Kensington and Chelsea Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Reduction Strategy

Draft for consultation

Introduction

Homelessness
statutory requirements

1996 Housing Act part VII

Action to prevent homelessness and provide assistance to people threatened with or actually homeless.

Homelessness Act 2002 &

Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation)(England) Order 2002

Homelessness Strategy becomes a requirement.

Strengthened the assistance available to people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness.

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

Significant reform of homelessness legislation

Provide services to all residents, not just those in `priority need'.

New duties include:

  prevention of homelessness earlier (56 days not 28)

  relief of homelessness before the main (old) duty

  duty to refer

  provide advisory services and information

  assessments and personalised plans

Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Reduction Strategy
statutory requirements

Homelessness Act 2002

all local housing authorities must take strategic responsibility for tackling and preventing homelessness

single plan to concentrate their activities for tackling homelessness

includes assistance from social services, cooperation from housing associations, and contributions from other agencies

Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Reduction Strategy
statutory requirements

Homelessness code of guidance for local authorities   April 2019

Alongside the 2002 Act, sets out what a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy should cover.

Includes:

review of homelessness	early identification	preventing (and relieving) homelessness
preventing recurring homelessness	securing accommodation	providing support
advice and information	partnership arrangements	resources

Review of Homelessness in K&C

Carried out by independent specialist consultants Neil Morland & Co.

Independent and impartial review of homelessness prevention activities carried out by the Council and by other organisations.

Supports understanding of how we can improve our services.

Published alongside the draft Homelessness Strategy.

Review of Homelessness - key findings

a need to improve the recording, measuring and monitoring of current and future levels of homelessness

deepen our understanding of the causes of homelessness in the Borough and help to maximise the impact and outcomes of homelessness services

strengthening partnership working

residents at risk of homelessness can be identified earlier and can access appropriate assistance in a timely manner

improve access to and use of suitable, high quality accommodation

including increased use of PRS and reducing reliance on temporary accommodation

Affordability in the Borough

Median house prices

45 times median gross earnings (London = 10, England = 8)

Private rented sector

Houses 36% of households

1 bed - 79% of average gross pay for a single resident

- LHA covers 42% of average rent

4 bed - LHA covers 16% of average rent

Homelessness approaches

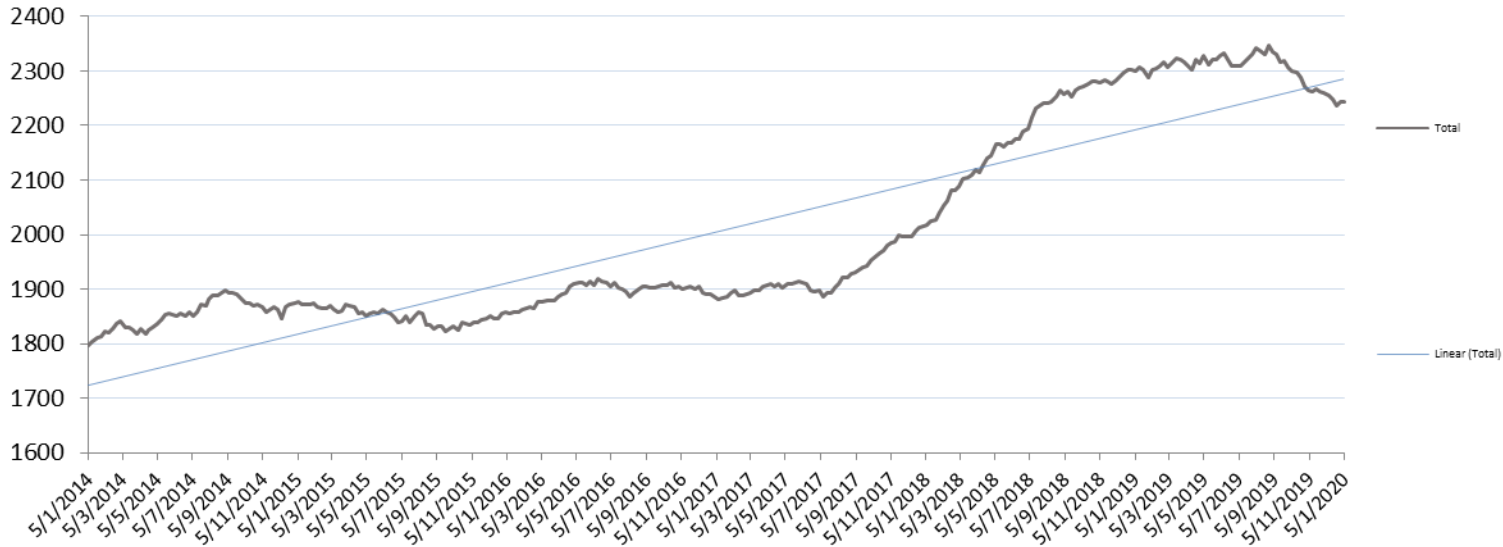| Financial Year	Total Applications	Duty Accepted	Percentage
2014-15	1167	401	34.4%
2015-16	1009	549	54.4%
2016-17	795	479	60.3%
2017-18	765	431	56.3%
2018-19	1129	379	33.6%

Between April 2018 and December 2019

    1947   families and singles have made a homeless application

    78%   approached too late for prevention

Second highest rate of homelessness, per head of population, in England

Temporary accommodation

Total in TA 2014 - 2019

2243   Households currently in temporary accommodation

21% in Kensington and Chelsea

50% local (including K&C)

79% outside K&C

Social housing – demand and supply

Number of Beds	No of lets in last 5 years	% of bedroom size compared with total lets	Number on waiting list (March 2019)	% of waiting list requiring bedroom size (March 2019)	% difference last 5 years' demand to last 5 years' lets
0+1	1048	54.2%	1263	39.3%	**+17.4%**
2	572	29.6%	1320	41%	**-14.8%**
3	259	13.4%	591	18.4%	**-3%**
4	47	2.4%	140	4.4%	**-1.5%**
5	6	0.3%	17	0.5%	**-0.4%**
6	1	0.05%	3	0.09%	**-0.01%**

relative over-supply of studio and 1 beds

under-supply of all other homes, especially 2 beds

Waiting for a social housing tenancy

Households in temporary accommodation - average wait to be rehoused

Studio / 1 bed	1 and a half years
2 bed	over 4 years
3 bed	6 years
4 bed	over 6 years
5 bed	over 9 years
6 bed	over 13 years

What we <u>know</u> about homelessness

We cannot solve affordability

Gap between income / benefits and housing costs

Ongoing gap between demand and supply

We cannot build or procure our way out

Social housing is seen as the answer

By residents and by many partners

We rely on social housing for single residents

But this does not support prevention, and does not help all residents (eg women, LGBT+)

What we perceive about homelessness

Prevention / relief within 56 days is challenging

`At risk' within 56 days is a slippery slope?

We are not approached by residents early enough

Request support too close to homelessness

Partners do not contact us early enough

Tendency to refer too late (and with too little)

Single residents and families have different causes of homelessness

Single residents = personal reasons?
Families = structural reasons?

We invite dependence on the Council

We don't do enough to help residents support themselves

What we **don't know** about homelessness

The true causes of homelessness

ie The root causes that can eventually result in homelessness

Govt prescribed reporting does not tell us this (at the moment!)

Different causes for singles and families?

Different causes in different areas of the Borough?

Different experiences for different members of our community?

Our priorities
Ten point plan across four broad areas

Preventing residents from becoming homeless and assisting them when they have become homeless

1 Giving residents the power and ability to solve problems by refreshing and personalising the advice and information we provide when people may be facing homelessness.

- accessible information so residents can access advice anywhere
- tailored solutions
- share best practice and information with community agencies
- improved staff skills

2 Make sure we have the right solutions and ensure we are maximising all pathways into appropriate and settled accommodation.

- early identification and referral pathways
- advice & support to secure a suitable home
- improved specialist housing pathways (eg care leavers)
- improved services for victims / survivors of domestic abuse

Providing suitable accommodation for homeless households

3   Improve our procurement and provision of high quality temporary accommodation for homeless households.

improving supply of suitable temporary accommodation, using innovative delivery where appropriate

strong focus on safety and security

ensure it meets the needs of residents

4   Ensure a range of suitable settled accommodation, and support, is available for homeless households that we have a housing duty towards when homelessness cannot be prevented.

support more affordable housing in K&C

Increased, appropriate use of PRS

housing associations offering more homes

Direct Lettings Agency?

Reducing and working towards the elimination of rough sleeping

5   Prevent residents from rough sleeping in the first place.

work with partners to identify and support residents much earlier

tenancy sustainment through partnership working

strengthen duty to refer (esp. prisons, hospitals)

6   Helping residents that are sleeping on the streets for the first time off the streets for good.

supporting residents to move into offers of accommodation

further improve mental health, drug and alcohol support – accessing support across London

7   Supporting entrenched rough sleepers off the streets for the long term.

partnership working to provide tailored and sensitive services, addressing specific / complex needs

Housing First

Working with partners to prevent homelessness earlier

8 Look at the wider causes of homelessness in the borough and develop solutions through early identification and intervention

listening to and learning from residents

analyse info and data – explore root causes of homelessness in different areas of K&C (and share this)

target resources where they are most needed

9 Make our housing services more visible and accessible to all residents, and better communicate what we can and cannot offer

improve availability and access to good, transparent information and advice

deliver services in community, with the community

restructure and retraining

10 Work with partners and other housing providers to develop more effective interventions and solutions to homelessness through earlier identification and intervention.

early intervention working with Council and community services

using `trigger points'

tenancy sustainment, financial inclusion

Next steps

Six week public consultation from mid February.

We will use the feedback from the consultation to shape the final version of the strategy, reviewing the priorities to ensure they reflect what we have heard.

The Leadership Team will be asked to agree the final version of the strategy at its meeting on 29 April.

Alongside the final version of the strategy, we will publish an action plan setting out what we will do against each of the priorities.