older stock with more complicated retrofit requirements, and, to many landlords, retrofit can therefore appear to be excessively

¹⁸ [Hackney Housing Strategy 2017-22, London Borough of Hackney](#)

complex. In addition, mixed ownership is increasingly common in Hackney, with ownership often complicated by the distinctions of freehold and leasehold. Changes to building fabric are easier if the building is owned by a single household or entity (such as a detached house or a housing association block of flats) - for example, leasehold properties may require the agreement of the freeholder to undertake modifications, and multi-tenement flats can also be hard to alter given that the agreement of all households is needed to make changes.

We were told that properties which are listed may have further restrictions to what can be done without gaining approval from the Council - around 22% of properties in Hackney are in conservation areas, higher than the London average of 17%. Improving the energy efficiency of historic homes whilst protecting the character and appearance of their conservation area can therefore seem daunting.

New homes delivery

Between 2022 and 2026, the Council is looking to build, or will support partners to build, around 1,000 new homes. The Council's house building programme contributes to approximately 4% of the total carbon emissions in the borough, which equates to 14% of those which it has strong/direct control over.¹⁹

We heard that where new housing is needed, optimising material use, reusing building materials and selecting low carbon and recycled products reduces their climate impact, as well as making them energy efficient. We were told about the encouraging work undertaken by the Council on existing house building programmes such as De Beauvoir Estate Phase 1, which will see gas boilers replaced with air source heat pumps (which is expected to reduce on-site regulated carbon emissions by 49%).

However, the Council anticipates that there will be various challenges in bringing future programmes in line with its net zero ambitions. We heard that challenges exist in the construction sector, where the pace of change has been slower than in other sectors - the regulatory landscape is complex, and for many construction firms net zero is not yet seen as practical or realistic.

The social housing sector faces other pressing priorities and there are also trade-offs to be made between building net zero carbon homes or addressing, for example, fire safety, the needs of the ageing population, housing need or homelessness. For example, current limitations on non-combustible materials and facades, for instance, prevent the use of timber technologies on buildings over 18 metres or six stories.

We were told that another trade off is between the additional cost associated with building net zero carbon homes and the viability and/or profitability of development and possibly the affordability of those homes. Without additional funding or subsidy, developers may need to make difficult choices around the number of homes they build and the level of carbon saving that can be achieved.

¹⁹ [Building new council homes. London Borough of Hackney](#)

Council strategic property

Similarities can be drawn between the Council's efforts to retrofit its council housing stock and that of its corporate estate (the buildings it occupies to deliver the services it provides) - however, there are notable differences in both the approach and the challenges faced.

The corporate estate varies widely - from office spaces such as Hackney Service Centre and those leased to voluntary and community organisations, through to depots, libraries and civic spaces like Hackney Town Hall. We heard that the diversity of the corporate portfolio brings with it specific retrofit challenges, and that the Council is in the early stages of trying to understand the current characteristics and levels of energy efficiency of the corporate estate.

We know that the estate is largely made up of older buildings with more complicated and potentially costly retrofit requirements, and properties in the estate vary in both their running costs and the revenue they generate - meaning the approach taken to retrofitting one property may vary considerably from the approach taken to another. We came away with a feeling that more could be done to understand the retrofit requirements of the corporate estate, especially in regards to energy efficiency and retrofit requirements.

We were told that the Council is currently simultaneously focused on reducing council occupancy of the corporate estate due its potentially complicated and costly retrofit requirements. In recent years it has moved out of over 100,000 square feet of office space - reducing its carbon footprint as a result. In moving out of Keltan House, the Council has been able to invest against the future revenue stream to improve fixtures and fittings within the building and replace its gas boiler with an electric heating system. This is an example of how repurposing buildings can help the Council to reduce its overhead costs, whilst creating opportunities to invest in upgrading the performance of assets.

There are also other commercial and smaller properties used by the voluntary and community sector within the Council's corporate portfolio. We heard that once a building is leased the Council has limited scope to ensure that tenants use carbon reduction measures, though in some instances it does retain some responsibility for the fabric of the building. However, we did come away with a sense that more could be done to encourage commercial property tenants to use renewable electricity, monitor usage and make energy-related information available to the Council.

These issues are not only felt by the Council - other businesses, organisations and institutions will face similar challenges as they seek to retrofit their property portfolio and we heard that there is considerable opportunity for shared learning in this respect. Homerton University Hospital Trust, the biggest acute provider in the borough, has been looking at innovative ways to retrofit their properties. For example, it had installed cost-effective window solar control films to prevent overheating problems and was in the process of auditing all chillers installed onsite, which may lead to an average 20% to 30% reduction of cooling energy consumption.

Reducing carbon emissions from buildings is one of the biggest challenges facing the
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Council in its transition to net zero, yet it is uniquely placed to drive forward retrofit locally, both through acting on its own stock and by utilising its connections to local stakeholders.

We have heard that progress is being made in understanding the opportunities to retrofit existing council-owned buildings, and in ensuring that new council homes are energy efficient. Despite this, we feel that more work could be done to engage with tenants, leaseholders, other registered providers, owner occupiers and the private rented sector, and to establish pan London retrofitting metrics and collaborative opportunities to drive retrofit forward.

Key recommendations:

Recommendation 7

The Council should **ensure its tenants and leaseholders are supported as much as possible to engage in low-carbon lifestyles**, for example through welcome packs providing information and discounts at reuse and repair shops, and **consider identifying retrofit champions** who are willing to talk about their experiences of retrofitting.

Recommendation 8

The Council should **demonstrate how it will work with registered social landlords operating within the borough** to coordinate actions on retrofit and other decarbonisation measures, and share examples of good practice for mutual benefit.

Recommendation 9

The Council should **explore broadening the licensing requirements for additional houses in multiple occupation (HMO) and selective licensing schemes** to cover the whole borough and include energy efficiency, retrofitting and fuel poverty requirements.

Recommendation 10

The Council should **investigate and report back on the options and implications for expanding the provision of retrofitting and net zero advice to owner-occupiers and the private rented sector**, and **consider identifying retrofit champions** who are willing to talk about their experiences of retrofitting.

Recommendation 11

The Council should **report back on its longer term plan on how it intends to bring the corporate estate in line with the net zero goal, including its retrofitting programme and exploration of clean energy projects.**

Recommendation 12

The Council should **explore including within lease agreement requirements for its commercial property tenants to use renewable electricity, monitor usage and make energy-related information available.**

Transport

Transport is responsible for 6% of Hackney's carbon emissions. The vast majority (70%) of transport-related emissions in the borough are from private cars or motorbikes. Reshaping the local transport system to reduce reliance on cars and shift towards low carbon public transport, cycling and walking will therefore play an important role in the move to net zero.

We questioned how the Council is integrating sustainability and climate resilience into its transport plans, and took time to understand its efforts to improve electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure and encourage more walking and cycling in Hackney.

Public transport

The Council has significant influence over public transport in the borough through its partnerships with neighbouring local authorities, different tiers of government, public transport operators and related sectors.

More residents using public transport decreases the amount of carbon emissions in the borough, and we heard that an efficient public transport network can reduce congestion and pollution and make streets more attractive for walking and cycling. The Council is therefore planning to continue its work to support the provision and accessibility of public transport in Hackney, encouraging a greater uptake of public transport journeys.

We heard that rail accounts for around a quarter of all commuter trips in the borough and, unsurprisingly, the majority of these trips originate from areas in which there is good access to London Underground and Overground services. However, we did hear that there remains gaps in provision of London Underground rail services, overcrowding on services (particularly on the London Overground) and accessibility issues at some stations.

We were pleased to hear that the Council is continuing to work with the DfT, rail operators such as TfL and Network Rail, neighbouring boroughs and a range of advocacy groups and non-government organisations to improve the railway network in the borough. For example, the Council has worked with TfL and Network Rail to secure accessibility improvements to Hackney Central Overground Station, including a new second entrance, an additional staircase and new cycle parking.

We were told that buses are the most significant form of public transport provision in the borough, with 48 day bus routes in operation and around 455 bus stops - in fact, Hackney has the highest mode share of bus users of all London Boroughs. TfL controls routes, frequencies and fares in the borough, and we heard that TfL would likely continue to review the bus network in response to changing travel patterns and as a result of the large drop in fare income experienced during the pandemic.

We were concerned to hear that the impact of current and future cuts to bus services across Hackney may challenge the Council's net zero ambitions. The current funding landscape is fragmented and uncertain and it is recognised that large scale cuts and reductions in bus mileage will make it harder to increase the number of public transport trips and thus reduce carbon emissions. We therefore feel it is important that the Council uses its influence, alongside other boroughs and the GLA, to push for longer term funding certainty and work together to respond as new transport-related funding initiatives are announced.

We were told that the Council wishes to see a rapid electrification of the bus fleet in Hackney - at the time of the review, there were only two electric bus routes that served the borough

(routes 106 and W15) with additional routes (43, 214) serving the periphery. These buses do not emit harmful emissions, and also cut congestion, with a double decker carrying more than up to 80 times the number of passengers as a car. However, electrification of bus routes is enabled through TfL's bus tendering programme, and councils have limited scope to engage and facilitate a further rollout of zero emission buses in their local areas.

Active travel

Walking and cycling are the least carbon-intensive ways to travel, and many of the trips taken by households with cars could have been walked and cycled. This may not only make roads quieter, safer and more attractive for others to walk and cycle, but may also bring local economic co-benefits and improve people's health.

We heard that the Council can play an important role in increasing walking and cycling in Hackney through influencing planning and providing the infrastructure to enable active travel. Hackney's Transport Strategy sets out the Council's vision to create an environment whereby people actively choose to walk and cycle as part of everyday life.²⁰

The Council has introduced one of the largest active travel programmes in the country, with 19 LTNs and 48 new School Streets now being introduced. We were told that it is also reducing road and parking spaces to support the promotion of walking, cycling and climate resilience and introducing sustainable urban drainage networks to reduce traffic and open up Hackney's roads for cleaner uses.

The most recent LTNs have been focused on areas with greater population densities, social distancing and air quality challenges. Some were introduced due to their proximity to the south of the borough and the traffic changes planned for the City of London, and a more general need to develop a contiguous network of neighbourhoods without too many gaps. We were told that results from traffic counts of recent LTNs shows traffic decrease of 38% inside LTNs can be achieved.

We heard that, for School Streets, the priority now is to manage the existing schemes whilst continuing to introduce new School Streets where these are possible and would benefit the area. Tailpipe emissions were down 74% on school streets and, on average, 30% more children were walking to school and 51% more children were cycling or scooting to school. More generally, Hackney has the highest levels of residents cycling to work in London at 15.4% of all commuter journeys, almost four times greater than the London average of 4.3%.

We were pleased to hear that the Council recognised the need to evidence demand for active travel and to closely monitor and measure its benefits, and in particular to ensure it listens to feedback from residents. We heard that, with this insight, the Council will be able to ensure schemes can be adapted, extended or reduced depending on what the data shows, and it can also evidence the benefits of such schemes and whether they have contributed to a mode shift in travel.

²⁰ [Hackney Transport Strategy 2015-25, London Borough of Hackney](#)

For example, the Council has introduced new live traffic monitors across the borough to monitor changes in traffic patterns, and as a result of public feedback it has introduced exemptions for Blue Badge holders from bus gates on Shepherdess Walk, Downs Road, Richmond Road and Stoke Newington Church Street. However, we did come away with a sense that more could be done to engage those key stakeholders, particularly local businesses, that are directly impacted by the rollout of active travel schemes in the borough.

As with other areas of local climate action, we were concerned to hear that access to funding remains one of the main risks to the successful delivery of active travel in Hackney, and the implementation of the Council's wider transport goals more generally. Since the pandemic, and with TfL's own uncertain financial position, the funding mechanism for boroughs has been uncertain, with funding allocated for less than 12 month periods.

Electric vehicles (EV) charging infrastructure

Meeting the Council's climate ambitions will require a step change in the availability of EV charging infrastructure. A full transition to EVs is widely considered as one of the most important actions to achieve the UK's net zero target, with electric vehicles emitting far fewer greenhouse gases and air pollutants than petrol or diesel vehicles.

We heard that for those that still need to travel by car, sufficient infrastructure will be required to enable journeys to be made by the cleanest vehicles. Whilst the Council does not envisage being the long-term provider for EV charging infrastructure in the borough (the chargepoint market will have to strengthen to support the transition), it does have a role to play in catalysing the market and helping it in its early stages.

We were told that those people who still need to travel by car will be encouraged to adopt less polluting electric vehicles or use car sharing services, with Hackney Light and Power aiming to install over 3,000 EV charge points by 2030 to support this. It plans for most petrol and diesel vehicles in the borough to be phased out by 2030 - with 64% of cars and 68% of vans on the road expected to be battery-powered. It is also continuing to reduce emissions from its fleet of vehicles and associated infrastructure - charging points have been implemented across the borough depots and as of 2021/22 13.75% of the Council's road registered fleet were fully electric.

We heard that improving EV charging infrastructure will also require other businesses, organisations and institutions in the borough to contribute and take a lead. Important steps in this regard had already been taken by some - Homerton University Hospital NHS Trust told us that they had installed six EV charging points onsite, introduced four electric vehicles to its in-house fleet and is planning on introducing an all electric fleet of vehicles to its non-emergency patient transport service.

However, despite encouraging progress, the EV charging landscape remains a challenging area. Electric vehicles are still a relatively new technology and, although the Council is paving the way, many residents will be unaware or are just learning about the advantages of electric vehicles. The fear of running out of electricity, also known as range anxiety, is a

concern for many prospective EV owners, and the initial capital cost of vehicle ownership is difficult to overcome for some.

We heard that there are particular challenges for the Council in accessing often insufficient, uncertain and inflexible multiple funding streams and, even if government funding is secured, a proportion of the installation costs have to be met by the private sector given budgetary constraints. Other practical challenges exist too - the available capacity in the grid can mean installation in a specific location is not possible (or grid reinforcement costs make the scheme unviable), and there may also be footway or highway space restraints when considering a location.

Along with buildings, vehicles are the biggest contributor to Hackney's territorial emissions, and one where quick wins can be made. The Council is well placed to reshape the local transport system, working with key stakeholders to reduce residents' reliance on cars and shift towards low-carbon public transport, cycling and walking.

We were encouraged to hear that the Council has implemented one of the most ambitious active travel plans in the country, and recognises the importance of accelerating the rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. However, we came away with a feeling that more could be done to work with regional bodies such as TfL and the GLA on funding and decarbonisation opportunities, and to improve the evidence base for increasing the uptake of active and sustainable travel choices.

Key recommendations:

Recommendation 13

The Council and Transport for London should **review decarbonisation pathways for bus services in Hackney**, particularly around the opportunities to accelerate the rollout of electrification technologies.

Recommendation 14

The Council should explore the ways in which it can **improve the evidence base for increasing the uptake of active and sustainable travel choices** across the borough, with a particular focus on the links with health, education and the local economy.

Recommendation 15

The Council should **undertake a business perceptions survey** to measure how local businesses view active travel and its impact on them, and how best to share information and engage with businesses on this agenda.

Recommendation 16

The Council should **review current activity in promoting electric vehicles (EVs) across London** and **explore ways in which it can work more closely with vehicle manufacturers and operators** to deliver consistent and high-quality provision that removes all barriers to uptake.

Energy

An increase in clean energy production is crucial to achieving net zero. Councils are integral to supporting the delivery of clean energy projects and sustainable development through the planning system, convening relevant local stakeholders and offering support and information for local community groups to undertake energy projects.

We therefore looked at how the Council is using its influence to facilitate a move away from fossil fuels, promote the development of clean energy infrastructure in Hackney and set out policies to encourage high levels of energy efficiency and sustainability in new builds.

Planning policy

The role of plan making in local authority areas will be important in achieving net zero. Planning offers the opportunity to set and implement the long-term strategic vision necessary to deal with the impacts of climate change, and drive forward action on decarbonisation.

It should be noted that planning policy can only directly shape the built environment and influence development through the planning processes and the production of planning policy and guidance - as such existing buildings that do not require planning permission are not subject to these policies.

We were told that there is currently a complicated planning landscape in the UK that impacts on achieving low carbon development locally. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.²¹ The London Plan, the overall strategic planning document for the capital, also sets out a comprehensive range of policies that underpin London's planning response to climate change.²²

We heard that there is a sense of uncertainty about the strength of the planning system due to current government proposals and recently implemented changes. The proposals set out in the Levelling Up White Paper have the potential to impact on the development of low carbon development objectives, and recent changes to permitted development rights has introduced less control in the planning system to require the adoption of climate mitigation and adaptation measures.²³

Whilst the Council's capacity for plan-making is therefore limited, it can work with developers on their obligations to support climate mitigation and adaptation, and include requirements that new buildings meet an improvement on current national standards. The Hackney Local Plan includes additional requirements in regard to climate change - for example, Local Plan policy LP55 provides requirements on net-zero carbon emissions that goes beyond building regulations. It is applicable to all of development - all residential developments, including

²¹ [National Planning Policy Framework, UK Government](#)

²² [The London Plan, Greater London Authority](#)

²³ [Levelling Up White Paper, UK Government](#)

smaller developments that form approximately 41% of planning permissions granted, as well as non-residential developments.²⁴

We were told that where developments cannot meet these requirements on-site, they will be required to provide off-site contributions which will be used by the Council to deliver equivalent off-setting. Any shortfall is provided by a payment in lieu contribution to the Hackney Carbon Offset Fund which is secured through a S106 agreement - for example, in 2020 the fund allocated a total of £775,020 to fund the Solar Pilot Leisure Centres Project and Green Homes Programme.

There is also a role for the Council in increasing the number of developments complying with policy and delivering on-site carbon savings once buildings have been built and occupied. We heard that Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE) is the process of obtaining feedback on a building's performance in use after it has been built and occupied, informing building users if their building is energy efficient and providing data to help understand how buildings are used compared to their design intention. We came away with a sense that more can be done to embed POE as standard practice to ensure all new buildings meet intended energy efficiency ratings.

We were encouraged to hear that the Council is leading on London Council's Low Carbon Development workstream, which sets out a pathway for London Boroughs to collaborate on policy making and guidance, strengthen and explore the planning levers for the delivery of low carbon buildings, use innovation to make low carbon more achievable and increase training and understanding within all council workforces. We look forward to hearing about the development and approval of the second two-year work plan in 2023, and the outcomes of the current work plan.

Low carbon heat

Heat networks (also known as district heating) are identified as one of the heating system improvements for use in Hackney, alongside heat pumps and electric heaters, and when combined with complimentary fabric retrofit.

We heard that, as gas boilers are phased out across the borough, feasibility studies into low carbon heat will be simultaneously investigated. This will include identifying Hackney buildings which are best suited to switching to low carbon fuel such as heat pumps and hydrogen boilers, and exploring the feasibility of district heat networks.

We were told that the Council is best-placed to understand local options for developing district heat networks given its connections to local stakeholders, wide-ranging responsibilities such as for social housing and its influence through the planning system. Heat networks supply heat from a central source to a variety of different customers such as public buildings, shops, hospitals, universities and homes and, by supplying multiple buildings, they avoid the need for individual boilers or electric heaters in every building.

²⁴ [Hackney Local Plan 2033, London Borough of Hackney](#)

We were encouraged to hear about the work in this area which has already happened locally - for example, the Council operates the Shoreditch Heat Network which serves Wenlock Barn, Cranston and Fairbank estates. Several private networks also exist in the borough, and a decentralised energy master plan study recently identified ten district heating opportunity areas for consideration including Dalston, Clissold Park and Woodberry Down.

We heard that a heat network is one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing carbon emissions from heating - their efficiency and carbon-saving potential increases as they grow and connect to each other, and many of the cheapest sources of low-carbon heat can only be used if there is a network to distribute the heat. We therefore feel that the Council should prioritise the implementation of heat networks, with a view to undertaking projects in the opportunity areas identified in the masterplan study as soon as practically possible.

Whilst it is recognised that new heating technologies can bring huge carbon savings, many are untried at the scale required. There are risks associated with using these technologies, such as high upfront costs and potentially higher fuel and maintenance bills. We came away with a sense that there is significant opportunity for the Council to learn from the experience, challenges and successes of other boroughs, as well as consider opportunities for boroughs to explore the feasibility of connecting heat networks sub-regionally and collectively consider investment and commercial models.

We were told that the suitability of different technologies may change in the future, and as such, it was important that the renewable technology market is kept under review to explore the opportunities that they may bring. In particular, hydrogen has gained increasing prominence as an energy source that can be used to contribute to net zero with a range of applications such as in the transport, energy storage and heating sectors.

However, while there is wide public interest in the use of hydrogen as an alternative fuel, the supply chain for hydrogen is underdeveloped and the hydrogen available is not low carbon at this time. We were pleased to hear that the Council was committed to evaluating viable alternatives like hydrogen to pursue, provided the goal of decarbonisation is achieved.

Renewable energy generation

To achieve net zero, electricity needs to be generated from a mix of low carbon, renewable sources. Renewable technologies use natural energy to make electricity, and fuel sources include wind, wave, marine, hydro, biomass and solar.

We heard that one way in which the Council was looking to balance energy use and reduce emissions in this regard is through the installation of solar panels. Installing solar panels across the borough can help residents, businesses and organisations to save on their energy bills, maximise their reductions on carbon savings and contribute to the decarbonisation of the energy grid. According to Buro Happold modelling, the Council could achieve the installation of 2,000 home scale solar PV installations and 200 larger scale PV

installations by 2030 - this, and existing PV sites, could generate around 5% of building energy demand by 2040.²⁵

We were told that the Council has committed to covering its own roof space with solar panels as part of its plans to retrofit Council-owned buildings across the borough. The first pilot projects were launched on West Reservoir Leisure Centre and London Fields Lido in 2021 and, following a feasibility study to identify the capacity for solar generation in the borough, a programme of works to start covering roof spaces began in 2022.

We were concerned to hear that the take-up of solar panels had slowed since the Feed-In Tariff scheme was closed by central government in 2019. We were therefore pleased to hear that Hackney Light and Power is raising awareness of the benefits of solar power and supporting businesses and residents to invest in renewable technologies - the Hackney Green Homes Programme, for example, supports private rented and owner-occupier households to invest in carbon reduction measures and the Community Energy Fund supports community groups to access funding and resources to work with local schools and other public institutions such as faith buildings, nurseries or playschemes.

We were told that wind energy projects can also be a relatively secure and affordable source of energy, and we were pleased to hear that the Council is looking to explore the feasibility of wind energy in the borough in the near future. If viable, residents may be able to invest in one or more turbines of their own, either as individuals or as a community group acting together, and the Council could take a similar approach and invest in their own wind energy projects (which could generate income which can be reinvested into more energy saving and renewable energy measures, or used to support budgets for other priorities).

Purchasing renewable power

Purchasing renewable energy is another way in which businesses and organisations can reduce their emissions in pursuit of net zero. This is done on the understanding that they will be reducing their own emissions, as well as contributing to national or global emissions reductions in order to combat climate change.

The Council's Sustainable Procurement Strategy sets out its ambition to maintain sustained growth of "green" electricity in its energy contracts, and we were told that the long term strategy for the Council is to move to high quality green tariffs and Power Purchase Agreements.²⁶ Long term power contracts such as Power Purchase Agreements are preferable to standard energy tariffs since they provide a predictable source of income to renewable generators, and directly drive investment in green renewable infrastructure.

Long term power contracts should also ensure the energy provider does not double count power supplied in its reporting, and that the revenue is used to fund and build new generators for the new supply required. We were told that the Council will pursue a power purchase agreement approach from 2025 onwards - as a minimum, it will transfer to an agreement which supplies 50% of electrical demand at net zero carbon supply.

²⁵ [Net Zero Energy Strategy, London Borough of Hackney](#)

²⁶ [Sustainable Procurement Strategy 2018-2022, London Borough of Hackney](#)

We were encouraged to hear that other Hackney stakeholders are also taking a lead in this area - Homerton University Hospital NHS Trust told us that they had been purchasing electricity only sourced from renewable technologies since April 2021, and New City College has recently signed contracts for renewable energy on selected campuses.

Increasing clean energy production through the delivery of low-carbon energy projects, developing policy and planning guidance and actively encouraging sustainable development all have the potential to provide significant carbon reductions in Hackney.

We have heard that the Council has set out policies encouraging high levels of energy efficiency and sustainability in new buildings, and is taking steps to rethink its own approach to energy generation and procurement. Having said this, we feel that the Council could do more to explore collaborative energy projects with other boroughs and regional authorities, keep recent innovations in the renewable energy market under review, and engage with residents, businesses and developers on the benefits of clean energy projects.

Key recommendations:

Recommendation 17

The Council should **embed the use of Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE) and data sharing in its planning policy on all developments where the building has been in use for a minimum of three years** to ensure robust monitoring processes for energy performance and enable constructive dialogue with developers on energy efficiency.

Recommendation 18

The Council should **report back on the current London-wide picture of decentralised energy projects and pipeline schemes** that could provide opportunities for future programmes, and **explore collaborative procurement/investment opportunities for renewable power** with other boroughs and regional authorities such as the North London Waste Authority.

Recommendation 19

The Council should **enhance communications around the benefits of installing solar panels and the support available to businesses and households.**

Recommendation 20

The Council should **keep the hydrogen production market under review**, and where possible **ensure all new or replacement boilers are considered for hydrogen gas heating.**

Education, Skills and Economic Development

The transition to net zero will change how we supply, buy, use and dispose of the goods and services we need, and is likely to create a number of economic opportunities for local areas. The role of local authorities in this respect is twofold, with them both managing a transition to a low carbon, circular economy and enabling green growth.

We therefore sought to understand the Council's role in reducing borough-wide consumption emissions and promoting a circular economy, how it is encouraging local businesses to transition to net zero, and how it can anticipate future skill needs to frame education and training responses appropriately.

Consumption

We heard that 74% of Hackney's total emissions come from consumption emissions - the emissions generated outside Hackney to create the goods and services used inside Hackney (for example, in manufacturing and delivery). Meat consumption, for example, is highly emitting - nearly 60% of emissions from food in Hackney are linked to meat production, including farming machinery and processes to rear and transport animals.

Individuals can influence the reduction of consumption emissions through changing how much we all consume, and what we consume, and a reduction in these emissions is also dependent on changes by manufacturers and service providers. The main area of influence for the Council in this area was therefore in encouraging local residents, businesses and organisations to change how goods are supplied, bought, used and disposed of.

We were encouraged to hear that the Council is working closely with other boroughs on London Council's One World Living workstream, which is being led by London Borough of Harrow in partnership with West London Waste Authority and Re London (previously known as London Waste Recycling Board). It aims to achieve a significant consumption emissions reduction in two thirds of London households by 2030, with an initial focus on electricals, food, plastics and textiles.

We heard that one way in which the Council is looking to encourage more circular thinking is by signposting households, businesses, and anchor institutions to guidance on reducing consumption emissions and possible procurement strategy changes. For example, it has launched a circular economy campaign (#ZeroWasteHackney 'Go Beyond Recycling') to help residents waste less and rethink resources.

We also heard that the Council is looking to embed actions to reduce consumption emissions through the Council's own internal procurement and management processes. However, we came away with a sense that more could be done to maximise the Council's procurement levers, understand some of the biggest challenges that suppliers face in meeting net zero standards, and look at what can be done to overcome them.

The Council is also supporting businesses, organisations and residents to maintain, repair and reuse goods. We were encouraged by the good work already going on in this area which is helping to develop a local reuse network through projects like the Library of Things in Dalston and reuse and repair hubs delivered with the Forest Recycling Project, Hackney Fixers, TRAIID and Hackney Dr Bike team.

We also heard that, as the responsible authority for providing local waste and recycling collections and for the processing and treatment of the waste and recycling collected, the Council has a significant role to play in reducing both household and business waste,

increasing recycling rates and maximising rates of food and garden waste composting.

There has been good work recently in this area, with the Council introducing fortnightly collections of residual waste to street level properties in early 2021, and establishing a team to provide education and enforcement in support of the change. However, we feel there is scope to provide further support, advice and training to residents and in particular local businesses on low plastic approaches and reducing food waste.

The Council is also exploring the ways in which it can raise awareness of and enable access to healthy and sustainable diets, by encouraging healthy and sustainable food to be supplied in local businesses/organisations, as well as procuring sustainable and healthy food for its own spaces. We were pleased to hear that it is supporting local sustainable food partnerships, working closely with the GLA Food Roots Incubator programme, and is leading the reducing food consumption working group as part of London Council's One World Living workstream.

Supporting local businesses to decarbonise

Hackney is home to a diverse ecosystem of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), all of which have different needs, priorities, building typologies, tenancy arrangements and sources of emissions. We heard that, of the 22,340 businesses in Hackney, 20,400 identified as a micro business (0-9 employees), 1,640 identified as a small business (10-49 employees), 225 identified as a medium-sized business (50 to 249 employees) and 45 identified as a large business (250+ employees).

Good work in this area is already underway at a pan London level. The Mayor's Green New Deal aims to double the size of London's green economy by 2030 by coordinating the economic, industrial and political foundations to allow the green economy to grow.²⁷ London Council's Building the Green Economy workstream, led by London Borough of Hounslow, is bringing together a range of stakeholders to outline the collaborative actions needed to reach this target.

We were told that, despite a positive appetite to change, there remain key barriers to local businesses transitioning to net zero, including high initial upfront and operational costs and a lack of information on how businesses can be more sustainable, technical advice on retrofitting and green business opportunities/networking.

Some businesses will find it easier to adjust and move towards net zero than others - we were told that London-wide data suggests that 23% of all businesses were not taking any action at all. There is therefore a clear role for the Council in supporting businesses to shift their practices, business models and procurement to align with net zero, which will require an understanding of the nature and level of support needed for local businesses to decarbonise.

²⁷ [A Green New Deal. Greater London Authority](#)

We heard that the Council and its partners were providing support, guidance and information to local businesses to support them in their transition to net zero. For example, the Zero Emissions Network, a partnership between the London Boroughs of Hackney, Islington and Tower Hamlets (and supported by the Mayor of London), offers free advice and services for local businesses to switch to low emission energy and travel options.

The Council had provided some of its own grant funding to local SMEs (for example through the Adapt Your Business business support programme and the Hackney Central Impact and Ideas Fund) to fund heat decarbonisation and energy efficiency measures. Co-operative financing mechanisms for community-scale and joint-owned services were also being explored, such as community-owned solar panels and retrofit networks which can spread the upfront costs of decarbonising buildings.

As well as the Council, there are a range of other bodies supporting SMEs to transition including the UK Green Building Council, Centre for Low Emission Construction, Federation of Small Businesses, London Growth Hub and Zero Business Network. Funding is available through both the GLA Greater London Fund and the Greater London Investment Fund, and we feel that there is a clear role for the Council in bringing together and raising awareness of the support and funding opportunities available to SMEs.

We heard that through-traffic linked to freight accounts for around a fifth of all traffic in Hackney, and 20% of greenhouse gas emissions are from freight and through traffic not caused by Hackney residents or businesses. We are encouraged by the Council's work to date to accelerate alternative, clean delivery models, such as cargo bikes, van sharing and last mile delivery service models which can contribute to reductions in emissions. However, increasing freight and logistics emissions are a growing concern in the capital, and we feel that there is a need to further develop understanding and work with partners and neighbouring boroughs to identify new solutions and traffic management options.

Education and skills

The transition to net zero is expected to drive employment opportunities across London. Analysis shows that by 2030, in a central scenario there could be 505,000 green jobs in the capital (a net increase of 50,000 jobs) reaching over a million by 2050. In the next decade alone, green jobs could increase by 8% a year.²⁸

We heard that green jobs are estimated to take up around 4.4% of total employment in London, and employment figures are currently highest in the power, homes and buildings and green finance sectors. Green jobs in London are predominantly high-level managerial, professional and associate professional/technical roles. The green workforce is highly qualified, and two thirds have first degrees or equivalent or higher qualifications - among those with vocational qualifications the most common subject areas are building and civil engineering, followed by electricity and energy. In terms of skills supply considerations, green sectors tend to draw staff from other sectors, rather than straight from education - we

²⁸ [Green Jobs and Skills in London. WPI Economics](#)

were told that around 1% of the workforce enter straight from full-time education each year, compared with 3% across all sectors.

Whilst there is a general understanding of current green jobs and skills in Hackney and London-wide, we came away with a sense that more needs to be done to understand the potential scale and nature of green jobs in the coming decades, and the implications this may have on education and skills provision. We were encouraged to hear that this is recognised in London Councils' Green Economy Action Plan, which highlights the uncertainty in defining 'green jobs', when they will be generated and at what scale, and what new skills will be needed.

We were told that, to ensure a sufficient skills supply for new green jobs in the borough, there is an urgent need to increase education provision in relevant subjects and courses, increase the proportion of those taking relevant courses who progress to green employment, and increase the flows from other sectors into green sectors, including through re-skilling training. It is widely accepted that more skilled workers will be needed in construction supply chains to retrofit building stock, and we heard that Hackney's green finance and technology sectors are likely to grow alongside other green industries like digital transformation and electric vehicle servicing/maintenance.

We heard that the Council is therefore working alongside its partners in London's skills system to give training opportunities to residents to provide them with the skills needed to work in green roles. This will include green apprenticeships and training pathways and reskilling and retraining and/or recruiting staff in its own workforce. We feel that there is therefore a clear opportunity to align green skills opportunities with the Council's own housing, corporate property and regeneration programmes, and create a pipeline of carbon reduction jobs.

The Council is working with schools and educational settings in planning for the skills demand of young people who are yet to enter the labour market, supporting workers already in the labour market with skills valuable in a zero carbon economy but who will need to upskill and support those whose livelihoods may be affected by the transition by offering retraining programmes for people so they can find new forms of work.

We were pleased to hear that there has been a large increase in the number of building construction courses offered and taken up in the borough over the past few years. New City College told us that they had exceeded their target numbers for building and construction courses across its campuses by somewhere between 20% and 32% (depending on the campus) for the 2021/22 year. However, we did come away with a sense that the Council could do more to engage and promote existing green training schemes and programmes like these, and make existing colleges and training programmes aware of the demand for specific qualifications such as in retrofit.

Schools and early years settings in particular have a role to play in supporting learning and raising awareness about climate change. Climate change covers a wide range of issues that provide a wealth of opportunities for learning across almost any subject. Physical measures that can be adopted to respond and adapt to climate risks and severe weather may also offer significant learning opportunities - for example, tree planting offers learning

opportunities as well as biodiversity, energy efficiency and air quality benefits, and softening play infrastructure through the use of sand, pea shingles or rain gardens not only slows rain run off, but can also be used as multi-purpose spaces for play activities and outdoor teaching as they will remain dry the majority of the time.

We heard that the Council is also using its influence to encourage businesses and partner organisations to consider what they can do to support the development of green skills locally. It works closely with contractors and developers to create Employment and Skills Plans (ESPs), which help to create employment and skills opportunities for Hackney residents through work experience, job creation, apprenticeships and training. While this is encouraging, we came away with a sense that more could be done to promote existing training schemes and programmes aimed at developing local green skills in the borough, and to expose children and young people in particular to green skills opportunities.

As well as working with schools and educational settings, businesses and partner organisations, the Council will also need to reskill, retrain and/or recruit to its own workforce to meet the needs of the climate emergency. To strengthen and better coordinate its climate action, the Council aims to build organisational skills, plans and capability more broadly across the organisation - for example, by providing carbon literacy training for senior managers and councillors on low carbon buildings and technologies. We heard that there is also a need to identify the skills required within its own workforce to support the Council's net zero work. We were encouraged to hear that the Council is looking at the ways in which it can align, expand and grow its Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) to enable it to undertake some of the retrofitting and clean energy work itself and reduce reliance on sub contractors. We feel that more can be done to develop the wider workforce's skills and understanding of climate emergency to ensure each service department is able to contribute effectively to the net zero objectives.

Climate change presents an opportunity to rethink local economic growth and move towards a cleaner, low-carbon economy. For this to happen, the Council needs to facilitate more circular thinking in the way that products are supplied, bought, used and disposed of, encourage businesses to shift to low-carbon practices, and to ensure a sufficient skills supply for new green jobs.

We were encouraged by the support being provided for local businesses and employers to understand some of the adaptive activities they may need to undertake, and to encourage more circular thinking amongst residents and businesses alike. Despite this, we came away with a sense that more could be done to provide practical support to local businesses to decarbonise and shift their practices, and to kickstart and provide training opportunities and confidence for the supply chain.

Key recommendations:

Recommendation 21

The Council should **outline the progress it has made in embedding actions to reduce carbon emissions into internal procurement and management processes, and the options it is exploring to go further.**

Recommendation 22

The Council should **report back on its waste management work and objectives to reduce waste arisings and improve recycling and food composting rates**, and with particular consideration given to commercial waste.

Recommendation 23

The Council **should undertake local business surveys** to identify the nature and level of support needed for local businesses to decarbonise, and to map existing green businesses in the borough.

Recommendation 24

The Council should work with neighbouring boroughs and partner organisations to **identify new solutions and traffic management options to reduce carbon emissions from freight and logistics**.

Recommendation 25

The Council should work with other boroughs, training and education partners and businesses to **map out the scale and nature of green jobs in London and in Hackney, to consider the implications this will have on education and skills training provision**.

Recommendation 26

The Council should work with schools and educational settings to **enhance the quality of climate education, create hands-on opportunities for children and young people during the development and retrofitting of council-owned properties, and encourage carbon reduction measures in play areas and grounds** such as tree planting, Sustainable Drainage Systems and natural play spaces.

Recommendation 27

The Council should **report back on its plans to align, expand and grow its Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) to be able to undertake carbon reduction measures, such as installing low carbon heat sources and retrofitting, as well as the progress it has made to date**.

Conclusion

Climate change is one of the biggest, most complex and cross-cutting challenges that the UK faces, and it will impact environments and individuals across all levels of society. Tackling climate change is a shared responsibility, and there are no clearly defined solutions, with different stakeholders taking different views on how net zero can be achieved.

Our work has highlighted the necessity of coordinated local action for lasting environmental, social and institutional change. When it comes to tackling the climate crisis, Hackney is one of the most ambitious councils in the country, which many others look to for inspiration. Having said this, faster and coordinated action will be needed to ensure national and local net zero targets are met and communities are protected from the effects of climate change.

Our work has led us to make a number of recommendations in key areas relating to decarbonising transport, buildings and waste, installing clean energy projects, encouraging green growth, and ensuring a sufficient skills supply for new green jobs. We hope that our findings and recommendations will help the Council and other local stakeholders to understand not only the barriers which are challenging the delivery of climate action, but also the opportunities that can support them in their net zero journey.

Throughout the review the importance of using the Council's convening power to agree solutions across the borough, rather than just focusing on the Council as an institution, was evident. There is a growing understanding that climate action needs to be holistic, and we hope that the Council will prioritise the continued involvement of Hackney's residents, businesses and organisations in any future action it takes in response to our findings.

Finance Comments

The Net Zero Review was established to look at how Hackney can better meet its ambitions to achieve net zero targets in a manner that is affordable, efficient and fair. The review engaged with a range of organisations, businesses, industries, and communities on issues such as decarbonising buildings, transport, and waste, supporting clean energy projects, and managing a transition to a low carbon, circular economy.

The report provides a set of recommendations to address the climate and ecological crisis, which will be implemented through the governance process. However, the direct financial implications of these recommendations are difficult to determine at this stage. It is important to note that the council is facing a significant revenue budget gap over the medium term to 2026/27, while its capital programme, including HRA schemes, totals nearly £1bn in the three years to 2026/27. Included in the capital programme is an investment of £61m in projects which contribute to the Council's net zero target. Current capital receipts are all earmarked for existing schemes, which means borrowing will increase to fund the capital programme. This borrowing includes both the medium term, where capital receipts are anticipated to be generated from the later sale of private homes, and the longer term, where there is no receipt generated. The council is required to set aside sums in its revenue budget to service the interest on its debt and repay the borrowing for this long-term borrowing. In 2023/24, £6.2m is budgeted for both these sums, but it is anticipated to increase to around £20m by 2026/27 (the end of the medium term period), increasing from 1.8% to 5.7% of the Council's net revenue budget. It is important to keep in mind that these figures will increase if additional capital projects are approved on to the capital programme which are financed via borrowing.

Taking forward the recommendations arising from this review should as far as possible be contained within existing budgets, both revenue and capital given the financial challenges facing the Council. Any recommendation requiring additional will need to be considered as part of the Council's budget setting process.

Legal Comments

The Scrutiny Panel / Scrutiny Commissions are empowered under Article 7 of the London Borough of Hackney's Constitution to undertake policy reviews generally and make suggestions for improvements.

The aim of the Commission in carrying out this review was to look at what is needed to meet both national and local net zero targets, and to ask how the Council could better meet its ambitions in a manner that is affordable, efficient and fair.

There is currently no legal requirement for the Council to achieve specific carbon saving targets. However, the Council is under a general duty to have regard to the environment in all decisions it makes, and national government has set a legally binding target to reduce national carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050. Furthermore, the Mayor of London has set a target for London to be net zero carbon by 2030.

Hackney's draft Climate Action Plan (CAP) was presented to Cabinet in October 2022 and approval was given for consultation to be undertaken on the CAP for a period of 10 weeks, which concluded in January 2023. The results of the consultation are currently scheduled to be considered by Cabinet in May 2023.

Legal Services note that the Panel has made a number of recommendations.

Appendices

Membership

Scrutiny Commission	Membership
Scrutiny Panel	Cllr Ben Hayhurst, Cllr Margaret Gordon (Chair), Cllr Sharon Patrick, Cllr Soraya Adejare, Cllr Sophie Conway, Cllr Polly Billington, Cllr Peter Snell and Cllr Clare Potter
Living in Hackney	Cllr Sharon Patrick (Chair), Cllr Anthony McMahon, Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Penny Wrout, Cllr Soraya Adejare, Cllr Ajay Chauhan and Cllr Clare Joseph
Health in Hackney	Cllr Ben Hayhurst (Chair), Cllr Peter Snell, Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli, Cllr Emma Plouviez, Cllr Kam Adams and Cllr Michelle Gregory
Skills, Economy & Growth	Cllr Polly Billington (Chair), Cllr Clare Potter, Cllr Steve Race, Cllr Gilbert Smyth, Cllr Anna Lynch, Cllr Jon Narcross, Cllr Fliss Premru, Cllr Claudia Turbet-Delof and Cllr Jessica Webb

Participants

Organisation	Attendees
Hackney Council	<p><u>Cabinet</u></p> <p>Cllr Mete Coban (Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport)</p> <p>Cllr Guy Nicholson (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Housing Supply, Planning, Culture and Inclusive Economy)</p> <p>Cllr Carole Williams (Cabinet Member for Employment, Skills and Human Resources)</p> <p>Cllr Clayeon McKenzie (Cabinet Member for Housing)</p> <p>Cllr Chris Kennedy (Cabinet Member for Health, Adult Social Care and Leisure)</p> <p>Cllr Sem Moema (Mayoral Advisor for Private Rented Sector and Affordability)</p> <p><u>Sustainability & Public Realm</u></p>

	<p>Aled Richards (Strategic Director of Sustainability and Public Realm)</p> <p>Andy Cunningham (Head of Streetscene)</p> <p>Ian Holland (Head of Leisure and Green Spaces)</p> <p>Sam Kirk (Head of Sustainability & Environment)</p> <p>Mary Aladegbola (Head of Energy and Carbon Management)</p> <p>Lucja Paulinska (Head of Operations – Hackney Light and Power)</p> <p>Matthew Carrington (Strategic Delivery Manager)</p> <p>Tyler Linton (Group Engineer - Sustainable Transport and Engagement, Streetscene)</p> <p>Katie Glasgow (Strategic Planning Manager)</p> <p>Rachael Weaver (Planning Policy Officer)</p> <p>Andrew Amoah (Project Manager)</p> <p>Barry Coughlan (Major Project Manager)</p> <p><u>Housing Services</u></p> <p>Steve Waddington (Strategic Director of Housing Services)</p> <p><u>Inclusive Economy, Regeneration & New Homes</u></p> <p>Chris Trowell (Interim Director of Regeneration)</p> <p>James Goddard (Interim Director of Regeneration)</p> <p>Suzanne Johnson (Head of Area Regeneration)</p> <p>Andrew Monk (Head of Employment, Skills & Adult Learning)</p> <p>Jasmin Ceccarelli-Drewry (Regeneration Officer)</p> <p>Simone van Elk (Strategic Delivery Manager)</p>
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	<p><u>Strategic Property</u></p> <p>Chris Pritchard (Director of Strategic Property)</p> <p>Ken Rorrison (Head of Strategic Design)</p> <p>Irina Mot (Strategic Asset Manager)</p> <p><u>Procurement</u></p> <p>Rotimi Ajilore (Head of Procurement)</p>
London Borough of Waltham Forest	James McHugh (Head of Housing Strategy)
London Borough of Harrow	Matthew Adams (Head of Natural Resources and Climate)
Greater London Authority	Philip Graham (Executive Director, Good Growth)
London Councils	Kate Hand (Head of Climate Change)
Department for Work and Pensions	Steve Hanshaw (Senior Partnership Manager)
Buro Happold	<p>Jon Gregg (Sustainability Engineer)</p> <p>Martha Dillon (Sustainability Consultant)</p>
Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust	<p>Tracey Fletcher (Chief Executive)</p> <p>Liam Griggs (Head of Facilities, Compliance and Performance)</p>
New City College	<p>Jamie Stevenson (Group Executive Director of Apprenticeships & Business Development)</p> <p>Alison Arnaud (Principal of Hackney and Tower Hamlets Colleges)</p>
Hackney Resident Liaison Group	<p>Steve Webster (Co-Chair)</p> <p>Helder Dacosta (Co-Chair)</p>
Other Attendees	<p>Sharon West (Chair, Lordship South Tenant Management Group)</p> <p>Jean Nicholson (Chair, Downs Estate Tenant Management</p>

	Group) Cllr Vincent Stops (Chair, Planning Sub-Committee)
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Meetings

Scrutiny Commission	Topics & Links	Date
Scrutiny Panel	Net Zero Carbon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • Minutes • Livestream 	4th October 2021
Living in Hackney	Energy Strategy & Systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • Minutes • Livestream 	26th October 2021
	Buildings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • Minutes • Livestream 	8th November 2021
	Buildings, Electric Charging & Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • Minutes • Livestream 	13th December 2021
	London Councils Consumption Emissions and Retrofit Workstreams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • Minutes • Livestream 	7th March 2022
Health in Hackney	Roadmap to Net Zero at Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • Minutes • Livestream 	17th November 2021
Skills, Economy & Growth	Green Economy & Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • Minutes • Livestream 	22nd November 2021
	Transport	15th December

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • Minutes • Livestream 	2021
	SMEs & Decarbonisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda • Minutes • Livestream 	22nd February 2022

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Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Circular economy	An economic model in which resources are retained in use at their highest value for as long as possible and are then reused or recycled, leaving a minimum of residual waste.
Climate emergency	An umbrella term to describe the situation where burning fossil fuels creates greenhouse gas emissions, which are changing the climate of the planet. Also known as: climate change, climate collapse, climate crisis, global warming.
Consumption emissions	The greenhouse gas emissions generated outside Hackney to create the goods and services used inside Hackney, for example in manufacturing and delivery.
Decarbonisation/Decarbonise	The process of reducing greenhouse gas emissions

District heat network	A distribution system of insulated pipes that takes heat from a central source and delivers it to a number of buildings.
Embodied carbon	The greenhouse gas emissions created to produce, transport, install, maintain, replace and dispose of materials or items. This is a type of consumption emission.
Freeholder	Someone who owns the freehold of a property which can include a building and other property or land. In a block of flats, for example, the freeholder would own the land and the actual building.
Fuel poverty	The situation where someone is unable to afford to keep their home adequately heated, without compromising basic necessities. Central government has defined fuel poverty as when a household needs to spend more than 10% of its income to achieve reasonable levels of warmth (22°C in living areas, 18°C in unoccupied rooms)
Greenhouse gas emissions	Refers to the gases created when fossil fuels are burnt that contribute to the climate and biodiversity breakdown. Also known as: carbon emissions, carbon dioxide emissions, GHGs and emissions.
Green jobs	Jobs that have a focus on either reducing carbon emissions, restoring nature or making similar environmental improvements
Hackney Light and Power	The Council's energy services arm, installing clean energy services across Hackney.
Heat pump	A device used to heat and cool buildings by transferring thermal energy from a cooler space to a warmer space.
Leaseholder	A leaseholder is someone who owns a property on a lease, typically for 99, 125 or 999 years. The length of the lease decreases year by year until it eventually runs out.
Low carbon (e.g. item, product)	Something that does not release significant amounts of carbon when produced or operated. Typically they are electric and running on fossil-free renewable power, or capable of running on the national grid, which is rapidly decarbonising.
National grid	The network of power stations, powerlines and electricity

	infrastructure that allows electricity to be generated, transported and used across the county. Within the network there are many different Distribution Network Operators who send electricity from the grid to end users.
Net zero	Net zero refers to a state in which the greenhouse gases going into the atmosphere are considerably reduced and the residual emissions removed out of the atmosphere elsewhere. In the context of the built environment, buildings should aim to reduce their overall greenhouse gas emissions for embodied carbon and operational energy to near zero or negative, with reliance on offsetting strictly limited to exceptional circumstances.
Offsetting	The process of compensating for greenhouse gas emissions, by participating in schemes designed to make equivalent reductions of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Also known as: carbon offsetting.
Range anxiety	Worry on the part of a person driving an electric car that the battery will run out of power before the destination or a suitable charging point is reached.
Renewable energy	Energy generated using fuels that are naturally restocked in a short time period and do not rely on fossil fuel extraction, such as solar or wind power.
Retrofit	The process of upgrading and altering existing buildings or systems to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This might include upgrading their thermal performance to improve energy efficiency, adding renewable energy sources or removing fossil fuel power sources. This reduces the amount of energy used in a building, reducing fuel poverty and greenhouse gas emissions while improving comfort levels.
Solar panels	A renewable energy technology that uses sunlight as a source of energy to generate electricity.
Territorial emissions	The greenhouse gas emissions from energy consumption and activities inside Hackney.

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
BEIS	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

CCC	Climate Change Committee
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfT	Department for Transport
DLO	Direct Labour Organisation
EV	Electric vehicle
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GLA	Greater London Authority
G20	An intergovernmental forum comprising 19 countries and the European Union
HMO	House of multiple occupation
HMT	Her Majesty's Treasury
LETI	London Energy Transformation Initiative
LGV	Light goods vehicle
LTN	Low Traffic Neighbourhood
MHCLG	Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government
NHS	National Health Service
NLWA	North London Waste Authority
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
POE	Post Occupancy Evaluation
PRS	Private Rented Sector
PV	Photovoltaics
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
TfL	Transport for London

Title of Report	Executive Response to the Overarching Scrutiny Panel Investigation into Net Zero
Key Decision No	Non Key Decision
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Meeting Date	23 October 2023
Cabinet Member	Cllr Mete Coban, Cabinet Member for Climate Change, Environment and Transport
Classification	Open
Ward(s) Affected	All
Key Decision & Reason	Not required
Implementation Date if Not Called In	
Group Director	Rickardo Hyatt, Group Director, Climate, Homes and Economy

1. Cabinet Member's introduction

- 1.1. I welcome the review recommendations from the Scrutiny Panel (SP) as a result of its in depth examination of the Council's plans to achieve net zero. When this review started in October 2021, the Council was already delivering key practical activities associated with achieving net zero, however, the investigation by the SP has enabled a broader cross-cutting review across a wider range of the Council's services.
- 1.2. During the period of the review, a number of key plans and strategies have been put in place that provide the framework for action since a Climate Emergency was declared in 2019, in particular the [2023-2030 borough-wide Climate Action Plan](#) (CAP) and [three-year Council Implementation Plan](#) (CIP), amongst others. There are also new pieces of policy and strategy work in train, such as the development of an Economic Development Plan, a new Housing Strategy and an updated Sustainable Procurement and

Insourcing Strategy that will all have clear actions that link to Council and borough-wide plans to achieve net zero, endeavouring to work with businesses in our supply chain, as well as more widely.

- 1.3. Many of the responses to the recommendations indicate that whilst there is clearly more to do, work has already started in a number of key areas at pace as the Council seeks to embed the organisation wide approach to net zero and further support cross-cutting benefits such as enabling a larger local green economy with more skilled jobs to support that.
- 1.4. The Council also continues to lead in a number of areas, such as transport, and I am pleased to note the recent successes at the [British Parking Awards 2023](#) where the Council won three awards in recognition of its commitment to providing a public service and improving the streets of East London. The Council was named Parking Team of the Year, won the School Streets Award, as well as the Communication Award for its [Parking & Enforcement Plan](#) (PEP), which was adopted in October 2022.
- 1.5. Announcements by the Government recently declaring an intention to delay actions on net zero in a number of emission areas are extremely disappointing and short-sighted. In particular, those pertaining to the phasing out of petrol and diesel vehicles, gas boilers and implementing increased regulatory standards to improve the energy efficiency of properties within the private rented sector. All these actions undermine previous signals as to the seriousness of the Government's intent and may force the private sector and others to review future investment decisions that support and accelerate the path to net zero within the UK in areas that are already progressing too slowly, such as transport and housing. Accelerating plans to switch to electric vehicles and heat pumps have wider benefits in the long run, with the potential to save people money and improve people's health.
- 1.6. The full impact of these decisions, alongside others such as the recent approval of the Rosebank oil and gas field can only undermine our standing internationally. The details will be the subject of more extensive analysis by independent organisations, such as the [Climate Change Committee](#), but it is already evident that an extended period of reliance on gas will be more expensive than going low-carbon and provide little comfort to those already experiencing fuel poverty and living in poor quality energy inefficient homes.
- 1.7. Despite this news, the Council is continuing with the roll out of its electric vehicle charging programme, the largest in the country and I hope to be able to make further announcements regarding external funding applications for

work supporting improving our social housing portfolio, amongst others, shortly.

- 1.8. Looking to the near future, the Council is gearing up for the next Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund bidding round, which is now open, with the caveat that applications will be subject to eligibility. Round 2 of Hackney Light and Power's [Community Energy Fund](#) will be launched on the 19th October 2023 and the Council will be starting work imminently with neighbouring local authorities to develop a Local Area Energy Plan that identifies the utility infrastructure that is needed to support the transition to net zero.
- 1.9. Whilst the challenges may continue, the ambition, commitment and long term vision of the Council to create a greener Hackney remains unchanged.

2. Group Director's introduction

- 2.1. This report requests approval of the Executive response to the recommendations of Scrutiny Panel Overarching Review into Net Zero, which can be found in Appendix 1.
- 2.2. These recommendations seek to further strengthen the Council's response to the climate and ecological crisis across a wide range of topic areas including: monitoring, governance, leadership, investment & finance, housing & corporate property, transport, energy plus education, skills & economic development, all with a focus on net zero.
- 2.3. Since this review began in October 2021, the Council has progressed a number of key commitments which now provide the framework for future carbon emission reductions, both borough-wide and for the Council, noting that for the Council this is based on what it can control or influence.
 - **Climate Action Plan:** The Hackney [CAP 2023 - 2030](#), was formally adopted at Cabinet in May 2023. It is the first holistic borough-wide plan to address the climate and ecological crisis, bringing together the various strands into one overall document. This is underpinned by the CIP which sets out the key actions for the Council for the next three years to deliver the goals and objectives of the CAP and was an item at Full Council in July 2023 alongside the annual update on progress with the Council's decarbonisation commitments;
 - **Updated Council net zero target:** The Council's existing target for its own greenhouse emissions requires a 45% reduction by 2030 based

on a 2010 baseline and 'net zero' by 2040. The Council rejoined the UK100 membership network on 17th May 2023. As such the Council now has a revised 'net zero target' of 2030 for territorial emissions that fall within the current UK100 scope; and

- **Other relevant plans and strategies:** The PEP 2022-27 was formally adopted at Cabinet in October 2022. Key elements of the PEP seek to implement measures to reduce the impact of highly polluting vehicles, encouraging cleaner alternatives. The [Green Infrastructure Strategy 2023-2030](#) was formally adopted at Cabinet in June 2023. Green infrastructure is integral and essential to the Borough's resilience, meeting its future challenges and the delivery of its wider strategies, both at a community and individual level. The [Hackney Local Nature Recovery Plan 2023-2030](#) was formally adopted at Cabinet in June 2023 and identifies a number of nature recovery areas alongside practical actions for their improvement.

- 2.4. The review recommendations are also well timed so as to be able to inform a number of tasks which are underway and include preparing a draft Economic Development Plan, updating the Council's Transport Strategy and supporting plans, as well as adopting an updated Sustainable Procurement and Insourcing Strategy, amongst others.
- 2.5. Since the completion of the review report, officers across the Council have participated in further scrutiny commission sessions that are assessing the Council's response to net zero in specific areas.
- 2.6. It should be noted that a number of review recommendations may require additional funding which has currently not been confirmed and will therefore need to be considered as part of the Council's medium term financial planning and budget setting process.

3. **Recommendations**

- 3.1. **That Cabinet approves the Executive response, found in Appendix 1, to the Scrutiny Panel Overarching Review into Net Zero.**

4. **Reason(s) for decision**

- 4.1. Hackney Council is required to produce an Executive response to the Scrutiny Panel Overarching Review into Net Zero. The response draws on work underway or planned and is in line with principles, values and priorities held by Hackney Council.

5. **Details of alternative options considered and rejected**

- 5.1. Scrutiny Reviews follow a set process that involves recommendations and responses by officers resulting in a report to Cabinet and hence there are no alternative options to be considered.

6. **Background**

Policy Context

- 6.1. The climate and ecological crisis is already having visible effects on the world - the earth is warming, rainfall patterns are changing, and sea levels are rising. These changes are leading to increased extreme weather events, such as flooding and drought, are risking the supply of natural resources and are having a detrimental impact on human health. In Hackney, this is being seen first-hand, with a number of major floods being experienced in recent years - most notably in Finsbury Park and Stamford Hill.
- 6.2. Internationally, policy and decision makers are beginning to act. The Paris Agreement underlines the need for net zero, requiring countries and territories like the UK to transition to a state in which the greenhouse gases going into the atmosphere are balanced by removal of greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere. Achieving net zero requires changes that are unprecedented in their overall scale, and meeting the national net zero target is considered one of the biggest, most complex and cross-cutting challenges that the UK faces.

Climate Action Plan

- 6.3. Reaching the UK's net zero ambitions requires all tiers of government, businesses, institutions and communities to work closely together. In response, the Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and has been building its vision to transition to net zero resulting in the adoption of a borough-wide CAP 2023-2030 in May this year. Sitting alongside the CAP is a CIP, which provides a detailed set of key actions for the Council to undertake initially over the next three years and that contribute to delivering the goals and objectives within the CAP, considering where the Council has direct control and most influence to maintain momentum with its own climate response.
- 6.4. Although Hackney and the UK generally have made good progress in reducing emissions in specific areas over the last decade, it is recognised that faster and coordinated action will be needed to protect communities and

the environment from the effects of climate change. The CAP therefore sets out the ambitious, science-based changes that need to be progressed to achieve a borough-wide reduction in carbon emissions by 2030.

Net Zero Overarching Scrutiny Panel Review

- 6.5. The Net Zero Overarching Scrutiny Panel Review was established by the Scrutiny Panel in October 2021 to look at what may be needed to meet both national and local net zero targets and to assess how the Council could better meet its ambitions in a manner that is affordable, efficient and fair. Its key purpose was to play an active role in stress-testing and querying assumptions in the development of local climate action, particularly in light of the pandemic, whilst supporting the Council to engage with key stakeholders in the locality to better understand and align priorities.
- 6.6. The approach to the review reflected the scale of the net zero challenge and its cross-cutting nature. Through the Scrutiny Panel and thematic Scrutiny Commissions, it engaged, listened and learned from a range of organisations, businesses, industries and communities on a number of issues and policy areas, from decarbonising buildings, transport and waste, to supporting the delivery of clean energy projects, managing a transition to a low-carbon, circular economy and enabling green growth. The full report from the review is attached as Appendix 2.
- 6.7. The review was built from an amalgamation of work by the overarching Scrutiny Panel and the thematic Scrutiny Commissions: Health in Hackney, Living in Hackney and Skills, Economy and Growth. It gathered a range of qualitative and quantitative evidence to meet the aims and objectives of the review. Methods and sources used to gather this evidence were:
- **Desktop research and analysis:** Desk-based research was used to help establish the national legislative and policy framework which guides the UK's transition to net zero and to review key national data and trends, academic research and policy analysis in relation to climate change and net zero;
 - **Engagement with local stakeholders:** A range of local stakeholders were engaged to establish local policy and practice in relation to climate change and net zero. As well as providing an opportunity to review localised data, engaging with local stakeholders facilitated a more qualitative assessment of climate action in Hackney;
 - **Comparisons with other local authorities:** To support comparative analysis of local climate action across the capital, London Borough of Harrow, London Borough of Waltham Forest, the Greater London

Authority (GLA) and London Councils were invited to contribute to the review. Their involvement helped the Council to compare and benchmark policy and practice and helped to identify additional good practice where relevant; and

- **Specialist contributions:** Expert independent analysis helped to gather further insight into the Council's path to net zero. This was provided through direct submissions to the review from Buro Happold, as well as desktop research and analysis.

Equality impact assessment

6.8. Hackney Council and its decision-makers must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act (2010), which requires us to have due regard to the need to:

- 1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- 2) Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- 3) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

6.9. Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves considering the need to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- Meet the needs of people with protected characteristics; and
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.

6.10. The implementation of the recommendations from the review should therefore pay due regard to the equality considerations to ensure that the Council is compliant with its statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

6.11. The Council will continue to consider the impact on all protected characteristics during the ongoing development and implementation of the climate actions, including those associated with the review recommendations. Where appropriate, it will undertake additional

engagement with the community or more detailed equality analysis where negative impacts on specific protected characteristics have been identified.

Sustainability and climate change

- 6.12. 27 recommendations were set out in the Scrutiny Panel report, covering a wide range of actions aimed at promoting sustainability and addressing the climate crisis, with a focus on achieving net zero. They included measures related to monitoring, governance, community engagement, financing, the circular economy, energy efficiency, transport, waste management, education, amongst others, and support the objectives and delivery of actions set out in the CIP, as well as the 2030 goals identified within the CAP.
- 6.13. These recommendations will help the Council and the borough to reach net zero targets and, at the same time, can deliver societal impacts, also known as co-benefits.
- 6.14. Some potential co-benefits associated with these recommendations include:
- Actions related to transport, such as bus electrification and increasing electric vehicle charging points, will help to reduce emissions from vehicles, leading to improved air quality with benefits for public health;
 - Promotion of sustainable active travel options, such as walking and cycling, will encourage physical activity and reduce obesity rates;
 - Implementation of energy efficiency measures such as retrofitting buildings and electrification of heat using heat pumps may result in cost savings for residents, help to alleviate fuel poverty and create more liveable homes and workplaces in the longer term;
 - Transition to renewable energy sources, decarbonised heat and more circular economies may lead to job creation, the upskilling of existing job roles, and enable greener economic growth to the benefit of the whole community;
 - Better engagement in respect of the breadth of our communities will help to increase social equity and inclusion, addressing social justice issues; and
 - The implementation of green infrastructure such as sustainable drainage systems, tree planting may reduce the likelihood of surface

water flooding episodes, create new habitats for wildlife and support local biodiversity.

- 6.15. Co-benefits alongside key performance Indicators and targets for carbon reduction within the monitoring framework will enable the effectiveness of the Council's actions to be assessed, whilst providing insights to shape future decision-making and investments in climate projects.

Consultations

- 6.16. There is no requirement for a public consultation on the recommendations from this review, although a number of stakeholders have provided contributions to scrutiny sessions. Scrutiny Commissions are held in public with agendas, key content, recordings of sessions and minutes publicly available.

Risk assessment

- 6.17. Many aspects of the transition are inherently uncertain, hence it is likely that progress may be faster in some sectors than others. Even in the near term, there is high uncertainty whether projected emissions savings will advance as anticipated.
- 6.18. There are a number of key risks, both for the Council and more widely, which could impact on the success of implementing specific recommendations from the review noting that currently, not all the necessary infrastructure, finance, and regulation are in place to enable the changes needed, with a burgeoning impact of the cost of living crisis on current and future patterns of expenditure at both a personal and organisational level. The UK will only meet its emissions reduction targets if central government, regional bodies and local authorities, amongst others, work together to resolve some of these key barriers, noting that local authorities only have powers or influence over roughly a third of territorial greenhouse gas emissions in their local areas.

Finance

- 6.19. Local areas have a huge role to play in reaching net zero and have the ability to start implementation quickly, however, they do not have the funding they need. Central government must provide certainty on its long-term funding plans for key areas such as retrofit and energy efficiency. Without this, it is impossible for local areas to play their part in building the skills, capacity and engagement needed to meet the challenge.

Organisational change

- 6.20. The Council's ambitions for decarbonisation require leadership across the organisation and involve transformational work across almost all functions, rethinking how it works and identifying the skills requirements and resources to manage its climate response effectively. This, coupled with a desire to use the role of the Council in leading, shaping and influencing decarbonisation of the Borough, will place added requirements that will need to be effectively targeted, managed and resourced.

Policy gaps

- 6.21. There are estimated policy gaps associated with 57% of the future greenhouse gas emissions reductions required nationally, noting that this is before recent announcements by the government to delay a number of key net zero policies and targets. Embedding and integrating net zero and climate adaptation properly across the policy landscape is vital. Clearer responsibilities are needed between central government departments, regulators, the GLA, and local authorities for the actions and interactions on the path to net zero.

Skills

- 6.22. Workers will need to develop new skills to fill the needs of new low-carbon markets. However, evidence on skills requirements and current employment in key occupations (e.g. home retrofit coordinators) is limited. Availability of skilled workers therefore poses a risk for the net zero transition.

Stakeholder engagement

- 6.23. The success of the Borough's climate responses is dependent on the collective efforts of Hackney's stakeholders, central and regional governments, and the Council's civic leadership. This collaboration inspires change and addresses the climate emergency by connecting various organisations and communities.

7. Comments of the Interim Group Director Finance

- 7.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from approving the recommendation in this report. The Scrutiny report provides a set of recommendations to address the climate and ecological crisis, which will be implemented through the Council's Governance processes. As far as possible the recommendations will be delivered within the existing approved budget, both capital and revenue. Any recommendation requiring additional

resources should be fully assessed and considered as part of the Council's medium term financial planning (MTFP) process. It is important to note that the Council is facing a significant revenue budget gap over the medium term to 2026/27 and any recommendation giving rise to additional expenditure should be considered in the light of this financial challenge.

- 7.2. Included with the Council's approved capital programme of nearly £1bn in the three years to 2026/27 is an investment of £61m in projects which contribute to the Council's net zero target. The financing of the overall capital programme is included with the Council's MTFP. It is important to keep in mind additional capital projects without earmarked funding, such as grants or capital receipts, will need to be funded by borrowing which will impact our revenue budget and add to budget pressures going forward.
- 7.3. As stated above, taking forward the recommendations arising from this review should as far as possible be contained within existing budgets, both revenue and capital given the financial challenges facing the Council. Any recommendation requiring additional resources will need to be considered as part of the Council's medium term financial planning and budget setting process.

8. **VAT implications on land and property transactions**

- 8.1. Not applicable.

9. **Comments of the Acting Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services**

- 9.1. The Scrutiny Panel / Scrutiny Commissions are empowered under Article 7 of the London Borough of Hackney's Constitution to undertake policy reviews generally and make suggestions for improvements.
- 9.2. There is currently no legal requirement for the Council to achieve specific carbon saving targets. However, the Council is under a general duty to have regard to the environment in all decisions it makes, and national government has set a legally binding target to reduce national carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050. Furthermore, the Mayor of London has set a target for London to be net zero carbon by 2030.
- 9.3. Within the Mayors Scheme of delegation, it is reserved to the Mayor and Cabinet to Respond to Overview and Scrutiny Reports. Within this report, Cabinet is asked to approve the Executive response (attached as Appendix

one) to the Scrutiny Panel Overarching Review into Net Zero. The Mayor and Cabinet are authorised to approve the recommendation set out in part 3.1 of this report.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Executive response to the Scrutiny Panel Overarching Review into Net Zero.

Background documents

[Appendix 2: Full report from Overarching Scrutiny Panel Investigation into Net Zero.](#)

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Appendix 1 - Executive Response to the Overarching Scrutiny Panel Investigation into Net Zero

Recommendation one

The Council should **report back on how progress against the objectives of the Climate Action Plan will be measured and monitored, and how oversight structures including the Audit Committee, Scrutiny Panel and Scrutiny Commissions will fit into the monitoring framework.**

A commitment was made in the October 2022 Cabinet report that approved the public consultation for the [Climate Action Plan \(CAP\)](#) to develop a monitoring and reporting framework and include it as part of the adoption of the CAP. This has been progressed, assessing both Council and borough-wide monitoring and reporting needs. Where there was certainty regarding future monitoring and reporting, this was included in the revised CAP that was adopted in May 2023.

The development of a monitoring framework will, therefore, support the need to measure the reduction in carbon emissions amongst other climate related actions, and track progress towards the 2030 goals of Hackney's borough-wide CAP, alongside an agreed reporting and review mechanism.

Internal governance and oversight structures and their relationship were set out on page 90 of the adopted CAP identifying linkages to member oversight structures. The Audit Committee, Scrutiny Panel and Scrutiny Commissions have all become increasingly involved in the climate agenda over the last year, culminating in this current net zero review.

Oversight plans need to be further developed based on the actions that were identified in the adopted CAP, but initial scoping suggests that the Scrutiny Panel should receive an update based on the progress with the [Council Implementation Plan \(CIP\)](#), with consideration of wider borough-wide progress annually tied into the established annual external progress reporting schedule.

Monitoring performance may also form part of future reviews by Commissions and the Audit Committee in respect of specific topic areas where there are significant challenges.

Recommendation two

The Council should **explore establishing an appropriate and robust external governance framework** to reflect that the transition to net zero is not focused only on its own activities but also on those borough-wide emissions for which it is not responsible.

Establishing an appropriate and robust external governance framework is a key action now that the CAP has been adopted. There will be a key focus on progressing this to confirm proposals. Initial steps are to:

- Review approaches taken by other local authorities to meet this requirement;
- Work collaboratively with others post-adoption, to develop and agree a form of community oversight;
- Develop robust proposals for wider deliberative engagement on specific topic areas;
- Assess options for a future Hackney Net Zero Partnership to convene partners and businesses, including major landowners, public institutions, large businesses, and large housing associations who are responsible for significant borough-wide emissions, amongst others; and
- Better align existing networks whilst reviewing established key partnerships with the goals of the CAP.

Recommendation three

The Council should **demonstrate how each service department will contribute in concrete terms to the management and delivery of the Climate Action Plan, and in particular the accompanying Three Year Implementation Plan**, (both in terms of implementing actions, budgeting and continuing to innovate) for those areas that relate to their remits.

The borough-wide CAP was approved in May 2023, and CIP was provided to Full Council in July 2023. These key documents form the framework of the Council's response to the climate and ecological crisis and have been steered by a Strategic Officer Climate Group (SOCG)¹. SOCG spans services across the Council with oversight by the internal Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB). ESB chaired by the Group Director for Climate Homes and Economy, membership includes a wide range of senior managers from across the Council, usually at Director or Head of Service level.

The current membership of the executive structure ESB for oversight of the Council's response to net zero includes the following services at senior level: finance, procurement, area regeneration, public health, new homes, corporate property, corporate policy and strategy, public realm, social housing, housing strategy, public affairs, communications and engagement. Three key lead member portfolio holders are also formal members of the ESB.

These plans have also been considered, further shaped and approved by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) chaired by the Chief Executive. In addition, there have been regular items relating to CAP development at the Senior Managers Network (circa 180 members) to

¹ * SOCG: This group is the key tool for the delivery of the Council's Implementation Plan and is made up of the leads for each thematic area, as well as expertise in communications, engagement, finance, procurement, economic development and employment and skills. SOCG meets every six weeks.

ensure the wider obligations of various teams and services in respect of this agenda are well understood. Notwithstanding, this investigation by the Scrutiny Panel into net zero has heard evidence and plans from a wide range of services that are key to delivering the Council's net zero ambitions.

The CIP provides a detailed set of proposed actions for the Council to carry out over the next three years that contribute to delivering the goals and objectives under each of the five CAP themes. The CIP outlines actions that the Council has direct control over and considers where it has the most influence to maintain momentum on its own climate response. In addition to the five themes, there are actions under a cross-cutting theme of Green Economy.

The public version of the CIP identifies the lead service for each action, although many actions will require the collaborative effort of a wider grouping of services, alongside others to be able to be implemented. As part of developing information to support the future programme management of the CIP, these additional service details have been identified and will form part of the individual project management structures that may be needed to deliver individual actions. Actions will also have clear milestones and outputs to ensure delivery expectations are clear, supplemented by regular reporting by the lead services on progress to ESB, as well as CLT, where required. Furthermore, a monitoring, reviewing and reporting framework was also set out in the adopted CAP, pages 87-94.

Whilst the internal governance structures have been central to developing the framework for the Council's climate response, there is now a need for more formal programme management of what is a complex cross-cutting programme.

To further support this, an assessment of the SOCG and its working groups has been initiated. Based on its findings, there may be recommendations to maximise effectiveness. Following this, there will also be a consideration of the membership of the ESB based on these findings and recommendations.

To better embed the extent of the Council's climate response across the organisation, an internal communications programme will be starting shortly, whose first phases will involve some key communications about the CAP and the CIP to all staff. The approach that will be taken also includes communicating more tailored messages based on the key areas within the CIP that are of most relevance to individual directorates and their own responsibilities within the CIP.

Recommendation four

The Council should **explore the ways in which it can improve its engagement on net zero with harder to reach groups and those least likely to engage in formal ways**, such as those whose first language is not English, people with disabilities, young people, the elderly, people with low literacy levels and the digitally excluded.

Climate action in Hackney can reduce inequalities and create benefits, such as improved air quality, mental health, and biodiversity enhancement. By ensuring inclusive decision-making, prioritising accessible and affordable solutions, and tackling systemic issues, a fairer, more equitable, and inclusive environment will be enabled. Encouraging community engagement, raising awareness, promoting financial viability of sustainable options, and regularly monitoring progress will help ensure climate policies and initiatives remain effective and inclusive for all community members.

Key aspects based on responses received during the public consultation on the CAP are further elaborated on below.

- Involve diverse communities, including vulnerable and underrepresented groups, in the planning and implementation of climate policies and actions;
- Develop climate initiatives that cater to the needs of low-income, minority, and vulnerable populations, focusing on affordable housing, public transport, and access to green spaces;
- Address the root causes of climate change and social inequalities, such as poverty, racial and class disparities, and hold polluters accountable;
- Provide resources and assistance to vulnerable groups for climate adaptation, resilience, and mental health support to cope with climate-related stress and anxiety;
- Conduct outreach and educational programmes on climate change, its impacts, and sustainable options for diverse audiences, emphasising the importance of inclusivity;
- Encourage active participation from various social, economic, and cultural backgrounds in climate initiatives and sustainable practices;
- Ensure that sustainable options and green actions are economically feasible for everyone by offering financial incentives, subsidies, or affordable alternatives; and
- Regularly assess the effectiveness and inclusiveness of climate policies and initiatives, and adjust them as needed to ensure a fair and equitable transition for all community members.

As part of finalising the CAP, underrepresented groups were encouraged to take part in the consultation through existing networks and reference groups, taking into account the groupings that were identified in the equalities section of the Cabinet report of 24 October 2022. Four focus groups were held with groups underrepresented in survey responses, details below:

- Two focus groups with older residents, organised with the Older Citizens Committee;
- A focus group with Black and Global Majority residents, organised through the Hackney Matters Panel; and
- A focus group with Somali women including interpreters, organised in partnership with Coffee Afrique.

Eight drop-in sessions were held at each of Hackney's libraries across November and December 2022. Drop-ins were advertised through posters at libraries, alongside consultation communications, and on social media.

The percentage of consultation respondents who stated they considered they were disabled was 19.7%. This is higher than the figure for the Borough (14.3%), however, the latter figure represents those disabled within the terms of the Equality Act.

The [Equality Impact Assessment](#) was finalised post the public consultation on the draft Climate Action Plan, which provides pointers to the engagement that may be needed with a practical focus on fairness and social justice:

- Ensuring disadvantaged groups can access training and jobs in the green economy. Apprenticeships and skills programmes should target underrepresented communities;
- Protecting low-income residents from energy and food poverty. Retrofits, affordable public transport, and access to healthy diets are vital. Costs of the transition cannot unfairly fall on the most vulnerable;
- Co-designing where possible climate solutions with marginalised groups through participatory processes;
- Consulting experts on disability rights, migrant groups, etc. to mitigate unintended consequences;
- Communicating clearly how climate action delivers social benefits like health, jobs and lower bills. Link goals to tangible improvements in quality of life; and
- Ensuring voices from across all of Hackney's diverse communities are represented in decision-making through inclusive engagement.

Despite being a significant proportion of young residents in Hackney, responses from those under 25 as part of the consultation of the draft CAP were relatively small (1%) and indicate that more work will need to be done to engage this age group going forward, most likely in respect of specific topic areas. In respect of engagement to date with young people, the focus has been on very practical and active engagement with schools:

- 65 schools are participating in the [Eco-School programme](#), of which 18 have earned the Green Flag award;
- Participating schools have conducted assemblies and worked on carbon related projects to improve environmental performance at the schools;
- Five schools participated in the ['Cut Your Carbon' campaign](#), which focused on food, energy, and fashion's contributions to carbon emissions;
- Three Eco-Schools took part in ['Running Out of Time Relay'](#), Britain's largest sporting event celebrating environmental awareness;
- The Eco School Annual Event where three schools came together for a round table discussion on Hackney's CAP where 'Transform Our World' presented the ['Let's Go Zero' Campaign](#) and the Climate Action Planner toolkit;
- Rushmore School is trialling a surplus food waste redistribution project with [OLIO](#);

- 16 schools participated in the [Climate Resilient Schools](#) programme led by the Mayor of London, resulting in the creation of 12 rain gardens and comprehensive climate adaptation plans;
- Hackney currently has 49 [School Streets](#), with the goal to expand this to all feasible primary and secondary schools by 2026. This programme has led to an increase in walking and cycling amongst students and a decrease in tailpipe emissions. The Council's anti-idling campaign also continues with more workshops and signage, contributing to our commitment to a healthier, sustainable environment; and
- Plans are also underway for three Eco-Schools to initiate an eco-refill scheme by January 2024, aimed at reducing single-use plastics.

Reflecting on the past year, there has been engagement with over 5,000 students, conducting over 600 litter picks, and planting 1,000 trees. These accomplishments have been acknowledged at the [Global Action Plan Sustainable City Awards 2023](#) - Eco School programme was a finalist in the Public Sector Campaign of the Year category.

Plans are currently in development to increase the levels of engagement within work associated with the climate crisis. Once these are more advanced, they can be shared with scrutiny members.

Recommendation five

The Council should **undertake more detailed modelling on current and future spending on net zero-related policies, as well as the benefits derived from this expenditure**, to develop a fuller understanding of the finance and resourcing needs of the transition to net zero.

The [Audit Committee 'deep dive' in 2022](#) provides the context for the work that is continuing regarding more detailed modelling of current and future spending to achieve net zero.

The [Annual Update on Progress with Decarbonisation Commitments](#) presented to Council in July 2023 provided an update on the planned current and future spending noting that £61 million investment over the next three years was approved as part of budget setting for 2023/24.

The Council already has well-developed processes for managing, monitoring and reporting on this investment via the capital workstreams, alongside the existing processes for identifying and securing the funding required to enable these works. This includes processes to enable prioritisation of the finite capital funding available.

The overarching CIP allows this expenditure and funding to be viewed through the lens of the themes within that plan and for mapping the proposed investment/funding back to the themes.

Reporting and tracking the spend and funding against the themes alongside the benefits realised will enable better decision-making around prioritisation for future capital or revenue investment. It will also enable increased understanding of the true costs of existing projects to better inform project evaluation.

In respect of the benefits that are derived from this expenditure there are a number of key strategic actions within the monitoring and reporting section of the CAP that includes the development of a monitoring framework.

Monitoring will be completed through a variety of interrelated mechanisms:

- Council emissions will be initially aligned with the [UK100](#) membership scope but expanded over time, the [Local Partnerships GHG accounting tool](#) will be used.
- Borough-wide emissions will be monitored initially via The [London Energy and Greenhouse Gas Inventory \(LEGGI\)](#) and Consumption-Based Emissions Accounting Framework (CBEA).
- The CIP has a range of actions spread across the five thematic areas. A number of these projects and programmes will have their own independent evaluation requirements and for key ones, where a clear carbon impact has been estimated, the intention would be to build the outcomes into shaping future decision-making.
- Using the principle of prioritising existing reporting systems, the monitoring framework seeks to build upon and complement existing and future plans and strategies to support the overall goal of reducing emissions more effectively and efficiently. More granular monitoring of the impacts of the CAP will, therefore, largely be through:
 - Existing mechanisms, including [Air Quality Action Plan](#), [Reduction and Recycling Plan](#), [Local Nature Recovery Plan](#), [Green Infrastructure Strategy](#), [Transport Local Implementation Plan](#), [Parking and Enforcement Plan](#) and future Economic Development Plan, amongst others.
 - Key projects such as, but not limited to, [LTNs](#), [School Streets](#), street tree planting and the [Green Homes programme](#).
- A smaller number of key performance indicators will also be monitored.

Recommendation six

The Council should **collaborate with other boroughs and regional authorities to lobby central government to get external funding** for the net zero agenda, and should **proactively identify and respond to new funding opportunities** as they arise.

The economic and social costs of inaction continue to grow. Local areas have a huge role to play in reaching net zero and have the ability to start implementation quickly, but they need more funding. Central government must provide certainty on its long-term funding plans for key areas, such as retrofit and energy efficiency. This is necessary for local areas to play their part in building the skills, capacity and engagement needed to meet the challenge. Therefore, the Council is part of a number of groupings working with others, including London Councils, UK100, [Cities Commission for Climate Investment](#) (3Ci) and the Greater London Authority (GLA), as part of their lobbying activities to enable more funding to be made available for the wide range of responses needed to assist with reaching net zero.

As a context, the Funding Strategy for the Council's own CAP commitments is summarised below:

1. **What's already planned for** – those allocations in the Capital Programme that can be adapted to reflect technologies/latest innovations to tackle climate change – e.g. Planned Maintenance budget, Combined Heat and Power in regeneration programmes, Fleet.
2. **Robust Business Cases** – those projects where there are savings to be made that can repay the investment over time or have alternative delivery models - e.g. Electric Vehicle charging network, cycle hangars, investment in energy technologies for the Council's non housing estate.
3. **The aspirational** – those investments that are currently unaffordable at scale – e.g. retrofit of Council properties. The Council is exploring grant funding opportunities and working with other local authorities for solutions in this space and lobbying with others for more funding.

The key area where major external funding will be required is element 3.

There are a number of options amongst others that are being undertaken or further developed including:

- Grant funding from Central Government, this is limited but will be particularly important for low-income and social housing. For example, successful funding applications have already been made by the Council to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund. Further applications - subject to eligibility will be submitted as new bidding rounds open;
- The Council working alongside others to continue to lobby the Government to increase funding programmes for both public and private properties. The Mayor was a key representative in the Skidmore net zero review;
- The use of policy mechanisms to deliver new income streams such as from planning obligations. The Council is working with a number of local authorities in London to review carbon pricing standards;
- Local climate bonds that can raise capital whilst allowing local people to invest in their area and directly benefit from the projects delivered; and

- Carbon offsets investment of carbon offsets in local decarbonisation and adaptation schemes.

Exploring wider private sector finance mechanisms is also underway and the Council is a key representative of the 3Ci, an innovative collaboration of local government and the private sector. Its mission is to support local authorities in securing the necessary long-term finance for achieving net zero. 3Ci is working to leverage the combined scale of cities and regions to mobilise finance and drive investment into low and net zero carbon projects across all local areas together, rather than individual ones, which is seen as the key to unlocking the investment so urgently needed. It is based on the concept of developing [Net Zero Neighbourhoods](#) (NZN).

The key characteristics of an NZN are:

- a place-based approach to (nation-wide) decarbonisation (greenhouse gas reductions) that promotes community and local authority buy-in and participation. It facilitates the delivery of multiple interventions in one place in order to scale up delivery, generate efficiencies and derive wider socio-economic benefits;
- a blended funding model, which combines Government and outcome-seeking funding with profit seeking private investment. It also provides cost savings to the Government, possibly reducing what could be around a 70-80% subsidy, to around 35%, by appealing to institutional investors who can offer longer payback periods than those typically seen with retail finance; and
- generating revenues that make it an investable programme, can be used to fund the programme (repayable finance) and removes the need for individual residents and asset owners to personally fund the significant up-front costs of decarbonisation, whilst providing an incentive to participate (reduced energy bills).

Over the last year, the Council has proactively responded to funding opportunities and secured funding from various external sources to progress its net zero plans. Some of these can be found in the publicly available [Annual update of progress with decarbonisation commitments 2023](#), which provides a summary of key funding applications, both successful and unsuccessful, over the last 12 months to July 2023.

The Council is also awaiting the outcome of a major funding bid to the [Green Heat Network Fund](#). A £2.9 million grant application for a District Heat Network for Colville Estate to support the £14 million cost of implementing the network.

The Council is part of a sub regional local authority grouping led by the GLA that will be developing a fully funded sub regional Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) over the next 12 months. This involves significant collaboration between local authorities and partners. LAEPs set out the changes required to transition an area's energy system to net zero in a given timeframe. This is achieved by exploring potential pathways that consider a range of technologies and scenarios, and when combined with stakeholder engagement leads to the

identification of the most cost-effective preferred pathway and a sequenced plan of proposed actions to achieving an area's net zero goal.

Recommendation seven

The Council should **ensure its tenants and leaseholders are supported as much as possible to engage in low-carbon lifestyles**, for example through welcome packs providing information and discounts at reuse and repair shops.

The Council is working on low-carbon lifestyle engagement across all its communication channels as well as participating in London-wide and national recycling campaigns. In addition to offering educational service leaflets and reusable containers to new residents in its housing estates and new development properties, there will be a focus on targeting localities with lower-performing collection rounds with promotional activities and one-on-one engagement. This effort aims to engage approximately 10,000 to 15,000 households in 2023/2024.

Implementation of waste and recycling facility upgrades on Council estates continues and demonstrates strong evidence of impact. Phase 4 of the Estate Recycling Programme successfully improved the average recycling rate across the participating estates by 41%. Over a two-year period, the recycling rate across these estates has risen from 10% to 29%. Plans for Phase 5 aim to create 36 new bin store areas, close 241 hoppers and 58 chutes, further improving fire safety, recycling rates, and the overall environment on housing estates.

Other initiatives, which are part of the Council [Circular Economy programme](#) include:

- Zero Waste Hubs, which run four times a year and are successful in helping residents repurpose and repair items. Last financial year, approximately 850 residents attended the events, with around 200 items repaired and nearly 5.5 tonnes of waste diverted from direct disposal, reducing CO2 emissions significantly;
- Free clothes swap and repair sessions, run four times a year, are well-attended, with participants exchanging nearly 3,000 pieces of clothing in 2022/2023, saving an estimated £40,000 and significantly reducing waste in the fashion industry;
- Running cooking and sustainable food shopping workshops, teaching residents about plant-based foods, food waste reduction, and healthy eating;
- Offer of plastic-free workshops, teaching residents how to make their own low-cost and plastic-free products and providing information about sustainable alternatives to single-use items;
- Promotion of Hackney shops that offer refills and packaging-free food options via the Hackney Zero Waste map, which has been viewed more than 22,812 times;
- In collaboration with the North London Waste Authority (NLWA) a reusable period products campaign will be launched that includes a digital communications campaign and a voucher scheme for discounted reusable period products. The campaign will feature outreach and engagement events; and

- NLWA also continues to pay a subsidy of £70 per baby to parents/carers in north London who use reusable nappies rather than disposable.

One of the primary focuses more widely in the borough is on behavioural change campaigns aimed at encouraging low-carbon lifestyles. A key example of this is the recent '[Eat Like a Londoner](#)' campaign, which is geared towards promoting sustainable diets and reducing food waste. This campaign combines the best recipes, hacks, tips and tricks, offering weekly inspiration that not only helps residents save money and eat healthier but also contributes positively to the planet.

These above activities will significantly help the Council tenants and leaseholders to better understand and adopt low-carbon lifestyles. Continued close liaison between the housing and sustainability teams will help to ensure effective support for tenants and leaseholders in their transition to lower-carbon lifestyles, using welcome packs to incorporate materials that raise awareness of the various offers available to achieve this objective.

Recommendation eight

The Council should **demonstrate how it will work with registered social landlords operating within the borough** to coordinate actions on retrofit and other decarbonisation measures, and share examples of good practice for mutual benefit.

The [Hackney Registered Providers \(RPs\) Compact](#) - the key document for RP activity in Hackney - has climate action, retrofitting and decarbonisation amongst its key objectives.

The Council is already working in partnership with RPs to share good practice and knowledge concerning retrofitting and decarbonisation. The larger RPs (mainly G15 members) in Hackney all have existing climate action plans which include, to varying degree, proposals for achieving net zero targets in their housing stock. For medium sized and smaller RPs the picture is more mixed, but all have declared public targets for retrofitting. Additionally, most RPs have wide ranging climate action plans which include the full range of advice and interventions, including, for example, lifestyle and behaviour changes, recycling, food and energy efficiency advice.

Plans are underway for a new launch of the Better Housing Partnership (BHP) (previously known as the Housing Association Forum) in Autumn 2023. The BHP is a formal partnership for all RPs in Hackney, facilitated by the Council but chaired and led by the RPs. The intention is for retrofitting and decarbonisation to be a standard agenda item for the BHP either at each BHP meeting or through the creation of a specific sub-group focussed solely on these issues. Actions will be reported, including to the Council, on a quarterly basis.

Recommendation nine

The Council should **explore broadening the licensing requirements for additional houses**

in multiple occupation (HMO) and selective licensing schemes to cover the whole borough and include energy efficiency, retrofitting and fuel poverty requirements.

The Council is one of the few local housing authorities in the UK running three licensing schemes: mandatory, additional and selective. Mandatory licensing is a permanent requirement of the Housing Act 2004. Additional and selective licensing are specific and time limited schemes, applicable where a local housing authority has reason to apply to the Secretary of State for such schemes.

The Council intends to renew both its additional and selective licensing schemes and is applying to the Secretary of State for approval to do so. Furthermore, it is applying to extend its selective licensing scheme beyond the three original pilot wards to cover the entire Borough of Hackney. In essence, selective licensing means that if a landlord wishes to let their property in Hackney, they need a licence from the Council for each property.

As part of renewal planning for the licensing schemes, the Council has already explored whether it would be able to incorporate energy efficiency, retrofitting and fuel poverty considerations into the licence scheme. For example, by stipulating that in order to achieve a licence, it would be a requirement of the landlord to achieve a successful retrofit or to demonstrate a clear pathway and plan for retrofitting within the period of the licence. Based on the received legal advice, unfortunately, this is currently not possible. Licence powers are provided through the Housing Act 2004. The Act sets out the housing conditions that are applicable to a housing licensing scheme. Adding climate action requirements to a Housing Act scheme is likely to be seen, at first challenge, as acting beyond the authority of the Council.

Despite this, the Council is lobbying for this change and will be speaking directly to the Secretary of State as part of the licence scheme application stating that the thermal performance of any property is, by definition, part of its build type and general condition and therefore must constitute a housing condition.

In addition, there is ongoing lobbying around various legislative frameworks, including Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) and Housing Act provisions.

Most policy asks are captured in the [Housing Strategy Position Paper 2023](#) and the [Better Renting Campaign](#) and are reported to Members through a variety of meetings.

Recommendation ten

The Council should **investigate and report back on the options and implications for expanding the provision of retrofitting and net zero advice to owner-occupiers and the private rented sector**, and **consider identifying retrofit champions** who are willing to talk about their experiences of retrofitting.

The Council is currently developing a new Hackney Private Sector Housing Strategy for implementation in 2024. Within the strategy, the current approach sees the Council as the statutory agency for standards and enforcement that sets the standards and requirements. Where they are not being met, there is the power to take action and enforcement, thereby providing a clear delineation between advice/choices and standards/enforcement.

Council officers may provide specific net zero and retrofit advice on occasions but, generally speaking, will seek to signpost households to specialist and independent partner organisations and advisors for particular advice. It is then up to the household to proceed. Notwithstanding, the Council will continue to investigate the option of formal advice provision as it develops the new Private Sector Housing Strategy.

In respect of identifying future retrofit champions, the impact of [Hackney Light and Power's Green Homes grants programme](#) has been assessed by reaching out to households who have had measures successfully installed in their homes to ascertain:

- the impact on their lives, including their bills, health, wellbeing and behaviours;
- the application process and the relationship with the lead delivery partner Happy Energy and its contractors;
- the experience of interacting with the technology that has been installed; and
- their understanding of the positive impact they are having on the environment and Hackney's net zero journey.

A number of case studies are being developed which indicate a positive experience regarding the impact of the improvements that have been undertaken.

Recommendation eleven

The Council should **report back on its longer term plan on how it intends to bring the corporate estate in line with the net zero goal**, including its retrofitting programme and exploration of clean energy projects.

Work is ongoing to progressively survey corporate buildings for opportunities to reduce energy, lower-carbon and save money. Priority is being given to the decarbonisation of heat through electrification of heat using heat pumps, controls and other electric heat generators.

An initial batch of nine corporate buildings was brought forward as a project in 2022 and received a grant of £12.25m towards the £16.8m project to save 1,560 tCO₂e per annum. This project is now in delivery. A further suite of projects (subject to eligibility) is in preparation for the next Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme 3c grant round, estimated to open for applications in October 2024. Further projects will be brought forward as grants become available and/or sound 'Invest to Save' propositions are identified.

Notwithstanding, there are supporting actions in the CIP for the CAP which are focused on longer term plans such as:

- Develop an action plan to support maintained schools to reach net zero or the best achievable outcome by 2030; and
- Replace gas boilers with decarbonised energy generation for Council owned and operated buildings in line with the emerging Heat Network Strategy.

In addition, the recent commitment to join the UK100 membership network will bring forward the Council's net zero plans to 2030 for non-tenanted buildings. The initial scope is:

- Core Council Buildings, including libraries and frontline service delivery depots;
- Housing community halls and housing depots; and
- Leisure Centres - some of the largest energy users.

Recommendation twelve

The Council should **explore including within lease agreement requirements for its commercial property tenants to use renewable electricity, monitor usage and make energy-related information available.**

The Council routinely considers the social and economic credentials of potential tenants when marketing commercial properties, and green credentials are a fundamental component of that.

The Council can explore incorporating lease clauses that are geared towards the environmental performance of the asset, although in considering such clauses, the Council must be conscious of market expectations and commercial viability, taking into account the requirement to obtain the best consideration. While tenants are increasingly engaged with environmental and sustainable business factors, installing related obligations in leases is still a developing idea in the commercial property marketplace.

The Council's Commercial Property Portfolio is varied in many ways, including the potential to deliver income, social and/or economic benefits, alongside the levels of demand, and hence each one is treated according to its own particular circumstances.

There is, however, greater potential for environmental performance clauses in leases let under the Voluntary and Community Sector Lettings Policy, where under short leases, the Council retains control over the maintenance of the building, including mechanical and electrical installations.

Recommendation thirteen

The Council and Transport for London should **review decarbonisation pathways for bus**

services in Hackney, particularly around the opportunities to accelerate the rollout of electrification technologies.

Responsibility for bus electrification sits with Transport for London (TfL), and TfL's current target for electrification is 2034, although they have called on the Government to support an earlier target of 2030. Electrification of bus garages is fully supported, and the Council is in dialogue with TfL on this issue.

Councils are currently not routinely consulted on proposals to electrify individual bus routes, and the decisions regarding the sequence and priority of when routes will be electrified are taken by TfL as part of the bus tendering programme. The Council, together with London Councils, has expressed concern at the lack of borough involvement in this process and will continue to do so.

In the past year, the Mayor and lead member have written to and subsequently met with senior TfL officials, including the TfL Commissioner and discussed bus electrification.

One of the major constraints to electrification is the ability of depots to provide the power and charging capabilities necessary. The Mayor and lead member have discussed how the Council can support the electrification of bus depots, for example, through supporting the regeneration of bus depots, but have also raised the need for electrification ahead of such major regeneration schemes.

Recommendation fourteen

The Council should **explore the ways in which it can improve the evidence base for increasing the uptake of active and sustainable travel choices** across the borough, with a particular focus on the links with health, education and the local economy.

The Council has a well established evidence based approach to behaviour change, public realm and transport schemes. The current [Local Implementation Plan](#), approved in January 2023, builds on the evidence base of the [Hackney Transport Strategy 2015 -2025](#), which in turn drew evidence from health, education and economics disciplines.

The Council has adopted the Healthy Streets approach, which is based on high-quality, longitudinal public health quality data and provides a framework to consider physical changes to our streets.

The well established Schools and Workplaces engagement programmes rely on guidance and evidence from over 20 years of behaviour change research in the transport sector, which also draws from academic research into public health behaviour change which uses a similar toolkit.

Several Universities specialise in this area of research, notably the Active Travel Academy at Westminster University and Hackney Council are active participants in current research and regular attendees at seminars.

The Council is now preparing an update to the Transport Strategy, working closely across the health, education, regeneration, road safety and public transport teams to look at Census and other relevant data sources to best understand current issues. These evidence bases will inform the current work of the Council as well as the future strategic goals through the Hackney Transport Strategy 2025-2035. This will be an important opportunity to develop on the progress already made in Hackney in terms of active and sustainable travel and deliver the outcomes and benefits for all Hackney residents.

Recommendation fifteen

The Council should **undertake a business perceptions survey** to measure how local businesses view active travel and its impact on them, and how best to share information and engage with businesses on this agenda.

Through major schemes such as Stoke Newington [Low Traffic Neighbourhood \(LTN\)](#) and the Council's own business engagement team ([Zero Emissions Network, ZEN](#)), Council officers have engaged with local businesses on the specific issues of active and sustainable travel. With an active Network of over 1,500 businesses, the Council has helped businesses switch to more active and sustainable modes through schemes such as cargo bike hire or grants, as well as providing travel surveys and plans.

A notable example of success includes a Hackney based electrician trading in their van for an electric cargo bike. Residents and businesses can access the cargo bike hire scheme at four locations in the borough, and there are plans to expand this to 12 additional locations as well as offering active and sustainable travel advice to businesses across the borough. Some grants will also be made available to help businesses transition to more sustainable modes.

For major schemes, the Council will work directly with businesses, as has recently taken place in Hackney Central and is ongoing at Chatsworth Road. Results from this engagement will lead to local proposals and plans that can offer alternatives to existing motorised transport.

Recommendation sixteen

The Council should **review current activity in promoting electric vehicles (EVs) across London and explore ways in which it can work more closely with vehicle manufacturers and operators** to deliver consistent and high-quality provision that removes all barriers to uptake.

Electric vehicles (EV) have a large role to play in the future transport system, where they will provide a lower polluting and lower-carbon option to internal combustion engine vehicles.

However, EVs on their own will not be enough to meet the Council's clean air and carbon goals. They also do not address harm that motor vehicles bring in terms of road danger, community severance and do not contribute to a healthier and active population by walking and cycling.

It is in that context that the Council has entered into a unique contract with EV providers that prioritises overall motor vehicle reduction as its top line objective. Historically, this objective has been in conflict with the business viability needs of EV charge point suppliers, who require growth in EV ownership to make their businesses viable, even if it means promoting overall growth in vehicle ownership (for instance, through second household vehicles). Alongside the Council's EV Strategy, there is a policy of reducing private car ownership and on-street parking while creating environments that make it easier to walk and cycle.

Through a comprehensive tender, the Council is now working with suppliers who share its overall vision of a low-carbon, low pollution and low private vehicle ownership future transport network. The Council's contract providers have also committed to working with large car manufacturers so that plug and charge capabilities can be introduced as quickly as possible, improving the charging experience for EV users. Options are also being explored to enable Hackney residents to take advantage of discounted rates for charging.

This will result in the installation of an additional 2,650 EV chargers across the borough's seven square miles in the next four years. This programme includes the three different types of EV charging technology: rapid, fast and slow chargers. On top of the existing 344 chargers, this will take the total number of charging points in the borough to around 3,000 by 2026, and it will be the densest network in the country. The move is part of the Council's commitment to decarbonise the transport system in Hackney - a key goal in the borough-wide CAP and further demonstrates how local councils can be at the forefront of work to tackle climate change, lead innovation and help to pave the way for wider transport decarbonisation in the UK. Installation of the first batch of new EV charge points is expected to start by the end of 2023.

In addition to further promoting the transition to less polluting vehicles and the reduction of overall car ownership and usage, the Council is expanding its car club network to over 300 and ensuring that at least 50% of the car club fleet will be electric by 2026. This will help give an alternative to owning an EV and help give equitable access to the electrification of motorised travel.

Recommendation seventeen

The Council should **embed the use of Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE) and data sharing in its planning policy, on all developments where the building has been in use for a minimum of three years** to ensure robust monitoring processes for energy performance and enable constructive dialogue with developers on energy efficiency.

Planning policy in Hackney on post occupancy evaluation is already in place through London Plan policy S1 2 Minimising greenhouse gas emissions. Policy S1 2 sets out the energy hierarchy: be lean, be clean, be green, be seen. The 'Be Seen' aspect of energy monitoring reporting is concerned with operational energy performance, and post construction monitoring for seven years is required. This is required for all GLA referable schemes and major developments.

Recommendation eighteen

The Council should **report back on the current London-wide picture of decentralised energy projects and pipeline schemes** that could provide opportunities for future programmes, and **explore collaborative procurement/investment opportunities for renewable power** with other boroughs and regional authorities such as the North London Waste Authority.

Collaborative work is progressing on Retrofit, Heat Networks and Purchasing Renewable Power. As always, the opportunities from collaboration are balanced by complications and contractual issues, and the Council needs to choose carefully which projects provide the best balance of benefit versus cost/constraint.

In respect to Heat Networks, the Council is working with City of London and GLA on ways to access waste heat from data centres in the City, with an intention that this work is shared with other councils. Areas in Hackney may also be a conduit for heat to other areas of London as well as receiving heat from Newham via Tower Hamlets. These opportunities are factored into the work on a North London Local Area Energy Plan with the preliminary stages progressed by GLA. The Council is also working on ways to access waste heat from the Edmonton Ecopark.

On Power Purchase arrangements, six to eight London Boroughs, including Hackney, are working together with a view to a collaborative procurement for a Power Purchase Agreement from 2025-2026 to 2035-2036 and 2040-2041.

Recommendation nineteen

The Council should **enhance communications around the benefits of installing solar panels and the support available to businesses and households.**

As part of updating web pages covering energy advice on the Council's website, guidance will be provided for businesses and households interested in installing solar panels, including signposting to relevant sources of funding where they are available.

Recommendation twenty

The Council should **keep the hydrogen production market under review**, and where

possible **ensure all new or replacement boilers are considered for hydrogen gas heating.**

The priority for housing services in relation to this is to optimise the efficiency of communal heating networks and move them away from gas where possible. Regular liaison is made with Cadent Gas (a British regional gas distribution company that owns, operates and maintains the largest natural gas distribution network in the United Kingdom) on plans for hydrogen as an alternative to gas. It should be noted that it's one of several non-gas alternatives being looked for heating systems associated with the Council's social housing portfolio.

Recommendation twenty one

The Council should **outline the progress it has made in embedding actions to reduce carbon emissions into internal procurement and management processes, and the options it is exploring to go further.**

The Council's Sustainable Procurement Strategy that is currently undergoing a refresh, seeks to utilise a circular procurement approach, promote carbon reduction, a green economy and just transition.

The action plan within the new draft Sustainable Procurement and Insourcing Strategy sets out plans for short and medium term commitments, such as more staff development and training events, working more closely with the supply chains, introducing local measurements to standardise monitoring across contracts, celebrating the achievements of various departments and more engagement with external partners and anchor organisations. It will also increase alignment with the recently adopted CAP 2023-2030, goals and objectives, and there are actions within the three-year CIP. A key objective in the consumption theme of the CAP is to: *Embed actions to reduce consumption related emissions into internal procurement and management processes for the Council, businesses and institutions.*

A number of actions have been undertaken, including:

- Supplier selection questionnaires now request carbon commitments at all thresholds, with tracking of these commitments proposed through the new contracts management system, which would also endeavour to record and monitor wider sustainability outcomes;
- Systematically challenging the decision to go to market, but where this is unavoidable, ensuring that specifications seek to reduce CO2 emissions in supply chains, divert waste from landfill and incineration as far as possible, and ensure 'whole life 'costing where practical;
- Procurement tools, such as the Heat Map, are continuously being refreshed to ensure they capture and reflect industry best practice;
- Contract specifications being reviewed to support the priorities within the adopted CAP as the opportunities arise;

- External social value platforms are being piloted in a bid to simplify processes for suppliers and maximise outcomes for Council residents and businesses;
- Third party spend data is regularly analysed to seek opportunities for improvements;
- Updating the procurement pipeline to highlight sustainability opportunities, including carbon reduction, providing better visibility and opportunity for challenge; and
- Reviewing the contract register to ensure better data and early warning on expiring contracts so as to provide adequate time for reviewing specifications and earlier engagement with the market.

Recommendation twenty two

The Council should **report back on the impact of waste management work and objectives to reduce waste arisings and improve recycling and food composting rates**, and with particular consideration given to commercial waste.

The Mayor of London's Environment Strategy requires London authorities to write a [Reduction and Recycling Plan](#) (RRP). The RRP sets out baselines for the borough's waste and recycling performance, waste and recycling targets and an action plan for reducing waste and increasing recycling. The Council's current RRP was approved by the Cabinet and the Mayor of London in May 2023 and sets out a plan for 2023-2025. This is the second RRP the Council has been required to submit to the GLA, and it builds on actions from the previous RRP 2018-2022.

Following approval of the RRP, the Council is required to report back to the GLA with the progress and impact of the planned actions and targets on a regular basis. Progress with these actions can come back to scrutiny if required.

The RRP includes:

- Ten actions to reduce waste and increase materials reuse;
- 18 actions to maximise recycling performance;
- Two actions to reduce the environmental impacts (such as greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants) of waste activities; and
- Two actions to maximise the use of local waste sites.

The actions planned to reduce waste include plans for the Library of Things; food waste reduction initiatives; waste prevention schemes; and the Circular Economy Action Plan.

The actions planned to improve recycling and food composting include:

- Plans to enhance performance of the new fortnightly residual waste collection;
- Flats Above Shops food waste trials;
- Estates food waste services expansion;
- Resident engagement and behaviour change through waste and recycling communications and service publicity;

- Expanding the range of recyclable materials;
- Estates Recycling Programme (Hackney Housing);
- Housing Association Recycling Programme;
- General estate recycling interventions;
- Storage Provision for Estates Recycling; and
- Increasing recycling within the Commercial Waste portfolio.

Particular consideration is given to commercial waste, with plans for the Council to deliver and develop the Council's commercial waste and recycling services, including continued provision of mixed dry, glass, cardboard and food waste recycling. This will continue to be expanded to more commercial premises in the borough, maintaining a pricing structure that incentivises recycling.

Recommendation twenty three

The Council **should undertake local business surveys** to identify the nature and level of support needed for local businesses to decarbonise, and to map existing green businesses in the borough.

The Council completed a research commission looking into Hackney's green economy in April 2023. This provided an estimated baseline of 301 green businesses operating in the borough and indicated specialisations within the climate change strategy and policy sector; reduce, reuse, recycle, repair sector; and power sector.

Most of the green activity within the borough is located towards the Hoxton West, Hoxton East and Shoreditch areas, reflecting the area's popularity as a headquarters location for businesses seeking a central London base. Smaller clusters are observable within the Lea Bridge, London Fields and Hackney Wick areas. The Council is undertaking further engagement with green businesses operating in key strategic sectors to understand growth requirements and how the Council could accelerate green growth in the borough.

In a wider general business survey completed in March 2023, only 4% of businesses stated they had a commitment to reach net zero by 2030, and a further 7% were working towards being net zero. The three barriers most regularly cited by local firms to transitioning to net zero were a lack of knowledge, grants and capital/finance. However, it should be noted that about half of the businesses surveyed did not provide an answer to the question of what they were doing to reduce their footprint, and about 20% of respondents said they do not need help because it was not a priority for them, especially in the current economic conditions. This indicates a continuing disconnect between the imperative for local firms to plan for a net zero future and their capacity/ambition to do so.

The extent to which the Council will be able to directly address these capacity limitations or the difficulty for local firms to access finance is inevitably limited, given the scale of the challenge and the resources available to local authorities in directly funding the private sector net zero

aspirations. The focus will, therefore, likely need to be on raising awareness amongst local firms on the steps they can take, with a particular emphasis on supporting microbusinesses (defined as having 0-9 employees), which make up 89.9% of all Hackney businesses.

To this end, the Council has allocated some [UK Share Prosperity Fund \(UKSPF\)](#) funding to establish a programme of individual diagnostic calls, on-site business audits and advice from energy experts to provide business specific recommendations (normally operations, energy use building/equipment adaptation), depending on budget, building design and other variables. This will help tackle the cited barrier of lack of awareness amongst local firms.

A small amount of GLA funding is also available to offer businesses capital grants to implement recommendations arising from the property audits. Further funding will be sought to extend the offer of capital funding to a larger number of businesses. The London-wide UKSPF programme managed by the GLA may offer further support for Hackney businesses to transition to net zero. As details of this programme are confirmed, the Council will signpost businesses to any additional opportunities where relevant.

Recommendation twenty four

The Council should work with neighbouring boroughs and partner organisations to **identify new solutions and traffic management options to reduce carbon emissions from freight and logistics.**

The Council is committed to the following freight objectives to reduce local carbon emissions:

- Develop more Low Emission Zones/Ultra Low Emission Streets in Hackney's town centres/areas of high freight deliveries/poor air quality;
- Work with neighbouring boroughs to produce new area-wide construction logistics plans in south of the borough;
- Investigate the purchase of additional electric and low-emission vehicles for the Council fleet including cargo bikes and electric HGV vehicles;
- Install more on-street and Council depot-based electric vehicle charging points suitable for different types of freight vehicles including street trader vehicles, e-bikes and at local micro consolidation centres;
- Continue and expand support for zero and low-emission last mile deliveries through ZEN; and
- Explore feasibility and delivery rollout of residential shared cargo bikes and potential need and feasibility of developing a local hydrogen refuelling station.

Recommendation twenty five

The Council should work with other boroughs, training and education partners and businesses to **map out the scale and nature of green jobs in London and in Hackney, to consider the implications this will have on education and skills training provision.**

A 2021 study by the Institute for Employment Studies and WPI Economics indicated that, as of 2020, there were 234,300 green jobs in London. These were most heavily concentrated in the Power sector (82,900), Homes and Building sector (58,200) and Green Finance sector (50,700). The same report found that the biggest growth in green jobs by 2050 was likely to be in the same sectors, with Green Finance, in particular, experiencing rapid growth, increasing to an anticipated 387,000. Combined with a significant growth in the Low Carbon Transport sector, these four sectors will account for nearly nine in ten green jobs. The employment projections from this report suggest an overall 4.5-fold increase in green jobs in London over the coming three decades.

The largest increase in green jobs, in numeric terms, is among professional workers, whose numbers are projected to increase by 68,000 to reach 124,000 in 2030, an increase of 123% and reflecting the predominant services orientation of the London economy. Skilled craft workers are projected to experience the fastest growth, of 138%, with numbers rising by 61,000.

At present, green sectors draw very few workers directly from full-time education, with most new entrants coming in from other sectors, although with the rapid projected growth over the coming decade, employers may need to draw more new workers straight from education. There is likely to be an increase in education provision in subjects and courses that are relevant for green jobs and an increase in the proportion of those taking relevant courses which progress to employment within green sectors. However, the assumption remains that the bulk of growth in employment numbers will be accounted for by inflows from other non-green sectors into green sectors, including through reskilling training. This will likely remain the case, at least in the short term, while green education and training provision increases to meet the needs of the sector.

Providing an accurate localised estimate of green jobs is difficult - the Hackney green economy research found that there were 880 jobs with specifically 'green' businesses, but this figure excludes green jobs within non primarily green businesses and will therefore be a significant undercount.

Recommendation twenty six

The Council should work with schools and educational settings to **enhance the quality of climate education, create hands-on opportunities for children and young people during the development and retrofitting of council-owned properties, and encourage carbon reduction measures in play areas and grounds** such as tree planting, Sustainable Drainage Systems and natural play spaces.

The recommendation aligns well with the existing initiatives, and the Council has made significant progress. Through Hackney Light and Power's Community Energy Fund, the Council is actively supporting community-led energy projects. The Fund, launched in

collaboration with local energy groups, is especially beneficial to schools, students, and communities in Hackney. The initial round of funding was awarded in April 2023 to The Hackney Empire, Mildmay Club, and Parkwood Primary School for the installation of solar panels. Other community organisations, including a church, a gurdwara, a wellness charity, and seven schools, received funding for the development of carbon-saving projects. Through this, the Council aims to foster carbon-saving behaviours within the communities.

In terms of engagement with young people, at present, 65 schools are participating in the Eco-School programme, of which 18 have earned the Green Flag award. Reflecting on the past year, the Council can proudly report engaging with over 5,000 students, conducting over 600 litter picks, and planting 1,000 trees. These accomplishments have been acknowledged at the Global Action Plan Sustainable City Awards 2023.

Additionally, schools have been actively involved in various carbon-awareness campaigns and events, like the Eco-School 'Cut Your Carbon' Campaign and 'Running Out of Time Relay'. Students are also part of innovative projects like the Pupils Profit eco-refill scheme to combat single-use plastics.

The Council had significant representation in the Mayor of London's Climate Resilient Schools programme, with 16 schools from our borough participating. The programme, now concluded, helped these schools to improve water efficiency, reduce surface water flood risk with 12 rain gardens, and create climate adaptation plans. It also equipped students with knowledge about climate adaptation.

Through these initiatives, the Council is prioritising climate education and hands-on climate action in schools. The Council is committed to continuing and expanding this work, further enhancing students' understanding and ownership of sustainable practices and collective responsibility to protect the environment.

Recommendation twenty seven

The Council should **report back on its plans to align, expand and grow its Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) to be able to undertake carbon reduction measures, such as installing low-carbon heat sources and retrofitting, as well as the progress it has made to date.**

The growth of the in-house DLO has progressed in line with the Mayoral manifesto commitment and ambitions to grow by 20% between 2022 and 2024. The Council is on track to have expanded DLO resources to 170 operatives this year, compared to 143 in 2021-2022.

Further work is required to develop the existing workforce and recruit/train additional staff to undertake carbon reduction measures, such as low-carbon heat sources and installing retrofit measures to existing homes. There are plans to develop a workforce strategy and review existing skills, and identify gaps to help develop training and development plans. For example,

alongside the ambition to phase out gas boilers, the Council will be looking at re-training the Council's gas engineers to be able to install and maintain alternative heating systems.

This work is also linked to the Council's retrofit plans for Housing, as there are key dependencies in terms of the types of skills and capabilities that will be required within the in-house service. It also requires investment and planning for the continued growth and development of the DLO, including a new depot and a cleaner, greener fleet so that the Council can operate in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.

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Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 22nd November 2023 Item 9 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting	Item No 9
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Outline

The draft minutes of the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 18th September 2023 are provided.

Action

Members are asked to review and agree the draft minutes as an accurate record of the meeting, and note any responses to actions arising.

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London Borough of Hackney
Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission
Municipal Year 2023/24
Monday 18 September 2023

Minutes of the proceedings of
the Living in Hackney Scrutiny
Commission held at
Hackney Town Hall, Mare
Street, London E8 1EA

Chair:

Councillors in Attendance: Cllr M Can Ozsen, Cllr Clare Joseph (Vice-Chair), Cllr Joseph Ogundemuren, Cllr Sam Pallis, Cllr Ali Sadek, Cllr Zoe Garbett and Cllr Sade Etti

Apologies: Cllr Ian Rathbone, Cllr Soraya Adejare, Cllr Caroline Selman and Cllr Yvonne Maxwell

Officers In Attendance: Rob Miller (Strategic Director Customer & Workplace) and Jennifer Wynter (Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs)

Officer in Virtual Attendance: Andrew Croucher (Operations Manager)

Other People in Virtual Attendance: Sally Caldwell (Strategy & Transformation Consultant) and Helen Lewis (Associate Consultant, Homeless Link)

Officer Contact: **Craig Player**
 020 8356 4316
 craig.player@hackney.gov.uk

Councillor Clare Joseph in the Chair

1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 The Chair updated those in attendance on the meeting etiquette and that the meeting was being recorded and livestreamed.

1.2 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Adejare (Chair), Cllr Maxwell and Cllr Rathbone.

1.3 As Vice-Chair, Cllr Joseph would chair the meeting.

2 Urgent Items / Order of Business

2.1 There were no urgent items, and the order of business was as set out in the agenda.

3 Declaration of Interest

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4 Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy

4.1 The Chair opened the item by explaining that the Commission was keen to hear about the development of the Council's draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy, which was due to be presented to Cabinet later in the year.

4.2 The Commission saw this discussion as timely, giving members an opportunity to challenge how the strategy will be delivered, how the Council had considered any risks and the key measures of success before it was adopted.

4.3 Representing London Borough of Hackney

- Cllr Sade Etti, Deputy Cabinet Member for Homelessness & Housing Needs
- Rob Miller, Strategic Director Customer & Workplace
- Jennifer Wynter, Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs
- Andrew Croucher, Operations Manager

4.4 External Guests

- Sally Caldwell, Strategy & Transformation Consultant
- Helen Lewis, Associate Consultant, Homeless Link

4.5 The Chair then invited the Deputy Cabinet Member for Homelessness & Housing Needs, Council officers and external guests to give a short verbal presentation. The main points are highlighted below.

4.6 Much of the housing crisis had been driven by issues that the Council was not in control of. This included central government policies on austerity measures, house building, rent controls, immigration and economic policy. This was in addition to the pandemic and cost of living crisis which had deepened and accelerated its impacts.

4.7 There were other ongoing issues which were affecting the Council's ability to deliver, such as Local Housing Allowance having been frozen since 2011, welfare reform, short term and limited temporary accommodation funding and housing affordability. Government commitment to address the housing market crisis and other homelessness issues had been limited.

4.8 There had also been more recent developments which were impacting the Council's ability to deliver. This included a volatile housing market, shrinking private sector with Buy to Let landlords leaving the market, and the temporary accommodation crisis in London.

4.9 There was an unprecedented demand for accommodation in Hackney, including from Home Office Asylum Seekers Programme, Afghanistan and Ukraine Resettlement Programmes, and increasing homelessness due to overcrowding and conflict.

4.10 There was a need to stabilise funding streams from different government departments (for example the funding from the Rough Sleeper Initiative, health, adult social care and substance misuse) to reduce uncertainty around service delivery, and the recent funding settlement meant that Hackney was under-resourced.

4.11 Homeless Link was the national membership charity for non-statutory frontline homelessness services and worked in partnership with the Council and homeless charities in the borough, and had been commissioned to support the development of the strategy.

4.12 Work to refresh the new strategy over the past year had included a review of the local, London and national policy context and analysis of data relating to homelessness gathered by the Council, local health services and mental health services.

4.13 It also included consultation with a wide range of stakeholders such as Council departments, external partners like the NHS, commissioned providers, voluntary and community organisations and central government, as well as people with lived experience of homelessness in Hackney.

4.14 A range of key issues were identified through this work including:

- Increasing youth homelessness
- Increasing complex needs presentations
- Pathway development including hospital discharge, single homelessness/rough sleeping supported accommodation
- Temporary accommodation crisis
- Procurement of longer-term housing, including private rented sector
- Global majority homelessness, LGBTQIA+ and inequality of outcomes
- Sub-regional and pan-London collaborative working continuity and opportunities.

4.15 It also identified a number of successes and achievements of the Council's current approach to homelessness and rough sleeping. These included expanding and reinforcing the Greenhouse and Street Outreach services for rough sleepers, enhanced pathway development and multi-agency working for example for hospital discharge, young people and care leavers and prison leavers, and developing relationships with the community and voluntary sector.

4.16 In regard to homelessness prevention in particular, successes and achievements included developing psychologically informed practice, embedding Benefits & Housing Needs staff in other service areas and poverty reduction work such as Hackney Money Hub to intervene in cases of homelessness earlier.

4.17 It was felt that Hackney's available levers could be considered at three levels: service development (e.g. procedures, workforce development and multidisciplinary working), collaborative working (e.g. pathways, joint working between Hackney departments and other London boroughs) and policy and research, campaigning and innovation.

4.18 There were a number of challenges facing the Council in preventing homelessness and supporting those residents approaching it for assistance. This included affordable housing supply, both temporary and long-term.

4.19 Ensuring access to affordable, decent housing within Hackney was made difficult by its dense population, high land values and increasing levels of landlord exit. New Homelessness Prevention Grant allocations and increased competition from other boroughs also made it difficult to manage temporary accommodation costs. Ensuring

strong alignment with the new Housing Strategy would therefore be particularly important.

4.20 Reducing the flow and entrenched numbers of rough sleepers in the borough was also a challenge, with market conditions meaning that many areas across London were experiencing rising numbers of people sleeping rough. Numbers of people coming onto the street for the first time were higher in Hackney than the London average, and many had complex needs.

4.21 Addressing homelessness amongst young people was an increasing priority since the pandemic and cost of living crisis, with young people less visible and more likely to approach the Council as a last resort. Young people experiencing homelessness often needed commissioned specialist accommodation, but were competing with many other cohorts for this housing supply.

4.22 Increasingly, residents approaching the Council for homelessness assistance had complex and multiple support and medical needs. Challenges in this area included insufficient supported accommodation, which risked the repeat of homelessness, with out of borough placements and/or the loss of social networks.

4.23 Forecasting changes in the size/composition of the 'Edge of Care' cohort was difficult, as housing, health and homelessness dataset did not work easily together. Some challenge and advocacy by staff within homelessness was also seen to be counterproductive.

4.24 The pandemic and costs of living crisis had intensified inequalities for Global Majority groups, and this inequality may manifest itself as hidden homelessness. Around 80% of preventable health issues related to social determinants, but these were difficult to address without affordable housing supply. The cost of living crisis meant more demand for Hackney services, in turn making services costlier to run. There was therefore a need to meet immediate needs and upstream interventions.

4.25 Another challenge was offering an effective pathway for non-UK national rough sleepers and people with no recourse to public funds without a coherent government policy response. These groups were particularly vulnerable in law and policy terms.

4.26 Analysing the impact of upcoming policy and legislative changes would be important, for example the end of Section 21 notices, and the Council-wide response would need to promote collective responsibility for addressing homelessness.

4.27 In terms of the strategy itself, there was a need to put it into practice. This would involve setting out deliverable actions and activities, with targets and goals. A robust action plan was currently in development to this end.

4.28 Delivering the actions would not rely solely on the work of Benefits and Housing Needs, but should be delivered in partnership with some leadership devolved to external partners who would drive the work via the Homelessness Partnership Board.

4.29 Work on some of the actions was already underway. For example, funding had been secured for the new Rough Sleeper Assessment Centre which would provide short-stay accommodation for people who needed further needs assessment and/or support to stabilise before moving into longer-term accommodation.

4.30 Immediate next steps in the development of the strategy included:

- Addressing the recommendations from PSG
- Presenting the strategy to the Executive for sign-off
- Publishing the strategy
- Working with partners and stakeholders to agree a detailed action plan that takes forward the themes and turns them into concrete actions and service improvements
- Through the Hackney Homelessness Partnership Board, oversee and monitor the delivery of the agreed actions and improvements.

Questions, Answers and Discussion

4.31 *A Commission Member asked for information on the support a resident would receive at the first point of contact when they were referred or present to the Council as homeless or at risk of homelessness.*

4.32 The Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs explained that there were many variables to what support was offered to those that presented as homeless or at risk of homelessness, and it often depended on where the first contact was.

4.33 The Greenhouse Day Centre provided a single point of contact for rough sleepers, many of which were single and often had complex needs. This provided a multi-agency service for rough sleepers and had shared pathways with a range of services including health, adult safeguarding and social care, probation and prisons to ensure wraparound support.

4.34 For example, two social workers were embedded within the service (one mental health specialist and one generalist) and worked across Homerton Hospital. In addition, the out of hospital model was set up last year with Peabody and Lowry House to ensure any discharge of care or bed blocking for homelessness reasons.

4.35 If someone were to present at Hackney Service Centre they would likely present as part of a family and/or with children. All staff were trained to provide a holistic, wraparound and psychologically-informed service. Many also had lived experience of homelessness and domestic abuse themselves.

4.36 The Strategy & Transformation Consultant added that it was more and more important for interventions to be made at an earlier stage. Joint working, signposting and collaboration was therefore imperative to ensure that relevant services had information on the needs of vulnerable residents.

4.37 The Deputy Cabinet Member for Homelessness & Housing Needs went on to say that The greenhouse health offer had been expanded, with more staff to ensure that residences needs are assessed and appropriate support is provided.

4.38 In addition, the coordination of housing related support has been brought together within the Benefits and Housing Needs Service, involving Council departments, health, housing associations and support providers to commission additional schemes.

4.39 *A Commission Member asked whether the Benefits and Housing Needs Service felt it had the internal capacity to meet demand for homelessness services and deliver the priorities of the new strategy.*

4.40 The Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs explained that, in terms of staffing levels, the service propped itself up with agency staff where appropriate and had a low turnover of staff within the service. Many of its agency staff wanted to stay on at the council as permanent employees too.

4.41 The biggest challenges were brought about by short term and limited government funding for homelessness services. This made it increasingly difficult for Hackney to sustainably plan services and to meet its ambition of preventing homelessness and supporting all Hackney residents approaching it for assistance.

4.42 The service had done various modelling and forecasting exercises, alongside public health and around the homelessness monitor itself, looking at population databases to understand what it could expect in terms of future homelessness so that the service was resilient and robust enough to deal with that.

4.43 A Commission Member asked what the current status of the Housing First scheme was, whether the Council was looking to expand the scheme and what options were being considered for longer-term funding.

4.44 The Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs explained that the service had made successful bids to the Department for Levelling Up, Communities and Housing (DLUHC) Rough Sleeping Initiative (RSI) to support the expansion of rough sleeping services including Housing First. This would facilitate the expansion of accommodation supply as well as reviewing the current support and progression models.

4.45 The Operations Manager added that the initial funding from the Clinical Commissioning Group was for 10 properties. The service then bid for RSI funding to increase supply by 15 units and the service was well on the way to delivering that and, once those properties were filled, this provided a long-term solution for homeless residents. The service was currently working with St Mungo's on delivery, and looking at other ways that it can secure longer-term funding for the scheme.

4.46 The service had also lodged a bid for funding from the Greater London Authority (GLA) and DLUHC for the Single Homelessness Accommodation Programme and specifically for young people. This would fund 10 accommodation units using the Council's own stock and enable it to provide specialised support packages for this cohort.

4.47 A Commission Member asked what the approach to placing residents in existing residential areas and estates, including those managed by housing associations, through the Housing First scheme.

4.48 The Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs explained that the service worked alongside St Mungo's and housing associations to ensure that residents were placed appropriately and had the support to sustain their tenancies and settle into their communities

4.49 A Commission Member asked for further information on how the Council was looking to explore new delivery models for temporary accommodation projects, and work with landlords who were interested in providing temporary accommodation.

4.50 The Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs explained that the Council worked closely with other London Boroughs to obtain additional private rented accommodation and reduce the use of expensive nightly paid temporary accommodation. For the last ten years there had been a cap on the amount of money that boroughs would pay for temporary accommodation, meaning they did not inflate the market any further than necessary, and there were also agreements in place about the amount of incentives that would be paid in each borough.

4.51 The Council not only provided incentives for landlords, but also renting advances and deposits for residents and helped with travel costs and viewings.

4.52 London Boroughs met on a monthly basis around this issue and were involved in various forums including the Temporary Accommodation Forum and the Housing Needs Forum to make sure that their work was completely joined up and to hold each other to account.

4.53 The Council was also exploring new delivery models for temporary accommodation projects, drawing on work by Common Projects and the Centre for Homelessness Impact. This involved working with Regeneration and Housing colleagues, for example to identify council managed and housing association properties that may be able to be used for temporary accommodation.

4.54 A Commission Member asked whether the Council had an idea of the amount of Buy to Let landlords who were likely to leave the market in the near future, and what impact this may have on the supply of council homes (provided the Council decided to buy these properties back).

4.55 The Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs explained that the Council had commissioned work from Savilles and the London School of Economics to understand the levels of Buy to Let landlords pulling out of the market and the impact that this may have on local council housing supply.

4.56 It was important to note that the council would consider whether or not to buy back a property in this way on an individual basis, depending on factors such as the capital funds available, housing need and demand for the type of property being offered, and any additional costs for refurbishment work.

4.57 Of particular importance was housing need, the demand for the type of property being offered and the area in which the property was located. This was because the service was seeing increasing approaches from residents with complex and multiple needs, meaning it needed more tailored or supported housing options.

4.58 A Commission Member asked how the strategy refresh had considered the particular needs of transgender and non-binary people who were at risk of homelessness, and how it would work with partner organisations to ensure that they did not face discrimination when accessing homelessness services.

4.59 The Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs explained that the Council's main partner in this area was akt, an LGTBQI+ youth homelessness charity working with young people who were struggling with their housing situation. Akt was a referral partner and operated out of the greenhouse Day Centre. This was because there was a clear intersectionality between young people, those who identify as LGTBQI+ and homelessness.

4.60 The Associate Consultant, Homeless Link Confirmed that none of the respondents to the stakeholder consultation undertaken during the strategy refresh had identified as LGBTQI+.

4.61 The Operations Manager added that the service had worked hard to ensure all frontline staff working with people experiencing homelessness understand and were sympathetic to the challenges and discrimination faced by LGBTQI+ residents. It was also looking to work with stakeholders and partners to identify housing solutions that would meet the needs of LGBTQI+ residents who were homeless or at risk homelessness.

4.62 The Strategy & Transformation Consultant added that the co-design workshops had brought to light the fact there was Intersectionality between a wide range of factors when looking at the reasons for people presenting as homelessness, including poverty, family breakdown and discrimination.

4.63 The multi-agency approach to this in Hackney was good, with a number of referrals that could be made to a variety of different organisations based on people's needs. Referrals for the particular needs of young people and LGBTQI+ residents were seen as examples of good practice.

4.64 The Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs added that work was underway to develop a homelessness prevention programme in schools to give young people realistic expectations of housing options and what it meant to live independently.

4.65 *A Commission Member asked how the strategy refresh had considered the particular needs of armed forces veterans, and how the Council would use the government's Op FORTITUDE funding for bespoke homelessness pathways.*

4.66 The Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs explained that even before Op FORTITUDE, the Council had an armed forces veterans covenant in place. In practice, there were not many armed forces veterans in Hackney, with the majority represented in outer London boroughs.

4.67 In the past year there had been only one homelessness presentation from an armed forces veteran. The Council was required by legislation to report to the government any presentations of homelessness where there was a history of military service. As a protected group, they also had high priority for social housing allocation.

4.68 *A Commission Member asked how the strategy would feed into the wider Housing Strategy refresh and plans to deliver more affordable housing across the borough.*

4.69 The Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs underlined the importance of the priorities of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy being reflected and actioned throughout the new Housing Strategy refresh and future delivery.

4.70 The service had been clear that the Council did not only need to increase the supply of affordable temporary and permanent housing, but also understand the different types of accommodation that was needed to reflect housing need and demand.

4.71 The Council was currently gathering the evidence base for the Housing Strategy refresh, including a strategic housing market assessment, and the Housing Policy Team would be reporting on this and the emerging priorities at the next Commission meeting.

4.72 A Commission Member asked for further information on the delivery of Hackney Living Rent homes, and the options being explored for expanding Living Rent products.

4.73 The Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs explained that the Regeneration Team was responsible for the delivery of Hackney Living Rent homes. These were affordable homes at below market rent for private renters who did not qualify for social housing.

4.74 The service believed that these products were important and would welcome increased numbers of Living Rent products, however it advocated that the immediate priority should be with those who were experiencing homelessness.

4.75 A Commission Member asked why there were increasing levels of homelessness amongst young people in Hackney over the past few years, and what actions were being taken to address this issue and related impacts such as on education and employment.

4.76 The Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs explained that the pandemic and cost of living crisis had particularly affected young people, increasing strain on family relationships and making it more difficult to manage on relatively low incomes. Welfare reforms, for example benefit caps, compounded these issues too.

4.77 The London Youth Gateway project was in place, delivered collaboratively through London Councils, which offered youth targeted homelessness pathways. Through this, the Council would continue work with other boroughs to develop sub-regional and pan-London protocols, to improve the consistency of responses for young people experiencing homelessness across London.

4.78 Government funding has also been made available for two groups of people through the Single Homeless Accommodation Programme, namely rough sleepers with multiple complex needs and young people. That being said, funding had generally been limited and short term in nature with government agencies and apartments often working against each other, meaning it was difficult to put in place a reactive service.

4.79 The Deputy Cabinet Member for Homelessness & Housing Needs added that the Council was looking to reintroduce the mediation scheme to reduce homelessness due to family breakdown, as well develop a homelessness prevention programme in schools.

4.80 The Strategy & Transformation Consultant went on to say that, whilst the youth homelessness pathway was an example of good practice, support for residents once they had been through this pathway often fell away. It was therefore important to ensure that young people were supported into stable employment or education as well as accommodation, and that the traumatic consequences of having been homeless were considered whilst tailoring support packages.

4.81 The Council therefore needed to be proactive in exploring opportunities for dedicated housing pathways for young people, such as a young person specific Housing First offer. This again pointed to the importance of joined up working between the Benefits and Housing Needs, Regeneration and Housing teams.

4.82 A Commission Member asked about how the Council worked with other London boroughs to lobby the government for increased long-term funding across housing, social care, public health and NHS services.

4.83 The Deputy Cabinet Member for Homelessness & Housing Needs explained that the Council did lobby the government for change in these areas alongside other London boroughs and the GLA, and through London Councils. It was recognised that funding was often limited and short-term in nature.

4.84 In any case, there were things that could be done locally to meet the challenges the Council faced. For example, There was a commitment alongside Regeneration and Housing colleagues to explore new delivery models for temporary accommodation products for example using the asset review to identify meanwhile sites - areas which were too small or otherwise unsuitable for new-build housing but could be repurposed for temporary accommodation.

4.85 A Commission Member asked whether the Council's homelessness database was affected by the cyber attack and, if so, what mitigations have been put in place since.

4.86 The Assistant Director of Benefits & Housing Needs explained that the homelessness database had not been affected by the cyber attack. It was a relatively new database which had been purchased to coincide with the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in 2018. Whilst other systems had been affected, such as those within Housing Services, this did not have a significant impact on the Council's ability to deliver its homelessness services.

Summing Up

4.87 The Chair thanked Commission Members for their questions and all witnesses for their responses and engagement with the scrutiny process.

4.88 It was explained that, after the meeting, the Commission would reflect on the evidence heard and may make suggestions or recommendations for consideration.

5 Letter to Independent Office for Police Conduct: Child Q Investigation

5.1 The Chair explained that, at the joint Living in Hackney and Children & Young People Scrutiny Commissions follow up discussion on the partnership response to the Child Q incident held on 25th April 2023, it was agreed that the Chairs would write to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC) expressing its concerns regarding the delay in the publication of its report into the conduct of police officers involved in the incident.

5.2 The Chair then drew Members attention to the IOPC announcement the completion of its investigation on 14th September. It determined that three officers should face gross misconduct hearings for potential breaches of police standards, including allegations that Child Q was discriminated against by them because of her

race and sex. A fourth officer would face a misconduct hearing relating to there being no appropriate adult present during the strip search.

5.3 It would be important to continue to monitor and review the partnership work in response to the incident, including the outcome of this investigation and the second report from City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership published in June. The Chair would therefore be meeting with the Chair of the Living in Hackney and Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission to plan and agree the next steps and will update members in due course.

5.4 Members noted the agreed letter and the process and timescale for following it up.

6 Policing of Drug Use: Findings & Response

6.1 The Chair explained that, following the discussion held on 23rd January 2023 on the policing of drug use in Hackney, the Commission had brought together its findings and sent a letter to the Community Safety Partnership and Mayor's Office for Police & Crime (MOPAC) seeking assurances in several key areas.

6.2 It was noted that there was a typo in the cover sheet. The response from the Community Safety Partnership and MOPAC to the letter was received on 17th August, rather than 19th September.

6.3 In terms of following up this piece of work, the Chair suggested that the Commission may want to request an update from MOPAC on the success of the Local Policing Scrutiny Panel pilot and plans for work in subsequent years and beyond at the appropriate stage.

6.4 A Commission Member asked for further information on the Serious Violence & Gangs Board, namely on the process and timelines for the election of a Chair and its work programme. The Chair agreed to follow this up in writing after the meeting.

6.5 Members noted the letter and response to the findings of the scrutiny session on the policing of drug use.

7 Overview & Scrutiny Public Engagement Protocol

7.1 The Chair explained that the Overview & Scrutiny Public Engagement Protocol was agreed by Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 13th July 2023.

7.2 The protocol was developed to provide guidance and information to scrutiny councillors, officers and the public to support public engagement in the scrutiny process in response to technological changes and efforts to increase resident participation.

7.3 A Commission Member suggested that Overview & Scrutiny look to develop a feedback mechanism for those members of the public who engage in its work to inform future work and any suggestions for improvement.

7.4 Members are asked to note the Overview & Scrutiny Public Engagement Protocol.

8 Minutes of the Meeting

8.1 The draft minutes of the previous meeting on 10th July 2023 were presented.

8.2 Members agreed the draft minutes as an accurate record.

9 Living in Hackney Work Programme 2023/24

9.1 The Chair explained that the item was to consider and agree the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year.

9.2 The draft work programme had been drafted by the Chair and Vice-Chair taking into consideration the suggestions made by Commission Members, as well as suggestions made in the public survey and by key stakeholders.

9.3 The Chair then invited Commission Members to make any comments on the 2023/24 work programme.

9.4 A Commission Member asked whether the Commission would undertake a formal review during the 2023/24 year. It was explained that the possibility of a review into the Council's approach to the long-term viability and future use of community halls had been explored, but was not possible this year. A briefing would instead be provided later in the year, which may be used to launch a review in the next municipal year.

9.5 A Commission Member asked about how the Commission was fulfilling its statutory role in respect of scrutinising the Community Safety Partnership. It was explained that the Commission scrutinises the Community Safety Partnership at least once a year, often taking the approach of looking at a themed area which falls under its statutory responsibility.

9.6 Members agreed the work programme for the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission for the 2023/24 municipal year.

10 Any Other Business

10.1 None.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00 - 9.05 pm



Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 22nd November 2023 Item 10 – Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2023/24	Item No 10
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Outline

Attached is the work programme for the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Please note that this is a working document.

Action

Members are asked to note the work programme for the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission for the 2023/24 municipal year.

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Overview & Scrutiny

Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission: Work Programme for June 2023 – March 2024

Each agenda will include an updated version of this work programme

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
12th June 2023 Papers deadline: Tues 30th May 2023	Cabinet Question Time: Accountability of Private Rented Sector & Housing Associations	Cllr Sem Moema, Deputy Cabinet Member for Private Rented Sector and Housing Affordability	To question the Deputy Cabinet Member on the Council's relationship with its housing association partners and the private rented sector and how it works with both tenants and landlords to ensure effective accountability and protection. Particular focus will be given to how the Council works with housing associations and the private rented sector to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maximise supply, nominations and lettings ● Support tenancy sustainment ● Maintain properties in good repair
	LiH Scrutiny Commission Work Programme Planning 2023-2024	Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer	To consider and make suggestions for the LiH Scrutiny Commission work programme for the new municipal year.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
<p>10th July 2023</p> <p>Papers deadline: Mon 4th July 2023</p>	<p>Meeting the Council's Net Zero Target: Retrofitting</p>	<p>Steve Waddington, Strategic Director Housing Services</p> <p>James Goddard, Strategic Head of Strategy, Assurance and Private Sector Housing</p>	<p>To look at the Council's work to meet its net zero carbon target in relation to the retrofit of housing stock in the borough since the Commission last looked at retrofit in 2021 as part of the overarching Net Zero Review.</p> <p>Particular focus will be given to progress against retrofitting and promoting better energy use across two key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Council housing stock ● Housing association, private rented sector and owner-occupied housing stock
	<p>Housing Support for Care Leavers: Executive Response</p>	<p>Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer</p>	<p>To note the Executive response to the Housing Support for Care Leavers Review undertaken with the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission in 2021/22 and agree the follow up process.</p>
	<p>Accountability of Registered Social Landlords: Recommendations and Findings</p>	<p>Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer</p>	<p>To note the agreed letter to the Executive and Housing Associations in response to the scrutiny sessions on the accountability and performance of registered social landlords held throughout the 2022/23 municipal year.</p>
	<p>LiH Scrutiny Commission Work Programme Planning 2023-2024</p>	<p>Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer</p>	<p>To note the shortlist for the Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission work programme for the new municipal year and make any comments and/or further suggestions as appropriate.</p>

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
18th September 2023 Papers deadline: Tues 5 th September 2023	Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-25	Rob Miller, Strategic Director Customer & Workplace Jennifer Wynter, Head of Benefits & Housing Needs	To look at the Council's Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-25 and provide any feedback or comments before it is adopted by Cabinet.
	Letter to Independent Office for Police Conduct: Child Q Investigation	Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer	To note the agreed letter to the Independent Office for Police Conduct regarding its investigation into the police officers involved in the Child Q incident following the joint scrutiny session held with the Children & Young People's Scrutiny Commission held on 25th April 2023.
	Policing of Drug Use: Findings & Response	Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer	To note the agreed letter to the Community Safety Partnership and Mayor's Office for Police & Crime and their responses following the scrutiny session on the policing of drug use in Hackney held on 23rd January 2023.
	Overview & Scrutiny Public Engagement Protocol	Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer	To note the Overview & Scrutiny Public Engagement Protocol, which was agreed at Scrutiny Panel on 13th July 2023.
	LiH Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2023-2024	Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer	To agree the LiH Scrutiny Commission work programme for the new municipal year.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
<p>22nd November 2023</p> <p>Papers deadline: Mon 13th November 2023</p> <p>This meeting was rescheduled from 16th October 2023 due to the Mayoral elections.</p>	<p>Supported Accommodation for Rough Sleepers & Single Homeless People with Complex Needs</p>	<p>Rob Miller, Strategic Director Customer & Workplace</p> <p>Jennifer Wynter, Head of Benefits & Housing Needs</p> <p>Dr Adi Cooper OBE, Chair of City & Hackney Adults Safeguarding Board</p>	<p>To look at the current provision and future need for supported accommodation for rough sleepers and single homeless people with multiple and complex needs.</p>
	<p>Draft Housing Strategy & Private Sector Housing Strategy: Evidence Base</p>	<p>James Goddard, Strategic Head of Strategy, Assurance and Private Sector Housing</p>	<p>To look at the evidence base for the Council's draft Housing Strategy and Private Sector Housing Strategy.</p>

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
	Resident Engagement for Estate Regeneration: Findings & Executive Response	Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer	To note the agreed letter to the Executive and its response following the scrutiny session and related work on resident engagement for estate regeneration schemes in Hackney held on 20th April 2023.
	Draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-25: Recommendations & Findings	Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer	To note the agreed letter to the Executive following the scrutiny sessions on temporary accommodation and the draft Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy held on 22nd March and 18th September 2023.
	Overarching Scrutiny Panel Review into Net Zero: Executive Response	Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer	To note the Executive response to the Overarching Scrutiny Panel Review into Net Zero undertaken in 2021/22 and the follow up process.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
<p>11th December 2023</p> <p>Papers deadline: Tues 28th Nov 2023</p>	<p>Housing Services Resident Engagement Strategy 2022-25</p>	<p>Steve Waddington, Strategic Director Housing Services</p> <p>Resident Liaison Group and/or Tenants & Resident Associations</p>	<p>To look at progress made against the strategic priorities identified in the Housing Services Resident Engagement Strategy since it was adopted by Cabinet in December 2022, which are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Embed a 'Resident First' culture across the service 2. Support our involved residents' groups to thrive 3. Widen the ways residents can engage with us 4. Ensure that residents influence our decision-making and drive service improvement 5. To promote engagement activity that strengthens our communities

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
	Housing Repairs	<p>Steve Waddington, Strategic Director Housing</p> <p>Rob Miller, Strategic Director Customer & Workplace</p> <p>Resident Liaison Group and/or Tenants & Resident Associations</p>	<p>To look at the progress made against the improvement actions put in place by the Council to improve housing repairs performance and customer care.</p> <p>Particular focus will be given to those improvement actions discussed at the previous meeting in December 2022 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Damp & mould and the Leaks Hub ● Property MOTs ● DLO growth ● Roll out of Repairs Hub ● Contract management ● Disrepair case management ● Alternative Dispute Resolution

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
<p>22nd January 2024</p> <p>Papers deadline: Tues 9th January 2024</p>	<p>Anti-Social Behaviour on Council Managed Estates & Blocks</p>	<p>Gerry McCarthy, Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulations</p> <p>Steve Waddington, Strategic Director Housing Services</p> <p>Central East Borough Command Unit, Metropolitan Police Service</p> <p>Resident Liaison Group and/or Tenants & Resident Associations</p>	<p>To look at how the Council works with partner agencies and communities to ensure multi-agency responses and support in order to prevent, reduce and if necessary enforce against anti-social behaviour on council managed estates and blocks.</p> <p>Particular focus will be given to the multi-agency approach across key areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prevention and early intervention ● Supporting those affected by anti-social behaviour ● Enforcement and diversionary activities ● Engaging with communities

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
	Intermediate Housing Panel: Interim Findings	James Goddard, Strategic Head of Strategy, Assurance and Private Sector Housing	To look at the interim findings of the Intermediate Housing Panel, which has been commissioned by the Council to look into the delivery of intermediate homes (affordable home ownership and intermediate rent).
27th February 2024 Papers deadline: Thurs 16 th February 2024	Draft Housing Strategy 2023-28	James Goddard, Strategic Head of Strategy, Assurance and Private Sector Housing	To look at the Council's draft Housing Strategy 2023-28 and provide any feedback or comments before it is adopted by Cabinet in early 2024.
	Draft Private Sector Strategy 2023-28	James Goddard, Strategic Head of Strategy, Assurance and Private Sector Housing	To look at the Council's draft Private Sector Strategy 2023-28 and provide any feedback or comments before it is adopted by Cabinet in early 2024.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item
<p>12th March 2024</p> <p>Papers deadline: Thurs 29th January 2024</p>	<p>Parks & Green Spaces Strategy 2021-31</p>	<p>Ian Holland, Head of Leisure, Parks and Green Spaces</p> <p>Steve Waddington, Strategic Director Housing Services</p> <p>Selected local community and voluntary groups/organisations</p>	<p>To look at the Council's progress against the key commitments of the Parks & Green Spaces Strategy 2021-31, and how it will work alongside with the newly adopted Climate Action Plan, Green Infrastructure Strategy and Local Nature Recovery Plan.</p> <p>Particular focus will be given to the progress made against key commitments such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engaging with people and building local skills, and investing in volunteers ● Ensuring parks and green spaces are well designed, clean and safe ● Creating opportunities for people to come together ● Responding to climate change and the biodiversity crisis
	<p>Viability & Future Use of Community Halls</p>	<p>Steve Waddington, Strategic Director Housing Services</p>	<p>To look at the Council's approach to the long-term viability and future use of community halls in the borough, and address the challenges faced by local organisations and groups in securing adequate spaces from which deliver community and/statutory services.</p>

Items to be considered outside of formal meetings: June 2023 – March 2024

Proposed Item	Directorate and lead officer contact	Description, Comment and Purpose of item	Type
Arts & Culture Funding	Petra Roberts, Strategic Service Head Culture, Libraries and Heritage	To look at how arts and cultural provision is funded in Hackney, and how individuals, groups and organisations are supported to make use of local, regional and national funding opportunities.	Written briefing
Levelling Up Fund: Hackney Central	Stephen Haynes, Strategic Director Inclusive Economy, Regeneration & New Homes	To look at the options being considered for town centre improvements for Hackney Central following £19 million funding from the Levelling Up Fund (relates to public realm, environment, planning, arts & culture, community safety as well as topics within SEG remit).	Possible joint work with SEG
Hackney Prevent	Gerry McCarthy, Head of Community Safety, Enforcement and Business Regulations	To look at Hackney Prevent's progress against its key priorities and objectives (with key consideration given to the Channel process), and explore potential ramifications of Home Office funding ending in 2025/25 (though responsibility to implement duty locally remains) on future work.	Written briefing

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