

Kerslake Review of strategic delivery of new affordable homes in Lambeth
Terms of Reference

The context of meeting the challenge of accelerating affordable housing in Lambeth

Lambeth has a significant housing crisis, with over 30,000 people on our waiting list and over 3,000 families in temporary accommodation. Our teachers, social workers and other key workers are increasingly unable to afford housing either to buy or to rent, and many young people struggle to afford to stay living in the borough. Employers in our most exciting industries, consistently cite affordable housing as being a barrier to them being able to grow and provide more job opportunities for our residents.

Lambeth has delivered the first new council homes in a generation and has made significant commitments to deliver new housing, either directly through its wholly owned company, Homes for Lambeth or with partners and through the planning process. Lambeth has performed well in recent years against housing targets. Its net new housing completions for the most recently assessed three years comfortably met the Housing Delivery Test against the London Plan targets (136% of target during that period). The borough was also in the top quarter of London Boroughs for affordable housing starts in the capital in 2021/22. Through our wholly owned delivery company, we have a pipeline of 4700 homes to be delivered over a 15-20 year period but this alone cannot alleviate the need for more genuinely affordable homes in the short term. The administration's manifesto commits the council to increase the delivery of affordable housing and to "ensuring that growth in Lambeth delivers the good jobs, affordable homes and investment in our communities that Lambeth residents need."

Like many London boroughs, these commitments must be delivered in a context of extremely high land values, rising development costs and constrained central government funding and powers to deliver affordable housing. Similarly, the will to deliver social justice through tackling the housing crisis must be delivered alongside Lambeth's commitments to climate justice as the first London borough to declare a climate emergency.

Identifying new ways forward

To bring insight and constructive challenge, Lambeth Council is honoured that Lord Bob Kerslake will lead an independent review examining two key questions:

- How can Lambeth council and its partners deliver more high-quality affordable homes, more quickly for more people?
- How can Lambeth council and its partners do this and manage the costs of moving to a net zero carbon borough?

The commission will review the existing housing delivery approaches and development pipeline by Lambeth council, its wholly owned delivery company Homes for Lambeth and how it works with current or potential partners.

It will consider how we can ensure that opportunities and delivery across the borough are accelerated and maximised by working with all partners, including the Mayor of London and public sector partners, to deliver more homes at social rent. It will consider how to maximise land supply and look at best practices, including by looking at other councils across London that have successfully accelerated their local delivery programmes.

This review will not cover the council's housing management function nor planning function, except when planning has impacted on the delivery of affordable homes.

The report will conclude with a report for the leader of the Council, Councillor Claire Holland and the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Growth and New Homes, Councillor Danny Adilypour due in the early autumn. The review will be published.

Call for evidence

To inform the review, the commission will seek evidence from the following organisations and stakeholders:

1. Council staff
2. Elected members
3. Homes for Lambeth Board and Executive
4. Major Registered Providers in the borough or actively seeking investment
5. Major public sector landowners and partners e.g. GLA, TfL, London Councils
6. Key developers and investors in affordable housing
7. Lambeth residents including residents in temporary accommodation and/or on our waiting list
8. Other London councils with active development programmes

Governance

The review will be independent to the council. It will be chaired by Lord Bob Kerslake. He will be assisted by an experienced technical team to include Dick Mortimer, Nalin Seneviratne and Dorian Leatham. The panel will be supported by a small project team, comprising Lily Kwong (Senior Development Manager, Lambeth council) and Alexis Harris (Senior Policy Officer, GLA).