



Camden and Chester Road hostels for homeless families

Breaking New Ground: Innovative
Local Authority Solutions for
Homelessness – June 2026

Why this matters

Camden Council's vision is clear:
Everyone should have a secure place
to call home.

The number of London households
living in temporary accommodation
has surged from about 56,280 in 2019
to 75,600 by the end of 2025 (a **34%
increase**), driven by escalating private
rents, welfare restrictions, and a
shortage of affordable housing.

Costs to the Council have become
unsustainable

Avoid placing families in insecure,
unsuitable accommodation, such as
bed-and-breakfast hotels



Young people from Doorstep, a charity working with people in hostels and temporary accommodation in Camden, tell councillors about the importance of free wi-fi in temporary accommodation (Image: Julia Gregory)

70%

Of those previously accepted households were living in costly, nightly paid accommodation

HOMELESSNESS IN CAMDEN:

- 1,400 Camden households homeless and living in temporary accommodation at the end of 2025 - nearly half of them are families *
- 1258 children and young people are living in TA in Camden *
- High increase in the use of private TA
- Length of stay is increasing - 75 households 5yrs+ of which 35 are 10yrs+
- Forecasted £26m TA overspend for 2025/26 at Q4

CAUSES OF HOMELESSNESS

End of Private Sector Tenancy

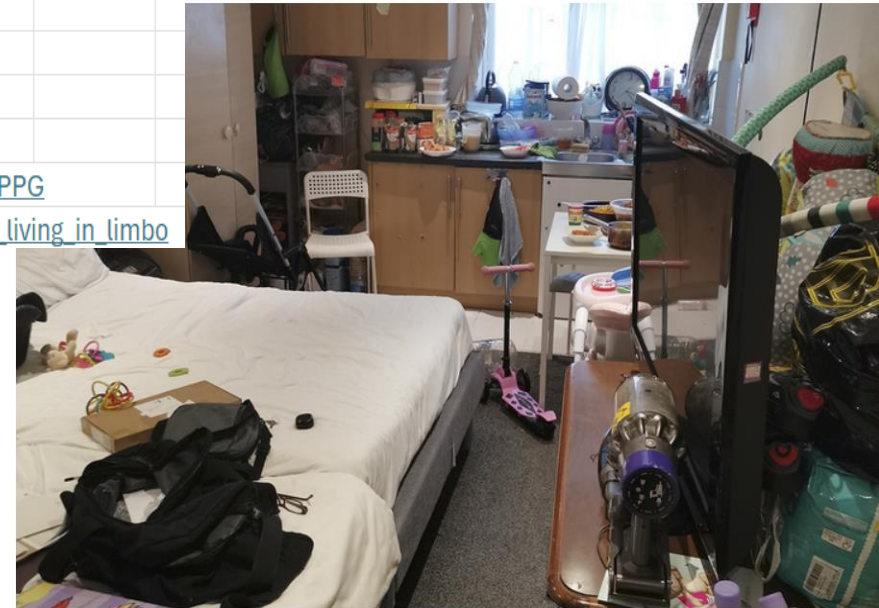
Friends & family can no longer accommodate

Domestic Violence & Abuse

* Source: H-CLIC Tables on homelessness Oct-Dec 2025, MHCLG

Impact of homelessness on children and families

*No of Children in TA in 2024	164,040
**Child deaths in last 5 years where TA was a contributing factor	74
***Shelter 2023 research of 1,112 households living in TA	
No. of children in TA without a bed of their own	371
Children in TA without a space to play	678
Children in TA living with depression	578
Children's friendships impacted by living in TA	311
No. of children who have had to move schools	523
No. of children living in TA who have missed more than one month of school	411
* Tables on homelessness - GOV.UK	
** Child Mortality in Temporary Accommodation 2025 - Households in Temporary Accomodation APPG	
*** https://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/policy_and_research/policy_library/still_living_in_limbo	



Councils use hotels, hostels and B&Bs as temporary accommodation for families (picture: Jack Simpson)

Camden's Values & Commitment

Our Strategy

- Camden Council established a **Temporary Accommodation Task Force in 2024** with the goal of driving up the supply available to Camden families and to find ways to reduce demand from homeless households and improve support.
- The Council continues to increase in-house temporary accommodation supply through a number of initiatives including hostel development via the Community Investment Programme.
- The hostels at Camden & Chester Rd are part of its medium to long term homelessness reduction strategy.



COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PROGRAMME



TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION SERVICES



FINANCE & DECISION MAKING

Camden's Strategy for Diversity in the Public Realm 2023 to 2028.

Consultation with neighbours close to Camden & Chester Road resulted in:

Kathlyn Oliver House - Camden Road Hostel

Kathlyn championed needs of working classes in the early 1900s amongst domestic workers, many of whom became homeless if they lost their live-in job.



Millie Miller House - Chester Road Hostel

Millie was elected as a Councillor in Camden when it was created in 1964. She became the first woman Mayor in Camden and in 1971, first woman to lead Camden (or any London Council). She left a legacy of housing and social achievements for which Camden was famed.



Why this model makes sense



£26m
overspend
in previous
year

Social
Value
outcomes

Less public
money to
private
providers

2
additional
hostels in
2026

Financial sustainability

More families placed in insecure accommodation, cost to the Council is unsustainable

Improving outcomes for people living in TA

Where we live impacts our life chances

Public Sector leadership

Solutions focused taskforce to deliver change

Replication

Identification of council owned buildings no longer fit for purpose

Two new hostels for Camden families

Previously used as hostels for single homeless people



**Millie Miller House,
2 Chester Road schedule for
delivery in August 2026**

**Kathlyn Oliver House,
248-250 Camden Road scheduled for
delivery in September 2026**



Raising the Standard of Temporary Accommodation Living

**Camden Road -
Landscaping**



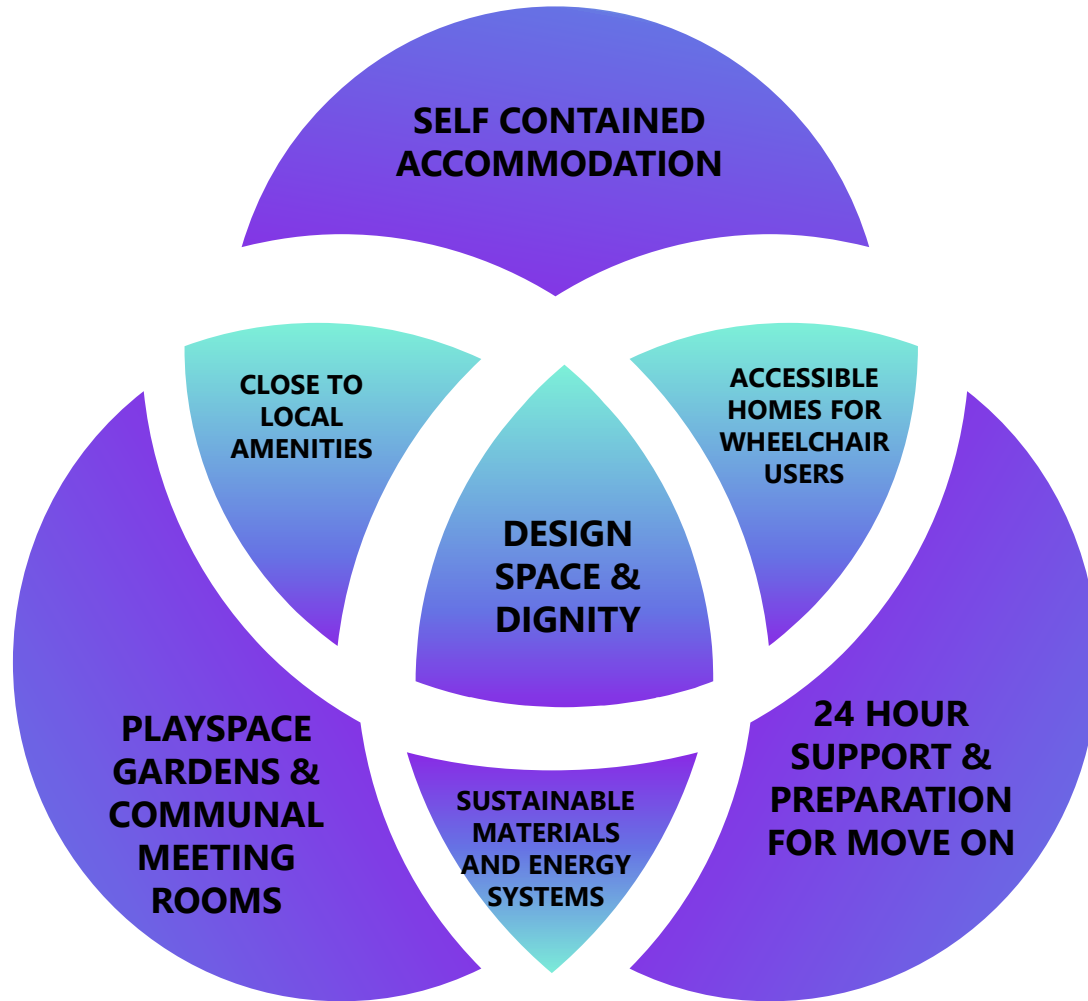
**Chester Road -
Landscaping**



The New Hostels will now offer:

- 50 and 39 self-contained properties
- Compact but secure space for families with children (average length of stay in TA 3 – 5 years)
- Educational stability for periods of time until permanent home found
- On-site support for parents and women fleeing domestic violence including money management.
- Safe spaces for children to grow and flourish whilst in an interim environment
- Communal spaces for homework clubs and other activities
- Own front door approach to design – no sharing with others
- Plugged into active neighbourhood support groups for families & children
- Both sites are close to jobs, education and training including Kings Cross Construction Skills Centre.

Delivering Quality and Value Through New Hostels



The Cost Picture:

- Chester Road Hostel works: circa £19M
- Camden Road Hostel works: £14M
- Projects costs are circa £41M (Inc. contingency & on-costs).
- Brownfield Land Release Fund (**BLRF**) £1.5m - £832,500 for Chester Road and £742,470 for Camden Road
- Local Authority Housing Fund (**LAHF**) for £5.4M (£3,022,320 Chester & £2,374,680 Camden).
- Business case assessed options to proceed or halt projects.
- Projects progressed based on demonstrated value for money and revenue savings.

Sustainability, Wellbeing, Local Economy

- ✓ **Lightweight Steel Frame** (Metsec) construction reducing carbon emissions while improving speed, flexibility, and overall cost-effectiveness in project delivery.
- ✓ **Air source heat pumps** and **solar PV panels** in roofs.
- ✓ **Biodiversity-enhancing features** such as green roofs, varied planting, specimen trees, wildlife habitats and Sustainable Drainage System (attenuation tanks, permeable paving, etc).
- ✓ Clearly designated areas **for waste segregation and recycling**.
- ✓ **Courtyards**, vegetable gardens and nature-based play areas designed to promote wellbeing and community interaction.
- ✓ Communal **Wi-fi system** provided to every unit.
- ✓ Active and passive **security measures** including strict access control strategies, Door Entry System and 24/7 CCTV monitoring to prevent ASB and ensure safety for residents and neighbours.
- ✓ Secured by Design (**SbD**) Silver accreditation
- ✓ **Cycle parking** spaces for use by residents and visitors.
- ✓ Contractor-delivered **social value** including work-experience placements, school and college workshops, apprenticeships, local employment opportunities, community vents, and procurement that prioritises local SMEs.
- ✓ Construction works progressing on programme and within budget.
- ✓ Both projects recognised at the **Considerate Constructors (CCS) National Site Awards**, with 248 Camden achieving a Gold Award and 2 Chester a Silver Award.

