# Modular prototype outside City Hall sparks push to replace hotel homelessness in Havering



An offsite modular home engineered by Rollalong and installed by Wates Residential has captured attention outside City Hall in London, with organisers claiming the unit can be installed in under two hours and with plans for a prototype scheme to be rolled out in Havering later this year. The display sits within a broader context of London’s housing crisis, where one in 21 children are homeless and the daily cost to local authorities of housing homeless families in temporary accommodation is pushing toward £4 million.

Across the capital, Havering Council is pursuing a broader, tangible push to explore rapid, high-quality temporary housing. A modular home installation at Romford Market ran from 10 March to 3 April 2025 and was designed, delivered and built in just over 90 days, illustrating how quickly quality housing can be deployed for families in housing need. The project originated from The Building Centre’s New Homes in New Ways exhibition in London and involved Rollalong (modular manufacture) and Wates (lead contractor) alongside Havering’s 12 Estates Joint Venture, with the display forming part of the council’s wider programme to test temporary accommodation options while permanent homes are developed. Havering emphasised that the unit demonstrates modern, sustainable living solutions and was intended as a launchpad for future deployments. A Modular Playbook accompanies the display to guide future deployment and delivery. In parallel, Havering confirmed planning permission for a pilot modular home scheme on the Waterloo and Queen Street Estate in Romford, delivering 18 modular homes to provide temporary accommodation for families in need and to move away from hotels and hostels as part of a phased approach that aligns with the council’s regeneration ambitions and energy/safety priorities.

Rollalong’s involvement in Romford Market has been framed as a forward-looking demonstration of what factory-built housing can achieve when paired with strong local partnerships. The installation has been relocated from The Building Centre to Romford Market for a four‑week public showcase from 10 March to 3 April 2025, a move described by Wates as part of a broader effort to relieve pressure on hotels and B&Bs by delivering high‑quality, energy‑efficient temporary accommodation. The project is led by Wates in partnership with Rollalong and Havering Council’s 12 Estates JV, with further collaboration around Waterloo and Queen Street regeneration proposals. The display is designed to spark a conversation about housing supply and placement within communities, and to provide a practical, scalable model for rapid delivery of temporary homes.

Parallel to the Romford demonstrations, Rollalong and its collaborators have highlighted a wider programme under The Building Centre’s New Homes in New Ways banner. Design4Structures outlines the collaboration between RCKa Architects, Wates (Lead Contractor), Rollalong (Offsite Manufacturer) and Design 4 Structures as Structural Engineers, noting a prototype two-bedroom apartment unveiled outside the Building Centre with a timeline from design to manufacture to installation of around two months. The unit arrived in London on 7 February 2025, and the project describes how the structure can be coordinated to support multiple storeys and achieve a balance of finish, efficiency and affordability. The initiative positions MMC as a scalable, affordable solution to London’s housing pressures, illustrating how factory-built housing can be deployed rapidly without compromising standards.

In sum, the momentum around Rollalong’s prototype outside City Hall has given way to a broader, interconnected programme across Havering and central London. With Romford Market’s temporary showcase and the Waterloo and Queen Street pilot now in motion, plus a growing body of design and engineering work detailing rapid delivery timelines, industry data shows a concerted effort to replace hotel-based temporary housing with fast, quality modular homes. The dialogue is supported by industry and design organisations eager to test, refine and scale these solutions in real communities, while councils weigh the implications for planning, safety and long-term affordability.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/home/rcka-installs-prototype-modular-solution-to-housing-crisis-outside-city-hall/5137651.article), [[4]](https://rollalong.co.uk/rollalong-showcases-the-future-of-temporary-housing-at-romford-market/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.bdonline.co.uk/home/rcka-installs-prototype-modular-solution-to-housing-crisis-outside-city-hall/5137651.article), [[2]](https://www.havering.gov.uk/news/article/1501/temporary-modular-home-installed-at-romford-market), [[5]](https://www.havering.gov.uk/news/article/1534/planning-permission-granted-for-pilot-modular-home-scheme)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.wates.co.uk/news/residential-development/residential/modular-installation-moves-to-romford-market-havering/), [[6]](https://www.design4structures.com/new-homes-in-new-ways-delivering-fast-cost-effective-and-high-quality-housing/)

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

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bdonline.co.uk/home/rcka-installs-prototype-modular-solution-to-housing-crisis-outside-city-hall/5137651.article> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.havering.gov.uk/news/article/1501/temporary-modular-home-installed-at-romford-market> - The London Borough of Havering reports a temporary modular home installation at Romford Market, open to the public from 10 March to 3 April 2025. The unit demonstrates modern, sustainable living solutions and was designed, delivered and built in just over 90 days, illustrating how quickly quality housing can be deployed for families in housing need. The module originated from The Building Centre’s New Homes in New Ways exhibition in London and involved key partners Rollalong (modular manufacturer) and Wates (lead contractor) alongside Havering’s 12 Estates Joint Venture. The display is part of Havering’s broader programme to explore temporary accommodation options while permanent homes are developed.
3. <https://www.wates.co.uk/news/residential-development/residential/modular-installation-moves-to-romford-market-havering/> - Wates reports that the modular home installation, originally exhibited at The Building Centre, has been relocated to Romford Market for a four‑week public showcase from 10 March to 3 April 2025. The unit was designed, delivered and built in just over 90 days, and demonstrates high‑quality, energy‑efficient temporary accommodation that can relieve pressure on hotels and B&Bs. The project is led by Wates in partnership with Rollalong and Havering Council’s 12 Estates JV, with further collaboration around Waterloo and Queen Street regeneration proposals. A Modular Playbook accompanies the display to guide future deployment and delivery.
4. <https://rollalong.co.uk/rollalong-showcases-the-future-of-temporary-housing-at-romford-market/> - Rollalong describes bringing a cutting‑edge modular home installation to Romford Market, open to the public from 10 March to 3 April 2025. The installation—designed, delivered and built in just over 90 days—shows rapid deployment of high‑quality, self‑contained homes, designed to provide safe, warm accommodation for families in transition. The unit originated from The Building Centre’s New Homes in New Ways exhibition and sits within Rollalong’s broader programme with RCKa Architects and Wates to prove that factory‑built housing can help reduce reliance on hotels. The Romford Market display is intended as a conversation starter about housing supply and placement within communities.
5. <https://www.havering.gov.uk/news/article/1534/planning-permission-granted-for-pilot-modular-home-scheme> - Havering Council confirms planning permission for a pilot modular home scheme on the Waterloo and Queen Street Estate in Romford. The decision, part of Havering’s joint venture with Wates Residential, will deliver 18 modular homes to provide temporary accommodation for families in need and to move away from hotels and hostels. The scheme aligns with London’s housing affordability pressures and the council’s regeneration ambitions, while emphasising efficiency, energy performance and safety. Officers anticipate delivery as part of a broader phased approach, with the Waterloo and Queen Street project forming the pilot stage and set to begin in the coming months.
6. <https://www.design4structures.com/new-homes-in-new-ways-delivering-fast-cost-effective-and-high-quality-housing/> - Design4Structures presents the New Homes in New Ways project, detailing collaboration between RCKa Architects, Wates (Lead Contractor), Rollalong (Offsite Manufacturer), and Design 4 Structures as Structural Engineers. A prototype two‑bedroom apartment was unveiled outside the Building Centre in London, designed for efficiency and rapid delivery. The article records a design‑to‑manufacture‑to‑installation timeline of around two months and notes the prototype’s arrival in London on 7 February 2025. It explains the structural coordination required to support up to four storeys, the module’s dimensions and finish standards, and highlights the project’s aim to demonstrate MMC as a scalable, affordable solution to housing pressures in London.
7. <https://www.buildingcentre.co.uk/whats_on/exhibitions/new-homes-in-new-ways> - Building Centre's New Homes in New Ways exhibition page explains MMC’s role in addressing the housing crisis, with a focus on social rent housing and temporary accommodation. It outlines the exhibition’s aims, case studies and potential outcomes of factory‑built housing, emphasising speed, quality and sustainability. The page places MMC within policy, planning and energy‑efficiency debates and highlights how temporary accommodation could be delivered more rapidly without compromising standards. It notes the exhibition’s duration and the accompanying summit for housing decision‑makers to learn from industry practice, illustrating MMC as a strategic tool for London and beyond.