# Dartford Council invests £1.7 million in homes for homeless and refugees



Dartford Council in Kent is set to invest nearly £1.7 million in the acquisition of four homes designed to assist homeless individuals and refugees, following government support. This decision was approved by the council's cabinet on March 27, despite an initial request for funding to purchase 20 properties being denied.

The financial breakdown for this acquisition reveals that £730,000 will be contributed by the government, while the remaining £950,000 will come from the council’s own reserves. Of the four homes, three are intended for temporary accommodation for homeless families, while the fourth is designated for a household of Afghan refugees currently being resettled under a government scheme.

This funding comes from the third round of the Local Authority Housing Fund, which is aimed at helping councils cover the costs associated with housing homeless individuals and refugees. A council spokesperson highlighted the significance of the funding, acknowledging that, although it fell short of the original application, it will still contribute positively towards addressing homelessness in Dartford. The spokesperson further stated, "This application reflects only one part of our work to end homelessness in Dartford and we're grateful for the contribution. We will continue to work with partner agencies and find opportunities to support those who are the most vulnerable in our communities."

However, the acquisition comes as Dartford faces an ongoing housing crisis. Latest council figures indicate that the number of individuals on the housing register—those in urgent need of a home—rose by nearly 32% between January and December last year. This trend is exacerbated by a decrease in the availability of properties for temporary accommodation as landlords increase their rental prices. Currently, over 400 households in Dartford are residing in temporary accommodation, with many families being placed outside the Dartford area due to a shortage of local housing.

Dartford Labour's housing spokeswoman, Cllr Debbie Graham, expressed support for any initiative aimed at improving the housing situation, emphasising that temporary accommodation serves only as a short-term solution, saying, "Temporary accommodation is merely a sticking plaster to the housing crisis and is not only costly in financial terms for the Council, it's also extremely costly both emotionally and psychologically for the affected families."

Amid this context, the cabinet member for housing Cllr David Mote (Con) refrained from commenting due to pre-election regulations ahead of the forthcoming Kent County Council election. In the meantime, a spokesperson for the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government stated that the government is working to improve temporary accommodation quality through the Local Authority Housing Fund, which received strong interest from various councils. The spokesperson noted, "We distributed it fairly to as many councils as possible while also prioritising areas with the highest housing pressures."

As Dartford moves forward with the purchase of these homes, the impact of such initiatives on the local community remains to be seen.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/dartford/news/it-s-a-sticking-plaster-council-s-bid-for-20-homes-to-hou-322245/> - This article supports the claim that Dartford Council will invest nearly £1.7 million in acquiring four homes for the homeless and refugees, with funding from both the government and council reserves. It further explains the allocation of these homes and the council's efforts to address homelessness.
* <https://www.fromthemurkydepths.co.uk/2024/09/05/dartford-crises-spikes-as-homeless-households-and-related-costs-rise-sharply/> - This report corroborates the housing crisis in Dartford, highlighting the increase in homelessness and the rising costs associated with temporary accommodation. It also outlines the shortage of affordable housing and the impact on local families.
* <https://www.dartford.gov.uk/downloads/file/1928/allocations-policy-2023-customer-access-review> - This document provides insight into Dartford Borough Council's housing allocation policies and procedures, which are crucial in addressing homelessness and housing needs within the community.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-housing-fund> - Although not directly referenced, this URL would typically provide information on the Local Authority Housing Fund, a government initiative aimed at supporting councils in housing homeless individuals and refugees. However, it's worth noting that while this link does not specifically highlight Dartford's funding, it explains the broader context of government support for local authorities.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/c83rzqjp1j5t/housing-crisis> - This URL from the BBC typically covers the broader UK housing crisis, which mirrors the situation in Dartford described in the article. While it doesn't focus exclusively on Dartford, it provides context on the national housing challenges that contribute to local crises.