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**Meeting of the Housing and Safer Communities Select Committee – 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

**Report of the Director of Housing and Communities**

**Review of Private Rented Sector**

**Purpose of report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of our Private Sector Housing Team in working in the Private Rented Sector. This report outlines the statutory duties of the team which determines their key roles and responsibilities, the enforcement options available to them, and the challenges they face in their operations. By presenting real-life examples and case studies, we aim to illustrate the practical implications of the team's work in maintaining housing standards and protecting public health.

**Recommendations**

2. It is recommended that Committee Members note the content of the report.

**Background**

3. The Housing Act 2004 marked a pivotal moment in housing enforcement, introducing a risk-based evaluation system for assessing housing conditions, known as the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). This was further bolstered by the Housing and Planning Act 2016, which introduced additional powers for local authorities to tackle rogue landlords and improve standards in the private rented sector.

**Overview of the Private Rented Sector**

4. The Private rented sector in the borough accounts for 13.8% of Dudley households (2021) and is the fastest growing sector having increased in the last decade from 9.2% in 2011.

A report by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) estimated that 15% of privately rented homes nationally present a risk to its occupants' health and safety by containing a statutory category 1 hazard.

Private Rented Properties within the Dudley Borough are becoming more unaffordable:

- Median pay of full-time workers living in Dudley Borough is £30,417 per year, below the England figure of £33,208 (2022)
- The median rent (across all property sizes) paid by tenants in Dudley has increased by 7.1% from March 2022 to March 2023.

Average monthly rent within Dudley MBC, showing the comparison between tenures (September 2023 data):

Property type	Bedrooms	DMBC monthly	Average Registered Provider rent	Median private rented	Local Housing Allowance Rate
Low rise flat	1	£329.68	£357.50	£520	£397.88
House	2	£391.08	£420.42	£675	£508.60
House	3	£426.22	£474.54	£825	£593.36
House	4	£458.85	£537.72	£1013	£747.93

The BRE estimates that there are around 2,200 privately rented houses in the Dudley borough that are in multiple occupation (known as Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)). Mandatory licencing of HMOs is required for properties with at least 5 tenants, who form more than one household that share facilities like a kitchen, bathroom, and toilet.

Dudley MBC currently have 133 Mandatory Licenced HMOs, 24 licence renewal applications and 33 new HMO Licence applications.

The numbers of cases (excluding HMO licences) that the Private Sector Housing Team (Dudley) have received so far during 2023/24 are 191 in quarter 1, 252 in quarter 2, and 224 in quarter 3.

As at the end of Quarter 3 2023/24 the Homeless Prevention and Response Team had received 200 referrals with end of assured shorthold tenancy as the main reason for homelessness.

## **Statutory Responsibilities**

5. The team are statutorily responsible for:

- Inspecting accommodation that is in serious disrepair and can pose a risk to its occupants e.g.
  - No heating and no hot water
  - Faulty electrics
  - Inadequate fire detection
  - Damp and mould
  - Investigating drainage issues
  - Dealing with leaks between properties where the offending property is privately rented
- Licensing of privately rented property (HMOs)
- Investigating domestic property related statutory nuisances namely Light nuisance complaints.
- Providing advice to both tenants and landlords about their responsibilities and rights
- Ensuring landlords meet their legal obligations, taking enforcement action where appropriate.

## **Current Operations**

6. The Private Sector Housing team aim to provide a service to all private-sector housing residents who require assistance, advice or guidance on housing-related problems, this includes private rented properties, owner occupiers and Housing Associations.

The team continues to strive to work with partner organisations and adapts to meet the needs of our community to ensure that those living within the borough have access to safe and decent housing that is well managed and maintained to a good condition.

In addition to our statutory functions, the team are also responsible for:

- Inspections of HMOs prior to issuing licences to ensure the standards of these properties goes above and beyond what is legally required.
- Investigating suspected HMOs, using intelligence and BRE data to determine whether a licence is required.
- Investigating complaints surrounding empty homes
- Investigating allegations of illegal eviction and/or harassment
- Undertaking Immigration Inspections.
- Project work and partnership working:
  - Damp and Mould Action plan
  - Life in Lye Project
  - Wolverhampton Street
  - Stalled and Derelict Sites Group

- Rogue Landlords Group
- West Midlands Enforcement Practitioner Group
- Housing Health Switch
- High Rise Cladding Projects
- Team Talks
- Mitigating Poverty
- Safer Places
- Policy review
- Addressing other issues associated with the private rented sector e.g. Overgrown gardens, Boundary disputes and aesthetically poor properties.

HMOs requiring mandatory licences are inspected prior to the issuing of licences to ensure the housing standards within these properties which pose a higher risk are checked. Work is underway reviewing the HMO licencing process to make this more efficient and to include joint working with planning following the introduction of Article 4 Direction. The legislation doesn't allow an application for a HMO licence to be refused on a property that would require planning permission if the property meets the required amenity standards which is sadly where the legislation falls down.

In the case of Empty Homes, we like other local authorities have long term empty properties some going back decades. There are few incentives to offer landlords to bring Empty homes back into use but we work with landlords to encourage them to bring empty homes back into use and to ensure that they are maintained and secure. The council does not currently have a designated Empty Homes Officer and the budget to resolve legal disputes, and introduce Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMOs) and Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs), and these properties therefore often remain empty.

Tenants in the 'sub-standard' private rented sector can be fearful of reprisals or eviction with some having limited understanding of their rights, so many do not report these issues. The sad reality is that there are often repercussions on tenants who complain to the local authority with tenants commonly facing rent increases or Eviction Notices and there is little we can do to prevent these courses of action when the landlord has done so in line with what the law allows.

Following the death of Awaab Ishak, aged 2, who died from a respiratory condition caused by exposure to mould there has been a Government focus on addressing damp and mould within homes. Damp and mould is identified as one of the 29 Hazards outlined in the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) to be assessed when inspecting disrepair within a property. Our goal as a Private Sector Housing Team is to raise

awareness among landlords and tenants about the causes, effects, and solutions of damp and mould, gather information about the prevalence and severity of damp and mould within our private rented properties and take appropriate action to deal with damp and mould complaints and hazards. We are hoping that Governmental review of the HHSRS and associated legislation will provide further enforcement tools to tackle this issue.

In cases such as overgrown gardens, boundary disputes and aesthetically poor properties we do not have the powers to enforce against them so are limited to asking landlords to undertake works with no legal basis to pursue if they chose not to do what has been asked or passing them on to other departments such as waste management, planning, ASB who have different powers they may be able to use.

We are working in a reactive capacity not a proactive service due to our capacity, this is echoed in findings of a study commissioned by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) (2021) for the majority of authorities across the UK. This impacts on our abilities to be able to gain a more comprehensive knowledge of the private rented stock within the borough which would inform strategic decision making and therefore find it difficult to comprehensively enforce private rented sector standards. This leaves the team fulfilling statutory duties and taking enforcement action in cases which need it.

## **Licencing**

7. Currently, within the Dudley Borough, mandatory HMOs are licenced.

A house in multiple occupation (HMO) is a property rented out by at least 3 people who are not from 1 'household' (for example a family) but share facilities like the bathroom and kitchen. It's sometimes called a 'house share'.

You must have a licence (mandatory licence) if you're renting out a large HMO in England or Wales. A domestic property is defined as a large HMO if all of the following apply:

- it is rented to 5 or more people who form more than 1 household
- some or all tenants share toilet, bathroom or kitchen facilities
- at least 1 tenant pays rent (or their employer pays it for them)

In 2018, the scope of mandatory HMO licensing was extended so that properties used as HMOs in England which house 5 people or more in 2 or more separate households will in many cases require a licence regardless of the number of storeys that the property is separated into.

An HMO needs a mandatory HMO licence if it is occupied by 5 or more people, unless it is:

- a Section 257 HMO, ie a building converted into self-contained flats where the works of conversion do not comply with the Building Regulations 1991 or subsequent regulations in force at the time of conversion (or which has not been retrospectively upgraded to comply) and where less than two-thirds of the flats are owner-occupied
- a purpose-built flat situated in a block made up of 3 or more self-contained flats

The number of people includes everyone whatever their age, including babies and children.

A HMO licence is valid for a maximum of 5 years and a separate HMO licence is needed for each HMO that a landlord owns. The legislation surrounding HMO licencing imposes conditions on landlords/ managing agents to make sure:

- the house is suitable for the number of occupants (this depends on its size and facilities)
- the manager of the house, the landlord and/or agent is considered to be 'fit and proper', for example they have no relevant criminal record or breach of landlord laws or code of practice
- certification is supplied relating to safety requirements such as gas safety certificates, electrical safety certificate, fire alarm and emergency lighting certificates where appropriate, electrical appliances (PAT) testing where appropriate.
- appropriate fire detection is installed and maintained.

This will help ensure they are not overcrowded and do not pose risks to the health or safety of occupiers or blight the local communities in which they are located.

HMOs are more likely to be occupied by younger people and those who are more economically disadvantaged who are unable to afford market rent for an individual flat or house. Licencing of HMOs helps to ensure that properties are not overcrowded and do not pose risks to the health and safety of occupiers or blight local communities in which they are located. The growth of HMOs has an impact on the local community, including where inadequate rubbish storage leads to pest infestation and health and safety problems.

Other licencing options available for local authorities to consider are:

**Additional Licensing:** Additional licensing is when a council can impose a licence on types of HMOs for which licensing is not mandatory. For example, a smaller HMO, which means a property with three or four occupants.

**Selective Licensing:** Selective licensing applies to any property, whether it is an HMO or not, and allows councils to specify areas down to the specific side of a street that need a licence. Selective licensing for privately rented housing is available if local authorities believe it would reduce or eliminate specific housing problems.

**Differences:** The main difference between additional and selective licensing is that additional licensing applies to HMOs not covered by mandatory licensing, while selective licensing can apply to all privately rented properties within a defined area.

The pros and cons of implementing licencing schemes within the Dudley Borough include:

Stakeholders	Pros	Cons
Tenants	Improved living conditions: Licensing schemes aim to improve the standard of privately rented homes Protection against rogue landlords: Licensing can help protect tenants from landlords who provide substandard, overcrowded, and potentially dangerous accommodation	Potential increase in rent: Landlords may pass on the cost of licensing to tenants, leading to higher rents
Landlords	Higher rental income: HMOs, which often require licensing, can generate higher rental income due to multiple tenants. Protection against bad tenants: Licensing can provide landlords with more control over tenant behaviour.	Licensing fees: Landlords have to pay for licenses, which can be costly. Increased responsibilities: Landlords have to meet certain standards and comply with additional regulations.

Local Authorities	<p>Control over housing quality: Licensing gives local authorities the power to enforce minimum safety standards in privately rented homes</p> <p>Ability to tackle specific issues: Selective licensing allows local authorities to address problems in specific areas, such as anti-social behaviour, poor housing conditions, high levels of migration, deprivation, or crime</p>	Administrative burden: Implementing and managing licensing schemes can be resource-intensive for local authorities
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Each local authority sets its fees for HMO licencing. Dudley's current fees for mandatory HMO licences are **£1,019.66 (Seperated into Part 1 Fee = £424.65 to cover costs** of processing the application and **Part 2 Fee = £594.51** to cover costs of Enforcement/Inspections). Private Sector Housing are currently reviewing the HMO licencing process, the current fee will increase in April 2024 in line with a recent hourly rate increase.

Some neighbouring authorities charge additional fees depending on the size of HMOs (number of rooms), for sending paper HMO licence application, for supplying HMO advice, offer 2 tier fees depending on whether a landlord is part of an accredited landlords association, some charge less for renewals.

Estimating the costs associated with additional licensing for HMOS and/or selective licensing can be challenging. With selective licencing, once an area is identified the data can be obtained to understand numbers of private rented affected within the particular area/ streets or postcodes. Knowing the number of properties that would be affected by additional licences is much more difficult as there is no notification requirement for such HMOs. The intention is that fees charged should cover the scheme however this is not always the case.

Here are a few factors that might contribute to the cost:

1. **Administration:** This includes the cost of processing applications, maintaining a register of licensed properties, and issuing licenses.
2. **Inspection:** Costs relating to inspections of properties and equipment needed



3. **Enforcement:** Costs related to ensuring compliance with license conditions, which may involve property inspections and follow-up actions.
4. **Legal:** Costs associated with potential legal proceedings against landlords who fail to comply with license conditions.
5. **Communication and Support:** Costs related to informing landlords about licensing requirements and providing support throughout the application process.

Local authorities must consult on the proposed designation for at least 10 weeks with those who are likely to be affected by the additional/selective licensing scheme. This includes residents, landlords, tenants, and any other person likely to be affected. A stock condition survey usually forms a valuable part of the evidence needed to support the area(s) to be designated to provide insight into housing conditions in the area, which is one of the criteria to be considered when making a designation.

### Schemes within neighbouring authorities

Birmingham City Council have a selective licensing scheme covering 25 of Birmingham's 69 wards which came into effect in June 2023, they also have an Additional Licencing Scheme to cover smaller sized HMOs.

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough have an additional licence scheme that came into effect in July 2022 that covers HMOs occupied by 3 or more persons comprising two or more households, and HMOs as defined in Section 257 of the Act.

Wolverhampton City Council have previously operated a selective licencing scheme but it's term has ended.

Coventry City Council have an additional licence scheme that came into effect in May 2020.

Worcester City Council have an additional licence scheme that came into effect in September 2020 and a further additional licencing scheme that came into effect in September 2023.

Warwick have proposals currently undergoing consultation.

### **Challenges**

8. There are several challenges impacting the work of private sector housing teams and housing enforcement:

## **Funding Constraints**

- Budget cuts have led to the loss of specialist officers within the sector and with it the loss of specialisms and knowledge.
- Resources and the time taken to progress cases to completion is an impediment to the ability to hold landlords to account.
- Demand for private rented accommodation is at a peak and the need for advice relating to termination of tenancies and the protections that come into effect when a notice has been served have increased demands on our service.
- Works in default budgets are limited therefore not allowing us to undertake works in instances where landlords don't, won't or can't.
- Costs and time needed to improve ICT infrastructure.

## **Changes in Government Policy**

- The UK government has proposed several reforms to improve the private rented sector for tenants and landlords. These reforms include the abolition of Section 21 'no fault' evictions, strengthening council's enforcement powers, and introducing a new requirement for councils to report on enforcement activity.
- Proposed changes to HHSRS (Housing Health and Safety Rating System): combining some of the hazards to reduce the total number from 29 to 21. Changing the current banding system by adding a third category to be colour coded so that a "traffic-light" system can be used.
- The Renters' (Reform) Bill was introduced to Parliament in May 2023, aiming to deliver safer, fairer, and higher quality homes for tenants.
- The vast range of legislation (Appendix 1) makes enforcement more complicated and determining the most appropriate legislation extremely challenging.

## **Emerging Challenges in the Housing Sector**

- The housing sector is facing significant financial pressures due to high inflation impacting operating costs for private sector housing providers, including costs related to maintenance, utilities, and property taxes.
- Rental costs, repair and building material costs, cost of living crisis and availability of labour impacts both landlords and Private Sector Housing.
- Pressures to monitor and licence Houses in Multiple Occupation including those that are not currently required under the Mandatory Licencing Scheme.
- An increase in the need for advice and assistance in relation to landlord and tenant matters associated with cost of living, retaliatory

evictions, and proposed changes to the rental market both nationally (renters Reform Bill) and locally (Article 4 declaration).

- Benchmarking challenges.
- Increased enquiries and complexity (Appendix 2) both directly from tenants and via MPs, Councillors, Complaints, Service Requests, Data Access Request, Partner Agencies, Internal departments etc.

This growth of the sector coupled with legislative changes and evolving complexity of cases needs a robust and proactive approach to housing enforcement and highlights the importance of effective enforcement in maintaining housing standards and protecting public health.

## **Conclusion**

9. Responding to changes in the private rented sector, targeting and managing resources is extremely challenging during this difficult time. To date there is not a clear direction from central government and the legislative changes that have been implied in recent years makes it difficult to plan ahead. Without more robust legislation and penalties when works are not undertaken by landlords or budgets for works in default to be completed, private rented tenants continue to live in properties where high risk, Category 1 Hazards exist.

## **Finance**

10. There are no direct financial implications associated with this report

## **Law**

11. This report details the various statutory obligations that the Council has with regard to private sector housing and the powers that it has to take enforcement action. The Council will need to take steps to ensure that it can comply with its statutory obligations.

## **Risk Management**

12. The risk of not meeting the Council's statutory duties in relation to private sector housing in managed and mitigated through the Directorate risk register

## **Equality Impact**

13. Ensuring statutory duties for private sector housing are met has a positive impact upon all residents living in the private rented sector in Dudley, including those with protected characteristics. Sub-standard housing

conditions in the private sector impacts upon the health and wellbeing of children and young people living in the homes and, while they have not been directly consulted upon in relation to this report, the work of the private sector housing team impacts positively upon children and young people living in privately rented homes.

### **Human Resources/Organisational Development**

14. There are no direct HR implications associated with this report

### **Commercial/Procurement**

15. There are no direct commercial or procurement implications associated with this report

### **Environment/Climate Change**

16. There are no direct environmental implications associated with this report

### **Council Priorities and Projects**

17. As part of our response to external reviews and audits, the council is focussing on an Improvement and Sustainability Programme. The current council plan, which was due to run until March 2025, will be paused to allow a new one-year plan to be developed.

The new plan will have emphasis on improvement and financial sustainability. Reviewing our council plan priorities will help us to focus on setting a sustainable budget while protecting essential services and communicating those priorities to our residents, communities, and staff.

The new plan which will be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, will be formally approved at Cabinet on 20<sup>th</sup> March and Council on 15<sup>th</sup> April.



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## Appendices

- *Appendix 1 – Legislation*
- The Housing Act 2004
  - Notices: Improvement Notice, Suspended Improvement Notice, Prohibition Order, Suspended Prohibition Order, Hazard Awareness Notice, Emergency Remedial Action & Prohibition Orders, Demolition Orders, Clearance Orders,
  - Empty Dwelling Management Orders, Compulsory Purchase Orders
- Part 2 of the Housing Act 2004 (Houses in Multiple Occupation)
- HMO Licencing Offences:
  - Operating an unlicensed HMO;
  - Allowing an HMO to be occupied by more persons than a licence allows;
  - Breach of licence condition; and
  - Supplying incorrect information in a licence application.
  - Rent Repayment Orders (RRO)
  - Interim and final management orders
  - Final management orders
  - Temporary Exemption Notices
- The Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (England) Regulations 2006 – General Management of HMOs
- Housing and planning act 2016
- Civil Penalties
- Rent Repayment Orders
- Banning Orders
- Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949
  - Buildings Act 1984
- Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982
- Protection From Eviction Act 1977
- The electrical Safety Standards in the Private Rented Sector (England) Regulations 2020
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
  - Statutory Nuisance Provisions
  - Abatement Notice
- The Deregulation Act 2015
- The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022
- The Immigration Act 2014

- The Tenant Fees Act 2019
- The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015
- The Redress Schemes for Lettings Agency Work and Property Management Work (Requirement To Belong To A Scheme Etc) (England) Order 2014

- *Appendix 2 – Case Examples*

1. In some recent work I have been involved with in Lye. I visited a family in a property that had several housing defects, but the tenants would not give me permission to contact the landlord to address the property condition issues. They were worried about being thrown out; they are paying a lower rent to other they knew and were not entitled to benefits so their housing options are more limited than those with recourse to public funds. They were concerned that they would be made to move away from their community because they said the landlords know each other and they won't get offered another property.
2. A complaint was received from an owner occupier living in a typical 2 bed semi-detached property within the borough with a ground floor rear extension which mirrors that of the neighbour that they adjoin. The neighbouring attached property is empty and has been for a number of years. Damage to the flat roof is causing water to leak and cause damage to the owner occupiers' property. Investigation of the owners of the empty property points only to the address itself and intelligence has been unable to provide any alternative contact information as to where to contact the owner or if they have passed away etc. A statutory nuisance has been identified and Notice has been served however there has been no response or works undertaken. The budget is not available for us to undertake works in default to get the problem remedied. The owner occupier can look to attempt to claim against the neighbouring properties home insurance but in this case there is no one to contact to be able to obtain there details.
3. When visiting a property to undertake an inspection following receipt of a complaint, all rooms are inspected and defects identified within a property are assessed in line with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System Guidance and where necessary e.g. Category 1 and or high Category 2 Hazards are identified, the landlord is written to with details of the works to be completed. A tenants' original concerns were relating to the kitchen being tired and the carpets being heavily worn and that no improvements had been made to make it more modern 'looking' since the tenancy had begun in 2012. The disrepair did not meet the threshold to require landlords to take action, but other defects identified by officers that didn't cause concern to the tenant could legally require action. The tenant was not inclined to allow the landlord access to undertake the works as they were not the things that she wanted fixing. This was very time consuming

with time being spent mediating between landlord and tenant where the relationship has broken down and as in this case it is commonplace that eviction proceedings are already in progress. This makes it difficult to take enforce action or pursue Civil Penalties or prosecution when Notices are not complied with because the landlord has evidence of being declined access despite several attempts to complete the work and this would likely be considered by Tribunal or Court as a reasonable defence.



- *Appendix 3 – Extract of Neighbouring Authorities Licence Fee's from their websites.*

## Birmingham

### **Licence Fees for on-line applications 2022 to 2023**

Type of Fee	HMO Occupants 5 Persons	HMO Occupants 6 to 11 Persons	HMO Occupants 12+
Persons Part A (application fee)	£420	£470	£515
Part B (licence fee)	£705	£745	£785
Total	£1125	£1215	£1300

### **Fees for optional HMO services 2022 to 2023**

Description	Fees
Fee Paper application to send	£20
Paper application to process	£65
Advice visit	£200

## Bromsgrove District Council

The HMO licence is usually issued for a period of up to 5 years and the fee is **£133.35 per person.**

## Coventry

<b>Licence fees</b>			
Higher Rate New Application - New application for a one-year licence where the HMO has been found to be operating unlicensed for more than 12 weeks	£625.00	£1,185.00	£1,810.00
Standard New Application - New application for a one-year* licence where: i) The HMO was acquired and/or began operating as an HMO within the previous 12 weeks; or ii) The licence expired before a valid renewal application was completed; or iii) Change of existing licence holder. *May be eligible for longer licence in cases of i) or iii) if licence holder holds other	£625.00	£635.00	£1,260.00

HMO licences with us and all relevant criteria are met at time of application			
New application – Two-year licence where all <b>eligibility criteria</b> are met	£625.00	£275.00	£900.00
New application – Five year licence where all <b>eligibility criteria</b> are met	£625.00	£190.00	£815.00
Standard Renewal - Renewal of a licence	£625.00	£165.00	£790.00

Optional charges for other services available	
HMO licensing advice (per visit) – optional visit to determine whether the property is suitable to be licensed and advise on requirements for property to be used as an HMO.	£260.00 plus VAT (£312.00)
Charge for printing and posting Paper HMO Applications.	£33.00
Charge for additional Paper HMO Applications.	£11.00

### Dudley

**Total Fee = £1,019.66**

**Part 1 Fee = £424.65**

Part 1 Fee is to cover the costs of processing the application – Invoiced once application processed and entered on to case management system

**Part 2 Fee = £594.51**

Part 2 Fee is to cover costs of Enforcement/Inspections – Invoice sent once draft licence is issued (usually within a couple of days of the draft as this comes from Debtors rather than Private Sector).

### Herefordshire

Details	Fee
Basic application fee for a 5 year HMO licence	£1227.51

### **Discounts**

Discount details	Percentage discount
Applicants that are (or have applied to be at the time of licence application) accredited under the <a href="#">Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme</a> (MLAS) (or equivalent)	5% discount

Where the landlord is a member of one or more recognised landlord associations	5% discount
Renewal of HMO licence	15% discount

### HMO licence fee quick reference guide

Number of units	Total
Basic fee	£1227.51
5% (association members or accreditation)	£1166.13
10% (association members and accreditation)	£1104.76
15% (re-licensing)	£1043.38
20% (re-licensing + 1 additional discount)	£982
25% (re-licensing + 2 additional discounts)	£920.63

### Sandwell

## HMO Licence fees from 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024

First application for an HMO licence	
First payment	£601.44
Second payment	£336.58
<b>Total</b>	<b>£938.02</b>
Renewal Licence Fee	
First Payment	£465.58
Second Payment	£202.07
<b>Total</b>	<b>£667.65</b>

The proposed Licence Holder may claim any of the following discounts for being a member of the following landlord organisations or for second and subsequent properties.

Membership of MLAS (Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme) or has received any training/professional qualifications in housing and/or housing management (to be provided) (initial application)	£165.00
Membership of National Residential Landlords Association (NRLA) or similar organisations	£55.00
Discount for second and subsequent properties	£55.00

## Shropshire

Licence Type	Current Fee (£)
HMO up to and including five bedrooms	1,145
Additional bedroom Fee (per Room)	163.00

## Solihull

### *Pay the non-refundable fee*

Once your case reference number has been provided you will be required to pay the **£915** non-refundable fee.

There are discounts for MLAS, NLA and RLA members:

- **MLAS:** £732
- **NLA/RLA:** £824
- **Membership of both organisations:** £641

You will need to provide proof of your organisational membership when you apply.

Further fees may be included depending on different aspects of your HMO:

- an additional let or person over 7: £36.50
- application for a subsequent licence resulting from the change of the licence holder: £183
- inadequate application resulting in the Council reviewing information: £123

## Stoke-on-Trent

A full break down is provided in the document fees and charges table below.

*N.B please note the charging structure has been revised. We now charge in bands to reflect the size of the property*

<b>Property Size</b>	<b>Charges - Part 1</b>	<b>Charges - Part 2</b>	<b>Total</b>
Up to 6 bedroom property	£309.00	£402.00	£711.00
7 to 10 bedroom property	£309.00	£425.00	£734.00
11 to 20 bedroom property	£309.00	£470.00	£780.00
21 to 30 bedroom property	£309.00	£516.00	£825.00
31+ bedroom property	£309.00	£561.00	£870.00

## **Additional Fees**

Finder's fee - This is the fee for unlicensed HMO's that the authority finds. Currently this is set at £227.00 and the fee has been revised to £240.00

## **Refunds**

£200.00 refund where following an inspection it is found that the property is not required to be licensed. This amount relates to the costs of drafting and issuing the licence.

## **Discounts**

£50.00 reduction for subsequent applications submitted within three months of your first application (from the total licence fee).

## Telford and Wrekin

*Our current HMO Licensing fees which came into effect on 1 August 2023 are as follows: a HMO with up to 5 bedrooms - £1,312.53. a HMO with 6 - 10 bedrooms - £1,426.46. a HMO with 11 or more bedrooms - £1,526.37.*

## Walsall

<b>Number of persons accommodated</b>	<b>1st stage fee</b>	<b>2nd stage fee</b>	<b>Total</b>
5 - 6	£740.00	£250.00	£990.00
7 - 8	£945.00	£320.00	£1,265.00
9 - 14	£1,375.00	£450.00	£1,825.00
15-19	£1,530.00	£505.00	£2,035.00
20 - 24	£1,680.00	£565.00	£2,245.00
25 - 29	£1,850.00	£620.00	£2,470.00
30	£2,025.00	£670.00	£2,695.00
Each additional person	£80.00	-	£80.00

### **Fees for first HMO application - non-accredited landlord**

<b>Number of persons accommodated</b>	<b>1st stage fee</b>	<b>2nd stage fee</b>	<b>Total</b>
5 - 6	£930.00	£310.00	£1,240.00
7 - 8	£1,135.00	£375.00	£1,510.00
9 - 14	£1,660.00	£555.00	£2,215.00
15 - 19	£1,780.00	£595.00	£2,375.00
20 - 24	£1,960.00	£650.00	£2,610.00
25 - 29	£2,160.00	£720.00	£2,880.00
30	£2,360.00	£780.00	£3,140.00
Each additional person	£80.00	-	£80.00

## HMO Licence

The full fee is applicable for new HMOs or where the licence holder has not held a licence at the property before i.e. if the property is sold to a new owner or there is a change of licence holder. It is based on the number of occupiers, after the initial licence, further licences are charged at renewal rate. Occupiers refers to all people living in the property.

Number of Occupiers	Stage 1 Fee	Stage 2 Fee
5 Occupiers	£723.00	£241.00
6-12 Occupiers	£837.00	£279.00
13-20 Occupiers	£959.00	£319.00
21+ Occupiers	£1,107.00	£369.00

## HMO Licence Renewal

This is the fee for a subsequent licence, which will be held by the same named person on the same property.

Number of Occupiers	Stage 1 Fee	Stage 2 Fee
5 Occupiers	£550.00	£183.00
6-12 Occupiers	£632.00	£211.00
13-20 Occupiers	£728.00	£242.00
21+ Occupiers	£837.00	£279.00

## Other Applicable HMO Licensing Charges

	Fee	Purpose
Late Licence Application	£139.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>New applications - Where the Council is aware that an HMO is due to become occupied by 5 or more persons, but the landlord/agent fails to submit a licence application by the time it becomes so occupied.</li><li>Renewal applications- Where a licence application is received by the Council after the expiry date of the existing licence.</li></ul>
Late Documents Charge	£70.60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A charge will be made if any documents/application fee have not been received within 14 days of being requested by the Council.</li></ul>

	Fee	Purpose
Additional copying of documents	£6.90	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requests for copies of safety certification we hold or further copies of the licence due to the original being misplaced.</li> </ul>
Miscellaneous payment	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If you have under paid a licence fee, you will be asked to pay the difference using this method.</li> </ul>

## Wolverhampton

<b>Fee 1 - Application processing and determination fee</b>		
Covers costs relating to the processing of an application for an HMO up to 6 bedrooms, up to and including the decision to grant or decline.		£806.00
<b>Add on costs Fee 1 Application processing and determination fee</b>		
7 to 10 bedroom		£27.00
11 to 20 bedroom		£77.00
21 to 30 bedroom		£128.00
31 to 40 bedroom		£178.00
41 to 50 bedroom		£228.00
For each incremental 10 bedrooms ie up to 60, 70, 80, 90 rooms etc.		£50.00
For each disused room in the HMO building not forming part of HMO but within the building.		£5.00
Commercial areas within HMO building?		£22.00
<b>Fee 2 - Licence scheme operation and enforcement fee</b>		
Covers all costs after granting of the licence, including costs during the life of the licence and costs associated with enforcement of the scheme.		£500



City Life Lettings and Private Sector Housing Fees 2023/24	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	Price change £	% Increase
<b>Fees for Mandatory Licensable HMOs (five+ occupants) - NEW application</b>				
<b>Units of Accommodation</b>				
Up to 5	1,354.00	1,449.00	95.00	7.0%
6 to 8	1,368.00	1,464.00	96.00	7.0%
9 to 15	1,383.00	1,480.00	97.00	7.0%
16 to 23	1,413.00	1,512.00	99.00	7.0%
24 and above	1,443.00	1,544.00	101.00	7.0%
<b>Fees for Mandatory Licensable HMOs (five+ occupants) - RENEWAL Application *</b>				
<b>Units of Accommodation</b>				
Up to 5	1,246.00	1,333.00	87.00	7.0%
6 to 8	1,260.00	1,348.00	88.00	7.0%
9 to 15	1,275.00	1,364.00	89.00	7.0%
16-23	1,306.00	1,397.00	91.00	7.0%
24 and above	1,336.00	1,429.00	93.00	7.0%
<b>Fees for all Other Licensable HMOs (additional licensing)</b>				
<b>Units of Accommodation</b>				
2 to 4	987.00	1,056.00	69.00	7.0%
5 to 7 (section 257 HMO's only)	1,040.00	1,113.00	73.00	7.0%
8 and above (section 257 HMO's only)	1,128.00	1,207.00	79.00	7.0%
<b>Fees for all Other Licensable HMOs (additional licensing) - RENEWAL Application* (applicable from 1st Sept 2020)</b>				
<b>Units of Accommodation</b>				
2 to 4	884.00	946.00	62.00	7.0%
5 to 7 (section 257 HMO's only)	937.00	1,003.00	66.00	7.0%
8 and above (section 257 HMO's only)	1,024.00	1,096.00	72.00	7.0%
<b>Other Fees</b>				
Reminder letters for missing documents or annual certificates (first reminder is included in the cost of the licence; per letter)	62.00	67.00	5.00	8.1%
Emergency inspections for incomplete applications (charge per inspection until the property is licensed)	85.00	92.00	7.00	8.2%
Pre-application advice including inspection (charges apply to both types of licences)	60.00	60.00	0.00	0.0%
Missed inspection or inspection cancelled less than 24 hours prior to appointment	65.00	70.00	5.00	7.7%
Penalty fee for unlicensed HMO (charged in addition to the licence fee listed above and any fees for notices and enforcement proceedings)	174.00	188.00	14.00	8.0%
Immigration inspection (per visit)	60.00	64.00	4.00	6.7%
Licence checking and data entering service	55.00	59.00	4.00	7.3%
<b>Worcester City Lettings Agency</b>				
Worcester City Lettings - Introductory lets	250.00	250.00	0.00	0.0%
Worcester City Lettings - Managed Lets - New tenant sign-up fee	250.00	250.00	0.00	0.0%
Worcester City Lettings - Managed Lets - Monthly management fee	8%	8%	0.00	0.0%
Worcester City Lettings - Private Sector Leasing - Monthly management fee	12%	12%	0.00	0.0%
Worcester City Lettings - Legionella Risk Assessment	30.00	30.00	0.00	0.0%

## List of Background Documents

Office for National Statistic (2021) How life has changed in Dudley: Census 2021.  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E08000027/>

Dudley MBC (2023) Data from M3/Assure HMO licences and BRE data  
<https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/housing/housing-options/private-housing/>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/privaterentalmarketssummarystatisticsinengland/april2022tomarch2023>