

Appendix 1

Hackney Council-Housing Associations Compact 2023-2026

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Introduction

Housing associations make up a large proportion of landlords in Hackney and manage a significant number of homes across the borough. Over 40% of the housing stock in Hackney is social, either managed by the Council or by housing associations¹. Similarly to the Council, they fulfil an important social role by housing and supporting people in housing needs.

Most housing associations are Registered Providers (RPs) of social housing, registered with and regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH), an executive non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Hackney Council recognises and values the role of the RSH, which undertakes economic regulation and sets consumer standards, such as supporting the provision of well managed social housing and encouraging Registered Providers to make a contribution to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the areas in which their housing is situated².

The aim of this Compact is to reinforce shared values and objectives so Registered Provider partners can best contribute to the Council's vision: keep Hackney a place for everyone by ensuring all residents can have safety, security and long-term roots in the borough.

The Compact is developed around fourteen housing related areas including nominations, domestic abuse, maintaining properties in good repair, and supported housing, among others. The fourteen topics were proposed by both Hackney Council and the housing associations who participated in the meetings which led to the co-production of the document. Each topic includes a number of commitments which foster collaboration, partnership working and high standards of service delivery. Sharing services should also be considered where possible to foster efficiency. Key strategic objectives will be monitored via the Better Homes Partnership Housing Forums.

Housing Associations are invited and encouraged to sign the Compact by contacting the Housing Strategy & Policy team at Hackney Council.

¹ Hackney Council, Hackney Housing Strategy 2017-22 ([housing-strategy-2017-22.pdf](#))

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/regulator-of-social-housing/about#our-role-and-fundamental-objectives>

1. New Homes Development

Why is this important?

Hackney is facing an unprecedented housing crisis. The proportion of families considered to be in high priority for social housing has increased in recent years (from 18% in April 2014 to 35% in July 2020)³. There are 8,500 applicants on the housing waiting list (following the review of the lettings policy)⁴ and over 3,000 homeless households live in temporary accommodation⁵.

While the demand for housing has increased in the last years, the Government has provided no adequate funding to build Council housing. Although some funding is now available from the Mayor of London, it is a fraction of what is needed to build the thousands of genuinely affordable homes that Hackney needs.

Hackney Council is doing everything it can to increase the supply of genuinely affordable housing in the borough by delivering its own new homes and by issuing grants to housing associations to help them fund new developments for social or living rent, thus making schemes more affordable.

The need for more new genuinely affordable housing in Hackney has never been higher, but provision of new housing is not just about numbers. It is also about quality and contributing to sustainable communities.

How can we work together?

1) Hackney Council to keep working with Registered Provider partners to maximise the supply of new genuinely affordable homes in the borough.

Unlock development opportunities in the borough, including: supporting RPs new homes delivery through the Mayor of Hackney's Housing Challenge; providing advice on the development process, including engagement with other Council departments; and considering opportunities for sharing and combining land for development.

2) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to meet or exceed design and quality standards for their new homes and ensure all new homes are safe, secure and environmentally sustainable.

This includes keeping the quality of affordable homes as high as possible and delivering genuinely tenure-blind homes that apply the same design rigour to all tenures. Design of new homes should have regard to ongoing costs, namely service charges, to make them financially sustainable for residents and housing management alike over the long term.

3) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to ensure that their new housing developments and estate redevelopments contribute to sustainable communities.

This includes ensuring that residents have access to open spaces and community facilities and are able to access employment, apprenticeships and training opportunities created by new housing developments.

³ Hackney Council Benefits and Housing Needs Data

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Ibid

4) Hackney Council to share best practice and information relating to housing and policy that can help Registered Providers deliver new affordable homes, and lobby Government to ensure the Council and Registered Providers are given the tools to build new affordable homes in Hackney.

This includes for the Council to share information on new policies with Registered Provider partners and discuss responses to new policy proposals brought forward by the central government.

It also includes a knowledge share of the development process - using knowledge gathered from Council-led delivery programmes and sharing this with Registered Providers and vice versa.

2. Nominations and Lettings

Why is this important?

44% of Hackney residents live in social housing, provided by either the Council or social landlords such as housing associations⁶. The majority of social rent homes in the borough are offered by Hackney Council to applicants on the Council's housing register, people without a suitable place to live and tenants looking to move because their social rent home no longer meets their needs⁷.

Despite Hackney Council's ambitious housebuilding programme and excellent track record in the delivery of new housing, in recent years the borough has been facing an unprecedented housing crisis and finding an affordable place to live in Hackney has become more and more difficult. As demand for social housing has grown significantly, supply has decreased; fewer and fewer social properties have become available to be let. This is due to a number of factors including the loss of social stock due to Right to Buy and fewer people leaving their tenancies⁸.

To meet increasing housing demand and the needs of people seeking housing in Hackney, housing associations' contribution to providing genuinely affordable, stable and safe homes to the households on the Council's Housing Register is extremely important.

How can we work together?

1) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to work together to ensure that the number of RP void properties that are available for nominations by Hackney Council is maximised.

This includes adhering to the nominations agreement (East London Housing Partnership Sub-Regional Nomination Agreement) in place between Hackney Council and Registered Providers, meeting to discuss borough related issues (wider meetings) or specific case issues (ad-hoc liaison meetings), and, for Registered Provider partners, sending void returns to Hackney Council for monitoring purposes.

⁶ Hackney Council, Hackney Housing Strategy 2017-22 ([housing-strategy-2017-22.pdf](#))

⁷ Hackney Council, Social Housing in Hackney: Have your say on how we allocate homes and support people in housing need, 2021 ([Social housing in Hackney](#))

⁸ Ibid

Should Registered Provider partners consider procuring properties in the borough which do not carry nomination rights for Hackney Council, they must consult with the Council before doing so.

Registered Provider partners should ensure there are no properties left empty in their housing stock, so all are used as a place to live, and adhere to the Hackney Council-Registered Provider Sales Protocol should they plan to sell an empty home in the borough.

Finally, Registered Provider partners should share information on and figures of their housing stock, lets and allocations (e.g. number of units per tenure and number of re-lets) with the Council on request.

2) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to provide, and maintain up to date, key contacts for communicating and problem solving particularly with regard to nominations and void returns.

This includes providing and maintaining up to date contact details within the Lettings teams to ensure timely communication about:

- Shortlist turnaround time
- Shortlist prioritisation: Where necessary shortlists may be prioritised on a case-by-case basis. For example, the shortlist for a 'ready-to-let' property can be prioritised. Registered Provider partners are encouraged to communicate to the Council the works estimated completion dates for their void properties.

Registered Providers' requests for withdrawing properties advertised via the Choice Based Lettings scheme shall be avoided where possible. Registered Provider partners shall discuss all possible alternatives with the Hackney Council's Lettings team at the earliest possible stage before making the decision to withdraw.

3) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to work collaboratively to meet the needs of people on the Council's Housing Register or households in need of an emergency transfer, especially in the case of statutory homeless applicants and domestic abuse or gang violence survivors.

In the case of statutory homeless households, we invite Registered Provider partners to inform applicants of the consequences of refusing a reasonable offer for accommodation, and Hackney Council to communicate to RP partners the timescale of the process to discharge duty in order to manage RPs' time expectations on obtaining a second shortlist of applicants. Hackney Council to offer advisory support and training to Registered Provider partners on this, if necessary.

Hackney Council and Registered Providers to create and adhere to a joint Protocol on Domestic Abuse, that will stand alongside the Compact, defining an agreed housing pathway.

4) Registered Provider partners to provide realistic advice to their residents if approached about housing in order not to raise unrealistic expectations that everyone can access the Housing Register.

Registered Provider partners should in their advice and communications to residents be

realistic and not raise false expectations of social housing that can not be met. Within the context of severe shortage, for many people, obtaining housing via the Housing Register is unfortunately not a realistic option. Registered Provider partners' communications should promote appropriate alternative housing options such as mutual exchanges, Housing Moves or HomeSwapper schemes, or private rental and make use of their wider portfolio of properties across the country.

3. Homelessness and Tenancy Sustainment

Why is this important?

Over recent years, Hackney has seen one of the biggest house price and private rent increases in the country which has made housing in the borough unaffordable for many. This, combined with frozen Local Housing Allowance, benefit cap, and the Government's social housing and welfare reforms, has generated severe housing needs and homelessness levels have increased in recent years in the borough. Challenges have become even more acute as the cost of living increases.

Despite the Council's excellent track record in the delivery of new housing over the past ten years, in recent years the number of social properties becoming available to let has decreased due to a range of factors such as right to buy, demand for social housing - particularly from households with multiple and complex needs - has increased significantly, and an increasing number of Hackney residents are finding themselves homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

In a context of cost of living crisis, reduced availability of social housing, and increasing number of households in acute need, more of the tenants who obtain social housing via the housing register are likely to have complex needs, need support and be unable to afford or access any other housing type. Tenancy sustainment and preventing tenancy failures and evictions has become paramount to ensure those on the lowest incomes do not become homeless again.

How can we work together?

- 1) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to take a collaborative and preventative intervention approach to supporting customers in sustaining their social tenancies in order to avoid evictions and prevent homelessness, engaging as soon as a potential risk of homelessness is identified.**

Registered Provider partners should ensure that support is provided at the earliest possible opportunity to help residents resolve their difficulties and sustain their tenancies. It is essential that good relationships are built between Registered Provider partners and tenants to address tenancy issues rapidly, and that appropriate referrals to money advice, tenancy support and mediation are offered, at the earliest available opportunity.

All public bodies have a duty to refer to the Council any Hackney service users who might be homeless or threatened with becoming homeless. Registered Provider partners should refer to Hackney Council tenants who are at risk of becoming homeless, for instance due to rent arrears or anti-social behaviour, at the earliest possible occasion thus ensuring an early intervention to prevent their homelessness. Referrals can be made by registering at [Duty to Refer](https://live.housingjigsaw.co.uk/alert/duty-to-refer)⁹.

⁹ <https://live.housingjigsaw.co.uk/alert/duty-to-refer>

Where a RP tenant is at risk of eviction, the Council and the Registered Provider partner should work jointly with the tenant to try to prevent the eviction, ensuring that every route is explored and attempted before the eviction proceeds.

Under the Homeless Reduction Act (2017), everyone at risk of homelessness within 56 days is entitled to comprehensive advice which examines their housing situation with the aim of preventing their homelessness. Where the tenant has rent arrears and is at risk of eviction Hackney will work with both tenant and landlord to try and resolve the cause of the financial difficulties, and prevent the eviction including through benefit maximisation and the use of Discretionary Housing Payments where appropriate. Landlords may also be expected to take reasonable steps such as freezing the collection of rent arrears until tenants' finances are back on track, agreeing sustainable rent repayment plans, writing off some rent arrears, or maintaining a flexible approach to collection of rent arrears as tenants' incomes rise and fall.

Where tenants have more complex needs, Hackney will work with the landlord to identify the tenant's main support needs, and ensure that a holistic support plan is drawn up as part of their Personal Housing Plan. The plan will identify appropriate sources of support available to the tenant from across the Landlord, Council, Statutory Services and Third Sector to help sustain the tenancy while the tenant is in crisis.

2) Registered Provider partners to become familiar with the Hackney Homelessness Strategy and contribute to the achievement of its aims and objectives to reduce and prevent homelessness, and with the Council's work on Poverty Reduction.

This includes Registered Provider partners to place homelessness prevention at the heart of their organisations and culture, and follow industry best practice in tenancy sustainment.

Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to work in partnership to end rough sleeping in Hackney. Registered Provider partners to ensure that their housing officers and estate staff are aware of [Streetlink](#)¹⁰ and the referral process if they encounter someone sleeping rough. Registered Provider partners are also expected to contribute properties to the Clearing House scheme.

Finally, Registered Provider partners are encouraged to participate in, and contribute to, Poverty Reduction meetings and/or initiatives organised by Hackney Council.

3) Registered Provider partners to operate inclusive lettings policies and take an enabling approach to the pre-tenancy checks they may undertake.

Pre-tenancy checks should be a means for housing associations to understand how to better help new tenants maintain their tenancies and should not become an obstacle for Hackney homeless applicants to get a home. For instance, tenancies should not be refused on the ground of a financial risk and Registered Provider partners should provide - or refer to - financial advice and support to applicants to enable them to meet their eligibility criteria.

¹⁰ <https://www.streetlink.org.uk/>

4. Adult Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse

Why is this important?

The most common forms of adult abuse in City and Hackney are neglect and acts of omission, financial abuse, and physical abuse¹¹, with referrals for intergenerational domestic abuse, self-neglect and hoarding on the rise. In Hackney in 2021-22, self-neglect became the most reported over other areas.

Considering that most abuse occurs in the individual's own home by someone known to them¹², the Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns raised unprecedented challenges for safeguarding and strengthened the importance of protection of adults and children at risk. As evidence, during the first Covid-19 lockdown, referrals to Hackney Council's Domestic Abuse Intervention Service increased by 60 per cent at their peak, passing from approximately 25 cases per week to approximately 40 cases¹³.

Every person has the right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Housing associations manage a significant portion of housing stock in Hackney (over 40% of the housing stock in the borough is social, either managed by the Council or by housing associations¹⁴) so can play a crucial role in identifying safeguarding issues, raising safeguarding concerns, and supporting residents and their families who are at risk of or experiencing abuse or neglect.

How can we work together?

- 1) Registered Provider partners to ensure that their staff are equipped with the knowledge and tools to recognise safeguarding, including domestic abuse, concerns and confidently signpost, refer and support residents at risk.**

This includes attending training to help spot signs of abuse and neglect and make referrals, being equipped with skills to support adults being abused or neglected, nominating a safeguarding lead and domestic abuse champions, and having and circulating to employees clear and up-to-date safeguarding and domestic abuse policies and procedures, and resources¹⁵. Where possible, this also includes working toward obtaining specialist accreditations, and employing and/or collaborating with safeguarding and domestic abuse professionals.

Registered Provider partners are invited to access the free training resources and learning opportunities advertised on the Council's website (City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board), including free courses and Safeguarding Adults Reviews. They are invited to join the Safeguarding Adults Board mailing list by contacting chsab@hackney.gov.uk, which provides updates on training and safeguarding news.

¹¹ City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board, CHSAB Strategy 2020-2025 ([CHSAB Strategy 2020 – 2025](#))

¹² Ibid

¹³ Hackney Council, Rebuilding a Better Hackney: The impact of coronavirus on Hackney and our priorities in the next phase, 2020 ([Rebuilding a better Hackney.pdf](#))

¹⁴ Hackney Council, Hackney Housing Strategy 2017-22 ([housing-strategy-2017-22.pdf](#))

¹⁵ RPs to also refer to [The Charter for Social Housing Residents Social Housing White Paper - GOV.UK](#)

The Hackney Domestic Abuse Intervention Service (DAIS) delivers training sessions throughout the year on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) related topics. Registered Provider partners are invited to email DAIS at dais@hackney.gov.uk for information on these.

2) Registered Provider partners to provide and maintain up to date key contacts for communicating and problem solving particularly with regard to learning opportunities, referrals and supporting residents experiencing abuse or neglect.

This includes providing and maintaining up to date contact details of safeguarding and domestic abuse leads/champions to facilitate communication on learning activities (e.g. training, dissemination of briefing notes, etc.), networking and referrals as necessary.

3) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to work collaboratively to support domestic abuse victims/survivors and make them and their families safer.

This includes for Registered Provider partners to work jointly with DAIS and specialist agencies to carefully assess risk (RPs to participate in MARAC meetings as necessary), install security measures through the Sanctuary Scheme when it is safe and survivors want to continue to live in their home, or facilitate moves considering a range of housing options where necessary and appropriate.

4) Hackney Council to set up and facilitate a Housing Domestic Abuse Champions Network attended by Council officers and RP domestic abuse leads.

The Housing Domestic Abuse Champions Network will create a thriving community of practice that enables effective risk management for domestic abuse survivors and their children, and stronger relationships and links between initiatives and partners across Hackney ensuring a whole system housing approach.

The Domestic Abuse Champion (at least one within each housing association) will: receive full free awareness training on domestic abuse by DAIS/Hackney Council; cascade domestic abuse knowledge and awareness to colleagues, clients or customers; act as first point of contact around Domestic Abuse issues in their organisations; and support colleagues to identify victims and refer them to appropriate services. Registered Provider partners are encouraged to contact DAIS (dais@hackney.gov.uk) for more information.

5. Safeguarding Children and Young People

Why is this important?

The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership (CHSCP) wants to make sure that everyone who works with children across the City and Hackney has the protection of vulnerable children and young people at the heart of what they do. In practice, this means that children and young people are seen, heard and helped. Registered Providers are well placed to do all three.

In line with our collective approach that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, Registered Providers are well placed to identify issues of risk in both the family home and in the wider

community, having knowledge about families and local issues, alongside being in a position to access home environments.

How can we work together?

- 1) Registered Provider partners to ensure that their staff are equipped with the knowledge and tools to recognise safeguarding concerns and confidently signpost, refer and support children and young people in need or at risk.**

This includes RP staff attending free CHSCP training¹⁶ to help spot signs of abuse and neglect, handle disclosures and make referrals to Hackney Children and Families Service if required. Training will equip staff with skills to support children being abused or neglected.

It also includes accessing a range of material available on the CHSCP website¹⁷, including advice on how to write an effective safeguarding/child protection policy¹⁸ and a range of other useful information.

- 2) Registered Provider partners to promote learning and improvement through the cascading of key information and sharing lessons from case reviews.**

Case reviews involving housing services often illustrate the unique insight that staff in this sector can have into the lifestyles of their tenants. They receive complaints from neighbours and inspect family homes. Because of this they may be the first to identify concerns about possible abuse or neglect. This could include parental substance abuse, anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse and neglect.

The learning from these reviews highlights that housing services should consider the impact that tenants' lifestyles and behaviour are likely to be having on their children. They should also provide support and advice to young people and families experiencing difficulties to prevent them falling into a recurring pattern of rent arrears, anti-social behaviour and eviction. The NSPCC have published a briefing¹⁹ which summarises the learning from case review reports.

To keep in touch with local news on safeguarding children and young people, all RP staff should sign up to the CHSCP TUSK briefings²⁰.

- 3) Registered Provider partners are expected to comply with the CHSCP's safeguarding assessment framework process and a range of minimum standards.**

Registered Provider partners are expected to use the CHSCP online tool²¹ that enables RPs to self-assess the sufficiency of their organisation's safeguarding arrangements and provides a systematic way of responding to identified actions. Amongst a number of

¹⁶ <https://chscp.org.uk/>

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ CHSCP, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Guidance, May 2020 ([SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION POLICY GUIDANCE](#))

¹⁹ NSPCC, Housing: Learning from case reviews. Summary of risk factors and learning for improved practice around the housing sector, September 2014 ([Housing services: learning from case reviews](#))

²⁰ <https://chscp.org.uk/chscb-briefings/>

²¹ <https://www.chscp.org.uk/self-assessments-and-peer-reviews/>

expected standards and in line with the CHSCP safeguarding arrangements²², key requirements for all RPs will be to have an up-to-date safeguarding policy and a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputy. DSLs act as the single point of contact in RPs to facilitate communication on learning activities (e.g. training, dissemination of briefing notes, etc.) and lead on referrals as necessary.

6. Anti-Social Behaviour and Estate Safety

Why is this important?

Anti-social behaviour (ASB) has a detrimental effect on good relationships and confidence in the community. It affects the lives of people often leaving them feeling helpless, desperate and with a considerably reduced quality of life²³.

The Council (and this Compact) adopts the same definition of ASB as the police²⁴. It works with Registered Providers to promote and encourage good relationships and positive behaviour amongst all Hackney residents to build safer communities across the borough. It values Registered Providers' contribution to dealing with issues of ASB, firmly and fairly, demonstrating leadership, commitment and accountability with a focus on preventative measures and positive action. The quantitative and qualitative data collected by all agencies and landlords in the borough enables Hackney Council to understand the ASB trends and hotspots, which in turn informs where the Council needs to deploy resources in order to take a target hardening approach. The partnership approach ensures that resources are used effectively to avoid duplication of effort and that a joined up approach is taken to investigate and resolve issues affecting residents regardless of tenure type.

How can we work together?

- 1) Registered Provider partners are recommended to adopt the same definition of ASB as the Council and the police²⁵, and consider adopting the five ASB principles developed by the Anti-social Behaviour Strategic Board chaired by the Home Office²⁶.**

This ensures that all Registered Provider partners in the borough adopt a consistent approach to recognising and addressing ASB in Hackney.

- 2) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to be clear about their role and responsibilities in dealing with ASB, promote positive behaviour and an awareness of their residents' rights and responsibilities in relation to ASB.**

Registered Provider partners should be clear about responsibilities and accountability to support residents facing ASB timely and effectively. They should provide accessible routes and contact details for residents to report ASB and investigate all reports of ASB.

²² <https://www.chscp.org.uk/the-partnership/>

²³ <https://hackney.gov.uk/report-crime>

²⁴ <https://www.met.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/asb/asb/antisocial-behaviour/what-is-antisocial-behaviour/>

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/anti-social-behaviour-principles/anti-social-behaviour-principles>

3) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to share best practice in dealing with ASB particularly in response to unprecedented circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, or new policies, such as the 2020 Social Housing White Paper.

To effectively adjust in unprecedented and new situations and to maximise customer's experience, Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners shall share their lessons learnt in response to unexpected and challenging circumstances, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and to changes in the policy context, such as the 2020 Social Housing White Paper which proposed a range of measures about tenants' satisfaction with ASB handling.

4) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to share information relating to ASB and estate safety (particularly in the case of ASB occurring in Hackney Council-RP multi-tenure estates) to map ASB in the borough and ensure that Hackney's communities are safe.

Registered Provider partners are encouraged to share ASB data with Hackney Council for the Council to: map ASB, crime and disorder hotspot areas of the borough to bring these to the attention of the Community Safety Partnership, and periodically report cases to the Home Office as statutorily required. This will allow for resources to be allocated to the problem area.

Registered Provider partners to participate in Community Safety Partnership tasking meetings and ASB Action Panels when necessary or relevant to their estate in order to collaboratively define and implement common action plans. Registered Provider partners should provide, and maintain up to date, Hackney Council with a single point of contact for ASB within their organisation.

7. Maintaining Properties in Good Repair

Why is this important?

Every resident in Hackney, no matter the type of tenure (social or private tenants and leaseholders), should live in their homes safely. No property in the borough should suffer from poor conditions, such as mould and damp, or poor management. All homes should be kept in good condition for the future and repairs to tenants' homes should be carried out by landlords in a timely way and to the highest possible standard.

The 2020 Social Housing White Paper²⁷ emphasised that all social tenants should have a good quality home and a landlord who keeps it safe and in good repair. It proposed a set of tenant satisfaction measures on responsive repairs completed right the first time, satisfaction with the repairs and maintenance service provided by the landlord.

With regard to the private rented sector, where property conditions (especially of Houses in Multiple Occupation) are usually poorest compared with other tenures, Hackney Council has in place three licensing schemes to ensure privately rented properties in the borough meet good standards and do not present risks to residents in relation to poor management, fire safety, and other hazards.

²⁷ [The Charter for Social Housing Residents Social Housing White Paper - GOV.UK](#)

Building stronger relations between the Private Sector Housing team of Hackney Council and Registered Providers operating in the borough is important to minimise, effectively deal with and solve in a timely way any disrepair complaints that RP social tenants, but also private tenants living in RP-managed housing stock (e.g. in flats purchased through the right to acquire and then let out), may raise with the Council.

How can we work together?

- 1) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to develop closer contacts, and provide and maintain key contact details for communicating and problem solving particularly with regard to disrepair complaints that the Council may receive from RP residents.**

Hackney Council appointed a Liaison Officer who is the main point of contact for RP partners, and will assess and triage complaints raised by housing association tenants. In this way, the Council can assist specific Registered Provider partners as necessary, and raise their awareness if recurring problems or patterns of issues arise from the complaints the Council receives, thus enhancing customer satisfaction.

Registered Provider partners to provide, and maintain up to date, Hackney Council with a single point of contact within their Repairs Team - someone who can influence decision making (e.g. Repairs Manager) - to ensure timely communication about disrepair complaints that housing association residents may raise with the Council.

- 2) Registered Provider partners to share information with Hackney Council on properties sold under the Right to Acquire scheme and used for private rent to ensure that these, if licensable, are licensed under one of the Council's property licensing schemes thus contributing to making renting in Hackney fairer for everyone.**

Housing association properties sold under the Right to Acquire scheme are sometimes used for private rent and are often licensable under one of Hackney Council's three property licensing schemes. Licensing a property helps better regulate the management and conditions of the properties requiring landlords to provide good and safe homes to their tenants. Failing to licence a property is a criminal offence.

8. Estates Waste and Recycling

Why is this important?

In recent years Hackney has experienced a growth in its population, business and visitors, and as a consequence an increase in the amount of waste produced in the borough. To make Hackney a cleaner and greener borough, waste needs to be reduced, re-used or recycled. This would also contribute to saving money by part-mitigating rising waste disposal costs, and protecting the environment by reducing carbon emissions. The latter is particularly important considering that in 2019 Hackney declared a Climate Emergency.

Residential recycling rates on estates in the borough are currently low. Less than 15% of residential waste on estates is recycled, despite the fact that more than 60% is recyclable. To

achieve a higher recycling rate and contribute to the 31% recycling target to which the Council is committed by 2022/23²⁸, an improvement in estates' recycling performance is required.

Working together (the Council and Registered Providers) will enable higher levels of recycling on our estates, deliver higher quality services for our residents and achieve positive results for all.

How can we work together?

- 1) Registered Provider partners to commit to meeting the Rubbish and Recycling Service Standards for Housing Estates and Blocks of Flats²⁹ in Hackney across all blocks and estates.**

The service standards set out the roles, responsibilities and standards expected for the Council's recycling and waste collection services, highlighting the important contribution from the RP partners.

- 2) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to regularly communicate with residents via established channels about waste and recycling services, to ensure that residents are fully aware of the services, how to use them correctly and to increase participation in the recycling collection services provided.**

This includes working with residents in the borough to support them in taking responsibility for their waste and their neighbourhood. This can be achieved utilising existing communication channels, such as RP newsletters and social media.

It also includes for Registered Provider partners to proactively send out recycling communications to householders as a minimum on an annual basis and to all new households. Artwork and other communications materials can be provided by the Council for inclusion in RP publications.

- 3) Registered Provider partners to provide caretakers/cleaners guidance to support in implementing Hackney's Service Standards which will assist the Council and RPs in providing the best services for residents. Registered Provider partners should consider tangible steps for delivering this.**

This includes ensuring that on-site staff are familiar with the service standards, such as ensuring that the bins are accessible, identify and clear dumping issues, report issues, and encourage the correct use of the recycling and waste facilities. Hackney Council to offer advisory support and training to Registered Provider partners on this, if necessary.

- 4) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to work together on estate-based project delivery.**

For Registered Provider partners interested in delivering an estate improvement project on one (or some) of their estates and investing resources to improve recycling facilities and capacity, Hackney Council welcomes the delivery of joint projects.

²⁸ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/waste-plans> (Hackney's Plan)

²⁹ <https://hackney.gov.uk/your-recycling/#communal-bins>

9. Building and Fire Safety

Why is this important?

The Grenfell Tower fire re-emphasised the importance for all housing providers to give the highest priority, resource and capacity to the safety of residents. Since the Grenfell fire, Hackney Council launched a comprehensive fire safety review to ensure the safety of residents living in council estates and carried out a large-scale exercise to establish the EWS materials of all privately owned high-risk residential blocks (HRRBs) in the borough. All social housing providers operating in the borough were instructed to investigate the cladding on their properties and establish the EWS materials of all HRRBs within their stockholding.

The cladding crisis continues to create issues for leaseholders who are unable to sell their properties due to the lack of an EWS1 form. This is proving especially challenging for housing associations with large holdings of Shared Ownership stock nationwide, as they seek to not only obtain these forms, but carry out the remedial works where necessary with a limited number of professionals and a price spike in construction materials and labour.

In the context of changing Building Safety Legislation (Fire Safety Act and Building Safety Act), building and fire safety is a priority for Hackney Council. The Council, in partnership with other agencies, is committed to improving building and fire safety in all buildings in the borough, especially high-rise residential buildings and other buildings where people live. Cooperation between the Council and Registered Providers, and their timely communication with leaseholders, tenants and shared owners, is vital to ensuring homes are safe and remediation where required is scheduled and completed in a timely and cost-effective manner.

How can we work together?

1) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to prioritise the fire safety of their buildings to ensure the safety of Hackney's residents.

This includes always keeping the safety of residents at the forefront of everything we do and keeping residents aware of any defects and/or remediation timetables, and the Council upon request. This includes ensuring that all staff working in building and fire safety are fully trained for and confident in undertaking their duties and responsibilities.

2) Registered Provider partners to ensure that both their existing and new buildings are compliant with the latest government regulations and legislation on building and fire safety.

This includes consideration for all organisations to sign up to the Building Safety Charter.

3) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to share fire and building safety information and best practices to ensure people in Hackney are safe in their homes.

This includes Registered Provider partners sharing information on their housing stock as necessary. For example, Registered Provider partners to share information on all private and social housing stock that falls in scope of being a High-Risk Residential Building (18m+) - as well as any further height that may come into scope in future (e.g. 11m+), any

updates or progress on remediation works to these buildings and any other out of scope buildings that are undertaking fire safety remediation works.

Where the Registered Provider partner is the freeholder, they should provide residents with a realistic timeframe of when and how they will obtain any necessary documents, such as EWS1 forms.

4) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to create a safety culture amongst their staff and residents to reduce risk from fire as much as possible.

This includes circulating clear messages and communications to promote a culture where building and fire safety is everyone's responsibility which encourages staff, but also residents, to report incidents or concerns as soon as possible.

It also includes for Registered Provider partners to share their residents' engagement strategies with the Council upon request and how these have been communicated with their residents.

10. Carbon Management

Why is this important?

Hackney Council strives for a greener and environmentally sustainable community which is prepared for the future. Hackney is a leading borough for its environmental work around reducing carbon emissions to respond to the climate emergency³⁰.

The climate and ecological crisis is having a significant negative impact in Hackney and across the world, through increased extreme weather events, such as flooding and extreme heat, that put communities, ecosystems and natural resources at risk. Without drastic reductions in emissions, and adaptation to higher rainfall and warmer temperatures, the impacts of climate change will continue to worsen - affecting our lives and those of future generations. In response, the Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, supported by an ambitious vision to rebuild a greener Hackney in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

In 2020 the Council launched a publicly-owned energy services company to deliver its decarbonisation targets. It also adopted the Local Plan 2033 which includes policies seeking to make Hackney a low carbon and carbon resilient area and deliver a reduction in carbon emissions, and a greater use of sustainable construction techniques.

Hackney has made progress in reducing emissions over the last decade. Since 2010, emissions from buildings and road transport in Hackney have fallen by about 27%. Consumption emissions - from the things we all buy and use - have fallen by about 10-15% in the UK overall. Nevertheless, without faster action, driven by ambitious policies and targets, we won't be able to protect communities and ecosystems from the effects of climate change.

The Council has prepared a Borough-wide Climate Action Plan (CAP), the Council's first holistic borough-wide plan to address the climate and ecological crisis. The CAP provides a framework

³⁰ Hackney Council, Rebuilding a Better Hackney: The impact of coronavirus on Hackney and our priorities in the next phase, 2020 ([Rebuilding a better Hackney.pdf](#))

for everyone to take action to reduce emissions and adapt to the climate change that is already occurring, driven by an ambitious vision for a greener Hackney in 2030.

The CAP identifies the ambitious, science-based changes that we can work towards achieving a reduction in carbon emissions by 2030. All of these changes are organised into five themes: Adaptation, Buildings, Transport, Consumption and Environmental Quality. Within each theme, there are a set of ambitious 2030 goals. These goals are ambitious, borough-wide and aligned with the Paris Agreement. Reaching these goals at a local level will need the involvement of a wide range of actors including Registered Providers.

Considering that homes are responsible for almost half of all emissions in the borough³¹, and that housing associations are major landlords in Hackney, Registered Provider partners' collaboration is important to contribute to a greener borough and meet wider climate commitments.

How can we work together?

- 1) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners will work in partnership by sharing best practice and collaborating on policy issues, decarbonisation, heat networks and how to reduce the capital cost of decarbonisation.**

This includes Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners using their experience and expertise to share lessons learned. It also includes actively working together to help each other bring forward heat networks and other viable forms of decarbonisation, actively sharing new techniques and technologies for mutual benefit.

- 2) Registered Providers to contribute to achieving the goals set out in the CAP as appropriate.**

This includes Registered Provider partners to ensure that they are prepared for and resilient to the impacts of the climate emergency, protecting most vulnerable residents ('Adaptation' in the CAP) and work with their residents

11. Supporting Residents with Health and Wellbeing

Why is this important?

Hackney has been undergoing significant development and growth in recent years, but it is still one of the most deprived areas in England presenting some of the poorer health outcomes linked to health inequalities³². The Covid-19 pandemic has widened existing health inequalities across ages, ethnicities, sexes, pre-existing health conditions and socio-economic conditions³³, and created even more complex health and wellbeing challenges.

In Hackney, 22% of children in reception (age 4-5) and over 41% of children in year 6 (age 10-11) are above a health weight³⁴. Year 6 figures are considerably above the national average. Among

³¹ Hackney Council, Hackney a Place for Everyone: Hackney Local Plan 2033, July 2020 ([appendix-1-LP33-adoption-july-2020.pdf](#))

³² Hackney Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015-18 ([joint-Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy.pdf](#))

³³ City & Hackney Public Health Team, Review of population health needs to inform City and Hackney Health and Wellbeing Strategy, 2021 ([Review of Hackney population needs_C&H HWS_May 2021 -for website](#))

³⁴ Obesity Profile - Data - OHID

City and Hackney adult residents with BMI recorded, almost half (over 95,300 people) are above a healthy weight³⁵. Obesity has considerable negative physical and emotional consequences in childhood and adult life; it can generate discrimination and lead to low self-esteem, and is a risk factor for premature mortality, thus reducing life expectancy.

In England, 1 in 4 people experience a mental health problem of some kind each year and 1 in 6 people report experiencing a common mental health problem (e.g. anxiety and depression) in any given week³⁶. It is estimated that, in Hackney, almost 30,000 people have depression³⁷. Organisations operating in the borough reported an increase in young people (aged 11- 25) who require mental health support to deal with bereavement, depression, anxiety/stress, family or relationship breakdown and emotional difficulties.³⁸

By increasing awareness, supporting prevention, and commissioning a range of Public Health services (e.g. stop smoking services, healthy weight support, physical activity, health promotion in schools, community kitchens, mental health awareness training and support service, sexual health services, drug and alcohol services, etc.), Hackney Council works with partners and communities to tackle inequalities, improve the physical, mental and emotional health of its residents, and enhance the wellbeing of local people. As landlords of some of the most vulnerable residents in our borough, Registered Provider partners are encouraged to share the same vision and commitment to help residents enjoy full, healthy and happy lives, and improve health outcomes.

How can we work together?

- 1) Registered Provider partners are encouraged to get staff trained in Making Every Contact Count and have conversations with residents to promote the health support and wellbeing initiatives that are available to them locally.**

Make Every Contact Count (MECC) is an approach to behaviour change that uses the daily interactions that organisations and people have with other people to support them in making positive changes to their physical and mental health and wellbeing. In Hackney, hundreds of staff from the council and the wider system, as well as voluntary sector staff and volunteers have been trained with MECC and are able to support and signpost residents with relevant resources.

Staff working for housing providers may have the opportunity to regularly interact with residents in a way not all services can, and can help identify residents' needs, provide advice (or signposting as appropriate), and promote public health messages and initiatives, such as the Healthy Start Food Voucher Scheme, Smokefree Hackney, and physical activity and healthy weight initiatives.

- 2) When developing new homes or refurbishing existing housing stock, Registered Provider partners are encouraged to meet or exceed quality standards of homes and communal areas which positively contribute to their tenants' physical and mental wellbeing.**

³⁵ Extracted from the local GP register by CEG, Blizard Institute, April 2017

³⁶ [How common are mental health problems? - Mind](#)

³⁷ Hackney Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2015-18 ([joint-Health-and-Wellbeing-Strategy.pdf](#))

³⁸ Ibid

Poor quality homes can have a detrimental effect on people's physical and mental health. Registered Provider partners are encouraged to deliver and maintain high-quality, safe and well-designed (i.e. good levels of daylight, acoustic separation, access to outdoor space) homes and communal areas. Open and green spaces within their estates should be easy to walk or cycle through to facilitate social interactions, contribute to good mental health, and encourage an active life. Registered Providers can promote physical activity by improving access to cycle storage, making it easy for residents to take the stairs inside their buildings, encouraging food growing, and increasing access to safe and well lit green spaces or play areas.

- 3) With regards to mental health³⁹, Registered Provider partners are encouraged to promote discussions around this topic with staff and residents, and promote mental health related training amongst their frontline staff to ensure they are able to spot signs of poor mental health and signpost residents.**

This includes contributing to making mental health 'everyone business' and attending the free training opportunities available, such as courses offered by Future Learn⁴⁰, Thrive LDN, Zero Suicide Alliance⁴¹, and MIND⁴², amongst others. Registered Provider partners are also encouraged to familiarise themselves with the bereavement pack put together by Hackney's Public Health team and attend free training on bereavement to know how to speak to and support somebody who has been bereaved⁴³.

- 4) Registered Provider partners should consider the needs of disabled people, including people with an impairment which is not visible or immediately obvious such as dementia, autism and learning disabilities, and their carers as these people may be more vulnerable and may need more help (e.g. to access services) than other service users.**

Registered Provider partners are encouraged to familiarise themselves with and signpost their residents to the resources available on the Hackney Council website⁴⁴ ⁴⁵ about dementia, autism, and learning disabilities.

- 5) With regards to healthy weight, Registered Provider partners should encourage and promote physical activity programmes through their organisation for their residents and staff in Hackney.**

This could be done through organising a Play Street event⁴⁶, sports day, or delivering an exercise class in community spaces.

- 6) As employers, Registered Providers should encourage their staff in Hackney to lead healthy lives.**

³⁹ <https://hackney.gov.uk/mental-health>

⁴⁰ As an example, <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/psychological-first-aid-covid-19>

⁴¹ <https://zsa.frank-cdn.uk/scorm/full-training/story.html>

⁴² <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/mind-in-the-city-hackney-and-waltham-forest-18644267655>

⁴³ <https://hackney.gov.uk/bereavement-support>

⁴⁴ <https://hackney.gov.uk/autism>

⁴⁵ <https://hackney.gov.uk/coronavirus-vulnerable/#carers>

⁴⁶ <https://hackney.gov.uk/play-streets>

This includes encouraging their staff to walk to work, leave their desk throughout the day, take steps instead of lifts, and stop smoking (staff can be referred to the Council's smoking cessation programme).

12. Supported Housing

Why is this important?

Supported accommodation plays a crucial role in providing safe and secure housing with support for people to live independently, and stay within and participate in the local community. It improves the quality of life for vulnerable people and has wide reaching social benefits.⁴⁷

Demand for supported housing is estimated to increase nationally by 2030. It is projected that the number of supported housing units needed in Great Britain for older people and younger adults will rise by 51% in the period 2015-2030.⁴⁸

Hackney Council and Registered Providers will work together to make sure that supported housing meets the highest needs in the borough.

How can we work together?

1) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to work collaboratively to ensure that supported housing in Hackney meets the highest needs.

This includes delivering supported housing that meets Hackney's highest unmet needs and reviewing whether existing supported housing continues to make the maximum contribution to meeting supported housing needs in the borough.

Registered Provider partners are also encouraged to work with the Council to sustain and develop new models of supported housing, e.g. Housing First.

2) Developing an environment that supports recovery through Trauma Informed Care and Psychologically Informed Environments.

Where Registered Provider partners host supported accommodation, they are encouraged to make every effort to design accommodation that provides a Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE); this is crucial when working with residents who have experienced trauma and present with multiple and complex needs.

3) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to strengthen a recovery focused approach.

Those residents who are living in short term supported housing are typically expected to move onto independent accommodation, however sourcing appropriate properties within the borough can be a challenge. Registered Provider partners are encouraged to work with Hackney Council to develop move on options that provide good quality, secure accommodation for people who have completed their support journey.

⁴⁷ London Assembly, Supported Housing in the Balance, 2016 ([Supported Housing in the Balance](#))

⁴⁸ London School of Economics, Projected Demand for Supported Housing in Great Britain 2015-2030 ([PSSRU 2017.pdf](#))

13. Inclusive Economy: Employment Skills and Adult Learning

Why is this important?

Over the last 15 years Hackney has seen a rapid social and economic change which has brought many new economic opportunities for local people, however some local residents have felt excluded from the prosperity growing around them⁴⁹.

Hackney Council is intervening proactively to build a fairer and more inclusive economy for the borough. An economy that everyone can feel part of and is there to support both local residents and local businesses. The Council is committed to ensure that all Hackney's communities can participate to shape the local economy and can benefit from local opportunities⁵⁰.

Challenges have been generated by the Covid-19 pandemic which led to unemployment or underemployment, and made disparities in employment opportunities more evident. However, Hackney Council is even more determined to improve opportunities for everyone in the borough⁵¹.

Registered Provider partners and Hackney Council working together, to create employment, skills development and career progression opportunities for Hackney residents and supporting local businesses is key to developing an inclusive local economy that everyone can feel part of and where the benefits of economic opportunities are accessible and shared across the community.

How can we work together?

1) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to lead by example in offering quality employment and creating a diverse workforce.

Registered Provider partners and Hackney Council to offer fair pay and conditions of employment, and to monitor and review recruitment processes to ensure a diverse workforce is attracted and recruited at all levels. Registered Provider partners and the Council to focus on upskilling staff and creating progression routes. Finally, Registered Provider partners and Hackney Council to maximise opportunities through supply chains and the apprenticeship levy.

2) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to work collaboratively to create pathways and opportunities to connect residents to quality employment and skills opportunities.

Registered Provider partners and Hackney Council to deliver and promote quality employment, skills opportunities and events. Registered Provider partners are encouraged to promote opportunities through the Hackney's Opportunities webpages⁵² and newsletter. Registered Provider partners are encouraged to promote the Hackney's Opportunities newsletter subscription⁵³ to residents.

⁴⁹ Hackney Council, Hackney's Inclusive Economy Strategy 2019-2025, October 2019 ([Inclusive-Economy-Strategy.pdf](#))

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Hackney Council, Rebuilding a Better Hackney: The impact of coronavirus on Hackney and our priorities in the next phase, 2020 ([Rebuilding a better Hackney.pdf](#))

⁵² <https://opportunities.hackney.gov.uk/>

⁵³ <https://hackney.gov.uk/newsletters>

- 3) Hackney Council and Registered Provider partners to share information on vulnerable communities and work collaboratively to maximise opportunities for residents facing labour market disadvantages e.g. young people, over 50s, residents with health conditions, refugees and care leavers.**

This includes carrying out targeted promotion of opportunities to key target groups and developing initiatives that address labour market disadvantages.

14. Registered Providers' Role in Communities

Why is this important?

Building on existing strong partnerships, and making better use of resources, community networks and community assets can be helpful to ensure Hackney residents receive high-quality services and continue to thrive in a challenging financial environment characterised by diminishing funding from the Government, rising costs and demand for services, not only for the Council but also for registered providers and other community organisations⁵⁴.

To improve local prosperity, build resilience and ensure that residents have a meaningful stake in the future of their area, Hackney Council is exploring new ways of working in neighbourhoods, engaging and involving local communities and key anchor organisations. This is a broad approach that focuses, in the main, on the 'hyper local' and embedding community support, development and capacity building into what we do in the longer-term.

This includes an in-depth understanding of local needs, building on existing strengths and assets in the community and a coordinated place focused approach from the organisations with a stake in a local area⁵⁵. The work is being piloted in a number of places and the intention is to develop a targeted approach focusing on neighbourhoods where evidence indicates high levels of need, inequality and a sense of being 'left behind' amongst the rapid change occurring in the surrounding neighbourhood.

Housing associations are important anchor institutions within neighbourhoods, play a key role in communities, and often have a good understanding of the needs of their residents. Many are already undertaking valuable projects and activities with communities creating social value and empowering local people, some in partnership with Hackney Council.

The Council is keen to build local partnerships and work with community anchors such as housing providers to ensure that our communities are able to thrive and shape the future of the borough and their immediate neighbourhood.

How can we work together?

- 1) Registered Provider partners to embrace a hyper local place based community development approach and seek to build local partnerships in estates or neighbourhoods where they own or manage housing stock and community assets.**

⁵⁴ Hackney Council, The Hackney Community Strategy 2018-2028, July 2018 ([hackney-community-strategy-2018-2028.pdf](#))

⁵⁵ Ibid

- 2) Registered Provider partners are encouraged to join the Learning Network⁵⁶ facilitated by Hackney Council that brings together initiatives taking a hyper local community development approach within the borough.**

The learning network creates a thriving community of practice that enables stronger relationships and links between initiatives and partners across Hackney, and a strong collective voice for systems change, not just locally, but borough wide.

⁵⁶ RP partners can join the Learning Network by emailing policyandstrategy@hackney.gov.uk