

**PRIVATE SECTOR  
HOUSING STRATEGY  
2014 -2019  
Executive Summary**

## Introduction

The Private Sector Housing Strategy is the first such strategy that Ealing Council has published and supports the council's over-arching Housing and Homelessness Strategy by setting out the council's detailed plans for both home ownership and private rented housing. Our vision is:

***To ensure the borough has an affordable, good quality private sector housing to meet the housing needs of our residents, ensuring Ealing is a thriving place to live and work.***

Private sector housing performs a vital role in supporting Ealing's economic viability and meeting housing need in the borough. Homes to buy have become increasingly unaffordable, which has contributed to a major expansion in private renting, both nationally and at a local level. Consequently, rents in the private rented sector have also risen substantially and now provide homes for an increasingly diverse range of households.

The private rented sector has recently attracted increased scrutiny and been the subject of much research and several government inquiries. It is therefore essential that the council work with our partners to both improve property conditions and to provide access to well managed private sector housing to help meet the housing needs of our residents.

To achieve our vision we have set ourselves the following four strategic priorities:

- Increase the supply of private housing
- Support residents to access affordable, well managed private rented homes
- Improve the condition of private housing through regulation
- Develop strong partnerships to support the private housing sector

### **Priority 1: Increase the supply of private housing**

#### **Key Issues & Challenges:**

- Lack of Affordability
- Lack of Supply
- Tackling empty homes
- High demand for housing

#### **Our aims:**

- Ensure there is an adequate supply of affordable homes for residents to buy or rent
- Make the best use of the existing private housing stock by minimising the number of empty properties

#### **What we will do:**

- Bring empty properties back into use
- Increase the supply of quality, affordable private sector properties

## **Priority 2: Support residents to access affordable, well managed private rented homes**

### **Key Issues & Challenges**

- There has been a substantial increase in people privately renting
- Local authorities can discharge their homelessness duty into the private rented sector
- Private sector tenancies have less security of tenure
- The local impact of welfare reform
- Changing demographic profile with a higher proportion of vulnerable people

### **Our aims:**

- Prevent and support those at risk of homelessness
- Assist residents to secure sustainable private rented tenancies
- Raise management standards in the private rented sector
- Support residents affected by welfare reform
- Support vulnerable residents to enable people to live independently and remain in their home

### **What we will do:**

- Improve access & choice to private rented homes for households living & working in Ealing
- Utilise the private rented sector to help prevent homelessness
- Ensure private rented properties are well managed
- Support residents affected by welfare reform
- Provide housing related support and advice to help vulnerable tenants remain or return to their home

## **Priority 3: Improve the condition of private housing through regulation**

### **Key Issues & Challenges**

- Poor safety record of private rented sector
- Poor property conditions
- Poor property condition of Houses in Multiple Occupation
- Poor thermal comfort in the private sector
- Tackling Fuel Poverty
- Vulnerable Households are more affected more by poor property conditions

### **Our main aims:**

- Provide safe homes and communities for residents
- Improve the standard of private sector homes through an effective range of tools such education, advice and enforcement.
- Increase the number of homes which are energy efficient
- Identify and support fuel poor households
- Target grants and other resources to vulnerable residents in greatest need

### **What we will do:**

- Regulate and take enforcement action where unauthorised outhouse developments are identified
- Improve the standard of private sector homes
- Reduce over-crowding
- Provide effective regulation & enforcement for houses in multiple occupation (HMO's)
- Enhance personal safety & security within the home environment
- Target repairs and adaptation grants to vulnerable groups and those on the lowest income
- Improve energy efficiency in the private sector
- Reduce fuel poverty

## **Priority 4: Develop strong partnerships to support the private housing sector**

### **Key Issues & Challenges**

- This is Ealing's first Private Sector Housing Strategy, so we'll need to bring identify key people to help deliver our plans
- The Coalition government's devolution and 'Localism' agenda places less emphasis on central targets
- There is an Increased need for more detailed information on housing and market conditions and residents needs and aspirations to help us plan services and respond to change
- Lowered funding availability means there is a greater need to share resources and jointly commission services

### **Our main aims:**

- Provide strategic leadership on private sector housing issues within Ealing
- Provide effective partnerships within West London and positive relationships with private sector landlords, investors and other stakeholders
- Support residents and raise awareness of assistance that the council and partners can provide
- Understand local private sector housing property and market conditions
- Enhance our knowledge of the needs and aspirations of local private sector residents

### **What we will do:**

- Work in Partnership with the West London Housing Partnership to develop sub-regional projects
- Provide value for money private sector housing services
- Build positive relationships with private sector landlords, council leaseholders, investors and other stakeholders
- Monitor private sector housing property and market conditions