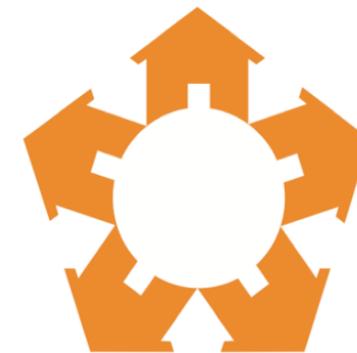


Improving Private Rented Sector and Temporary Accommodation

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Private Rented Sector

Working Better with the PRS

Suggestions

- Pay enough to make things work for the landlord, without inflating the market. But landlords are often as interested in the service they get.
- Let properties quickly and pay landlords on time. Council credit cards can be useful.
- Make it easy for the landlord to get access to officers and respond promptly and well when requested.
- Help out when tenancies are in difficulties.
- Prepare tenants properly and provide a resettlement service.
- Provide a range of offers to landlords depending on your local market.
- Be proactive in seeking out landlords and agents.
- Employ the right kind of people to engage with landlords.
- Make creative use of grant funding.
- Support tenants to find their own properties if they can.
- Decide who you want to use the PRS for.

Working Better with the PRS

Camden

- Council provides a responsive service to landlords with any tenancy related issues and vets tenants before they put them forward for a PRS let.
- Any potential tenants who are not deemed ready to sustain a PRS tenancy are accommodated elsewhere with additional support and are given pre tenancy training.
- Where there are problems, the council operates a tenancy sustainment function.
- Camden reaches out to new landlords, using a range of media and events.
- The borough offers a range of options to landlords, in which different levels of risk and housing management responsibility are taken on by the borough according to the landlord's preference. Rent guarantee and legal cover insurance is available to landlords, as well as a bond against damages, which in practice has had very few claims against it.
- Every year the council follows up on PRS tenants it had let to in previous years to see whether tenancies have failed.
- Camden pioneered and hosts the London Landlord Accreditation scheme.
- Allocations Policy favours PRS over TA.

Working Better with the PRS

Leeds

- The Leeds Landlord Scheme recorded 435 homelessness prevention cases 2016/17, and were expecting to exceed that number in 2017/18.
- PRS is actively promoted as a potentially long term, sustainable source of accommodation “a tenure of choice”
- Properties are inspected by qualified officers to ensure good standards and the scheme has had the added benefit of improving property standards in the private rented sector.
- Fast track payment of Housing Benefit and liaison with Leeds Benefit Service for payment queries. Typically, this halves the time for payment to around 2 weeks.
- Liability cover where appropriate for rent arrears and property damage for up to 1 month’s rent (or more in exceptional circumstances).
- A dedicated telephone number for all queries.
- Support for landlords to resolve tenant behaviour issues during the tenancy including rent arrears and any support needs.
- Comprehensive assessment of tenant’s needs and affordability and Tenancy support.
- Quick turnaround for new tenancy when current tenant leaves.

Working Better with the PRS

Brent

LB Brent have achieved more PRSOs than anyone, averaging around 250 to 300 per year. Key elements of success include:

- a dedicated PRSO team
- a clear understanding of and adherence to the law in terms of location and standard of property
- clear communication with homeless households about the alternatives
- a good working relationship between procurement and the PRSO team matching properties to households
- a sensitive resettlement service for out of area PRSO moves
- Keeping excellent records of each case from the point the household approaches the council
- Cases personalised to take into account legitimate restrictions on where the household can live.
- Enquiries made to establish needs for schooling, medical support needs etc. following the guidance associated with PRSOs issued after the Localism Act.

Accommodation obtained to prevent & relieve homelessness 2016 - 2017

	Prevent	Relief
Private rented housing	26%	28%
Social rented housing	35%	32%
Supported housing	25%	30%
Family, friends, relatives	6%	5%
Other	7%	4%

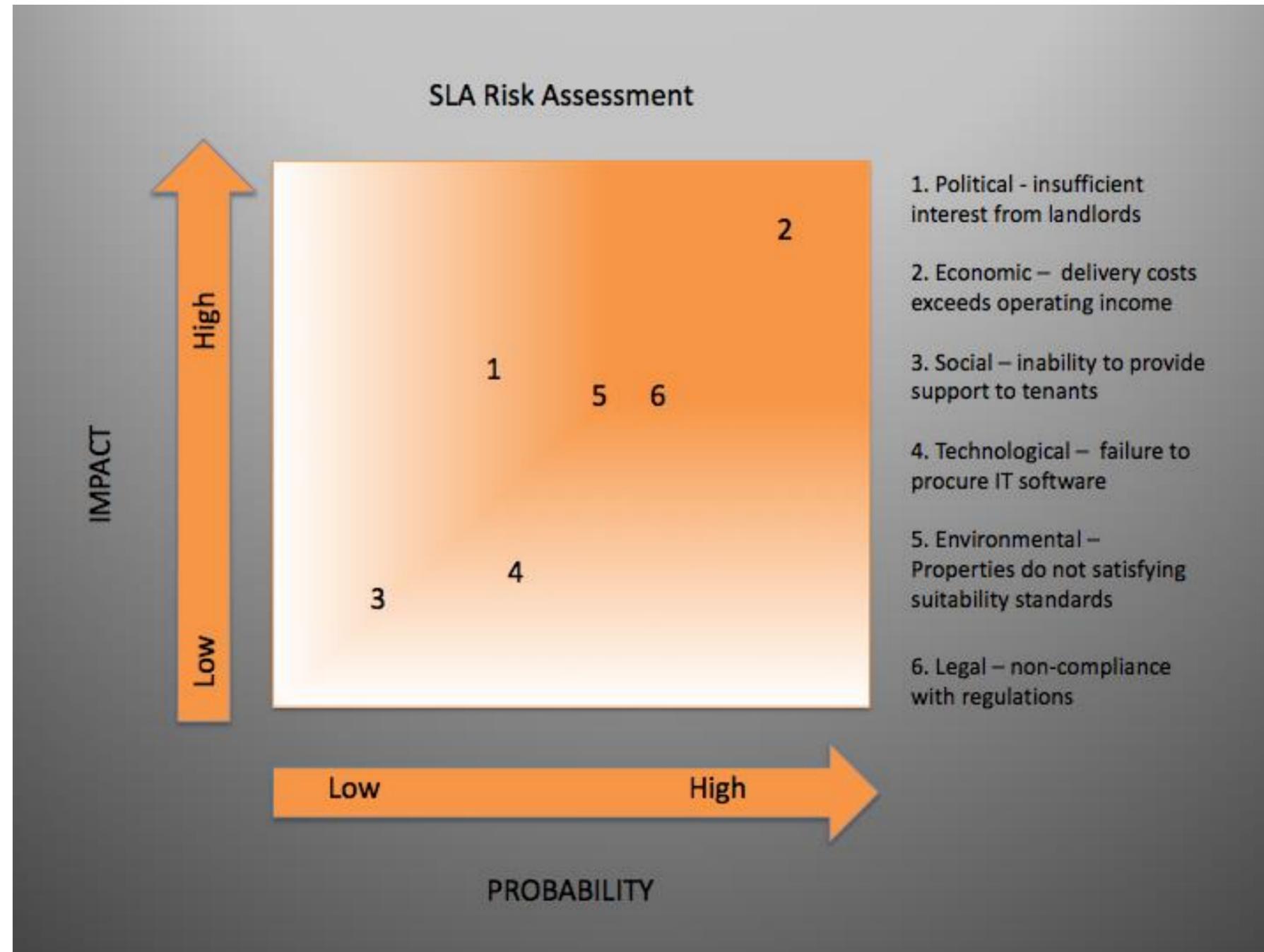


Social Lettings Agency

- There is no single method for setting-up and operating a SLA
- Current demand for PRS accommodation has resulted in a lack of one and four bedroom properties.
- Demand for PRS is growing
- Most affordable PRS accommodation is in areas with most inequality and poverty
- Impact of HRA17 will increase applications for homelessness assistance
- Welfare reforms makes it exceptionally difficult to run an SLA
- Set-up costs and landlord perceptions are barriers to an SLA being successful
- High risk that operating cost will exceed income from rents
- Procurement and management of 50 properties would require circa £85k pa

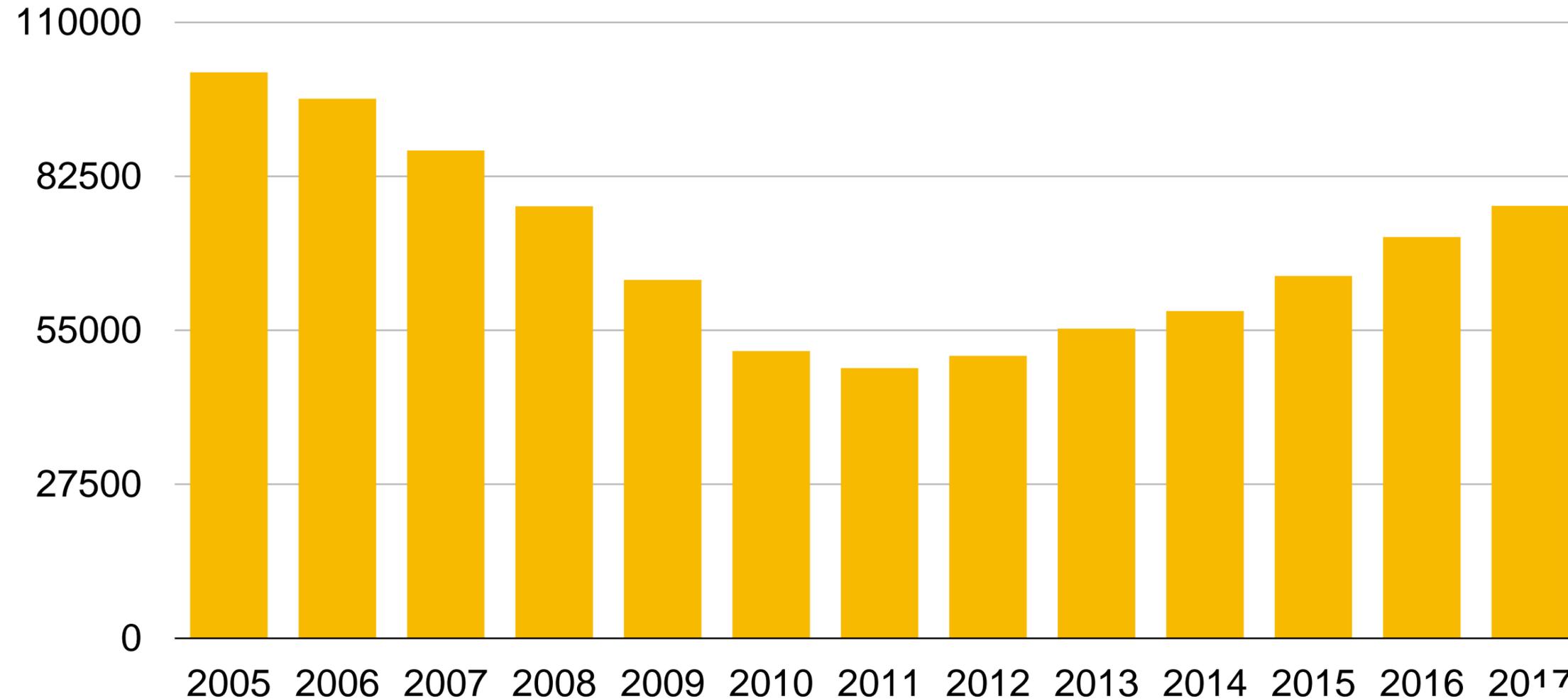


SLA Risk Assessment



Temporary Accommodation

Temporary accommodation levels, March 2005 - March 2017



Reducing of temporary accommodation

- Use technology to provide housing options advice
- Prevention of homelessness to reduced homeless applications (and therefore TA levels)
- Make best use of settled stock via mutual exchanges, transfers and choice-based lettings
- Make best use of local housing stock via PRS access initiatives
- Close collaboration with Housing Benefit
- Monitor and manage TA usage
- Adopt strategies for procuring and allocating TA



TA Procurement Strategy



Improving Temporary Accommodation

- Don't use TA if you don't have to. Plan accommodation supply to meet demand without using B&B.
- Microfocus on moving people out of expensive and unsuitable accommodation.
- Resist pressures from agents to move to nightly paid accommodation
- Work together with other local authorities to keep TA prices down.
- Develop better alternatives to B&B, e.g. conversions, new development.
- Council owned hostels in the general fund are often cost effective.
- Consider use of Modular Accommodation for suitable sites.
- Flexible Homelessness Support Grant usually now means more rent for PRS accommodation than TA, so why put people in long term TA?
- For singles, if accommodation has support provided, classify it as supported accommodation rather than TA and get Intensive Housing Management payments.

Council Investment in Property Acquisition

One potential solution to increasing property prices and market rents outstripping LHA is for councils to invest directly in property, either using their own funds or by working in partnership.

There are a number of ways councils have approached this, which may be summarised as follows:

- Buy properties directly as the council.
- Set up a General Fund owned company to purchase properties.
- Enter into a joint venture with another organisation to purchase properties.
- Invest in a property purchase fund.
- Enter into a nominations agreement with a partner organisation, who will purchase and manage properties.

Viability sensitive to interest rates and local property markets but avoids HRA borrowing caps and provides a long term asset with value growth potential.

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