

REVISED PLACEMENT POLICY - OUR DUTY TO MAKE YOU A SINGLE OFFER

NEED FOR THE NEW POLICY

Due to changes in the housing market, there is a severe shortage of accommodation for private rent in London and the southeast of England. This means:

- Like other London boroughs, Enfield is struggling to find rented homes to use as temporary accommodation or settled homes for homeless households.
- We have had to use hotels which are not ideal for families.
- It is especially hard to find affordable homes for people on benefits or a low income.
- Recent rent rises are not covered by Local Housing Allowance (LHA) which is used to work out how much Housing Benefit households receive. LHA has been frozen since 2020.
- Rising rents and the cost of living mean many more people are asking us to help them.

WHAT'S CHANGED?

We can only place homeless households where there is affordable accommodation. So, going forward, the majority of homes that are offered will be private rented accommodation outside London and the southeast of England. They will be in locations where rents and LHA rates are more closely aligned and so are affordable for residents.

We are committed to making the experience of homelessness rare, brief and non-recurring. This new placement policy will make it possible for people to afford to rent a secure and decent home more quickly. There is a relocation assistance package in place (see page 3 for details).

The new policy does not apply to people who have secured their own rented accommodation independently or via a Council support scheme. These support schemes will be available to assist homeless households under the new policy. (See page 2 for details). [Visit our website](#) to read the policy and see our FAQs on page 4.

CURRENT HOUSING PRESSURES IN NUMBERS



Average monthly private rent for 2-bed home*



*Average monthly rents in 2022 for illustrative purposes only. Source: ONS



Find Your Own Home Scheme

An opportunity for you to find suitable, affordable housing for private rent

How do I know if I am eligible?	The benefits for you and support available
You are living in emergency or temporary accommodation	Opportunity for a fresh start and new home
You have found a private rent property that you like	Flexibility and choice of where you want to live - UK wide
You are in receipt of Housing Benefit or Universal Credit	Training on how to sustain your tenancy, manage your money and secure employment
You need financial help with upfront costs	One month's rent paid in advance, one month's deposit (or an incentive paid directly to landlord or agent) – and help with relocation costs
The property is affordable for you.	Practical support to help you secure the private rent home of your choice such as rent negotiation and document checking
The property passes our checks that it is safe, and you can afford to rent it	Aftercare service to help you sustain your tenancy

You don't have to register for the scheme if you meet our eligibility conditions (above). However, do not pay any money or sign any agreements without contacting your caseworker first. They can sort out the tenancy agreement on your behalf – and payments such as a deposit or rent in advance. If you have found a property email: housingsolutions@enfield.gov.uk and add the words 'Found a Property' to the subject line.

Our partnership with Beam to help you find a new home outside London

Beam is a social enterprise that supports people into jobs and homes. It does this through its innovative crowdfunding platform and personalised support. Crowdfunding is where a group of people raise money online for a cause – in Beam's case to help homeless people.

HOW BEAM CAN HELP YOU



Speak to your Housing Solutions Service caseworker for more information or visit our partnership page <https://beam.org/enfield> on the Beam website.



A RELOCATION TO A NEW AREA



If you are unable to secure a private rental home of your choice, the Council will find one for you in a part of the country that is affordable for people on low incomes. You will not be offered a choice of location.

We will make you one offer of accommodation before discharging our duty towards you.

Three-quarters of homeless households who move away from their local area report a positive impact on their life including improved mental health, according to a Homefinder UK survey. The study of 690 applicants by lettings service Homefinder UK found that the leading reasons people wanted to move away were long stays in temporary accommodation, homelessness or the threat of it, and fleeing domestic abuse. Of those moving out of their area into a permanent social home, 73% stated they were happy and settled in their new environment. Improved mental health and well-being was said to be the top benefit, followed by the right size of home and lower rents.

Our relocation assistance package will help you to make the move to an affordable, decent home and put down roots in a new community.

- ✓ Relocation costs (funded through the Household Support Fund from the Government), available for a limited period only:
 - financial payments to support you with relocation costs
 - deposits and rent in advance
 - help with transport and moving costs
- ✓ And longer-term help with:
 - Supporting relationship with landlord/agent
 - Benefits and income maximisation
 - Employment support
- ✓ Our team will make you one offer of suitable, affordable housing
- ✗ If you do not accept this offer – this will end our duty to house you.

FAQS

HOW WILL THE NEW POLICY AFFECT ME?

Our aim is to stop using hotels as quickly as possible. However, to achieve this the new policy will affect everyone currently in temporary accommodation. Given the severe shortage of rented properties in London and the South East, the following groups are more likely to be made a more local offer of accommodation:

- Households with children in their final year of GCSEs or A levels
- Households with members who are registered carers in receipt of carer's allowance and provide care for a member of the family who is not part of the household but who resides in Enfield
- People who have a severe and enduring physical or mental health condition requiring regular specialist care that a move from Enfield and its vicinity would significantly disrupt.

WHY CAN'T THE COUNCIL SECURE MORE RENTED HOMES TO MEET DEMAND?

We are competing with 21 other London boroughs and the Home Office that all look for homes in Enfield. The Council uses 2,000 homes in the private rented sector locally to house people, but around 6,000 homes in the borough are used by other councils and government departments.

WHY HAS THE COUNCIL HAD TO PLACE HOMELESS HOUSEHOLDS IN HOTELS?

We are committed to reducing the number of families we place in hotels. We know it is incredibly difficult for people living in emergency hotel accommodation as the Council works hard to find long-term homes for them. The whole of London is experiencing a housing crisis. The Council is currently getting around 400 requests for help from residents per month.

WHAT IS THE COUNCIL DOING TO MINIMISE THE USE OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION?

We have a number of initiatives including:

- our Find Your Own Home and Beam partnership schemes (see page 2)
- an Ethical Lettings Agency where we acquire homes for private rent – bringing empty homes in the borough back into use
- working with private landlords to improve the quality of houses and tackling poor practices with our private sector licensing scheme
- providing homes and jobs where they are needed the most - where we have the funding to do this
- working with residents early on to help them avoid becoming homeless.

If you have more questions talk to your caseworker, email: housingsolutions@enfield.gov.uk or call 020 8379 4523.