



i4B Holdings Limited

2026/27 Business Plan

i4B Holdings Ltd 2026-27 Business Plan

1. Introduction

- 1.1. i4B Holdings Ltd (i4B) was established to reduce homelessness, provide affordable, high-quality homes, and deliver regeneration and financial benefits for its sole shareholder, Brent Council. This 2026–27 Business Plan sets out how i4B will consolidate its position, diversify its products, and increase its contribution to Brent's ambition of creating a borough with 'Prosperity and Stability in Brent: Safe, Secure and Decent Housing'.
- 1.2. The Business Plan takes the following format:
 - 2.0 Purpose of the Company
 - 3.0 Performance against Overall Purpose
 - 4.0 Progress against the Company's 2025-26 Business Plan
 - 5.0 Context for 2026-27 Business Plan
 - 6.0 Strategic Priorities for 2026-27
 - 7.0 Appendices
 - A1 Financial Implications of Proposals
 - A1a 30 Year Profit and Loss Account
 - A1b 30 Year Balance Sheet
 - A2 Risk Register
 - A3 Progress on 2025-2026 Business Plan Priorities
 - A4 2026-27 Business Plan Priorities
 - A5 2026-27 Service Level Agreement
- 1.3. As a response to the rising challenge of tackling homelessness, in November 2016, Brent Council's Cabinet agreed to establish its wholly owned investment company, i4B Holdings Ltd. The Company was set up with the purpose of acquiring, letting, and managing a portfolio of affordable, good quality Private Rented Sector (PRS) properties. Properties would be let to homeless families at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) levels. This would enable the Council to either prevent or discharge its homelessness duty and therefore reduce TA costs.
- 1.4. The Company was allocated an initial PRS phase one loan of £109m to purchase 300 units of private rented sector accommodation by September 2019. The 2018-19 business plan increased this target to 600 units and allocated additional PRS phase two funding of £110.5m. A further £32m in phase three loan funding will be available in early 2026. The Company's core business plan anticipates a financial breakeven position over 30 years.

2. Performance against Overall Purpose

- 2.1 As of December 2025, i4B has purchased 481 PRS homes, refurbished them to a high standard, and switched tenure to an affordable PRS product. Combined with Lexington, a 153-unit key worker block, the company now manages over 600 properties.
- 2.2 i4B has housed 546 families and 1166 children since being established. The majority of these families were previously housed in stage one TA. The total number of families supported exceeds the size of i4B's PRS portfolio because some properties have been re-let over time.
- 2.3 The Council has received the following one-off financial benefits:
- PRS phase one loan: loan arrangement fee of £872k and non-utilisation charge of £330k
 - PRS phase two loan: loan arrangement fee of £884k and non-utilisation charge of £408k
 - PRS phase three loan (under negotiation): loan arrangement fee of £320k and non-utilisation charge of £240k

3. Summary of 2025-26 Operational Performance

- 3.1. This section provides a review of the operational performance for 2025/26. It outlines delivery against agreed objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), evaluates service effectiveness, and assesses compliance with strategic priorities and governance standards. The summary focuses on and identifies areas requiring continued focus to support organisational resilience and long-term objectives.
- 3.2. Table One below provides a summary of operational performance as at January 2025:

Table One – Summary of performance

Indicator	Target	Performance at January 2025 (YTD)	Performance at December 2025 (YTD)	Trend
Number of units	479 by April 2025	PRS: 469 Key Worker: 153	PRS: 474 Key Worker: 153	↑
Instruction to Legal to Purchase	120 days	124 days	458 days	↓
Minor void re-let times	35 days	New purchases: 84 days	New purchases: 214 days	↓
		Re-lets: 98 days	Re-lets: 203 days	↓
Major void re-let times	72 days	New purchases: 119 days	New purchases: 106 days	↓
		Re-lets: 127 days	Re-lets: 122 days	↓

Rent collection	98.50%	Brent Managed: 91.4%	Brent Managed: 92.09%	↑
		Home Counties: 91.39%	Home Counties: 88.84%	↓
Emergency repairs completed within 24 hours	100%	99%	93%	↓
Urgent repairs completed within 7 days	95%	96%	97%	↑
Routine repairs completed within 28 days	95%	88%	88%	↔
% of properties with a valid gas safety certificate	100%	Brent Managed: 100%	Brent Managed: 100%	↔
		Home Counties: 100%	Home Counties: 86.96%	↓

- 3.3 During 2025/26, i4B made progress on acquisitions, repairs responsiveness, and governance improvements. However, void turnaround times and rent collection remain below target.
- 3.4 To address these challenges, the Board approved funding for a third Housing Companies Tenant Services Manager (HCTSM), reducing patch sizes from 380 to 250 properties. Recruitment was completed in summer 2025, but long-term sickness and staff turnover delayed full implementation. Smaller patches will enable proactive management of voids and arrears and strengthen tenant relationships.
- 3.5 i4B is working to improve tenant satisfaction and monitors this regularly. The latest TSM results show a significant decrease in overall satisfaction across the portfolio, and well below the 2024-25 London average. The Board has placed strong emphasis on improving customer experience, which will be central to the 2026–27 priorities.

- 3.6 i4B owns 76 properties in the Home Counties, and the management contract was moved to Pinnacle in July 2025. While the initial onboarding phase presented some challenges, overall performance has shown signs of improvement. To support successful contract delivery, i4B officers have prioritised weekly engagement with Pinnacle to reinforce performance expectations and address emerging issues promptly. Pinnacle attend Board meetings on a bi-annual basis. As part of routine performance monitoring, finance officers have identified potential discrepancies in the rent collection data currently being reported. A detailed review is underway to verify the accuracy of the figures and ensure that future reporting is robust. Once this work is complete, i4B will agree a targeted action plan with Pinnacle to strengthen income collection and improve overall performance.
- 3.7 In May 2025, the Council made a self-referral to the Regulator of Social Housing due to concerns regarding the management of actions following Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs). Specifically, it was identified actions were not being consistently closed or completed within the Council's compliance management system, True Compliance. As a result of these issues, the Council received a C3 rating under the Safety and Quality Standard. Despite this, health and safety compliance remains strong, except for a few outstanding electrical safety certificates. The legal process to gain access to carry these out continues to be followed for each outstanding certificate; however, it is not possible to force entry to properties that refuse access, as is the case with gas certificates.
- 3.8 Lexington, the key worker block, has been a particular focus in recent months due to persistent issues with poor repairs resolution and anti-social behaviour (ASB), which have led to significant resident dissatisfaction. The Board has commissioned an action plan, which is being implemented. Previously, management of the block was shared among the HCTSMs; however, in response to complaints and ongoing issues, housing management has assigned all 153 properties to a single HCTSM to provide residents with a dedicated point of contact.
- 3.9 The i4B Board has requested stronger budgetary controls. In response, officers, in collaboration with finance colleagues, have initiated a review of budget holders and cost centres ahead of the new financial year. These changes aim to enhance ownership and accountability in high-spend areas and ensure that budget holders remain aware of the impact their expenditure has on the overall viability of the Business Plan.

4. Context for 2026-27 Business Plan

- 4.1. This section outlines the various contextual factors that have influenced the i4B Business Plan and how they impact the Company.
- Current economic context;

- Government policies;
- The housing market;
- Current demand and housing need within Brent;
- The regulatory environment;
- Energy efficiency; and
- The key risks the Company currently faces

Housing policies of the UK government elected in July 2024 continue to have a bearing on the work of the company.

4.2. These factors have influenced the proposals outlined in Section 6.

4.3 *Current Economic Context*

4.3.1 i4B has aligned its rent increase policy with the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard, which stipulates the maximum annual increase is CPI+1%. CPI for September 2025, the benchmark for social housing rent increases in April 2026, was 3.8%, meaning rents can rise by 4.8% for 2026/27.

4.3.2 The recent government decision to abolish the two-child- benefit cap from April 2026¹ is expected to improve household finances for many tenants, increasing Universal Credit payments for larger families. However, despite easing inflation, the cost-of-living crisis persists, with energy and food prices remaining elevated. While benefit cap reform offers some relief, proactive tenant engagement and support will remain fundamental.

4.4 *Government Policies*

4.4.1 Government policies continue to shape the operating environment for both i4B and FWH. i4B has been more directly affected in recent years, as higher interest rates have reduced the price caps on potential acquisitions and constrained the company's ability to compete in the market. The interest rate cuts announced in December 2025 may ease these pressures over time, but the impact on borrowing costs and acquisition viability will depend on how quickly market conditions adjust. Both companies will continue to assess the implications for their financial planning and investment strategies as the policy landscape evolves.

4.5 *The Housing Market & Current Acquisition Strategy*

4.5.1 Acquisitions are expected to be more challenging at 5% interest rates, which reduce the price which i4B can afford, and hence the ease of buying on the open market. To navigate this, the property market will be regularly reviewed throughout 2025-26 to identify and capitalise on any opportunities that align with i4B's strategic goals. The company's response is set out in section 6.5 below.

4.6 *Current Demand and Housing Need within Brent*

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/poverty-impacts-of-social-security-changes-at-budget-2025/removing-the-two-child-limit-on-universal-credit-impact-on-low-income-poverty-levels-in-the-united-kingdom>

- 4.6.1 i4B continues to support the Council in housing homeless applicants amid severe demand pressures. Homeless approaches in the borough remain high, with over 8,800 recorded in 2025 and an estimated 3000 duties owed. Temporary Accommodation (TA) remains a significant financial burden for the Council, and while the April 2024 uplift in Local Housing Allowance rates provided some relief, affordability challenges persist. i4B's acquisition programme remains a key part of the Council's strategy to reduce TA costs and meet demand, including for adapted homes.

4.7 ***The Regulatory Environment***

- 4.7.1 The regulatory landscape for housing continues to become more complex, requiring i4B to maintain strong governance and compliance checks. Although i4B is not directly governed by the Regulator of Social Housing, the Company aligns with its standards to ensure best practice and consistency with the Council's HRA and First Wave Housing.
- 4.7.2 Tenant Satisfaction Measures, introduced in April 2023, are now fully embedded, and the Housing Companies Operational Manager provides bi-annual reports to Board to monitor performance and drive improvements in tenant experience.
- 4.7.3 Awaab's Law², which came into effect in October 2025, has introduced strict timeframes for addressing damp and mould hazards, requiring investigation within 24 hours and remedial works to commence within 5 days. These requirements will expand further in late 2026 to cover additional hazards such as excess cold, electrical safety, and fire risks, with full implementation expected by 2027.
- 4.7.4 The Building Safety Act also continues to impose significant obligations. In 2025, new requirements were introduced for Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in higher-risk residential buildings, and we have one such building, Lexington. Responsible Persons must identify residents needing evacuation support, complete person-centred fire risk assessments, and share this information with the Emergency Services.
- 4.7.5 Looking ahead, the regulatory landscape will continue to evolve, with forthcoming changes to the Decent Homes Standard, enhanced electrical safety requirements, and the phased implementation of the Renters' Rights Act, which is expected to extend to social housing by 2027. These developments reflect a sector-wide drive to raise standards, and we remain committed to meeting, and where possible exceeding, these expectations as part of our ongoing approach to safe, high-quality housing.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awaabs-law-guidance-for-social-landlords/awaabs-law-guidance-for-social-landlords-timeframes-for-repairs-in-the-social-rented-sector>

4.8 ***Energy Efficiency***

- 4.8.1 In September 2025, the i4B Board approved a Decarbonisation Strategy, setting out the Company's approach to improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions across its housing stock balancing financial viability with regulatory compliance. The forecast expenditure for i4B is £915,000 over four years, highlighting a significant capital expense for the company.

4.9 ***Risk Context***

- 4.9.1 The Company currently faces a number of risks. Key risks include:
- High void rent loss due to long void turnaround times
 - Rental affordability and collection
 - High Capital Programme costs, including future climate change expenditure, affecting the viability of the business plan.
 - Financial monitoring
 - Home Counties Management Contract
 - Cyber Security
- 4.9.2 Mitigating measures are in place to help to minimise the impact of all risks, with some risk scores being likely to reduce. A copy of the full Company risk register has been included in Appendix 2.

5. **Strategic Priorities for 2026-27**

- 5.1. In 2026-27 i4B will seek to improve tenant satisfaction, to address some long-standing management problems, and to increase its stock by finding new ways to exploit development opportunities in the borough. Priorities for the year are set out within the framework of the medium- to long-term objectives of Brent's Housing Companies. These objectives are:
- Providing a consistently good housing service;
 - Delivering safe and sustainable homes;
 - Running a viable business; and
 - Increasing the supply of affordable housing in the borough.
- 5.1.1 Looking ahead to 2026/27, i4B will implement a more rigorous approach to SLA management, including enhanced KPI scrutiny, monthly reporting, and targeted intervention where standards fall short. This strengthened framework will support the Board's expectation of improved operational performance and will ensure the company secures value for money from all contracted services
- 5.2 ***Providing a Consistently Good Housing Service***
- 5.2.1 This objective relates to improving tenant satisfaction, ensuring tenants are able to afford their rent, sustain their tenancies, and providing an effective and consistent housing service. i4B will continue to review initial responses to the very disappointing results from the tenant satisfaction measures, seek to improve its oversight of complaints handling, and continue to actively engage with its tenants on

financial inclusion and affordability. The 2026-27 strategic priorities for this objective are:

5.2.2 Priority 1: Prioritise tenant voice

- 5.2.3 In 2026/27, i4B will remain committed to improving resident satisfaction by ensuring that tenants are at the centre of service delivery and have meaningful opportunities to influence how services are shaped. As an initial step, HMS will develop and distribute a quarterly newsletter to improve communication, share key updates, and encourage greater resident engagement. The company will also consider its use of artificial intelligence (AI) to provide prompt responses and keep residents engaged and up to date.

5.3 ***Delivering Safe and Sustainable Homes***

- 5.3.1 This objective involves ensuring that i4B's homes are of a good quality, safe, legally compliant, and environmentally sustainable. In 2026-27, the Company's focus will be on further embedding improved practices in the areas of compliance, disrepair and asset management & energy efficiency. This will include meeting all requirements of the Building Safety Act and carrying out additional work on modelling & planning for future property management and decarbonisation works. The 2026-27 strategic priorities that relate to this objective are:

5.3.2 Priority 2: Implement asset management & decarbonisation strategy

- 5.3.3 During 2026-27, i4B will begin implementing the strategy, ensuring that works are scheduled and resourced effectively. This will include prioritising actions that maintain stock in good condition and deliver improvements to meet target Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) levels.

5.3.4 Priority 3: Maintain health and safety compliance

- 5.3.5 Health and safety compliance will continue to be reported to the Board through monthly updates from Housing Management Services (HMS), as well as bi-annual reports from i4B. Following the introduction of Awaab's Law, i4B will ensure damp and mould issues are resolved within statutory timeframes and prepare for future phases covering additional hazards.
- 5.3.6 Brent Council's recent C3 rating highlighted serious failings in meeting the outcomes of consumer standards. While none of the findings related directly to i4B's stock, the judgement reinforces the importance of strong assurance and accurate data across the wider housing system. In response, i4B will strengthen record-keeping, improve data reconciliation, and align with the Council's improvement plan to maintain full compliance across fire safety, asbestos, water safety, and other key areas.

5.4 ***Running a Viable Business***

- 5.4.1 This objective relates to improving the operational and financial performance by boosting the financial capacity of i4B to remain not only financially robust, but also to

support the Council's wider growth ambitions to tackle the housing shortage. In 2026-27, the Company will prioritise cost containment and income maximisation, with particular focus on voids and revenue collection. Performance will be benchmarked against both the Council and comparable organisations, with an aim of achieving upper quartile results.

The 2026-27 strategic priorities that relate to this objective are:

5.4.2 Priority 4: Continue to drive improvements around voids performance

5.4.3 Voids remain a key operational priority for i4B. Over the next year, the company will focus on reducing turnaround times, beginning with a targeted focus on minor voids, where quicker improvements are anticipated due to level of works required. Performance will be subject to rigorous monitoring by officers and the Board, with additional actions introduced where delays or inconsistencies are identified across the portfolio.

5.4.4 i4B will implement process improvements and explore innovative approaches to minimise void periods, including enhanced contractor management. The aim is to embed sustainable practices that maintain low void times and maximise rental income.

5.4.5 Priority 5: Improve rent collection performance

5.4.6 Housing Management Services have put in an action plan to address poor rent collection, and that will continue into 2026-27. Immediate actions include targeted support for households with persistent arrears and referrals to employment and financial inclusion services where needed. The i4B board will assess progress and take further action if this is not satisfactory.

5.4.7 Priority 6: Explore financial contributions

5.4.8 i4B will review opportunities to leverage additional financial contributions to increase and accelerate housing supply. This will include exploring collaboration with other organisations and reviewing the current structures for the companies to ensure financial headroom is optimised while maintaining an acceptable risk profile.

5.5 ***Increasing the Supply of Affordable Housing in the Borough***

5.5.1 i4B's primary aim is to improve the Council's affordable housing offer through the acquisition and letting of properties in Brent and neighbouring boroughs. i4B aims to ensure that any available finance is spent in a way that adds maximum value to the Council, whilst also being feasible and supporting the Company's financial viability. This includes exploring the acquisition of both street properties and blocks. The strategic priorities are as follows:

5.5.2 Priority 7: Identify and appraise potential acquisitions

- 5.5.3 i4B continues to explore a number of purchases in collaboration with Council colleagues each year as part of its development strategy. It will continue to do so in 2026-27, with block purchases seen by the Board and Shareholder as a preferential acquisition route to bring in a large amount of housing supply that is easier to manage and has the potential for adapted units, subject to acquisitions being viable.
- 5.5.4 Priority 8: Implement a pilot for housing for care-experienced young people
- 5.5.5 In 2026/27, i4B will launch a pilot scheme to purchase up to five one-bedroom properties and/or studio apartments for Brent care-experienced young people. If successful, the pilot will inform a permanent scheme to acquire properties annually for this cohort, ensuring financial viability and positive outcomes for young people.
- 5.5.6 Priority 9: Continue to seek the best strategy to ease Council pressures and deliver unique opportunities
- 5.5.7 Given current challenges with the usage and associated costs of Temporary Accommodation within the Council group, i4B have continued discussions with the Council as its Shareholder on how the company can contribute to alleviating these pressures. These discussions will continue during 2026–27 to agree the best approach to support the wider Council group’s housing objectives, taking a holistic view with the aim of increasing housing supply at scale while maintaining the long-term viability of the companies.
- 5.5.8 Areas for consideration will include the shared risk appetite of the Council and the company, and any potential flexibility within i4B’s acquisition strategy and financial modelling. The i4B Board is open to exploring inventive solutions that align with the Council’s housing strategy, and detailed proposals will be developed and agreed during the year.

7.0 Looking Forward

As i4B works to deliver on its strategic priorities for 2026/27, the company will also explore opportunities for growth and innovation in future years. Areas for consideration include:

- Exploring joint ownership models between i4B and Brent.
- Assessing the viability of expanding into the Home Counties portfolio.
- Developing small-scale projects with local companies and builders.
- Understanding and unlocking opportunities from empty properties.

i4B will begin to assess how best to progress these areas of opportunity, including evaluating the financial and operational implications of expanding the company’s remit, as well as determining the level of additional resources required to support delivery. This will ensure that any future development is evidence-based, financially sustainable, and aligned with i4B’s long-term strategic objectives.

