

MAYOR OF LONDON

Zoë Garbett AM

Chair of the London Assembly Housing Committee
C/o Matty.hadfield@london.gov.uk

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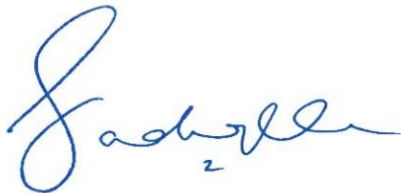
Date: 4 December 2025

Dear Zoë,

Thank you for the work undertaken by your predecessor and Assembly Members to produce the “Breaking the Cycle: Housing Needs for Women Leaving Prison in London” report published in May. I am sorry for the delay in responding.

We have carefully reviewed the report, and our responses to its recommendations are set out in the Annex below.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sadiq Khan', with a small '2' written below the name.

Sir Sadiq Khan

Mayor of London

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Annex

Mayor of London's response to the recommendations of the London Assembly Housing Committee's report regarding the housing needs of women leaving prison

Recommendation 1

By March 2026, the Blueprint Group should commission a training programme for agencies in London that provide housing support for women leaving prison with the aim of standardising best practice across London. This programme should provide structured training for local councils, probation services, and prison services to strengthen a coordinated, multi-agency approach to securing safe and stable accommodation. It must also include training to support agencies to adopt a holistic, trauma-informed and intersectional approach, and should be developed through engagement with women who have lived experience of the criminal justice system.

The Mayor of London has long recognised the complex needs of women in the criminal justice system, especially those being released from prison, and the need to deliver support that reduces their risk of reoffending and protects them from VAWG and exploitation. Since 2018, we have convened the Blueprint Delivery Group, which, in November 2024, organised a London Housing Knowledge Sharing event to share best practice and insights with partners and practitioners across London. Notes and actions from this meeting were shared with all stakeholders. We are now working with the Blueprint Delivery Group and the Women's Justice Board to explore how these insights might be shared and developed nationally. All key agencies working with women in the CJS, including commissioned service providers, give specific training to their staff on working with the vulnerabilities and protected characteristics common in this group. The Blueprint Delivery Group will continue to support the delivery of this training within organisations, and this should include how housing needs, as part of other complex needs, should be met as part of a gendered approach. We have also co-commissioned the London Women's Community Rehabilitation Service, which already provides a gendered, trauma-informed and holistic service for women and includes a strong emphasis on using lived experience to develop and improve provision. This service includes specialist housing support, both in prison and after release, and is in place to liaise and advocate with partners on a case-by-case basis on the complex needs of women in the CJS, including housing. We will continue to ensure this service is based on the lived experiences of women and how those with the most complex needs can be supported to re-enter mainstream London life.

Recommendation 2

In 2025, the Mayor should hold an event with all councils in London to publicly promote and disseminate the Women's Release Practice Briefing, and to showcase examples of good practice and encourage London's councils to implement it. The GLA should monitor the uptake of the briefing across local authorities and evaluate its effectiveness in improving housing support for women leaving prison and returning to London.

In November 2024, we convened a knowledge-sharing event specifically on the issue of housing for women on release from prison. This event, which included stakeholders and practitioners from across London, shared good practice and encouraged all agencies to consider how they can do more to support women in need of housing. This event was based on data and lived experience of the women being worked with across London and how housing support should be integrated into the multi-agency provision for them. The event also included a section-by-section discussion of

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the Practice Briefing and agreement on actions to implement this across agencies. We will continue to monitor the HMPPS data on housing for people released back to London from prison and work with partners to support improved outcomes.

Recommendation 3

The government should conduct an immediate review of the Community Accommodation Service Tier-3 Accommodation scheme to ensure women are not placed in unsuitable accommodation, such as accommodation with men. Additionally, the Government should record and publish quarterly data on the number of women released from prison and placed in CAS-3 accommodation in London.

The Community Accommodation Service Tier-3 is commissioned by HMPPS on a sub-regional basis and provides up to 84 days of accommodation to those at risk of homelessness following a custodial sentence. The Government publishes Community Accommodation Service Tier 3 (CAS3) Statistics which show that across England and Wales, 735 women were accommodated in CAS3 placements between April 2024 and March 2025¹. The Government also collects data on CAS3 accommodation moves on outcomes for the same period.

Recommendation 4

The upcoming Rough Sleeping Action Plan should specifically address how it supports women leaving prison

Through the Rough Sleeping Plan of Action, we are committed to working with partners to strengthen targeted interventions which prevent Londoners from experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping during periods of transition, such as leaving prison. Working alongside partners, we will increase the capacity of specialist advice services and improve the coordination of interventions to prevent rough sleeping among people leaving institutional settings. The Plan of Action showcases best practice regarding meeting the housing needs of women leaving prison, including the London Women's Community Rehabilitation Service, which we have co-commissioned alongside the NHS, the London Borough of Lambeth and HM Prison and Probation Service to provide accommodation-related support to remanded and unsentenced women. We will be working with partners, including HM Prisons and Probation Service, London Councils and boroughs, to identify opportunities to build the capacity of interventions such as this.

The Rough Sleeping Plan of Action has also been informed by the 2024 Women's Rough Sleeping Census to ensure that women's experiences of homelessness, such as spending their nights in 'hidden' locations, form part of the evidence base used to develop the Plan. In addition to working with partners to bolster homelessness and rough sleeping support for those leaving institutions, we will ensure these interventions reflect women's experiences of homelessness and rough sleeping, which are often different from those of men.

The Rough Sleeping Plan of Action is just one strand of the wider Ending Homelessness Accelerator Programme, which was developed jointly with London Councils to accelerate efforts to end homelessness across the capital. As part of this programme, we will establish joint strategic, system-wide leadership and governance structures to prevent homelessness, which will include London Probation as a key partner.

¹ Community Accommodation Service Tier 3 (CAS3) Statistics. 31 July 2025. Table 1: Volume of CAS3 placements started, by gender, July 2021 to March 2025, England and Wales.

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Recommendation 5

Councils and housing associations in London should ringfence a proportion of their supported housing units for women released from prison. The Mayor should also engage with Government to secure revenue funding to expand the amount of supported housing for women leaving prison.

The Mayor of London is committed to continuing to work with London boroughs and housing associations to deliver social and affordable housing, including supported housing for those with care, support and supervision needs. The next Social and Affordable Homes Programme 2026-36 seeks to make capital grants available to councils and housing associations looking to deliver supported housing, and we encourage bids from those seeking to meet the needs of women with complex needs.

The Ending Homelessness Accelerator Programme will initiate systems change and strengthen joint working between partners across the capital. As part of this programme, we will be working with London boroughs and wider partners to maximise the availability of supported housing that meets specialist or complex needs at both a sub-regional and pan-London level.

The Mayor of London welcomes the Government's commitment at the recent Spending Review to protect spending on homelessness and rough sleeping, including the announcement of £100 million for early interventions to prevent homelessness. This also follows the Government's confirmation of revenue funding available for 2025/26 through the Rough Sleeping Prevention and Recovery Grant to accommodate people experiencing homelessness who have had contact with the criminal justice system. The Government has confirmed that the funding will support boroughs in continuing to provide landlord incentives, rental deposits, and/or tenancy sustainment services to enable those leaving prison to secure private rented sector accommodation.