

# Royal Borough of Greenwich

The Temporary Accommodation Crisis – Dare To Hope  
(and dare to work with homeless families)

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# Financial and humanitarian TA crisis – RBG 2023/24

Total number of Households in TA from Jan 2017



No of rooms booked per night



**~£14 million projected overspend @Sept 2023**

- Rising demand + changing TA stock profile left us with the single biggest overspend the council had ever forecast

# Successful Crisis response?

## Some Outcomes so far:

- From 150 families including >300 children in Travelodge rooms in Spring 2024 to 0 families since July 2025.
- Improved the financial position of the council by £8.7 million by April '25
- Supported 1750 homeless households into settled accommodation (April 24 – April 25)
- Established co-production in service design

## How Have We Made Positive Progress?

1. Identified & **clearly articulated the problem to solve and what the intended outcomes are.**
2. **Mobilised senior leaders** around the problem, created lean governance structures and fast, well-informed decision-making pathways
3. **Worked collaboratively** across the organisation at both strategic and operational levels
4. Accelerated the problem-solving process by **taking a hypothesis-led approach**
5. **Improved data** to allow evidence-based decisions at pace
6. **Pulled all the levers available – including our ability to mobilise citizens**

# Our key interventions

Details of the full-scale interventions we have implemented *(impact of interventions up to April 2025)*

Lever	Interventions (from the hypotheses) implemented
<p><b>1. Maximise impact of housing supply</b> on reducing homelessness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>178 social housing units acquired &amp; mobilization process improved (133 brand new)*</b> <i>(113 TA exits / ~70 hotel exits delivered twice as quickly due to new process (worth ~£345k in avoided rent loss)</i></li> <li>• 107 General Fund TA units purchased enabled by grant funding bids, and 80% of new GFTA filled directly from hotels* <i>(~85 hotel exits)</i></li> <li>• <b>Agreement to convert 200 additional HRA voids converted for use as TA</b></li> <li>• <b>Agreement to make 605 direct offers of social housing to homeless households by March 2026*</b> <i>(~£1.2 million cost avoidance from the first 100)</i></li> <li>• A dedicated team to support older TA households to move into RBG sheltered housing <i>(20 households moved out of TA into sheltered accommodation)</i></li> <li>• A dedicated project to support council tenants living in TA to move out <i>(17 council tenants helped out of TA)</i></li> <li>• <i>Increased private sector landlord incentives (17% increase in PRS placements)</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Maximise impact of our support initiatives</b> on preventing homelessness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-prioritised the order of homelessness assessments to ensure families and other priority need clients are interviewed far sooner</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Minimise unit cost</b> of hotel &amp; nightly rented TA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyse pricing data to find the cheapest suitable hotel room at the booking stage <i>(19% reduction in hotel unit cost = ~£1.3 mil cost avoidance)</i></li> <li>• Analyse and use nightly net cost of all forms of TA and seek to reduce these</li> <li>• Strict adherence to our “voluntary” price cap for nightly rented TA costs</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Maximise the income we collect</b> from our TA portfolio</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increased rents on all TA the Council owns, whether acquired into the General Fund or changed use of general needs housing stock in the Housing Revenue Account, to LHA 2024 levels</b> <i>(~£3.8 million increase in income to the General Fund in year and ~£600k increase in income to the HRA in year)</i></li> </ul>

*\*Interventions we have permission to continue at greater volumes*

# Co-producing a crisis response WITH families

Since 2023 we've worked with [Creating Ground](#), a Community Interest Company formed by migrant women

Around 80 staff have experienced immersive, dramatic performances and engaged in joint action planning – Home In A Bag, [Snow Inn Hotel animation](#)

Jointly delivered free wifi access via SIM card scheme

Co-produced “[Your Guide to Temporary Accommodation](#)”

Our children's asks – wellbeing hampers, therapy for children affected by TA, transport for children placed in TA far from school, better communication across services, support with extra curriculum activities & breakfasts.

Now working with Greenwich Citizens/Citizens UK on their Fix The Five Basics in TA campaign – (1) cooking (2) laundry (3) Wi-Fi (4) storage (5) clear information

MHCLG rising to the challenge? £11 million funding announced 10 October to help families with children living in TA to access basic facilities. RBG allocated £250k – designing interventions across services and with Creating Ground

RBG & Creating Ground shortlisted for and Commended in [London Homelessness Awards 2025](#)