3. Policy on homelessness and housing

National policy

3.1. Government policy towards homelessness has not changed significantly since the previous review of homelessness in Croydon carried out in 2008. Emphasis in policy terms is still placed on preventing all forms of homelessness (not just statutory homelessness) delivered through a local partnership approach. The following section looks at the various national, regional and local policies that are of particular relevance to homelessness in Croydon.

Deficit reduction

3.2. Central government's most urgent priority since 2010 has been to reduce the country’s budget deficit (the gap between what the government spends and what it raises in taxes). This is known as fiscal consolidation and has been achieved through a range of measures, including substantial reductions in public spending, which are forecast to reduce public spending as a share of national income (GDP) in 2022/23 to 37.7% (from 44.8% in 2010/11).

Protection of spending on health, schools and aid has meant that reductions to other government departments have been much sharper. Local government has seen its spending reduced by more than half in real terms. These ‘austerity measures’ together with wage rises lagging behind inflation, and a ‘broken’ housing market have had an impact on levels of homelessness over the past five years. Research carried out by the Chartered Institute of Housing and the University of Sheffield, found that 84% of councils and 70% of housing associations surveyed thought austerity measures, such as the lower benefit cap, impacted negatively on their work to tackle homelessness. LGA Chairman Lord Porter warned recently that local authorities have been “damaged beyond recognition” and communities depleted of vital services unless government fills a funding gap estimated at nearly £8 billion by 2025.

3.3. Since 2010 the Council has seen a 70% reduction in funding, totalling some £144m. The Council expects funding and grant reductions to continue over the medium term based on the Spending Review and Local Government Financial Settlement. A funding gap of £38m for Croydon is projected over the period 2018/20. The Council’s approach to addressing this and previous funding gaps is to transform our services and reduce their cost. The focus of these transformation programmes not just been on improving efficiency, but also on effectiveness, and delivering the outcomes that changes our residents lives for the better.

1 https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/councils-face-almost-ps8-billion-funding-black-hole-2025
2 Tackling Homelessness Together (CIH and University of Sheffield 2017)
3.4. A Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness including eight Whitehall departments was established in 2011 to oversee the Coalition Government’s policy on homelessness. The Working Group’s first report, published a report in July 2011, focused on rough sleeping and those at risk of rough sleeping and established six commitments to support local action to tackle rough sleeping, including rolling out the No Second Night Out approach nationally. The report included commitments to improve access to health care, mental health and drug devolution of responsibility and funding to the Mayor of London to support the work to end rough sleeping in the capital.

3.5. The Coalition Government’s policy towards homelessness was then set out in further detail in the 2nd report of the Ministerial Working Group on Homelessness published in August 2012, ‘Making Every Contact Count’\(^3\). The report begins by saying that “[there is no place for homelessness in the 21st century]”. It goes on to say that, the key to delivering this vision is through prevention - and that successful prevention is best achieved through agencies working together. The aim of the report is to ensure that “every contact local agencies make with vulnerable people and families really counts”. The report sets out ten local challenges to the homelessness sector which include a corporate commitment and partnership approach to tackling homelessness, adopting the No Second Night Out model, providing a private rented sector offer, preventing mortgage repossessions and a having homelessness strategy detailing a proactive approach to preventing homelessness.

3.6. In March 2015, the Working Group published a report, “Addressing Complex Needs”, focusing on single homeless people with complex needs aged over 25. The aim of differences in the way services were offered to homeless households by local authorities and called on the Government to initiate a “renewed, cross-Departmental Government strategy”.

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\(^3\) Making Every Contact Count (MHCLG 2012)
3.7. In the summer of 2015, Crisis set up a panel of experts to look at the strengths and weaknesses of homelessness legislation in England. The panel concluded that the case for reform was strong and argued for legislation to place more emphasis on prevention particularly in relation to single people and childless couples. In response, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 was brought into being through cross-Party support, and obtained Royal Assent on 27 April 2017. The Act defines robust prevention and relief duties owed to homeless people or those at risk of homelessness.

3.8. Then in 2017, the Government established a Rough Sleeping Advisory Panel in the Ministry of Housing. Communities and Local Government responsible for overseeing the delivery of the commitment to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and eradicate it completely by 2027. As part of this commitment it has allocated £139m funding to prevent and reduce homelessness in England, in addition to homelessness prevention funding for councils. £40m of the funding has been allocated to two programmes and three separate funds:

- A prevention programme including a £20m Trailblazer fund running in 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 to establish a network of ambitious areas across England to work with all eligible households, whether in priority need or not to prevent them becoming homeless as early as possible;
- A rough sleeping programme including a £10 million rough sleeping fund, running in 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19, to help new rough sleepers, or people at imminent risk of sleeping rough, get the rapid support they need to recover and move-on from their homelessness;
- £10 million of outcomes funding for Social Impact Bonds, running in 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21, to support the most entrenched rough sleepers.
- Also - 2018 – Cross Governmental initiative to end rough sleeping to £30m fund for 2018/19 with further funding agreed for 2019/20 targeted at local authorities with high numbers of people sleeping rough (RSI funding)

3.9. In August 2018, the government published its Rough Sleeping Strategy setting out its vision for halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027. The strategy is based around three core pillars: Prevention, Intervention and Recovery. In addition to initiatives to boost affordable housing supply, and improve the financing and provision of supported housing the strategy includes the following key measures:

**Prevention**
- Prevention pilots focusing finding stable and sustainable accommodation for people leaving prison and for people with complex needs leaving care
- A review of homelessness legislation including the Vagrancy Act
- Research into the links between homelessness and sexual orientation, and modern slavery
- Investigating any deaths from rough or serious harm caused to rough sleepers, and supporting local authorities to strengthen their homelessness strategies with a greater emphasis on rough sleeping
Homeless review 2018

• Working on affordability in the private rented accommodation with a view to implementing new policies when the benefit freeze ends in 2020

Intervention

• £45m to continue the Rough Sleepers Initiative work
• Somewhere Safe to Stay pilots - £17 million for work in approximately 15 areas to rapidly assess the needs of people at risk of rough sleeping and support them to get the right help
• Rough Sleeper Navigators – funding for specialists to support people access appropriate local services, get off the streets and into settled accommodation.
• £2m to enable access to mental health and substance misuse support services for people who are sleeping rough.
• Training for frontline staff to show them how to interact with clients under the influence of Spice, identifying and supporting victims of modern slavery and domestic abuse, and how to effectively support LGBT people
• New support for local areas to work with non-UK nationals who sleep rough
• Rough Sleeping Support Team
• Funding for an improved Street Link

Recovery

• Dormant Assets funding: the allocation of up to £135 million of dormant accounts funds, the majority of which will be used to support innovative financing for homes for people who sleep rough or are at risk of rough sleeping.
• Move-on Funding: launch of a £50 million fund that will deliver a new supply of homes outside of London for people who are sleeping rough, as well as those who are ready to move on from hostels or refuges and might need additional support. Learning from this will inform plans for future capital funding for homes for people who sleep rough. This is in addition to the £50 million fund which was allocated to the Greater London Authority (GLA), who have been responsible for the implementation of the fund in London.
• Supported Lettings: up to £19 million of new funding to provide flexible support in homes provided for people with a history of rough sleeping. This will provide flexible support funding to help over 5,000 people at risk of rough sleeping, over the next two years, to sustain their tenancies in homes across the housing sector.
• Local Lettings Agencies: new funding to help local areas grow enterprises to support vulnerable people into accommodation.
• Housing First: we have already announced £28 million of funding for Housing First pilots in Greater Manchester, the West Midlands and Liverpool to support people with multiple complex needs.
• Homelessness experts for every Jobcentre Plus: will offer expert advice, signposting and support.
• Young Futures Fund: a new Social Impact Bond, the Young Futures Fund, to support young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
3.10. The Government has also recently concluded its consultation on Supported Housing funding – it had set out proposals for a ring-fenced, local authority administered grant for short-term supported provision and an enhanced regulatory regime for sheltered and extra care housing (referred to as ‘Sheltered Rent’, predominantly housing for older people). The Government has now decided to continue to use Housing Benefit to fund all supported housing, including short term supported housing. However, it will continue to work with the sector and local government to develop robust oversight and ensure value for money and quality for all supported housing.

Housing and planning

3.11. The Government has also pledged £9bn by March 2021 to build new affordable homes. This is in addition to the £28m already allocated towards the Housing First approach which aims to provide rough sleepers with stable housing first rather than progressing them through temporary accommodation.

3.12. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 24 July 2018 and introduces a Housing Delivery Test, which is a percentage measurement of the number of net homes delivered against the number of homes required, as set out in the relevant strategic policies for the area, over a rolling three year period. Where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below 95% of the local planning authority’s housing requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan in line with national planning guidance, to assess the causes of under-delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years.

3.13. Paragraph 64 of the revised NPPF expects at least 10% of homes to be available for affordable housing on major developments.

Welfare reform and its impact

3.14. Since 2010, the Government has made a series of changes to welfare provision aimed at delivering public expenditure savings of £13 billion a year by 2020-21, but also to encourage households to live within their means and manage their household budgets in a similar way to those in monthly paid work (by reducing expenditure and seeking cheaper accommodation), and to find employment. These reforms include:

- **Local Housing Allowance benchmark** – Local Housing Allowance rates were set at 30th percentile of local rents rather than previously at the 50th percentile.
- **Local Housing Allowance (LHA) caps** - National cap on Local Housing Allowance rates for each size of dwelling
- **Universal Credit (UC)** - a single payment (including housing benefit) aimed at increasing independence and improving incentives to work. The amount of UC payable was limited by the benefits cap to £500 a week for couples and single parent households and £350 a week for single adult households without children
• **Benefit cap** - households on working age benefits can no longer receive more in benefits than the average wage for working families. The cap was applied through Housing Benefit payments or Universal Credit, and payments were made direct to claimants in a similar way to a monthly salary. The benefit cap was subsequently lowered in 2016 to £23,000 in London for families (£15,410 for a single person)

• **Bedroom Tax** - working age tenants renting from a local authority or a housing association would only receive housing benefit towards the housing costs based on the need of their household. Any ‘spare rooms’ would not be eligible for housing benefit.

• **Limiting LHA increases** to Consumer Price Index, then 1% (2014) and to 0% for four years from April 2016

• **A four-year benefits freeze** from 2016 to 2020

3.15. One of the key findings of the National Audit Office’s report on the DCLG’s response to Homelessness published in September 2017 was that “Changes to Local Housing Allowance are likely to have contributed to the affordability of tenancies for those on benefits, and are an element of the increase in homelessness”. The NAO also found that the DCLG did not have a cross-government strategy to prevent and tackle homelessness, and that the Government had not evaluated the impact of its welfare reforms on homelessness, or the impact of the mitigations that it has put in place. This is despite the fact that homelessness had significantly increased in recent years, and at present costs the public sector in excess of £1 billion a year.

3.16. Croydon was one of four London boroughs selected to first introduce the Universal Credit (UC), the household benefit cap and the ‘Bedroom Tax’. More than 700 households in Croydon were directly affected by the household benefit cap, 2,400 social housing tenants by the bedroom tax, and 38,000 by UC in Croydon once it is fully implemented.

3.17. The Council’s response to welfare reform has been to set up a division designed specifically to support households affected by welfare reform – the Gateway and Welfare Division – and its “Gateway approach” can be summarised as one that:

- Empowers and supports families and individuals in achieving sustainable outcomes
- Considers the households as a whole, and works to:
  - reduce the overlap of services,
  - stabilises the household’s financial position
  - helps people find work where appropriate, and
  - ensures the housing solution was effective and sustainable
- Encourages customers to take ownership and develop their own action plan to help them do this with our support, including:
  - Financial; budgeting support, a holistic view of debt, income maximisation
  - Employment; training, work experience, finding work
  - Housing; preventing homelessness, moving to suitable and affordable accommodation

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4 [Bedroom Tax – are you affected?](Shelter)
3.18. The results of this approach so far have been very positive. The Gateway and Welfare division has:

- Helped more than 2,400 families avoid homelessness
- Given budgeting support to over 14,900 people
- Supported over 4,700 people on Universal Credit to improve their digital skills
- Seen a 15% reduction in the number of people applying as homeless
- Cut the cost of giving people emergency accommodation by £2m
- Increased the homeless prevention rate from 25% to 58%
- Reduced the numbers in emergency accommodation from 824 to 667
- Supported 587 residents into employment.
- Phase 1 of the Gateway programme is saving the Council £2.5m per year

**Regional policy**

**Draft New London Plan**

3.19. The Mayor’s ambitions for the capital are set out in ‘A City for all Londoners’, which recognise the need to develop the capital, but in an inclusive way that provides opportunities for London’s communities. The developing draft new plan London Plan places a strong emphasis on ‘Good Growth’ which means:

- Building strong inclusive communities – including promoting the crucial role town centres have in the social, civic, cultural and economic lives of Londoners
- Making the best use of land – including prioritising the use of brownfield land, seeking to intensify land use, and understanding what is valued about a place and using that as a catalyst for growth
- Creating a healthy city – including improving Londoners’ health and reducing health inequalities through using a ‘healthy streets’ approach, improving access to green spaces and providing new green infrastructure
- Delivering the homes Londoners need – including identifying and allocating a range of sites, including small sites, to deliver housing locally
- Growing a good economy – including ensuring that London’s economy diversifies and that the benefits of economic success are shared more equitably, and promoting and supporting London’s rich heritage and cultural assets
- Increasing efficiency and resilience – including improving energy efficiency and supporting the move towards a low carbon circular economy, and ensuring buildings and infrastructure are designed to adapt to a changing climate

3.20. The draft new London Plan also identifies the Croydon Metropolitan Centre as a Strategic Outer London Office Location reflecting its importance to the South London sub-region and its potential to deliver growth. The draft new London Pan has also set a challenging annual housing target for Croydon of 2,949, which is more than double the previous annual target. While the Council welcomes the Mayors approach and its underlying principle, there are real
concerns about deliverability which have been raised with the Major ahead of its examination.

**London Housing Strategy**

3.21. The Mayor consulted on his draft London Housing Strategy in the autumn of 2017, and the draft strategy was formally adopted.

3.22. The new strategy aims to:

- **Build more new homes** – the strategy will bring forward more land for development, provide more funding for infrastructure to unlock development sites, diversify the housebuilding industry, and improve skills and capacity in the industry. (See Policies 3.1-3.4)
- **Deliver more genuinely affordable homes** – the new strategy will ensure homes are genuinely affordable, try and deliver half of all new homes as affordable, and protect existing social housing. (See Policies 4.1-4.3)
- **Create high quality homes and inclusive neighbourhoods** – the strategy will ensure London produces well-designed, safe, good quality, and environmentally sustainable homes, that meet all of London’s diverse housing needs, and will involve more Londoners in housebuilding. (See Policies 5.1-5.4)
- **Provide a fair deal for private renters and leaseholders** – the strategy also focuses on improving the quality of the private rented sector, and providing more stability for renters through longer tenancies, and reforming the way leasehold properties are managed. (See Policies 6.1-6.3)
- **Tackle homelessness and help rough sleepers** – the strategy will ensure more work is done on homelessness prevention, helping homeless Londoners into housing, and ensuring there is a route off the streets for every single rough sleeper in London through the ‘No Nights Sleeping Rough’ taskforce. (See Policies 7.1 and 7.2)

**Housing in London - The evidence base for the Mayor’s Housing Strategy**

3.23. The GLA has also produced ‘Housing in London’ which is the evidence base for the Mayor’s Housing Strategy. This summarises the key pattern and trends across a range of topics relevant to housing in London. The report found that Croydon had a population of 383,301 (2016). It also found that the borough had an average private rent of £1,100 (2016/17) and average house price of £372,024 (Jan 2018), both of which were at the lower end compared to other London boroughs. This is illustrated through the price to earnings ratio of 11.2 (2017), which is the fifth lowest in London. The borough has also seen a continued growth in development and over the last three years has had the second highest number of completions (6,390)⁵.

⁵ [https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/housing-london](https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/housing-london)
Mayor of London - Rough Sleeping Plan of Action

3.24. The Mayor of London has also published a plan to tackle rough sleeping focusing on prevention, rapid intervention, and provision of accommodation and support. In terms of prevention the Mayor will provide a hospital homelessness and immigration support service, ensure safe shelter for LGBT+ people in crisis, reduce evictions from Clearing House accommodation, and ensure vulnerable people’s needs are considered as part of improving security of tenure for people renting in London. The Mayor also seeking additional funding for a new ‘somewhere safe to stay’ initiative (immediately available accommodation provided by local authorities with limited assessment); hostel in-reach service and daytime outreach services; and services for the care and resettlement of homeless people leaving hospital.

3.25. To ensure an immediate route off the streets is available the Mayor will enhance London Street Rescue outreach, provide two floating assessment hubs and two new No Second Night Out (NSNO) staging posts, improve winter provision, and monitoring and recording through improvements to CHAIN. With additional resources, improved services could be developed including: a London StreetLink service including a dedicated advice line, web pages and rapid response outreach; Places of safety providing immediate and safe places where people sleeping rough or at immediate risk of doing so could go outside working hours to wait for the rapid response outreach service to arrive; a network of local rapid intervention services, providing assessment services and emergency accommodation; additional assessment hubs; and, a community link project.

3.26. To secure accommodation for people sleeping rough the Mayor will: develop move-on accommodation; make better use of and improve the standards of existing hostels; make Housing Moves available to rough sleepers, and promote hosting schemes. With additional resources, the Mayor could: extend the Clearing House; establish a pan-London Housing First service for people with no or low support needs; and enhance the Routes Home service.

3.27. To provide the support necessary to help people move on with their lives following rough sleeping the Mayor will: improve access to mental health services, through a specialist team to help coordinate and carry out mental health assessments with people sleeping rough; and support health partners to implement the ‘Health care and people who are homeless’ Commissioning Guidance for London. With additional resources could develop the following services: a cross-tenure tenancy sustainment service; a detox and rehabilitation treatment fund; a pan-London multi-disciplinary mental health project; a health and social care project to work with outreach teams and in hostels; a personalisation fund; an employment service, with work navigators providing tailored, intensive employment support; and a successor to the Mayor’s current Social Impact Bond for entrenched rough sleepers.
Coast to Capital Strategic Economic Plan

3.28. Croydon is one of a small number of local authorities that is a member of two Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) – the London LEAP and the Coast to Capital LEP (C2C). C2C has recently updated its Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) setting out how it plans to tackle the region’s barriers to growth and invest in the infrastructure required. The C2C SEP identifies a number of factors relevant to future growth including a number of limitations – the C2C area has a historically strong economy; and it is the 7th largest Local Economic Partnership (LEP) economy in England out of 38 LEP areas. C2C’s economic growth has been in continued decline and is not recovering from the economic crisis like some comparable LEP areas. Its labour productivity peaked in 1999 and output in the city regions is growing much faster than in the C2C region. C2C is only the 24th fastest growing LEP area. There is also a clear productivity gap between places within the C2C area. Its labour productivity is two and a half times higher in Crawley than in Arun.

3.29. The factors underlying these limitations include over reliance on the London economy to provide employment opportunities for our area. Wages in the C2C area are, on average, a third higher in London than locally, and this places pressure on transport infrastructure which wasn't designed for this level of commuter travel. 10% of working age population travel to London each day for work, and the higher wages brought into the C2C area raise living costs, making it less affordable for those who work locally. House price affordability is up to twice as high as the national average. There are pockets of low skills, along the coast and in Crawley and Croydon. The percentage of the population with a degree level (or equivalent) qualification is twice as high in Epsom as in Shoreham. Businesses are not growing. Employment in small and medium businesses in the C2C area is 10% lower than compared to the best performing LEPs Businesses do not have the space they need to grow. An estimated 15% of business space has been lost in major urban areas to residential conversion since planning laws were relaxed.

3.30. The C2C Strategic Economic Plan will focus investment on:

- Priority 1: Delivering prosperous urban centres
- Priority 2: Developing business infrastructure and support
- Priority 3: Investing in sustainable growth
- Priority 4: Creating skills for the future
- Priority 5: Pioneering innovation in core strengths
- Priority 6: Promoting better transport and mobility
- Priority 7: Improving digital network capability
- Priority 8: Building a strong national and international identity

Local strategies and plans

3.31. The Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities, when developing a new homelessness strategy, to "have regard to" their current tenancy strategy and housing allocations scheme to ensure the policies are consistent. It is also important when developing a new strategy to
consider how it supports the Council’s wider strategies and plans and how they contribute to achieving its objectives.

3.32. Croydon’s priorities are set out in its various strategies and plans – however, the most relevant and important in terms of homelessness are:

- The Community Strategy
- Growth Plan – The Croydon Promise
- The Local Plan
- Croydon’s Opportunity and Fairness Commission
- Opportunity and Fairness Plan
- 2014 Ambitious for Croydon
- Corporate Plan

**Croydon’s Community Strategy**

3.33. The Community Strategy is the overarching strategy for the borough. It sets our overall strategic direction, the outcomes and priorities we will focus. In terms of:

- **PLACE** - A great place to learn, work and live where we will deliver new jobs and new homes for our residents, enable our local economy to grow, develop an exciting cultural offer and evening economy, in a safe and pleasant environment
- **(PEOPLE)** A place of opportunity for everyone where we will tackle poverty and deprivation, prevent homelessness, and support children, families and individuals to achieve their full potential and live a long healthy life through a good start, an excellent education, support to develop and maintain the resilience and self-reliance modern life requires, and providing holistic support to those that need it
- **(COMMUNITIES)** A place with a vibrant and connected community and voluntary sector where we will enable and empower our communities to connect and collaborate in developing community-led responses to the many challenges we face.

Croydon’s community Strategy is published on the council’s web site here:


**The Growth Plan (the Croydon Promise)**

3.34. The promise sets out Croydon’s growth ambitions for the next five years. It looks at the regeneration of the Opportunity Area in the centre of the borough, and the opportunities in four areas outside the centre:

- **East of Croydon** - Ashburton, Shirley, Heathfield and Selsdon and Ballards (opportunities
- **New Addington and Fieldway** (opportunities
- **South of Croydon** - Sanderstead, Purley, Kenley, Coulsdon West and Coulsdon East (opportunities
- **North of Croydon** - Woodside, South Norwood, Thornton Heath, Bensham Manor, West Thornton, Norbury and Upper Norwood (opportunities

3.35. **The Ten promises** included in the Growth Plan:

1. Provide a choice of homes for people at all stages of life addressing housing shortages in the borough by **enabling 9,500 housing starts** over the next five years

2. Enable the **creation of 16,000 jobs** – accessible to all- in a range of growing sectors including creative, digital and information technology; financial and professional services; construction; retail; leisure; education; health and social care.

3. Oversee the development of one of Europe’s largest urban shopping and leisure centres – the Whitgift redevelopment, support independent retailers and invest in Fairfield Halls further strengthening our cultural offer

4. **Attract investment to our district and local centres**, creating vibrant communities across the borough and ensuring that all of Croydon is a great place to live, work and visit.

5. **Make Croydon the best place in London to start a new business** enabling 2,000 new business starts per annum, and support the growth of SMEs

6. **Reinstate Croydon’s position as a premier office location** by accelerating the development of over one million sq ft of new high quality office space, and reducing the excess supply of older office stock, while delivering a high quality tech hub.

7. Raise aspirations of residents through **partnering with an international calibre university** to offer more higher education in the borough. To raise the number of residents with degree level qualifications and bring a new vibrancy to the metropolitan centre.

8. **Improve the transport network** across the borough, providing genuine alternatives to the private car, and strengthening links to Gatwick airport.

9. **Support residents – young and old – into employment** by implementing our Pathways to employment programme; raising the skills of the workforce; and ensuring the skills system is responsive to the needs of local employers.

10. Buy local wherever possible and use the council’s purchasing power to support local businesses, generate job opportunities and promote investment in our local communities.

3.36. The ‘Croydon Promise’ was approved by Cabinet in September 2014 and a copy of the plan is available to download from the council’s website here: [https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/20140929/Agenda/cab20140929_07_02_appendix_to_report_-_the0d9e.pdf?cmte=CAB&meet=29&href=/akscroydon/images/att4293.pdf](https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/20140929/Agenda/cab20140929_07_02_appendix_to_report_-_the0d9e.pdf?cmte=CAB&meet=29&href=/akscroydon/images/att4293.pdf)
**Croydon’s Local Plan**
3.37. The Croydon Local Plan 2018 was adopted on 28th February 2018. The Local Plan sets out how Croydon plans to grow to meet the needs of its population, and how it plans to deliver the required housing, infrastructure, land for commercial/industrial purposes, green space and leisure facilities, and enable sufficient social, health and community services to be provided. The housing target of 32,890 or (1645 homes per year) in the Local Plan is less than the need of 44,149 as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014 (SHMA). This is because it reflects the availability of land for development in Croydon whilst facilitating the sustainable growth of the suburbs, the need to provide a mix of homes to support sustainable communities and the objective to provide a choice of homes for people at all stages of life. The SHMA also indicates that of the overall number of homes needed in Croydon, about 91% need to be affordable homes for residents on lower incomes. It is not realistic to expect that this proportion of new homes in the borough will be affordable, both in terms of deliverability and because the private rental sector also meets and will continue to meet a significant proportion of the need for affordable housing. For this reason, the strategic target is 40% of overall supply, which reflects the findings of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, has regard development viability and the need to deliver balanced communities with a mixture of tenures and dwelling types.

3.38. In addition, the SHMA the local plan is supported by a detailed evidence base covering a range of topics including homes, local character and heritage, and climate change. Croydon’s local plan documentation are available to download from the Council’s website here: https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planning and regeneration/framework/localplan

**Croydon’s Opportunity and Fairness Commission (OFC)**
3.39. The independent Croydon Opportunity and Fairness Commission (OFC) was set up in 2015 to investigate issues of poverty and inequality faced by residents and to consider how the LSP could make better use of its resources to address these challenges. The OFC listened to the views of over 3,000 people and local businesses.

3.40. In 2015, 77% of residents said that people from different backgrounds get on well together. On the matter of fairness, 56% say that ‘what matters is ensuring everyone has equality of opportunity.’ A majority of residents think that ‘those in most need should get the most’. Most residents (75%) are satisfied with Croydon as a place to live and 72% identify with Croydon. In addition, 64% are proud of Croydon, particularly of transport/ease of access (16%), shopping/restaurants/markets (12%), people/community (8%) and improvements/regeneration (7%).

3.41. The OFC’s report produced recommendations under six themes which have informed this strategy:

1. **A vibrant responsible and connected borough** - reciprocity, volunteering and community activism, devolving power to neighbourhoods and regenerating district centres
2. **A town centre that lifts the whole borough** - ensuring more businesses benefit from town centre development, promoting the London Living Wage, increasing job brokerage and support for the high tech and growth sectors, a university campus, and broadening the cultural offer

3. **Leaving no child behind, early intervention to better lives** - supporting resilience, development and wellbeing in schools and beyond, together with raising aspirations within communities

4. **A connected borough where no-one is isolated** - tackling social isolation through volunteering and joint commissioning, and better integration between health services and the community

5. **Finding homes for all and support for tenants** - promoting lodging, maximising use of land, more tenure options in New Addington and Fieldway, social impact bonds to tackle homelessness

6. **Supporting residents towards better times** - supporting small businesses, improving work experience and job opportunities, supporting long term sick and disabled people return to work, reducing debt and increasing financial security and encouraging more childcare options.

**Croydon’s Opportunity and Fairness Plan 2016-20**

3.42. The Opportunity and Fairness Plan sets out the Council’s Equality Objectives for 2016 – 20. It provides a summary of the information that has informed how the objectives were selected. The information was taken from the Borough Profile, the recent publication of the Index of Multiple Deprivation, and the of residents and stakeholders that contributed to the production of the Opportunity and Fairness Commission’s final report published in January 2016.

**Ambitious for Croydon**

3.43. The Council’s re-elected Labour administration campaigned on a programme of ambitions for the borough which were described during the recent local government elections and in many cases were advanced during the previous administration from 2014-18. One of the key themes in this programme concerns housing and homelessness, and the commitment to provide decent and safe homes for all. The achieve this the Council will:

- Continue the development of Brick by Brick schemes across the borough. These schemes will supply properties in a range of tenures and ensure there is a supply of affordable properties. An important aspect of these schemes is that they give people from Croydon priority.
- Ensure that residents in rented housing are protected through the borough-wide Landlord Licensing scheme, and the fitting of sprinklers into our taller blocks
- Tackle homelessness working with a variety of partners, and address the underlying factors that often contribute towards homelessness through the Council’s Gateway and Welfare Service. The Gateway and Welfare Service supports people dealing with debt or coping with welfare reform and ensuring that they can stay in their homes.
- Continue to use innovative ways to secure accommodation for residents facing homelessness, including:
FairBnB which matches spare rooms to those needing emergency accommodation

Setting up a Social Letting Agency pilot to help people find suitable property and get them good terms

Croydon Choice – our choice based lettings scheme

Developing Croydon’s first Community Land Trust (CLT)

- Delivering 2,000 new homes and to give Croydon residents priority for them
- Buying 250 homes to give relief to those needing an affordable property and to
- Returning 100 vacant houses to use in the private sector to further increase supply where Empty Property Grant is provided in return for nomination rights for household nominated by the council.
- Introducing a borough-wide Article 4 Direction on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs).

Corporate Plan

3.44. Croydon’s Corporate Plan (2018-2022) sets out the council’s strategic objectives for the borough, in addition to how we will develop and deliver our services over the next four years. It speaks to the work with our partners and our communities. Crucially, it looks at the need for change in our service delivery to take a more preventative approach; improving outcomes for our residents, businesses and communities.

3.45. The plan ensures that the council focuses on getting the basics right, whilst pushing for growth for all to benefit from in the borough, and improving equality of, and access to, opportunity. It does not cover everything that the council does; it focuses on a combination of the issues that matter most to our local communities, the national context, and the unique challenges arising from Croydon’s growing population.

3.46. The plan is key to defining our operational service planning and performance management framework (appendix to the Corporate Plan). The outcomes that we are working towards are detailed in the document, in addition to how we will achieve those ambitions. It links the strategic priorities of the council directly to the activities of each individual employee through our appraisal scheme. It includes indicators for improving overall council performance, services and the way we work. It will also enable us to measure our progress and alert us to the remedial actions needed to bring our performance back on track.

3.47. The actions particularly relevant to homelessness and rough sleeping included in the Corporate Plan are:

- Good decent homes, affordable to all – where we will
  - Build 2,000 homes that give priority to Croydon residents
  - Return at least 100 vacant properties back into use
  - Renew the landlord licensing scheme beyond 2020 and increase
  - the number of properties registered
  - Purchase 250 street properties for families in need with truly affordable rent and security of tenure
Develop our Homelessness Strategy and assist and enable our residents to secure accommodation, supporting vulnerable residents to increase resilience and independence

Work with the Mayor of London to ensure affordable housing in new developments

Homeless charities and lobby groups

Crisis – Everybody in – How to end homelessness in Great Britain

3.48. Everybody In sets out an evidence based long term plan for ending homelessness in Great Britain. It sets out the costs and policy changes required to achieve this. Crisis advocate a swift process for identify people sleeping rough, and providing short-term help for those that can be moved into secure decent housing (such as assistance with a deposit and rent in advance) and longer –term support for more vulnerable people with complex needs through approaches such as housing-first. It also makes a number of policy recommendations including:

• ensuring emergency accommodation is always available for people in immediate need
• providing funding for personalised support for rough sleepers
• establishing housing first as the default option for anyone homeless with complex needs
• calling for over 100,000 new social homes per year
• imposing a wider duty on public bodies across Great Britain to prevent homelessness
• enabling everyone to access help and abolishing ‘priority need in England and Wales.

Homeless Link – creating the change

3.49. As the membership body for the homelessness and supported housing sector in England, representing over 750 diverse organisations, Homeless Link is in a unique position to understand and assess the scale and nature of the challenge to end homelessness. The country has experienced successive year on year rises in the numbers of people struggling to find and keep a home; and a corresponding increase in the complexity and multiplicity of people’s needs.

3.50. Vision - There is no place for homelessness in the 21st century. Our strategic aims relate to preventing homelessness before it begins, providing responsive and sustainable solutions should it occur, and instilling confidence, that ending homelessness is achievable. They bring together our vision and values, and describe the actions that we will take. Our four strategic aims:

1. Preventing homelessness and ending rough sleeping
2. Showing that ending homelessness is both achievable and sustainable
3. Supporting our members to be more effective, impactful and resilient
4. Being an excellent and inspiring organisation.
Review question 3 - policy overview

Have we captured all the relevant national, regional and local policy drivers concerning homelessness? Have we missed anything significant out that should be included in the review?

Contact details for feedback/comments on this section
Input and feedback can be provided in writing, by email, by telephone or via the survey on our Get Involved web site. The information provided as part of this review will feed into Croydon’s third Homelessness Strategy since the Homelessness Act 2002 was introduced.

To provide feedback or comments please write to: David Morris, Gateway Transformation Programme Lead (Interim), Croydon Council, Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR0 1EA, or email david.2.morris@croydon.gov.uk.