

# Private Sector Housing Strategy - Consultation

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# Commitment 1:

We work to increase the supply of private sector homes available in Brent so it is an accessible housing option for our residents

# Why is this important?

- There is a lack of social housing across London, and Brent is no exception
- The private rented sector is pivotal in supporting the Council to help prevent and relieve homelessness, so supply of good quality, affordable homes in this area is vital
- Home ownership is an aspiration of many Brent residents and the Council wants to explore options around this

# How will we achieve this?

- Commission a study into the demand for Shared Ownership and best practice within the sector to establish a 'Brent Shared Ownership' standard for all new builds in the borough
- Promote the work of our Housing Initiatives Team who work with property owners and developers to discuss available options for their empty properties and offer Empty Property Grants which helps to provide homes for homeless families
- Pursue owners of empty properties and take enforcement action where necessary to ensure that they do not allow their properties to fall into disrepair

## **Commitment 2:**

We effectively tackle poor property conditions across the private sector in Brent

# Why is this important?

- Legal requirements to tackle poor property standards through the Housing Act 2004 and Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Living in poor property conditions has a detrimental effect on the health and wellbeing of our residents

# How will we achieve this?

- Tackle health and safety concerns in private sector properties by taking formal action to resolve category one and serious category two HHSRS hazards
- Build upon our current landlord licensing scheme by extending it to cover more areas of the borough, inspecting 50% of all selective licenced properties and all licenced HMO's
- Strengthen our enforcement against property owners and managers who repeatedly breach required standards through prosecution and fines, as well as publishing enforcement results to name and shame failing landlords
- Build on our partnerships with other services and agencies across the borough to enable a wider reach in effective enforcement against landlords and property managers who breach required standards.

## **Commitment 3:**

We prioritise supporting residents to access and stay in their private-sector home, living safe and comfortable lives

# Why is this important?

- Supporting tenants to successfully sustain their tenancy in the private sector reduces the risk of homelessness
- People live happier, healthier lives when they are able to remain in their home supported by any adaptations they may need
- Its vital that private sector tenants know their rights, and what to expect from their landlord so they can challenge appropriately when needed

# How will we achieve this?

- Develop and promote an accessible Tenant Toolkit which will inform PRS tenants of their rights, services available to them and what to do in case of issues such as waste management and recycling
- Widely promote our Disability Adaptations Grants, Small Works Grants and Hospital Discharge Assistance Service in order to support making homes more accessible for disabled and vulnerable residents and address essential repairs and maintenance action where needed.
- Work with households at risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness to sustain effective tenancies and access affordable housing options in the private rented sector.

# Next steps

- Statutory consultation closes – **19 March**
- Collating consultation feedback and finalising updated strategy – **April**
- Developing delivery plan and success measures – **April**
- Approval at Cabinet and final publication – **To be confirmed following purdah (May / June)**

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