

# The Social Impact of Private Rented Housing Licensing in Nottingham

Full Social Return on Investment report

2026

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# Foreword

There is a long-established relationship between the quality of housing and neighbourhoods, and the wellbeing of people living in those homes and the community around them. Therefore, to understand the full impact of interventions that aim to improve housing quality, we need to look beyond purely financial or economic measures. Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a well-established method for measuring the impact of an activity on the wellbeing of individuals, communities, wider society and the environment. It is seen as a particularly valuable approach in recognising the impact of the design and quality of the built environment, on the outcomes experienced by the people living in that environment.<sup>1</sup> This evaluation uses Social Return on Investment to measure the social impact of private rented housing licensing in Nottingham. Although SROI has been used in many housing-related impact assessments, it is believed that this is the first time it has been used to evaluate the social impact of housing licensing.

Nottingham City Council (NCC) licensing department commissioned Alice Jones Impact Consulting to carry out an evaluation of the social impact of private rented housing licensing in the city. Alice Jones Impact Consulting is an independent Social Value consultancy, with over 12 years' experience in social value and impact measurement in the housing sector. Alice Jones Impact Consulting provides independent expertise, bringing an independent perspective with social value expertise assured at the highest level – Dr Alice Jones is one of only 17 Level 3 Advanced Practitioners in the UK accredited by the Institute for Social Value.<sup>2</sup> Alice Jones Impact Consulting has a value-driven purpose and practice – to support organisations wanting to improve and measure their social value and impact, guided by the Social Value Principles – a set of principles that provide the building blocks for thinking in terms of a wider definition of value, and consistent and credible methods for accounting for that value.

Alice Jones Impact Consulting has worked closely with NCC's licensing team, to build a rigorous understanding of how licensing operates within the city, and a clear picture of what outcomes and impact this then delivers. NCC licensing have provided access to activity and other performance data in order to measure the scale of activities and outcomes, as well as facilitating access to directly survey licensed landlords and renters living in licensed homes. NCC licensing have supported consultation with landlords and agents, accreditation partners and other landlord representative groups, and partner organisations within the city.

Thanks go to all those who have engaged in the evaluation process, sharing their feedback and insight to better understand the impact of housing licensing from the perspective of those who have experienced it. Thank you to all the individual renters, landlords and agents who completed a survey, and renters and students who participated in focus groups and interviews. Thank you to partners who took part in discussion sessions or interviews, including: DASH, NCC Community Protection team and Neighbourhood Safety Officers, NCC Waste Reduction and Recycling, Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service, Nottingham Trent University Students' Union, Unipol, Nottinghamshire Police, University of Nottingham Community Engagement team, University of Nottingham Students' Union.

We hope that this social impact evaluation will add value to ongoing local and national policy and decision-making in relation to private rented properties, and ultimately help improve the wellbeing of people who call this home.



# Executive summary

‘Home’ is an emotional and meaningful relationship between people and the property where they live, with long-standing evidence to show that the positive qualities of a ‘home’ provide significant wellbeing effects, whilst their absence damages health and wellbeing. The number of people living in privately rented homes has grown substantially over the last 20 years, with almost a third of Nottingham’s residents now living in a privately rented home. Nottingham’s vision for housing recognises how home is the foundation for people to thrive, with the ambition that: ‘Homes in Nottingham meet the aspirations and needs of current and future residents. People live in safe, warm homes, that they can afford, in vibrant local neighbourhoods where everyone can thrive.’

Private rented housing licensing therefore has a significant role to play in achieving the city’s vision for housing. Nottingham has opted to have a licensing scheme that covers most privately rented homes in the city – the third biggest licensing scheme in England outside of London – because of evidence of the need to raise the standard of private rented homes, and thereby improve the lives of people living in these homes. The aim of licensing is to ‘drive up standards of privately rented homes and protect renters across the city’.

The aim of this impact evaluation is to capture this wellbeing effect of licensing, on people living in privately rented homes, for those who own and manage them, and for wider neighbourhoods and the city of Nottingham. Social Return on Investment (SROI) is a perfectly positioned tool to do this, as a well-established method of measuring the overall improvement to the wellbeing of individuals, communities, wider society and the environment. Whilst there is much evidence about the importance of housing in contributing to people and society’s overall wellbeing, this is the first time SROI has been used to measure the impact of private rented housing licensing. The SROI assesses the impact of licensing over the last five years, from January 2020 – December 2024.

The foundation of the impact assessment is an ‘impact map’, which has been developed through consultation with staff, landlords, renters and partner organisations. This maps how the activities of licensing lead to medium-term outcomes, and long-term impacts. This shows that private rented licensing aims to enable renters to thrive, by improving landlord standards, improving standards of homes, improving neighbourhoods, and supporting and empowering residents. In the longer term, the expected impact of private rented licensing is that it is: ensuring the quality of landlords in Nottingham; ensuring safer and warmer homes for renters; improving local neighbourhoods and the environment; and ultimately enabling renters to thrive and supporting the long-term vision for Nottingham.

## How does licensing work in Nottingham?

There are three types of housing licences in Nottingham, covering the majority of privately rented homes. Larger privately rented properties, known as Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs), are covered by Mandatory and Additional Licensing. As the name suggests, Mandatory Licensing is a national requirement for properties shared by five or more households, whilst Additional Licensing was adopted as a local decision to ensure smaller HMOs (shared by three to five people) are covered by licensing. Similarly, Selective Licensing was locally adopted in Nottingham in order to bring smaller privately rented properties with one household within licensing. Licensing applies in certain areas of the city, depending on evidence of need due to issues such as poor property conditions, significant and persistent problems caused by anti-social behaviour, or high levels of crime.

Landlords apply for a licence for each of their rented properties, which lasts for up to five years. Between 2020 – 2024, over 33,000 licences were issued. At the peak during this period, licensing covered 33,500 homes and an estimated 89,000 people living in those homes.

The licence sets out a number of conditions that landlords are expected to meet. These cover legal compliance with housing law, minimum property standards, and expected management responsibilities. Landlords can go above and beyond the minimum standards of licensing, by becoming accredited to the Nottingham Rental Standard. Becoming accredited provides a quality mark for landlords, resulting in a lower licence fee.

Licensing is implemented by a separate team of around 100 staff within Nottingham City Council, which is fully self-financed from income generated by licence fees. During this period, the running cost for licensing was just under £24.9m. The majority of expenditure is on staff costs, to employ a team of local, qualified staff to issue and implement licensing across all 33,500 licensed properties.

The core functions of the licensing team are, firstly, to **proactively manage** the licensing process - processing applications and issuing licences (including tracking down unlicensed landlords), auditing licence documents and carrying out property inspections. This creates a foundation of **data and intelligence** which informs the core and wider work of the licensing team. The team also carry out **reactive management** to respond to issues that are raised, either through inspections or through reports from other sources. Officers work with individual landlords to investigate and address the issues raised. Where landlords don't comply, the team is able to take enforcement action to bring about compliance or penalise landlords who are breaking the law.

Alongside these core functions, the team carry out wider roles with different stakeholder groups to increase the effectiveness of licensing. Much of the effectiveness of licensing hangs on the engagement and response of landlords. Rather than just achieve the minimum standards of licensing, the team aim to **promote good practice** to landlords, by maximising engagement with landlords, sharing information with them, promoting best practice standards including via training and accreditation. The team also have a broader impact by **working in partnership** with other local agencies and organisations who are working towards shared goals for the communities where licensing operates, and strategically across the city. Licensing works closely with Police and community protection, universities and students, Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service, other Council departments such as waste reduction and recycling, planning and Adult Social Care, and resident and community networks.

### What difference does licensing make?

There are four main groups of people who are materially affected by licensing. Around 16,000 **landlords and managing agents** held a licence over this five-year period. At the peak coverage of licensing during this period, there were an estimated 89,000 **renters** living in licensed homes in Nottingham. **Neighbours and communities** live alongside those living in privately rented properties, with around 8,000 households from other tenures living in areas that are predominately private rented homes. Finally, there is an interconnected network of agencies and organisations in the wider **city partnership** that are working towards shared strategic goals for the city.

Licensing is **improving landlord standards**. Licensing is **improving landlord knowledge**, as landlords are made aware of the relevant housing law, minimum property standards and required management practices in order to be a licensed landlord, and are required to undertake relevant training every three years. As a result of licensing, 36% of landlords state their knowledge about the rights and responsibilities of a landlord have moderately-significantly improved. Licensing **ensures landlord standards** through audits and inspections, with the result that 31% of landlords state they have made improvements to their properties or tenancy management as a result of licensing. Licensing **supports landlords with best practice**, sharing information and encouraging and incentivising accreditation to the Nottingham Rental Standard, with the result that 35% of licences are issued to accredited landlords in Nottingham, compared to 6% of landlords accredited nationally. Finally, licensing **penalises unlawful or criminal landlords** – the team have identified over 7,000 landlords who were operating without a licence, and brought them within licensing. They pursue

civil and criminal prosecutions for the few landlords who repeatedly breach licensing or housing law, resulting in over £360,000 in financial penalties.

It is important to acknowledge that licensing sets a minimum standard, which many landlords already meet. Feedback from landlords suggests that around two-thirds feel that they already meet licensing standards. For some, licensing places an additional administrative burden on them.

Licensing is **improving the standard of homes**. Licensing inspections are the most powerful tool for directly improving standards of homes, but more widely, 31% of landlords state that they make improvements to their properties as a result of licensing. Having a **home that is able to be kept warm** is the top priority for renters, and living in a cold home has significant negative physical, mental and social wellbeing effects. Licensing inspectors identified just under 400 homes at risk of excess cold, of which 280 posed a significant risk to renters' health and safety. Outside of inspections alone, 14% of landlords said they have made improvements to the warmth of their property as a result of licensing, suggesting up to 4,900 properties have improved warmth. Licensing also ensures **homes are made safe, reducing hazards to health**. The state of repair inside their home is another top priority for renters. Licensing inspectors identified over 3,600 other hazards<sup>a</sup> that were remedied by landlords, including 780 with significant risk to health and wellbeing. 21% of landlords have made improvements to their safety standard of their property(s) as a result of licensing. This supports renters to be **healthy and safe** in their home, reducing treatment costs to the NHS. The licensing team work in partnership to **provide safe homes**, by carrying out fire safety checks and working alongside Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service to inspect tall buildings with increased risk of fire. Completing fire safety checks in over 9,000 properties/buildings is estimated to have contributed to the avoidance of 40 accidental fires in people's homes. Licensing activities support **more secure homes**, with 158 security hazards identified, 24 of which had significant risk of entry by intruders. 16% of landlords have made improvements to the security of their property(s) as a result of licensing. With 4,500 homes improved as a result of licensing inspections, this is **improving the health and wellbeing** of each person living in a licensed property, with two-thirds of renters stating that licensing makes a moderate to significant difference to their health and wellbeing.

Licensing is **improving neighbourhoods**. Licensing officers and community partners are **improving external property standards**, carrying out over 21,000 external inspections that resulted in 3,370 improvements to external property conditions – positively impacting the wellbeing of neighbours on either side of improved properties. Licensing has strengthened its powers to **reduce problem waste** and works in close partnership with Neighbourhood Safety Officers, NCC Waste team and university representatives – leading to over 1,000 individual waste complaints addressed, as well as proactively improving problem areas. Licensing also works to **tackle persistent noise and other ASB**, which is particularly prevalent in HMO properties. By drawing on the complementary powers of Community Safety, universities and licensing, over 900 complaints of ASB have been addressed, with 84% requiring no further intervention over the following year. This partnership work is **empowering safe communities**, reducing the number of ASB complaints and burden on other public services such as the Police. Finally, licensing is **championing sustainability**, by enforcing minimum energy efficiency standards in privately rented homes – meaning that a higher proportion of licensed properties have a valid Energy Performance Certificate that shows good energy efficiency (Bands A-C), compared to non-licensed properties; and average modelled carbon emissions across licensed properties decreased by just under 10,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> between 2020 and 2024.

Licensing is **supporting and empowering renters**. Licensing inspectors are trained to **identify and refer safeguarding issues**, and through licensing inspection powers are enabled to see 'behind the door' in over 9,000 licensed properties over the last five years. This has resulted in 28 referrals for safeguarding issues, supporting the long-term wellbeing of the most vulnerable renters. This also helps **reduce overcrowding**, by identifying overcrowding in individual properties (with 26 significant cases of overcrowding addressed by

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<sup>a</sup> Excluding hazards for excess cold, entry by intruders and overcrowding, which are counted in other outcomes.

licensing), as well as reducing overcrowding at a neighbourhood level by checking whether over 350 properties have the required planning permission for conversion of family homes to HMOs. Finally, the work of the Tenancy Matters team, funded by licensing, is **empowering renters' rights** by supporting over 700 renters with advice on housing and tenancy law.

### What is the impact of licensing?

This impact evaluation uses the Social Return on Investment method for comparing the costs of licensing with the value that it has created over the last five years. SROI calculates impact by measuring the quantity of change for each outcome, and assigning each a valuation in monetary terms. These valuations are derived from financial proxies that represent the value of the outcome – as such, these financial figures don't represent money in your pocket, but the value of the change achieved, for the person/group experiencing that change.

The calculation makes assumptions about how long these outcomes may last into the future, and whether they continue to the same extent over this time. This SROI assumes that outcomes will last a maximum of five years into the future, the length of a licence. It also assumes that outcomes drop-off in future years, as a result of changes in circumstances or wider context. The calculation also makes additional assumptions to make sure there is no over-claiming, deducting a percentage for outcomes that would have happened anyway without licensing, for outcomes that come at the expense of negative outcomes elsewhere, and for the proportion of the outcome that is due to the contribution of other individuals or organisations.

The impact of licensing in **ensuring the quality of landlords** is valued at £10.5m. Of this value, £3.6m is value to landlords themselves, as a result of improved knowledge, standards and best practice, whilst taking into account the cost of increased administrative burden of licensing. The majority of this impact is as a result of licensing creating a level playing field for all landlords, with £6.9m value from bringing unlicensed landlords within licensing and penalising unlawful/criminal landlords.

The biggest impact of licensing is from supporting **safer and warmer homes for renters** and **enabling renters to thrive**. Together, these impacts create £91m value for renters as a result of activities carried out over the last five years, and their continued impact over the duration of the licence. The most significant impact of licensing is as a result of improving the wellbeing of renters by improving property conditions – the main aim of licensing.

The impact of licensing on **improving local neighbourhoods and environment** is valued at £7.8m. This is as a result of improved wellbeing for neighbours from the improved appearance of neighbourhoods and reducing the negative wellbeing effects of waste and ASB.

The impact of licensing on other city partners in **supporting the long-term vision for Nottingham** is valued at £5.5m. Licensing reduces the burden on the NHS, Police, Fire and Rescue and contributes to the goals of Carbon Neutral 2028.

Overall, licensing has created just under £115m in value as a result of the outcomes it has delivered through its activities over the last five years. The cost of delivering those activities was just under £24.9m. This means that **every £1 invested in licensing creates £4.62 in social value**.

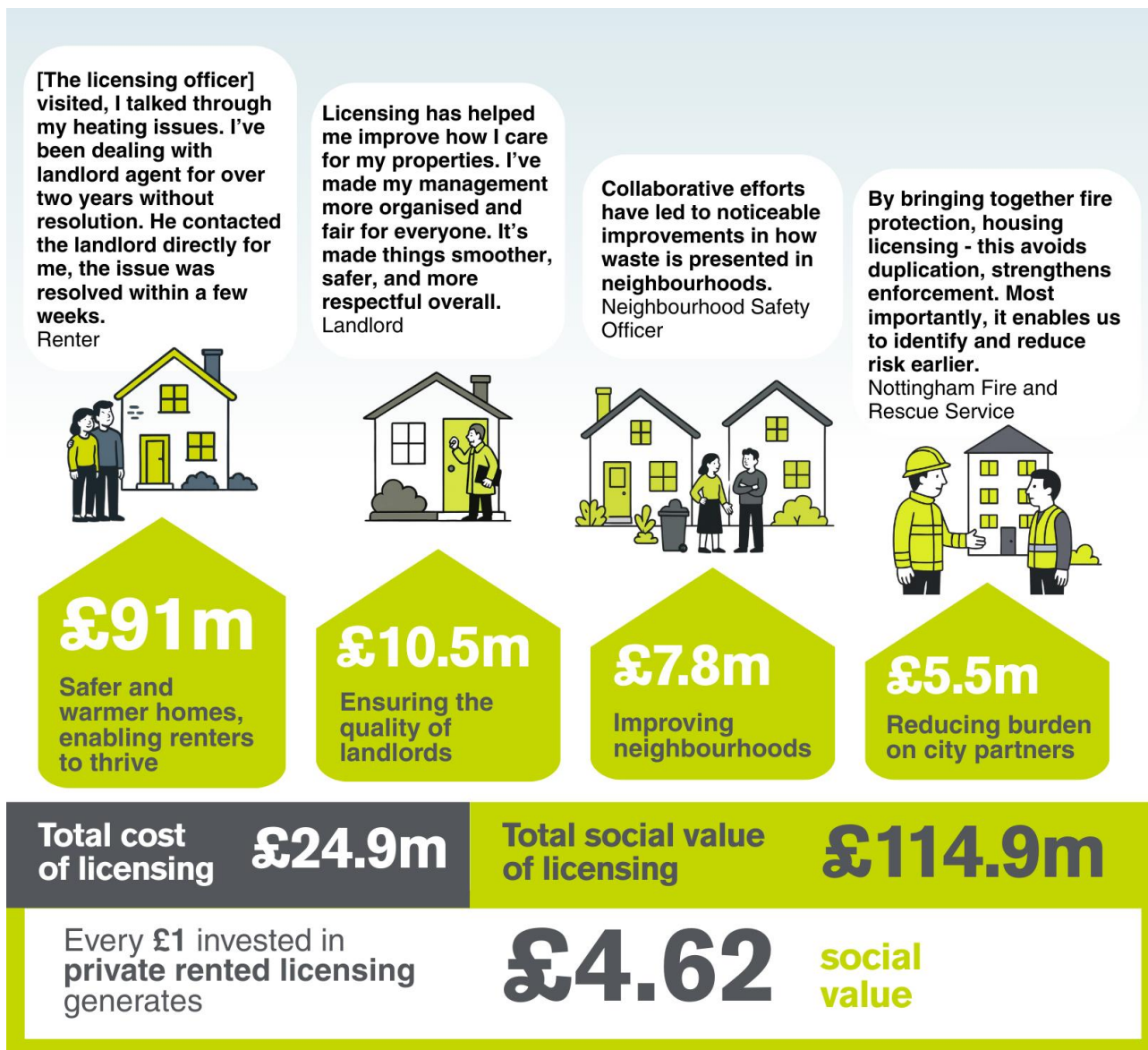


Image 1: Summary of Social Return on Investment of licensing

### Maximising the future impact of licensing

To maximise the future impact of licensing, the evidence shows that the biggest direct difference is made through proactive identification of landlords and properties that are not meeting licence conditions. Risk-based audits, inspections and enforcement activity are the primary drivers of improved property standards and a more level playing field across the sector. Continued refinement of data-led targeting – including the use of improved data insight – will ensure resources are focused where risk and potential impact are greatest. At the same time, raising awareness of licensing among renters, particularly those who may be more vulnerable or living in poorer conditions, will help ensure that concerns are reported and addressed promptly.

The evaluation highlights that improving the warmth of homes delivers particularly high social value and is a top priority for renters. Strengthening licence conditions, inspection standards and officer training around excess cold and energy efficiency will maximise this impact, especially in light of proposed regulatory changes to increase minimum energy efficiency standards in the private rented sector. In parallel, landlord training and accreditation have been shown to improve knowledge, confidence and management standards. However, fewer than half of landlords report completing relevant training in the last three years, and only one third are accredited despite many stating they already meet required standards. Targeted compliance checks on training requirements and a renewed focus on promoting accreditation – including its financial

benefits through lower licence fees – represent clear opportunities to enhance best practice and sector-wide standards.

Partnership working also emerges as a critical enabler of impact. Strong operational and strategic links, supported by effective data sharing, enhance outcomes related to neighbourhood standards and anti-social behaviour. Strengthening collaboration with other partners – particularly those with links to relevant communities of renters with higher likelihood of poorer property standards, and also energy efficiency and fuel poverty partners – will enhance impact for renters. Finally, improving impact measurement through outcome-focused Key Performance Indicators, refined inspection data, regular stakeholder surveying and structured tracking of long-term trends (such as crime, ASB and city-wide property standards) will ensure that licensing remains evidence-led and responsive over time.

Overall, the evaluation demonstrates that licensing in Nottingham generates substantial social value and delivers benefits that significantly exceed its cost. It improves housing conditions, supports renter wellbeing, improves neighbourhoods, raises landlord standards and contributes to wider city goals. The key lesson for the future is not whether licensing makes a difference, but how to optimise its reach and effectiveness: by focusing on risk and enforcement where it matters most, strengthening landlord engagement and accreditation, deepening partnerships, and embedding robust outcome measurement. If these lessons are applied, licensing will continue to play a central role in enabling safe, warm homes and thriving communities across the city.

# Introduction

## Purpose of the social impact evaluation

Why measure the social impact of licensing privately rented homes in Nottingham? Nottingham has opted to have a licensing scheme that covers most privately rented homes in the city, because of evidence of the need to raise the standards of privately rented homes, and thereby improve the lives of people living in these homes. This recognises the underlying context that ‘home’ is an emotional and meaningful relationship between people and the property where they live, even when that property is rented. There is long-standing evidence that shows that the positive qualities of ‘home’ provide significant wellbeing effects, whilst their absence damages health and wellbeing.<sup>3</sup> The opportunity to positively affect people’s lives through licensing is growing as more and more of the city’s population live in privately rented homes. This social impact evaluation takes this broader wellbeing perspective into account, and aims to help understand what difference private rented licensing has made over the last five years – to people living in privately rented properties, for those who own and manage them, and for wider neighbourhoods and the city of Nottingham – and how the positive impact of licensing can be maximised in the future.

The vision for housing in Nottingham is that:

Homes in Nottingham meet the aspirations and needs of current and future residents. People live in safe, warm homes, that they can afford, in vibrant local neighbourhoods where everyone can thrive.

Over the last five years, almost a third of Nottingham’s residents lived in privately rented homes, and up to 33,500 homes were licensed. Private rented licensing therefore has a significant role to play in achieving the city’s vision for housing.<sup>4</sup> Private rented licensing aims to do this by improving landlord standards, improving standards of homes, improving neighbourhoods, and supporting and empowering residents. In the longer term, the expected impact of private rented licensing is that it is: ensuring the quality of landlords in Nottingham; ensuring safer and warmer homes for renters; improving local neighbourhoods and the environment; and in the long-term, enabling renters to thrive by supporting the long-term vision for Nottingham.

This impact evaluation looks at each of these steps in turn, to see what evidence there is to show whether and to what extent these aims have been achieved. It combines all the evidence together to measure the overall impact of private rented licensing over the last five years, comparing the benefits to the costs of running the scheme. This is known as the Social Return on Investment.

Social Return on Investment is a well-established method for measuring and understanding the broader value created by an activity – not just the financial benefits, but the overall improvement to the wellbeing of individuals, communities, wider society and the environment. There is a lot of established evidence about the importance of housing in contributing to people and society’s overall wellbeing. However, this is the first time that Social Return on Investment has been used to measure the impact of private rented licensing. We therefore hope that there is much to be learned from this impact report.

## About the evaluation

This impact evaluation uses the Social Return on Investment approach to measure the wider benefits of private rented licensing for people living in privately rented properties, for those who own and manage them, and for wider neighbourhoods and the city of Nottingham.

Social Return on Investment is a way of measuring what difference an activity makes to those it most affects. It has a number of principles to ensure that the process is a valid and reliable way of measuring impact. Following these principles allows us to measure and compare a range of different types of effects on different groups, to provide enough information to make an overall assessment of the impact of an activity.

This is a retrospective Social Return on Investment assessment, in that it looks back at outcomes that have been achieved over the last five years, from January 2020 to December 2024. This means it is based on data of what has actually changed. However, the insight from this allows us to project forward to understand what future impact might be, and model how different scenarios could increase or decrease the future impact of licensing.

## Principles of Social Return on Investment

<p><b>1. Involve stakeholders</b></p>	<p>The first step is to involve those people who are most affected by private rented licensing, to tell us what differences it makes, and which are most important to them. This was done by reaching out and talking to the main groups affected – renters, landlords and agents, and partner organisations in the city that work with and see the effects of licensing on neighbourhoods and the wider city.</p>
<p><b>2. Understand what changes</b></p>	<p>Talking to these people and groups enables us to map what licensing does, how it creates changes, and understand what immediate and longer-term changes it creates (see Image 3 for our Impact Map). This shows us what to measure, so we can gather evidence – of both positive and negative changes, including those that were intended and unintended.</p> <p>We gathered this evidence using data and intelligence from the licensing process and licensing officers’ experience on the ground, by surveying renters and landlords, consulting with partner organisations and sharing their data, and also drawing on the wider evidence around the impact of housing (especially where the evidence focused on privately rented).</p>
<p><b>3. Value the things that matter</b></p>	<p>Social Return on Investment provides a framework to place a value on those changes, placing higher value on changes that are most important to the people that are affected. These values are informed by the data we collected (such as renter and landlord surveys), and also by large national datasets that show how much relative value people place on different outcomes.</p>
<p><b>4. Only include what is material</b></p>	<p>This report includes all the information and evidence needed to give a true and fair picture, so that readers can draw reasonable conclusions about impact.</p>
<p><b>5. Do not overclaim</b></p>	<p>We only want to claim the value that private rented licensing is responsible for creating, and use the Impact Map to show how the outcomes are linked to the activities of licensing. In some cases, we show how licensing partially impacts outcomes, for example, where they were achieved in partnership with others.</p>
<p><b>6. Be transparent</b></p>	<p>This report and its appendices set out how we have arrived at the conclusions made, in a clear way to all stakeholders.</p>
<p><b>7. Verify the result</b></p>	<p>The impact evaluation has been carried out by an independent social impact practitioner, who is accredited at the highest level (Level 3 – Advanced Practitioner) by the Institute of Social Value.</p>
<p><b>8. Be responsive</b></p>	<p>The aim of the impact evaluation is not only to understand what difference licensing has made over the last five years, but to understand from this information how its impact can be improved in the future.</p>

Table 1: Social Value Principles<sup>5</sup>

## About the private rented sector and licensing in Nottingham

### About Nottingham's people and housing

Nottingham city is the urban core of a wider conurbation of more than 850,000 people who live, work, study, shop and socialise in the city. It is a diverse, growing and successful city. It is home to two global universities, and so one in six of Nottingham's residents is a student at one of the two universities. Just over half of people who work in the city do not live in it. The city is home to 323,700 people.<sup>6</sup> The city has a high population density, and there are high levels of deprivation in some areas within the city boundaries. For example, Nottingham has the UK's third-lowest household income, higher fuel poverty and lower healthy life expectancy than UK averages.<sup>7</sup>

Nottingham City Council aims to make Nottingham a flourishing, inclusive and sustainable city where residents thrive. Housing has wide-ranging social impacts that go far beyond bricks and mortar and affect a wide range of these long-term goals for the city and its residents. Housing – or more importantly, having somewhere you can call home – is a foundation for people's physical health, mental health and social wellbeing. This is why the Council Plan 2025-29 includes the priority of providing safe, affordable housing. As nearly a third of the city's households now live in private rented properties, private rented licensing has a significant role in bringing about the Council's aims when it comes to housing standards. And in addition, because housing is a foundation for a range of other outcomes that affect individuals and communities, improving housing standards is likely to have a range of wider long-term impacts. This includes the Council's goals of empowering safe communities, healthy and safe residents, enhancing education and skills, revitalising the economy and championing sustainability.

The standard of privately rented homes has become more and more important, due to the significant growth of the private rented sector in Nottingham over the last 20 years, nearly doubling in size over this time. Nottingham stands out as having one of the highest proportions of households living in privately rented properties across the core cities. As of the 2021 Census, the private rented sector has overtaken the social rented sector in size (despite Nottingham having a larger than average social housing sector for the UK). The Census showed there are now 36,000 households living in privately rented homes, housing 95,000 people in the city.

The evidence gathered for granting of further licensing powers from central government demonstrated the ongoing need for improved standards in private rented housing. For example, government data from 2020 (the baseline for this report) showed that private rented homes are more likely to be classified as 'non-decent'<sup>b</sup> than owner-occupied or social rented homes, more likely to have a serious hazard in the home, and slightly more likely to have damp.<sup>8</sup> Many of the private rented homes in Nottingham are from the city's older housing stock, with 50% of privately-rented homes built before 1949.<sup>9</sup> However, there are also more modern privately rented properties, and a higher proportion of flats.

The impact of housing standards also depends on who is living in these homes. Census data is the best source of this information. From this, we know that the proportion of the population in private rented homes spikes for those aged in their early 20s (boosted by the high number of students in Nottingham), and declines as people enter their 30s and 40s. Very few older people live in private rented homes in Nottingham. Just over a quarter of households in private rented homes have children – meaning that just under a third of children in Nottingham city live in private rented homes. The ethnicity of those living in privately rented homes broadly reflects the city's ethnic profile, but with a higher proportion of households from White Gypsy/Irish Traveller, Roma or other white ethnic groups. Although people in the privately

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<sup>b</sup> For a dwelling to be considered 'decent' under the Decent Homes Standard, it must: meet the statutory minimum standard for housing, and not have any significant hazards to health (known as Category 1 hazards, under the Housing Health and Safety Rating system); provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort; be in a reasonable state of repair, and; have reasonably modern facilities and services.

rented sector are much less likely to be deprived<sup>c</sup> than those in social housing, a quarter of the city's deprived households live in privately rented homes. Privately rented homes are slightly more likely to be overcrowded than average for the city. However, people living in privately rented homes are less likely to be considered disabled, and less likely to report being in poor health compared to people in other tenures.

### About licensing in Nottingham

Nottingham has the third biggest private rented licensing scheme in England outside of London. Nottingham has opted to implement a significant licensing scheme across the city, including not only the Mandatory licences for large HMOs that are required by law, but also Additional Licensing for smaller HMOs across the entire city, and a Selective Licensing scheme that was approved by the Secretary of State, which covers 40% of the city. Collectively these licence schemes cover an estimated 79% of privately rented properties.<sup>d</sup>

The decision to have private rented licensing on this scale was made on the basis of the growth of the private rented sector in Nottingham, and evidence of poorer standards of housing in this sector. The aim of private rented licensing is to 'drive up standards and protect tenants across the city'<sup>10</sup>.


- **Mandatory HMO Licensing** was introduced nationally in 2006 to tackle serious concerns about safety, overcrowding, and poor living conditions in shared housing. The government recognised that many HMOs—especially those housing vulnerable people like students, migrant workers, and low-income tenants—were being poorly managed or even exploited by rogue landlords. Mandatory Licensing covers properties shared by 5 or more households, and in 2018 was expanded to cover all properties, not just those 3 or more storeys high.<sup>11</sup>
- **Additional HMO Licensing** was introduced in Nottingham to address concerns about property conditions and disrepair, overcrowding and illegal eviction, and anti-social behaviour (ASB) including noise and waste management. Additional Licensing is an additional discretionary power that Councils can use to improve standards in smaller HMOs shared by three or more people. It complements the Mandatory Licensing and removes the opportunity to evade having a licence to rent. Additional Licensing was introduced in 2014, and renewed in 2019 and 2023, when it was expanded to cover the whole city, in order to ensure all smaller HMOs are meeting licensing standards.
- **Selective Licensing** is also a discretionary power that Councils previously had to apply to the Secretary of State for. It covers any private rented property with one household. Selective Licensing was introduced in Nottingham in 2018, and granted again in 2023. Selective Licensing covers areas of the city where there are high proportions of privately rented homes, and there is evidence of two or more social issues being present in the area: significant and persistent problems caused by ASB; poor property conditions; high levels of deprivation, and/or; high levels of crime. The evidence of these criteria for the current Selective Licensing scheme means that it now covers 40% of the city.

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<sup>c</sup> The 2021 Census measured four key dimension of deprivation – education, employment, health and disability, and housing.

<sup>d</sup> Maps of the Additional and Selective Licensing scheme boundaries are available in the technical appendix.

<p><b>Mandatory HMO Licensing</b></p>	<p><b>Additional HMO Licensing</b></p>	<p><b>Selective Licensing</b></p>
<p>National scheme since 2006 which local councils must carry out.</p>	<p>First introduced in Nottingham in 2014 where the council has evidence of a need to improve standards of quality and safety.</p>	<p>Introduced in certain parts of Nottingham in 2018 where the council has evidence of a need to improve standards of quality and safety.</p>
<p>Applies to private rented properties shared by <b>five or more people</b> from more than one household.</p>	<p>Applies to private rented properties shared by <b>three or more people</b> from more than one household.</p>	<p>Applies to private rented properties with <b>one household</b>.</p>

<p><b>Licence conditions</b></p>	<p><b>Property standards:</b></p>	<p><b>Management responsibilities</b></p>
<p><b>Legal compliance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ <b>Fit and proper person:</b> Landlords are suitable and trustworthy, with no relevant previous convictions</li> <li>✔ <b>Comply with housing law:</b> Landlords meet legal responsibilities to make sure rented homes are safe, habitable and managed correctly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ <b>Gas &amp; electrical safety:</b> Records of safe installations</li> <li>✔ <b>Fire &amp; carbon monoxide safety:</b> Working detection and safe exit</li> <li>✔ <b>Security:</b> Working locks on doors and windows</li> <li>✔ <b>Warmth:</b> Can be kept reasonably warm e.g. heating, insulation</li> <li>✔ <b>Overcrowding:</b> Enough space &amp; amenities for occupants</li> <li>✔ <b>State of repair:</b> Good state of repair internally and outside</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ <b>Regular inspections:</b> every 6 months, with 24 hours' notice</li> <li>✔ <b>Deal with repairs:</b> Processes for reporting &amp; responding in good time</li> <li>✔ <b>Waste:</b> Have a Waste Management Plan in place</li> <li>✔ <b>Anti-social behaviour:</b> Policy that sets out steps to address ASB by residents or visitors</li> <li>✔ <b>Tenancy information:</b> Written Tenancy Agreement and information pack</li> </ul>

Image 2: About licensing

Overall, between January 2020 and December 2024, 33,318 licences were issued. Table 2 below summarises some of the key facts and figures about the licensing schemes. Some of the key take-away facts from this are:

- Selective Licensing is the biggest of the three licensing schemes, making up 88% of licensed properties.
- At the peak during this period, licensing covered 33,500 homes and an estimated 89,000 people living in those homes.
- The highest numbers of Selective licensed properties are in the Castle ward (around the city centre area) and Hyson Green and Arboretum (including the Nottingham Trent University campus and the diverse area of Hyson Green). The highest concentration of HMO Licences are in the traditionally student-dominated areas of Lenton and Wollaton East, and Radford.<sup>e</sup>

<sup>e</sup> See HMO and Selectively Licensed properties heat map in Technical and Data Appendix

	Selective Licensing	Mandatory Licensing	Additional Licensing
Licences issued 2020-24	28,235 licences issued <sup>f</sup>	2,983 licences issued	2,100 licences issued
About landlords	14,108 licence holders 86% are individuals (14% organisations)	1,751 licence holders 79% are individuals (21% organisations)	1,421 licence holders 77% are individuals (23% organisations)
About licensed properties	No. of licences in force (properties licensed) varies over time, starting at 5,165 in 2020, peaking at 29,351 homes in 2023  The highest concentration of SL properties are in Castle ward and Hyson Green and Arboretum ward	No. of licences in force (licensed properties) between 1,603 and 2,447  The highest concentration of ML properties are in Lenton and Wollaton East ward and Radford ward	No. of licences in force (licensed properties) between 1,318 and 1,957  The highest concentration of AL properties are in Lenton and Wollaton East ward and Hyson Green and Arboretum ward
About renters	Estimated 2.3 occupants per property <sup>g</sup>  67,507 people living in SL properties at peak	Average of 6.1 people per property  14,882 people living in ML properties at peak	Average of 3.9 people per property  6,635 people living in AL properties at peak

Table 2: Summary stats for Nottingham's licensing schemes

<sup>f</sup> Including new and renewed licences

<sup>g</sup> Selective licence data does not include the number of occupants. Data taken from [English Housing Survey 2023-24](#) for private rented households.

# How does licensing work?

## What does having a licence mean?

The aim of licensing is to drive up standards of privately rented homes and protect renters across the city. When a landlord applies for a licence, they agree to follow certain conditions. NCC’s licensing team checks and enforces compliance with these conditions.

What are licence conditions?	
Legal compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Fit and proper person:</b> To make sure landlords and anyone involved in managing the property are suitable and trustworthy, the Council looks at whether the person has a history that suggests they may put tenants at risk or fail to manage the property responsibly e.g. criminal convictions, breaches of housing law, failure to comply with safety regulations, past involvement in unlawful activity, or association with people who are not fit and proper</li> <li>• <b>Comply with housing law:</b> All landlords have legal responsibilities to make sure rented homes are safe, habitable and managed correctly e.g. tenancy deposits in a government-approved scheme, provide an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) which is rated E or above</li> </ul>
Property standards	<p><b>Licensed properties should:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Gas safety:</b> Have an up-to-date record that states gas installations are safe</li> <li>• <b>Electrical safety:</b> Have an up-to-date certificate that states electrical installations are safe, and appliances provided by the landlord are in a safe working condition</li> <li>• <b>Fire safety:</b> Have working fire detection e.g. smoke detectors on each floor, and safe escape routes in the event of a fire</li> <li>• <b>Carbon monoxide safety:</b> Have carbon monoxide detectors near boiler/fireplace(s)</li> <li>• <b>Security:</b> Can be kept secure, with working locks on doors and windows</li> <li>• <b>Warmth:</b> Can be kept reasonably warm e.g. working heating, double-glazed windows, loft insulation (should have an EPC of E or above)</li> <li>• <b>Overcrowding:</b> The home is not overcrowded and there is enough kitchen space and bathrooms for everyone that lives there</li> <li>• <b>State of repair inside:</b> In a good state of repair internally e.g. property’s structure, bathrooms, heating and hot water, gas appliances, electrical systems, and common areas</li> <li>• <b>State of repair outside:</b> Outside of the property should be maintained in good repair</li> </ul>
Management responsibilities	<p><b>Licensed landlords should:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Do regular inspections:</b> Inspect the home every six months, giving residents at least 24 hours’ notice</li> <li>• <b>Deal with repairs:</b> Residents are able to report repairs issues, and the landlord has a process to respond to requests in reasonable time, keeping residents informed on progress</li> <li>• <b>Plan for dealing with waste:</b> Have a Waste Management Plan in place that can effectively deal with the household’s waste e.g. suitable storage, recycling, and collection of waste at the start, during and end of the tenancy</li> <li>• <b>Clear behaviour expectations:</b> Be clear what reasonable and practical steps will be taken if there is any anti-social behaviour or criminality by residents or visitors to the property (Anti-Social Behaviour policy)</li> <li>• <b>Provide tenancy information:</b> Provide a written Tenancy Agreement and an information pack with all the above information</li> </ul>

Table 3: Overview of licence conditions

Landlords can also become accredited through partner organisations recognised by NCC, which provide good landlords with a quality mark and a lower licence fee.

## Accreditation to the Nottingham Rental Standard



The Nottingham Rental Standard is a quality mark for accredited landlords through Unipol<sup>h</sup> or DASH<sup>i</sup> that promotes and encourages high property standards and management practices in privately rented housing.

Landlords apply for accreditation and receive:

- A lower accredited licence fee rate
- Access to free training and good practice information and resources
- Self-regulation, with checks provided by accreditation partners to work with landlords to meet standard requirements

Accreditation means good landlords are recognised by potential tenants and rewarded through lower licence fees and benefits.



Figure 1: About accreditation to the Nottingham Rental Standard

<sup>h</sup> [Unipol](#) is NCC's partner in Nottingham to provide accreditation for student accommodation

<sup>i</sup> [DASH](#) is NCC's partner in Nottingham to provide accreditation for non-student landlords

## Licensing in action

Licensing runs on a five-year cycle. Towards the beginning of the cycle, the focus is on getting all properties that require a licence into the licensing system. This includes raising awareness of licensing with landlords, processing licence applications and issuing licences. This also includes tracking down landlords who require a licence but haven't applied for one. Landlords can apply for a licence at any point during this cycle and the licence lasts for up to five years, but there tends to be a spike in new applications at the start of a new licensing scheme as initial five year licences expire and new applications are received from both previously licensed and newly licensable properties.

Over the course of the licensing scheme, the activities shift more towards checking that landlords and their properties are meeting licence conditions. This is through desktop audits and property inspections. The licence audits check evidence that licence conditions are being met, e.g. by reviewing safety certificates, ASB and waste policies. The team also go out to properties to carry out inspections, to physically check that the outside and inside of the property is meeting the required standards. Not all properties are inspected, and the team aim to take a risk-based approach, for example focusing on properties that haven't already passed an inspection. Where landlords are accredited, they may have a property visit by their accreditation body.

These functions are collectively known as the **proactive management** of the licensing scheme, ensuring that all properties and landlords that require a licence apply and are issued a licence, and that a targeted sample are checked for compliance against the standards set out in the licence. The proactive management functions together provide a foundation of **data and intelligence** which informs the core and wider work of the licensing team.

The team also carry out **reactive management** to respond to issues that are raised, either through inspections or through reports from other sources. Officers work with individual landlords to investigate and address the issues raised. Where landlords don't comply, the team is able to take enforcement action to bring about compliance or penalise landlords who are breaking the law.

The licensing team is resourced by 105 team members, who take on the core roles of proactive and reactive management. Alongside these core functions, the team carry out wider roles with different stakeholder groups to increase the effectiveness of licensing. For example, much of the effectiveness of licensing hangs on the engagement and response of landlords. Rather than just achieve the minimum standards of licensing, the team aim to **promote good practice** to landlords, by maximising engagement with landlords, sharing information with them (such as changing housing regulations, e.g. The Renters' Rights Act), promoting best practice standards including via training and accreditation. This has a ripple effect, as supporting a landlord to improve their practice has a knock-on effect on all the properties that they own or manage.

Another way that the licensing team can have a broader impact is by **working in partnership** with other local agencies and organisations who are working towards shared goals for the communities where licensing operates, and strategically across the city. Working in partnership maximises impact in a number of ways. Firstly, it avoids duplication – for example, both the Fire Service and licensing are aiming to improve fire safety, and through a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations, have been able to share resources for checking fire safety across privately rented properties (see case study 9). It also means that partner organisations can bring both of their regulatory powers to bear in order to effectively tackle an issue. For example, in cases of anti-social behaviour, the licensing team can work with the Council's Neighbourhood Safety Officers, who have regulatory powers that they can apply to citizens who are committing ASB, whilst licensing can work with landlords to address the situation from a dual perspective. Also, sharing data and intelligence between partner organisations can increase effectiveness. For example, NCC's Waste team share information about problem waste with the licensing team, so that targeted interventions can be made. Finally, where the licensing team come across issues that are outside of their specialist expertise, they can make referrals to other agencies to provide the required support. Because

licensing has the power of entry into a property, this can in some cases reveal wider issues that may have gone unnoticed. For example, it may become apparent that there is a hoarding issue, which can be referred to the specialised Hoarding Panel for support to the resident, as well as to the Fire Service to make them aware (see case study 13).

During the five-year cycle, the licensing scheme is assessed for its effectiveness and at the end of the scheme, a review is carried out to consider the ongoing need for licensing, and areas most in need. These reviews have resulted in changes to the boundaries of each discretionary licensing scheme at intervals.<sup>j</sup>

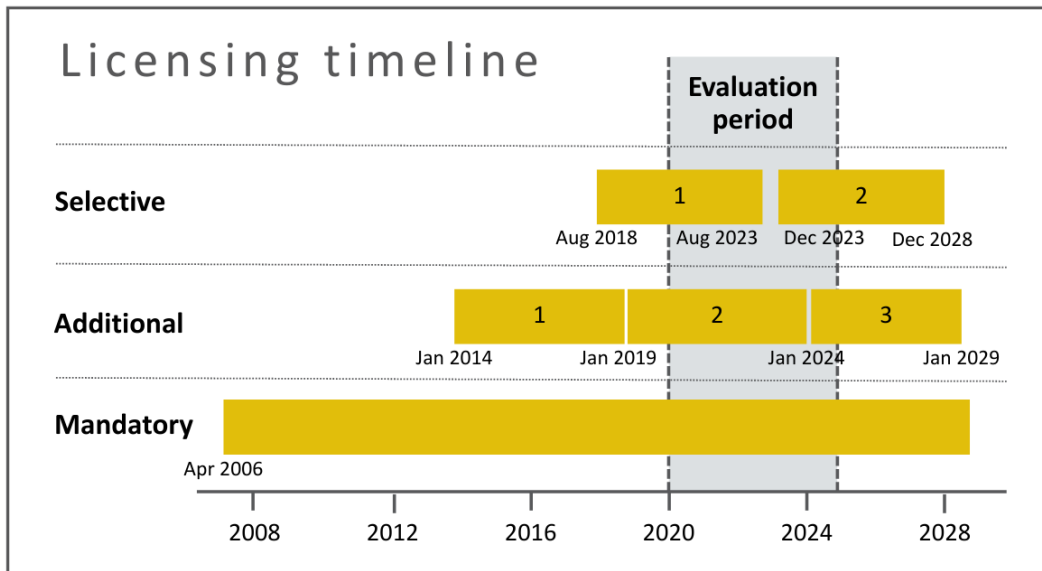


Figure 2: Licensing designation timeline and evaluation period

<sup>j</sup> Maps of the Additional and Selective Licensing scheme boundaries are available in the technical appendix.

**Proactive management**

<p><b>Licence applications</b></p>	<p>Landlords submit licence applications which are checked by the team – any missing or additional information is requested, before being issued.</p> <p>Licence applications provide initial information on landlords, properties and evidence of meeting licence conditions e.g. safety documents, EPC, tenancy management documentation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>33,318</b> licences issued</li> <li>• <b>16,373</b> licence holders on database</li> </ul> <p><b>Case study 1: Day in the life of Compliance Officer</b></p>
<p><b>Tracking down unlicensed landlords</b></p>	<p>The team carry out desktop investigations (e.g. using Council Tax data) and doorstep investigations (following local leads) to track down landlords who are letting without a licence.</p> <p>If found to need a licence, landlords are required to apply for a licence. Enforcement action can be taken against landlords operating without a licence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>19,163</b> investigations of unlicensed landlords</li> <li>• <b>7,443</b> of these properties required a licence</li> <li>• <b>157</b> enforcement actions taken against landlords refusing to comply</li> </ul> <p><b>Case study 6: Removing unlawful landlords from the rental market</b></p>
<p><b>Licence audits and property inspections</b></p>	<p>Over the period of the licence scheme, a proportion of licences are checked to make sure all the required management regulations are correct and up to date. Officers also go out to properties to inspect them, either externally or internally.<sup>k</sup></p> <p>Licensing inspectors have the right of entry to inspect a property under the licensing scheme. This gives insight into what is happening ‘behind the door’ i.e. checking property conditions, and general living conditions. This helps identify any hazards or licence breaches, which are followed up with landlords to make sure they are remedied. Officers can refer other issues identified that are outside of the remit of licensing to other partner agencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>8,758</b> licence audits</li> <li>• <b>9,245</b> internal inspections</li> <li>• <b>21,401</b> external inspections</li> <li>• <b>4,498</b> properties improved</li> </ul> <p><b>Case study 2: Day in the life of inspection officer</b></p> <p><b>Case study 7: Homes made warm, removing hazards to health</b></p> <p><b>Case study 8: Homes made safe, reducing hazards to health</b></p> <p><b>Case study 10: Improving external property standards</b></p>
<p><b>Data and intelligence</b></p>	<p>Licence applications and follow-up audit and inspection processes provide the data and intelligence to inform the effective working of the licensing scheme.</p> <p>This means the licensing team and wider partnership have information on privately rented properties across Nottingham, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact details of landlord/agent to resolve issues</li> <li>• The location, size and type of privately rented properties across the city</li> <li>• Intelligence from ‘behind the door’ via inspections e.g. property standards, living conditions, renter wellbeing issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Database of <b>16,373</b> licence holders</li> <li>• Database of <b>33,500</b> properties</li> <li>• Inspection data from <b>30,646</b> property inspections</li> </ul> <p><b>Case study 13: Going ‘behind the door’ to identify and refer safeguarding issues</b></p>

<sup>k</sup> Accredited landlords are inspected by their relevant accreditation body (DASH or Unipol) who support landlords to maintain their accredited standard, The Nottingham Rental Standard.

Reactive management		
<b>Responsive investigations</b>	<p>The team respond to and investigates complaints relating to licensed properties, raised directly by tenants, landlords or members of the community, or via other community organisations such as local Councillors, Police, Neighbourhood Safety Officers.</p> <p>The Tenancy Matters team is part of licensing, and provide direct support to renters or landlords in relation to any tenancy issues. A sample of renters are also surveyed directly each month to verify their experience of property and landlord.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2,036</b> ASB reports received</li> <li>• <b>1,531</b> cases supported by Tenancy Matter team</li> <li>• <b>1,473</b> renter verification surveys carried out</li> </ul> <p><b>Case study 3: Working in partnership to tackle ASB</b></p> <p><b>Case study 5: Supporting landlords and renters with Tenancy Matters</b></p>
<b>Enforcement</b>	<p>If landlords don't respond or comply with requests to meet licence conditions, the team can take further enforcement action, which can include financial penalties and legal action.</p> <p>This ensures that the licence standards are ultimately upheld, and protects tenants from ongoing poor standards or management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>157</b> enforcement actions taken (Final Written Warnings, Civil Penalty Notices, Prosecutions)</li> </ul> <p><b>Case study 6: Removing unlawful landlords from the rental market</b></p>
Promoting good practice		
<b>Landlord support</b>	<p>The licensing team engage with landlords on a day-to-day basis, and aim to work with landlords to encourage and support compliance with licensing. Landlords have one-to-one contact with an individual licensing officer, who will work with the landlord to achieve informal resolutions, share information on relevant legislation or guidance.</p> <p>The Tenancy Matters team also support landlords with questions arising around their tenancy/tenants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>52%</b> of landlords are directly involved in managing their property</li> <li>• <b>445</b> landlords supported by Tenancy Matters</li> </ul> <p><b>Case study 5: Supporting landlords and renters with Tenancy Matters</b></p>
<b>Landlord engagement</b>	<p>The licensing team (together with accreditation partners) share regular updates and best practice guidance with landlords, via landlord webinars and newsletters.</p> <p>The licensing team work with landlords and representatives of local landlord industry groups via quarterly Landlord and Agent Forums.</p> <p>Landlords are kept informed about licensing requirements, best practice and wider updates about the rental market, such as the Renters' Rights Act.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>5,000</b> landlords signed up to licensing newsletter</li> <li>• <b>100</b> landlords attend Nottingham Rental Standard webinar</li> <li>• <b>12-15</b> landlords and industry representatives sit on Landlord and Agent Forum</li> </ul> <p><b>Case study 4: Working with landlords to improve knowledge and standards</b></p>
<b>Landlord training and accreditation</b>	<p>Landlords are required to complete relevant training on the law and legal requirements relating to managing privately rented housing every three years. Accreditation partners DASH and Unipol provide relevant training in Nottingham.</p> <p>Landlords can also become accredited to the Nottingham Rental Standard, a quality mark for Landlords. Accredited landlords receive free training and information/best practice resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>48%</b> of landlords report completing training in the last 3 years</li> <li>• <b>35%</b> of landlords are accredited</li> </ul> <p><b>Accreditation partners impact statement (p.44)</b></p>

Partnership working		
<b>Universities and students</b>	<p>NCC licensing work with the University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University at a strategic level, to achieve the goals of the Student Living Strategy<sup>12</sup>; and at a practical level, attending housing information events for students, working in partnership to tackle community issues such as waste management and ASB, and responding to individual landlord/student renter cases.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>6,700</b> student households in on-street accommodation<sup>13</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>Case study 12: Working in partnership to tackle persistent noise and ASB</b></p>
<b>Police and Community Protection</b>	<p>The licensing team work closely with NCC's Community Protection team's Neighbourhood Safety Officers. NSOs work with licensing officers to deal with ASB issues relating to licensed properties, and also carry out external inspections of licensed properties and report any improvements needed.</p> <p>Licensing officers and neighbourhood Police inspectors attend Neighbourhood Action Team meetings together and respond jointly to any local issues raised. The Police have worked in partnership with the licensing team on specific issues, such as engaging landlords in the Safer Streets initiative to support target-hardening in areas with high burglary rates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>8,430</b> external inspections carried out by NSOs, identifying 1,280 properties needing improvement</li> </ul> <p><b>Case study 12: Working in partnership to tackle persistent noise and ASB</b></p>
<b>Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service</b>	<p>Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) work in partnership with NCC licensing, with an agreement for licensing officers to inspect fire safety issues in HMOs and a Joint Action and Inspection Team (JAIT) that focuses on large multi-occupancy residential buildings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>167</b> joint inspections of large multi-occupied residential buildings</li> </ul> <p><b>Case study 9: Improving fire safety in tall residential buildings</b></p>
<b>Cross-Council working</b>	<p>The licensing team engage with other departments within Nottingham City Council to work together to achieve shared objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste reduction and recycling – all licensed properties must have a Waste Management Plan. Licensing have resourced an additional 2 waste advisors to tackle issues, responding to live data from refuse crews and long-term issues such as end of term waste at student properties.</li> <li>• Planning – checking that licensed properties meet required planning permissions, including conversion to HMOs.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Case study 11: Working in partnership to reduce problem waste</b></p> <p><b>Case study 14: Working with Planning to prevent overcrowding and maintain balanced communities</b></p>
<b>Resident and community engagement</b>	<p>Licensing officers attend local Resident Meetings and Neighbourhood Action Team meetings, where residents and other local agencies can raise issues with licensed properties.</p> <p>The team also join Ward Walks with local Councillors, and do regular community door-knocks to engage with residents so they can raise any issues.</p>	<p><b>Case study 3: Working in partnership to tackle ASB</b></p>

Table 4: Overview of licensing activities

# CASE STUDY 1

## A day in the life of a Compliance Officer

**“I’m a Compliance Officer, involved with processing HMO (House in Multiple Occupation) applications. We need to make sure we grant a licence to the right person - the right person to hold the licence and it's the right person managing the property itself. We ensure it has sufficient amenities and space for the number of renters who live in it, and it is safe for them. This contributes to making sure that the property is decent for the renters, and it is suitable to be a HMO and the person managing it is competent.”**

We have five tests when we’re processing a licence application. Firstly, is the licence holder a fit and proper person? For example, whether they have any convictions – and if they do, whether it’s related to something we need to be concerned about. For the majority of licence holders, this isn’t an issue.

We check whether they are based in the UK, so that they can manage the property and be responsive to any works needed or so we can get hold of them for any of their legal responsibilities. We do similar fit and proper checks for the manager of the property as well if it’s a different person/company.

Thirdly, is the management competent? We check their management arrangements, for example that they have a budget to respond to repairs, or what the process is if an emergency repair is needed.

Next, are the shared amenities suitable and sufficient? We have local amenity and space guidance, for example on how many cookers needed for the number of people, how many sockets in the kitchen, is there enough communal space – do any works need to be done to make it suitable for the number of people living there.

And finally, is the property suitable? For example, we check the bedroom size, is there a fire escape route in the property, do the gas or electrical safety certificates show defects that means something is dangerous – to make it safe for the renters that live there.

If there are any improvements needed, we put this as a licence condition– and we detail all of the works needed, and give a reasonable deadline. Some of the landlords are not aware of the standards, especially if it’s the first time for them to apply. So we will help to provide the standards, guidance and the legal requirements.

Some of the landlords are quite responsive, and sometimes we need to give them a call. I believe the landlords don’t want their property to be unsafe as well. Through the application we see the issues, we raise the issues, we work with the landlords to solve the issues to prevent something potentially dangerous from happening. We give them the opportunity to express their opinions on how to remedy the problem, to see if they have an alternative solution. We ask for the evidence to show the issues have been dealt with.

HMO licensing ensures properties are suitable for being a HMO and the person/body managing them are competent. This is to ensure the property offers a comfortable and safe home for HMO renters. All the works we asked for, all the issues we found along the way with processing the application – it helps to improve the housing quality of the HMOs city-wide.

“ Ultimately this contributes to ensure the renters’ health and safety. If the renter enjoys living in the HMO they are more likely to remain, which is also something the landlord would like to see. So happy renters, happy landlords!

”

## Resourcing licensing

Licensing in Nottingham is self-financing, with all operational costs covered by the income generated from licence fees. The licence fee is set at a level that covers the cost of delivering the scheme (appropriately resourced so the scheme is successful), whilst balancing reasonable costs for landlords. No general Council tax is used to support the scheme, and income from licence fees is only used to deliver the scheme, following the legislative framework and the Local Government Association guidance.<sup>14</sup>

The current standard licence fee is £918 per individual Selective Licence property, and £1,553 per HMO Licence. Lower licence fees are available for landlords accredited to the Nottingham Rental Standard. Landlords who own a number of individual properties in a block can apply for a Selective Licence block fee. A higher fee is charged where there is evidence of a history of non-compliance with licensing. Full details about licensing fees are publicly available in NCC's Licence Fee Policy.<sup>15</sup>

All Councils have a duty to investigate any property when complaints are made, and act on serious hazards under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) under the Housing Act 2004, in addition to the scope of licensing regulation. The licensing teams have access to privately rented properties, and their expertise and intelligence support this work to be more targeted, efficient and effective. The Licensing function therefore receives some Council funding specific to this element of their work.

This Social Return on Investment (SROI) calculation covers the most recent five years, from January 2020 – December 2024. This period crosses over the last two years of the first Selective Licensing scheme and into the second scheme, and the last three years of the second Additional Licensing scheme and into the third scheme. Mandatory Licensing is a legislative requirement that runs throughout the period (see [Figure 2](#)).

In the SROI, the costs of operating licensing are compared to the benefits it generates. The 'cost' figure for the SROI uses the expenditure of the licensing teams over the evaluation period, as this best reflects the costs of delivering the scheme.

### What do licensing fees pay for?

Over the evaluation period (January 2020-December 2024) the licensing schemes generated a total income of just over £28,000,000. Over this period, the expenditure was just under £24,900,000. The balance is used to continue the compliance work for those licences that were issued in the five years of the scheme and will still be in force when the designation ends.<sup>1</sup>

	Selective Licensing	HMO Licensing	TOTAL
<b>Income:</b>	<b>£20,963,028</b>	<b>£7,039,067</b>	<b>£28,002,095</b>
<b>Expenditure:</b>			
Staff costs	£16,537,660	£5,684,665	£22,222,325
Overhead costs	£734,798	£64,872	£799,670
Support services	£1,293,513	£571,187	£1,864,700
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£18,565,971</b>	<b>£6,320,724</b>	<b>£24,886,695</b>

Table 5: Licensing income and expenditure January 2020 - December 2024

<sup>1</sup> The fee for schemes cover the costs associated with administering the licensing scheme over the length of their designation (5 years). There will be no gain or loss in association with the schemes, they will be cost neutral. The Council is not permitted to obtain financial gain from the fees paid through the licensing process.

Staff costs<sup>m</sup> make up the majority (89%) of the expenditure for licensing. Licensing is delivered by a local, skilled workforce, investing jobs and skills back into the city. The licensing team employs around 105 staff to carry out all functions. The team employs a high proportion of local people, with 57% of the staff team living within Nottingham city, and a further 33% in Nottinghamshire. Staff are qualified at a suitable level for their role, and receive further training to boost their skills and knowledge across a range of relevant areas. 18 members of the licensing team have completed higher level Apprenticeships, for example in Environmental Health and Regulatory Compliance. Four members of the team have completed a Masters in Environmental Health. Over half of the team hold the Advanced Professional Certificate in Investigative Practice, and have completed a range of other training, for example in relation to HHSRS, Fire Safety, HMO enforcement, PACE formal evidence gathering and interviewing, and Dynamic Risk Assessment.

Other costs include overhead costs such as the charges for office space, phone and IT, vehicle and travel costs, staff equipment and other professional fees and service costs. Support services include internal recharges to cover the costs of NCC support services, including finance, HR, IT, Legal services and other corporate services.

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<sup>m</sup> Staff costs include salaries and on-costs (e.g. annual leave, tax and pensions), as well as training costs.

## CASE STUDY 2

### A day in the life of an Inspection Officer

**“I’m a Compliance Officer for the HMO licensing Team, so I do three or four inspections a week. I like that I’ve got cases from start to finish, seeing the properties improved. Last year I supported landlords to make improvements to over 100 properties – and the average number of people in an HMO is five, so that’s improved the living standards of 500 people in a year.”**

I’m given the addresses by our team, from the list of their priorities, such as larger HMOs that haven’t had an inspection in a while, or if they’ve received a complaint. I’ll have a look at their case before I go out, checking any previous inspections or previous conditions that have been put on the licence. I have a standard inspection form to complete for each room in the house.

Usually someone meets me there – the landlord or manager, or a resident will let me in. We usually start from the top of the house and work down! We go into every single room and check everything. The biggest risks are fire safety and falls (on stairs or between levels), that’s where people get injured in houses. And in the kitchen, safety around cooking.

I talk with the landlord as I’m going, and they’ll be asking questions. If it’s over safety then there’s no leeway there. So, for example, if there’s no fire detection then I can’t leave the property until I know that’s safe. But if it’s about amenities or other things, we allow them to raise their concerns and suggestions about how to address it, as well as being reasonable and flexible about how long it will take to get the work done.

The majority of HMOs are student houses, and they tend to be of a good standard because it’s a competitive market. Most landlords are civil, the experienced ones have been through inspections before and know what we are looking for. It’s unusual that there’s no work needed, but mainly it’s minor issues that can be fixed quite quickly.

The main thing is to make properties safe – but we don’t want to make people homeless, so we work with the landlord to come to a solution where it’s safe. We also talk to the landlords if they’ve got problems with tenants – we have the Tenancy Matters team, and they’re here to help you as well.

I like it if there’s a tenant there, because I can talk to them and say ‘look, tell me any issues you’ve had. Did you report that to the landlord?’. I make sure I make it clear to the tenants, if they’ve got any issues and they’ve reported it to the landlord and not got a response, then contact the Council – especially if it’s anything to do with safety.

After the inspection I usually send the landlord my report, with a schedule of works that needs to be completed. Most of the time, I don’t need to go and reinspect, and the landlords send me evidence of the work that’s been done. I normally give people two months, and if I haven’t heard anything then I’ll escalate it. If I say I’m coming to reinspect, often a lot of work will then get done.

Most respond before any more enforcement is needed. Some landlords will only do the works with the threat of enforcement action. Only the extreme cases where we say you’re not a fit and proper person to manage this property, we’re likely to reject your next application. Then they often step back and give it to a management company, because they’re not doing the works and they need to change.

“ Our inspections certainly improve safety, and I see landlords put the work in to make properties suitable and to the quality we expect. And we also see good quality properties and encourage those landlords with positive feedback. ”

# What difference does licensing make?

## Who is affected by licensing?

The social impact assessment starts by considering who is most affected by licensing. Four main groups were identified as being relevant to this assessment:<sup>n</sup>

- **Landlords and Agents:** Landlords, and those who manage properties on behalf of landlords (managing Agents), have the most direct day-to-day interaction with licensing, through applying for the licence, meeting licence standards, responding to inspections or audits of their properties, etc. Landlords also pay for the licensing scheme through the licence fee. Landlords are clearly impacted by licensing.
- **Renters:** The aim of licensing is to ‘drive up standards and protect tenants across the city’, to the benefit of those living in privately rented properties. Renters have limited direct interaction with licensing (some may be present while an inspection takes place, or may raise a complaint to the licensing team), but they are affected by licensing as a result of improvements made to their home or the way it is managed as a result of the requirements of licensing. As the intended beneficiaries of licensing, renters are an important stakeholder group in this impact assessment.
- **Neighbours and communities:** Residents living in areas around licensed properties are affected by standards of privately rented homes in their area. The look and feel of a neighbourhood, and interactions between private renters and residents of other tenures, has an impact on the wellbeing of those living in the area.
- **City partnership:** Licensing aims to impact long-term outcomes for Nottingham city and its residents, through its own activities and by working in partnership with others who are working towards shared goals. Licensing is working with others to achieve the long-term vision for Nottingham, to make Nottingham a flourishing, inclusive, and sustainable city where residents thrive.

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<sup>n</sup> For a full stakeholder assessment, showing included and excluded stakeholders, see technical appendix document

Stakeholder	Number	Characteristics	How consulted?
<b>Landlords and Agents</b>	16,373 licence holders (landlords or agents)	<p>Majority (70%) have just one licence. 28% have 2-10 licences. Only 2% have more than 10 licences, with only 25 cases of a licence holder with over 100 licences.</p> <p>Most are individuals (85%) rather than organisations.</p> <p>Only a small fraction (3%) have both a Selective and HMO Licence.</p> <p>Of those with known demographic info, landlords are slightly more likely to be male (60%) than Nottingham average, from White ethnic background (80%) and median age is 55-64. Black and mixed ethnicity groups are underrepresented.</p>	<p>Information session at Nottingham Rental Standard webinar (100+ landlords)</p> <p>Theory of Change consultation at Landlord and Agent Forum, Jan 2025 (8-10 landlords)</p> <p>Landlord online survey – sent to 11,300 landlords, 816 responses</p>
<b>Renters</b>	<p>Est. 89,000 renters in licensed properties at peak (2023)</p> <p>21,000 in 2020, 64,500 in 2024</p>	<p>29% are single person households, 28% are households with children.</p> <p>Renting spikes in 20s, declines in 30s and 40s.</p> <p>Very few older people (4.6% over 65).</p> <p>Ethnicity of renters is broadly in line with city averages, except more renters from White Gypsy/Irish Traveller, Roma or other white ethnic groups.</p> <p>Renters less likely to be disabled or in poor health.</p>	<p>Renter online survey – sent to 8,000 households, 316 responses</p> <p>Student focus groups, NTU and UoN (12 students)</p> <p>Renter in-depth telephone interviews (7)</p>
<b>Neighbours and communities</b>	8,000 households of other tenures in neighbourhoods where PRS is predominant tenure (>50%)	<p>In these neighbourhoods, 21% are owner-occupier and 16% are social rented households.</p> <p>These neighbourhoods are in Hyson Green and Arboretum, Lenton and Wollaton East, Radford, Berridge, St Anns, Dales, Meadows, Mapperley.</p>	<p>Licensing team attend local Resident Groups, Neighbourhood Action Groups and Ward Walks.</p>
<b>City partnership</b>	N/A	<p>The following organisations and groups were identified as key stakeholders for licensing in the city partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Safety Officers (Community Protection)</li> <li>• Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service</li> <li>• University of Nottingham and Nottingham Trent University</li> <li>• NCC Waste department</li> <li>• Public Health</li> <li>• CN28 (Carbon Neutral 2028)</li> </ul>	<p>In depth consultation carried out with representatives of these groups, both strategic and operational.</p> <p>10 in-depth interviews/focus groups carried out.</p>

Table 6: Stakeholder analysis and consultation

## Landlords' views on licensing

The landlord survey provided the opportunity for landlords and agents to provide their views on licensing. The survey was sent to all currently registered licence holders (11,300 contacts) and over 800 people responded.<sup>9</sup> The survey reached all types of landlord that are in the licensing scheme, as the profile of those who responded is in line with data from across all licence holders – for example, 74% of respondents own 1-2 properties (compared to 84% of all licence holders), 84% were Selective licence holders, 16% were HMO or mixed (compared to 83% all licence holders have Selective licences, 17% HMO or mixed), and 35% said they were accredited (compared to 35% of licences issued to accredited landlords). The size and the profile of the respondents mean that we can be confident that those who responded to the survey are representative of the wider licensed landlord group.

Just over half of landlords own and directly manage their properties. 40% are landlords who are not directly involved in managing their properties (e.g. use a management company or agent). 6% of respondents were letting Agents. The majority (74%) have been a landlord for more than 5 years, so have experience of the licensing scheme.

Licensing aims to bring all landlords and properties within the scheme up to a minimum standard, as set out by the licence conditions. Landlords may already be meeting these standards. Survey responses indicate that around two-thirds of landlords feel that this applies to them. For example, when asked about what improvements they had made as a result of licensing, 69% of landlords stated that no improvements were required, as the standards were already being met. When asked to give a free-text response to 'how has licensing changed your property standards and tenancy management approach', around 60% of responses indicated that it hadn't made a difference.

However, around 1 in 5 landlords indicate that licensing has considerably or significantly improved their practice or standards. For example, 25% of landlords said operating within licensing had considerably or significantly improved aspects of their knowledge and awareness. 15% of landlords had made considerable or significant improvements to one or more of their property standards or tenancy management practices.

Some landlords felt that licensing has had a negative impact on them.

- Around a quarter of responses indicated that they felt negatively about the cost of licensing. This included sentiments such as licensing being an additional means for the Council to raise money, that good landlords are paying a cost in order to deal with bad/rogue landlords, or that the cost is passed on to the tenant in the form of higher rent.
- Around 1 in 10 responses indicated that licensing had placed additional administrative burden on them, for example as a result of the application or inspection process.
- Other negative sentiments expressed included a few cases where landlords stated that they were now looking to sell their properties or not invest in properties within licensed areas. Others felt that the government/Council has a negative attitude towards private landlords in general.
- Some landlords felt that the worst/rogue landlords would avoid being licensed and therefore the system doesn't have an impact on the worst cases.

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<sup>9</sup> The response rate gives a margin of error of +/-3.30% at a 95% confidence level, such that we can be confident that the responses given by those who completed the survey is representative of the wider licensed landlord group.

Landlords were also asked specifically about their experience of inspection. Just under two-thirds (63%) of respondents have had a property inspected by NCC Housing Licensing. Overall, around 40% were satisfied with the experience, 40% were neutral and 20% were dissatisfied.

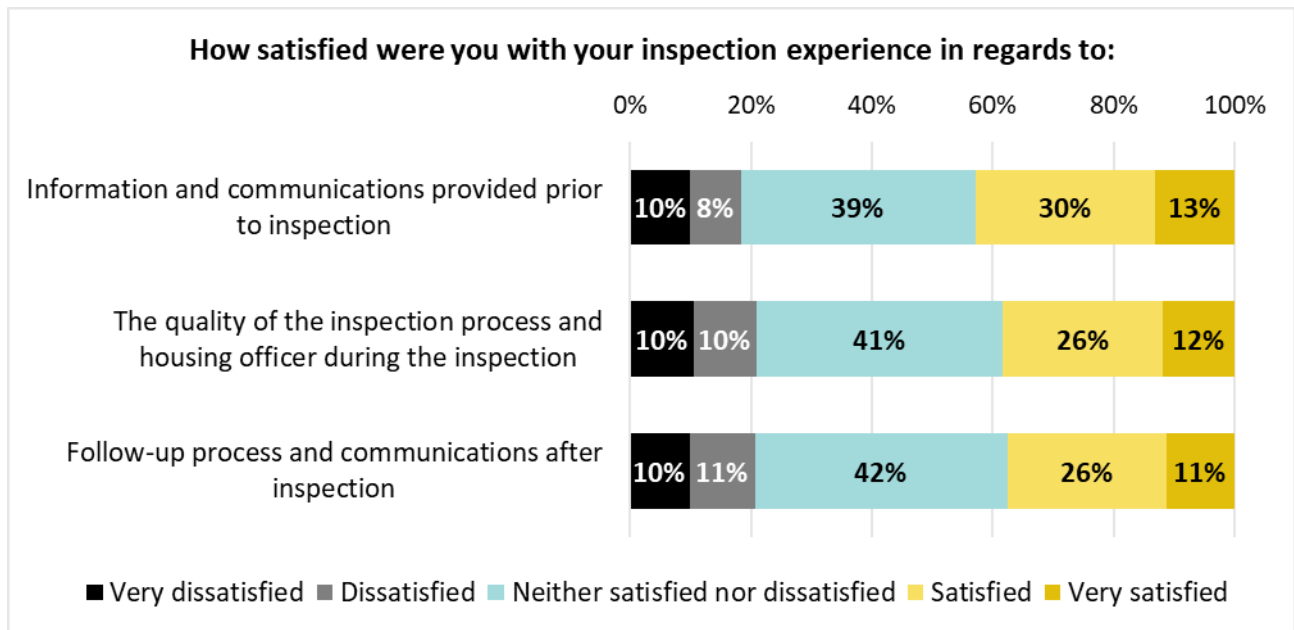


Figure 3: Landlord satisfaction with inspection, landlord survey (n=513)

# LANDLORD VIEWS

## Responses from the landlord survey

Landlords were surveyed and asked ‘How has licensing changed your property standards and tenancy management approach?’ Responses fitted into three broad themes: Around 60% felt that no change was needed, as they are already meeting licensing standards. Around 10-20% expressed a negative response, such as increased costs or administrative burden. Around 10-15% described how licensing had improved their practice, through increased awareness, understanding and a focus on safety and compliance.

### No change needed

“My property was already in excellent condition, met all requirements and was properly managed with robust contracts in place.”

“Personally I have always managed my properties to an acceptable standard ensuring that my tenants’ needs are always met and any problems quickly resolved. Selective Licensing hasn’t really improved these standards but will have the effect of protecting tenants from landlords who do not hold the same standards.”

“Prior to licensing I believe I was doing a good job maintaining property standards and a positive approach to tenancy management, and attending forums and knowing where to seek help if I was unsure. There are a lot landlords like me who want to do our very best in offering high standards for tenants.”

“The licensing scheme has not made any real change to how I let my properties, I have always provided good quality housing as I believe if I am providing a service for someone, it should be to a good standard, and somewhere nice for them to make their home. I have good relationships with all my tenants.”

“High standard already in place. Managing Agent was changed to ensure high standards and professional communication with tenants.”

### Negative impacts

“I do not think Licensing in itself has improved standards or my approach. What it has done has made being a landlord a lot more time consuming with the paperwork/online submissions, costs to the council, and a great deal of stress and anxiety.”

“It has made me put the property on the market as the inspection requirements are too strict and expensive to be cost effective.”

“I already maintained my property to a high standard and managed my tenants responsibly. The only impact licensing has had is financial, it has cost me money to obtain the licence, which I’ve had to recover by increasing the rent.”

“Has not changed our property standards as we already met the required standards of safety and were good landlords to our tenants providing properties of a good standard. The licence has meant increased costs for us, both for the licences themselves and increased costs from the managing agents in the paperwork involved.”

“It feels as if quality landlords are being penalised and paying additional costs purely to try and control less professional landlords.”

“It has reduced standards slightly because of the fees”

### Positive impacts

“More aware of overall responsibilities, so feel confident if anything were to go wrong ... and was aware of things like needing to put in CO alarms which weren’t present when we first started renting.”

“I’m more aware of yearly checks on gas, etc.”

“Licensing has significantly elevated our property standards and reshaped our approach to tenancy management. The introduction of mandatory licensing requirements—such as those under Selective or HMO Licensing schemes—has prompted us to adopt a more proactive and systematic approach to compliance, maintenance, and tenant wellbeing.”

“I do think the one good thing was the improvements to the electrics that have been done which I may not have considered otherwise.”

“Yes - fire door fitted and wired in fire alarm.”

“Better awareness and tenants taking more care of properties.”

“I attended the DASH training and intend to do more training this year. Since doing the training, I have made sure that my properties adhere to the rules and try to follow best practice. I am very conscious of security, safety, waste management, anti-social behaviour etc.”

## Renters' views on licensing

Renters are intended to be one of the main beneficiaries of licensing, although they may not have much direct contact or involvement with the licensing process itself. As one of the main intended beneficiaries of licensing, renters were directly surveyed about their views about their homes, awareness and experience of licensing, and their perspective on the impact of licensing. Surveys were sent to a random sample of 8,000 households living in licensed properties (out of around 23,000 properties currently licensed) – covering Selective and HMO licensed properties, across all areas of the city where licensing is in place. 316 people responded<sup>p</sup>, with the profile of respondents (in terms of age and ethnicity) broadly in line with the wider city's profile.

Awareness of licensing is fairly high amongst renters who were surveyed. Just over two-thirds (68%) of renters who responded were aware of licensing, whilst the remaining third were not at all aware.

Just under half (46%) felt that they would likely report a problem with their home or landlord to the Council. Those that wouldn't be likely to do so was mainly either because they don't have a problem with their home or landlord, or they would go directly to the landlord. Only a small group suggested that they wouldn't have confidence in the Council to solve the problem (5%) or they didn't know how to contact the Council (5%).

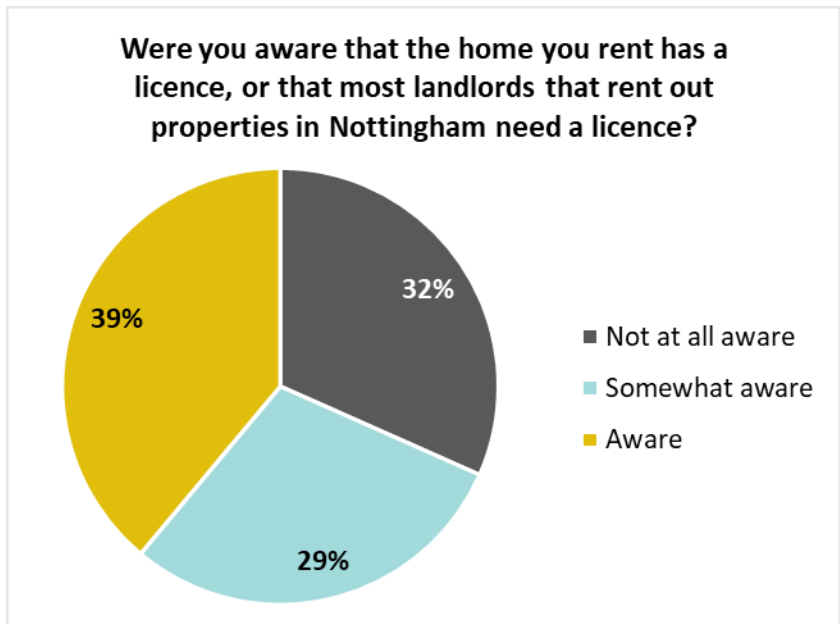


Figure 4: Renters' awareness of licensing, renter survey (n=316)

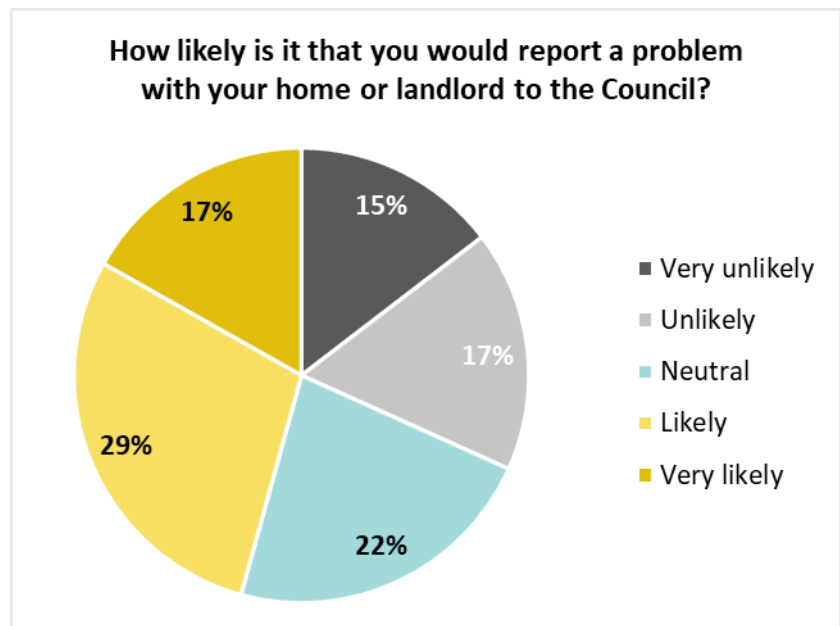


Figure 5: Reporting a problem with your home, renter survey (n=316)

<sup>p</sup> The response rate gives a margin of error of +/-5.5% at a 95% confidence level, such that we can be confident that the responses given by those who completed the survey is representative of the wider renters group living in licensed properties at the time of surveying.

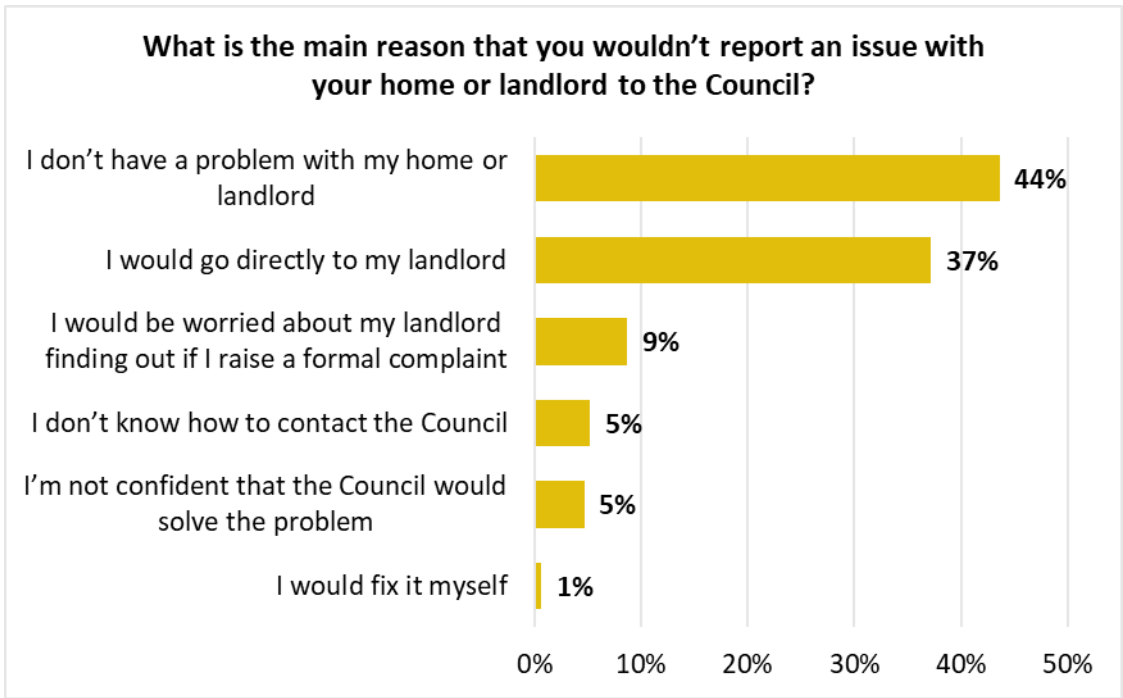


Figure 6: Reasons for not reporting an issue, renter survey (n=316)

Only a small group had actually contacted the Council about their home or landlord (9%) – over half of this group were satisfied with their experience, and a third were dissatisfied.

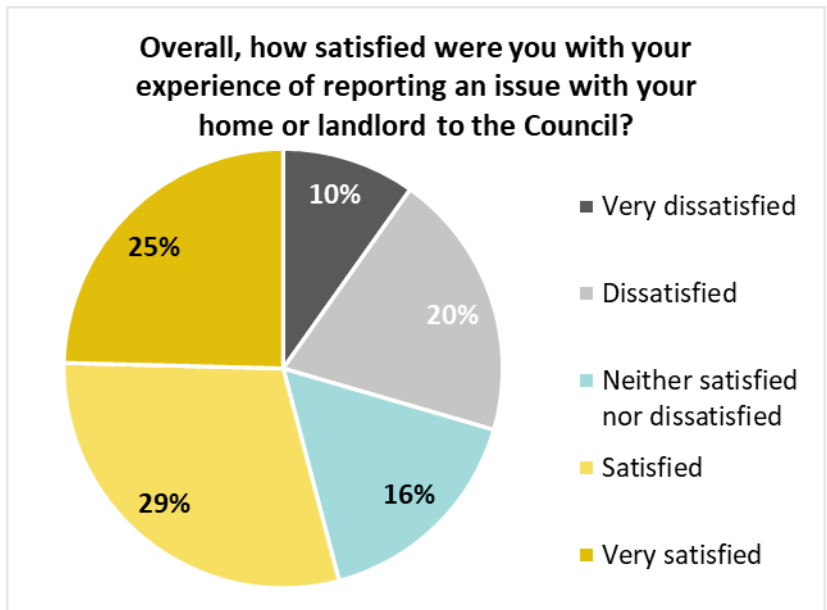


Figure 7: Renter satisfaction with reporting issue to the Council, renter survey (n=30)

Renters were asked about what is most important to them, firstly in terms of property standards of their home (as per the licence conditions). When asked to rate the top three things that are important to them, the highest rated were warmth (working heating and good insulation) and good state of repair inside the home. Renters then prioritised gas safety, security and electrical safety. These priorities were taken into account in shaping the outcome indicators for the social impact assessment.

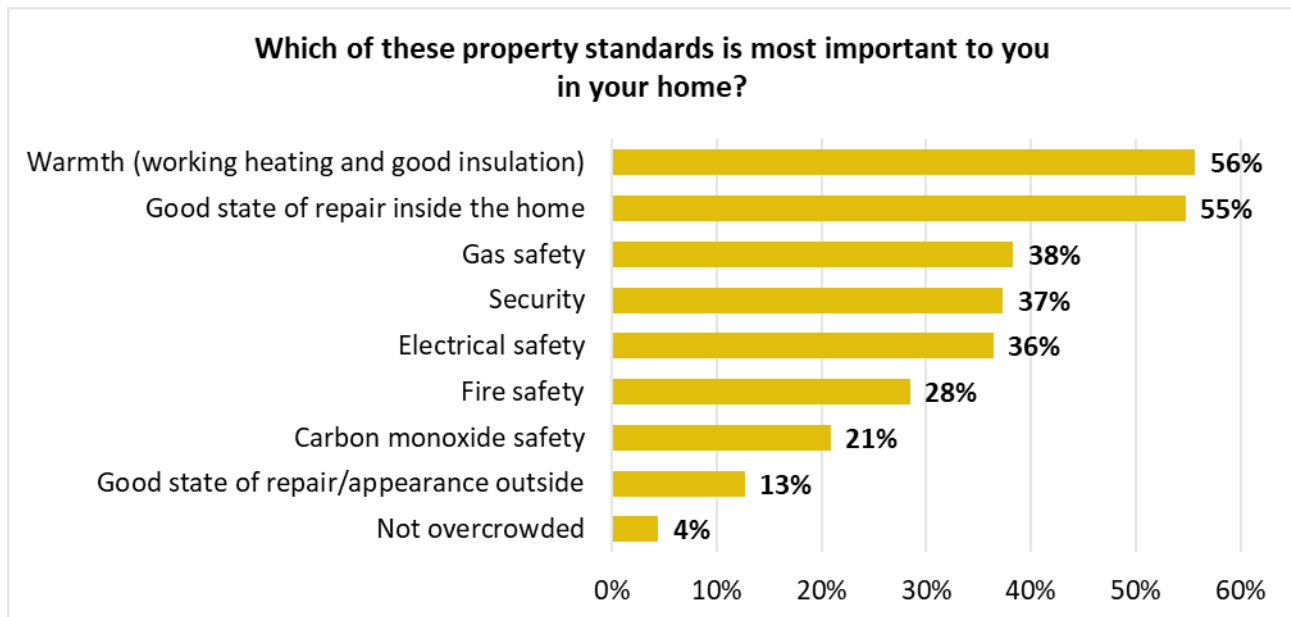


Figure 8: Renters' priorities for property standards, renter survey (n=316)

Renters were asked if they felt their home met these property standards. Almost half of respondents rated their property standards highly, and further third moderately. A fifth of renters rated their property standards as low to poor.

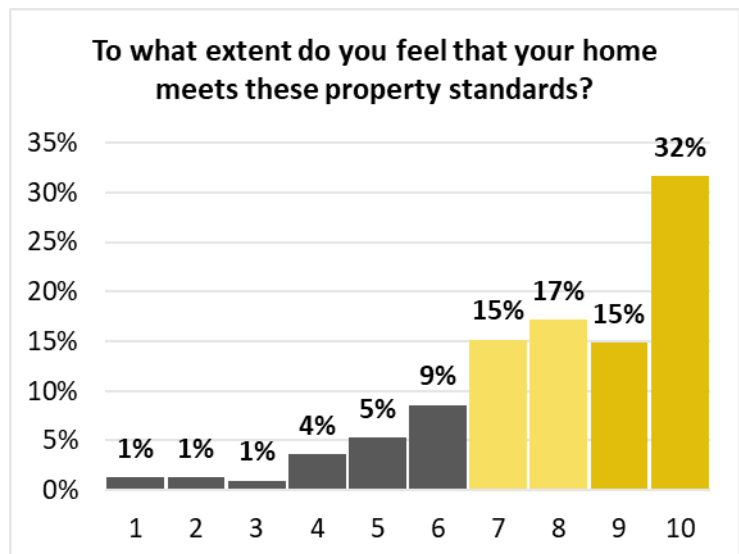


Figure 9: Renters' rating of property standards (n=303)

In terms of tenancy management standards, renters prioritised landlords dealing with repairs promptly, and being able to contact and communicate with the landlord.

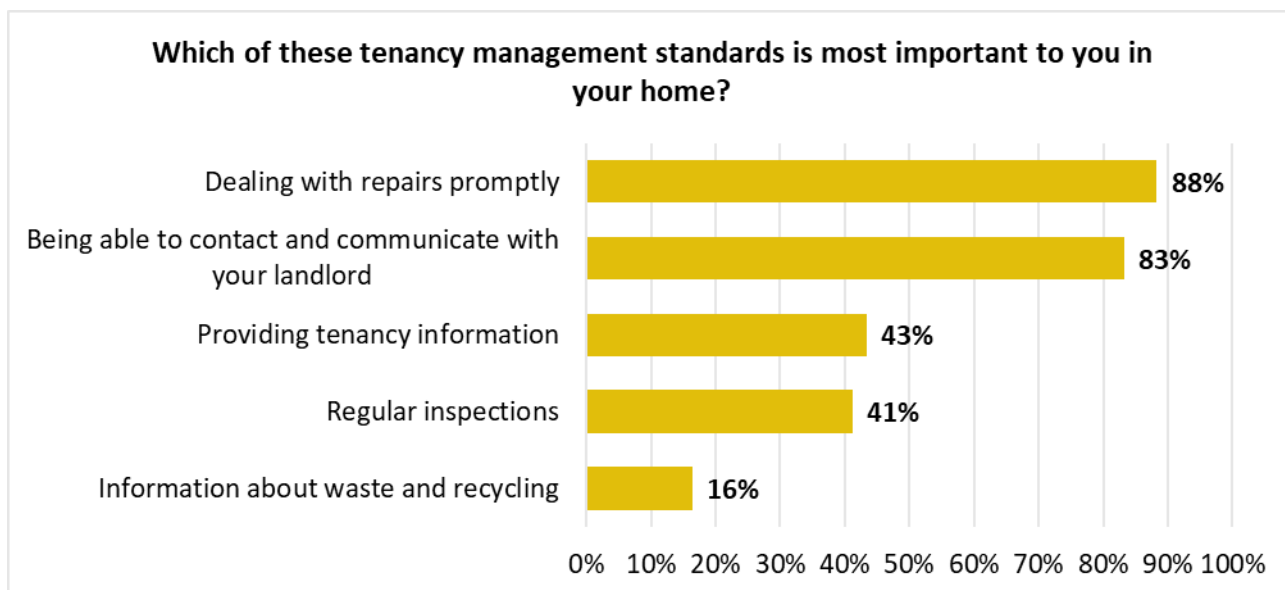


Figure 10: Renters' priorities for tenancy management standards, renter survey (n=314)

Again, half of renters rated their landlord's tenancy management standards as high, with a quarter rating it as moderate, and the remaining quarter rating it as low to poor.

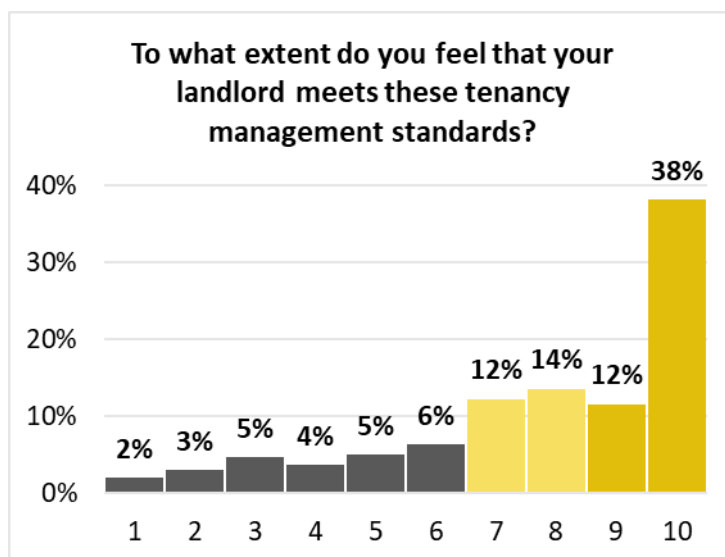
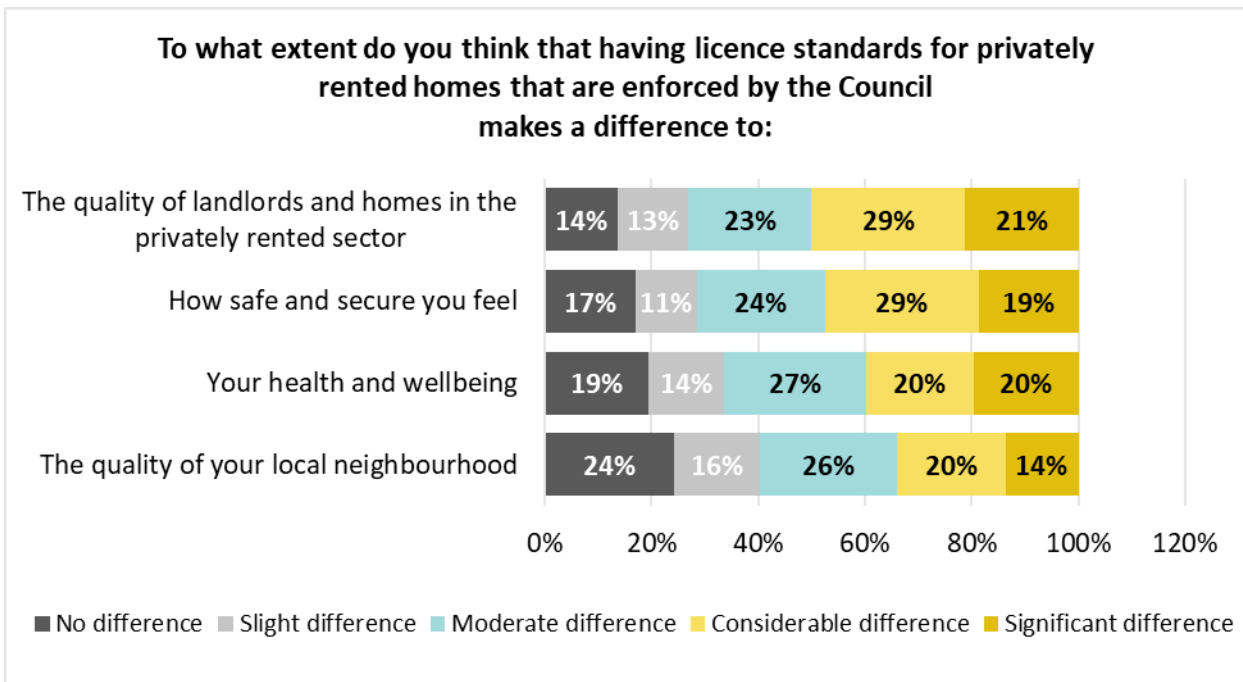


Figure 11: Renters' rating of tenancy management standards, renter survey (n=302)



**Figure 12: Renters' rating of impact of licensing on quality of life issues, renter survey (n=316)**

The majority of renters feel that having licensing in place is making a positive difference to them, even though very few have had direct contact with the licensing process. Overall, almost three-quarters of renters feel that licensing is making a moderate to significant difference in the quality of landlords and homes in the private rented sector. A similar proportion feel that that licensing makes a positive difference to how safe they feel, and two-thirds feel it makes a positive difference to their health and wellbeing.

# RENTERS' VIEWS

## Summary of in-depth renter interviews

In addition to the survey, a small number of renters took part in in-depth interviews about their experience. Renters consistently described home as foundational to stability, peace and wellbeing. Across the interviews, experiences of landlords varied significantly – from highly responsive and responsible to disengaged and resistant. Where renters experienced licensing inspection or intervention, licensing was seen as effective. Renters who were unaware of licensing or hadn't experienced an inspection were less clear about the benefits to them. Licensing was generally supported in principle as a way to ensure accountability and minimum standards.

Landlord experience	Safe and warm homes	Impact of licensing
<p>“It’s been really good. Yeah, we enjoy the property a lot and our interactions with our landlords have been really great. They’ve taken good care of us. So anytime we’ve had issues, they’ve been really responsive... they’ve repaired that and that’s been a good repair and been fine.”</p> <p>“I just moved from another place which wasn't too good, so I moved into this one... It is actually managed by an agent and when I've called them, they've come out practically straight away.”</p> <p>“It did tend to take a few tries... they would do very minor repairs, but it was very flimsy and then it just happened again... it just seems to be maybe some of the bigger things and the bigger expense, they’re less willing to fix.”</p> <p>“I’m a bit hesitant in raising maintenance issues at the moment because my rent is due to go up. So it’s a bit like a ‘do I/don’t I’ kind of thing... I’m always worried about affordability.”</p> <p>“A friend newly bought this to rent it out, she’s a first-time landlord. Once she found out [about licensing]... she made sure all the paperwork was in order and everything is done.”</p>	<p>“When I come home, I want peace... It’s very important that people have somewhere to live where they feel safe and comfortable and just have peace.”</p> <p>“It’s blooming freezing in the winter. Absolutely freezing... I can’t keep this warm... it can get to about 14–15 degrees... I have chronic pain so obviously the cold doesn’t help that... I’m so conscious of putting the heating on.”</p> <p>“The black mould was actually floating around in the air... I woke up a couple of times in the night. I couldn’t catch my breath... I think I’ve actually developed an allergy to mould now because of where I was living before.”</p> <p>“The front door... had been damaged... the building wasn’t secure... we are slap bang in the middle of a very busy junction of the city.”</p> <p>“We had a storm... three slates fell off, and then it was literally raining inside. We called [the agent], they found somebody to sort it out.”</p> <p>“The fire panel... constantly showed an error... we had to call out the fire brigade twice... we are above two industrial kitchens... if there’s a kitchen fire, we have to treat this seriously.”</p>	<p>“I would feel much more reassured knowing that [landlords]... are being held accountable... just a peace of mind that if they are seriously violating what you think are your safety issues... that there is someone there.”</p> <p>“I do think that it does ‘up’ the standards within the housing with what people have to live with... everybody should be able to live in a safe, comfortable place that doesn’t have anything dangerous in it.”</p> <p>“I don’t think the licensing actually impacts me in any way because I don’t see a result of it.”</p> <p>“They’d been dealing with mould in bathrooms for years... but one [renter] went through the whole process and actually had an inspector coming over from the Council and that was obviously nipped in the bud there... the landlord had to not just repaint... it was dealt with properly.”</p> <p>“I just never thought they would also actually come and check from the Council... It took 45 minutes or so to go through the house... the [licensing officer] was really thorough... It was good.”</p> <p>“I think if it was more common knowledge... that there is some sort of governing body... that would be useful.”</p>

## How does licensing make a difference?

The Impact Map (Image 3) for licensing tracks how the **activities** of the licensing team lead to **outcomes** that occur during the licensing scheme, which can be shown to contribute to long-term **impacts** for key stakeholder groups.

### Activities

The activities of the licensing team are described in the earlier section, which shows how the core activities of **proactive management** (processing and issuing licences, tracking down unlicensed landlords and checking compliance with licence conditions) create a foundation of **data and intelligence** that is used to inform the wider activities of the licensing team. This includes **reactive management** in response to failures to comply with licence conditions, such as responsive investigations and enforcement actions. The licensing process enables the team to engage with landlords to **promote good practice**, through one-to-one support through the licensing process, communications and engagement with landlords and landlord groups, and promoting landlord training and accreditation to the Nottingham Rental Standard. The licensing team also work to deliver more effective outcomes for the community by **working in partnership** with organisations that are connected into key stakeholder groups and working towards shared goals.

### Outcomes

Outcomes are short to medium-term changes that occur directly as a result of the activities of the licensing team, largely occurring during the five-year cycle of the licensing scheme. Four key outcome themes were identified during the consultation for the impact assessment.

#### Improving landlord standards

Engaging with the licensing process means that landlords are made aware of the relevant housing law, minimum property standards and required management practices in order to be a licensed landlord. In addition, a licensing requirement is that landlords undertake relevant training on the law and legal requirements relating to managing privately rented housing every three years. This is **improving landlord knowledge** of their rights and responsibilities as a landlord, and providing safe and well-managed properties.

Softer approaches to improving landlord standards such as improving landlord knowledge are also backed up by the more formal requirements of licensing standards, enforced through compliance activities (inspections, audits and enforcement). This provides a clearly defined standard for landlords, so that licensing is **ensuring landlord standards** meet at least the minimum requirements of licensing, but also encouraging landlords to improve on this – for example by encouraging and incentivising accreditation to the quality mark of the Nottingham Rental Standard. licensing therefore also encourages landlords to improve and achieve **best practice** standards.

At the other end of the scale, the licensing team have specific resources to proactively seek out unlicensed landlords, to either bring them within the licensing scheme (further supporting raising landlord standards) or in more extreme situations where landlords fail to comply with licensing or there is evidence of unlawful practice, to **penalise unlawful or criminal landlords**. As well as improving landlord standards, this also contributes to supporting and empowering renters by identifying landlords that are breaking housing law.

#### Improving standards of homes

Licensing standards reflect the legal requirements for landlords to ensure their property is safe, habitable and legally compliant. Having a licensing scheme in place means that there are resources to ensure that these standards are being met, by identifying landlords and properties that are being let, requiring evidence that these properties are meeting licence conditions, and verifying this through inspections and other routes for checking compliance.

This is important because access to safe, secure and good-quality housing is fundamental to people's wellbeing. Research consistently shows that the physical condition of a home directly influences people's health outcomes, life satisfaction and social relationships. For instance, people living in homes that qualify as 'decent' have higher life satisfaction and happiness, and lower anxiety.<sup>16</sup> Therefore the measures selected for this evaluation aim to capture the improvements to homes that have the most impact on the health and wellbeing of renters living in those homes.

Safety needs are a fundamental aspect of people's wellbeing (as shown in Maslow's hierarchy of needs<sup>17</sup>), and feeling safe and secure in your home leads to reduced anxiety and stress, with associated knock-on effects on physical health.<sup>18</sup> Having a home in which you feel secure and safe provides a sanctuary in which people can thrive. Therefore, having **more secure homes**, an increase in the number of homes that are made more secure (for example, by replacing faulty doors, windows or locks), is a key outcome indicator that contributes to long-term improvements in renters' health and wellbeing.

There is also a strong, well-established link between being able to keep a home warm, and people's physical, mental and social wellbeing. Cold homes can worsen physical health of vulnerable people, such as older people, children and those with poor cardiovascular or respiratory health. Living in a cold home is stressful, both due to worrying about the effects of being cold, and concerns about paying fuel bills. Cold homes are also more likely to have mould, which is independently associated in itself with poorer physical and mental health. Living in a cold/mouldy home can affect people's employment, education and social connections with others.<sup>19</sup> Having a **home that is able to be kept warm** is therefore another key indicator.

Finally, having a home that is free from hazards to health is essential to renters' health and wellbeing. Typically, the most common type of hazards found in homes in England are hazards that cause falls (either on stairs, on the level or between levels), as well as excess cold and damp.<sup>20</sup> Removing these hazards reduces the risk of an incident that could cause harm or injury to people in the home, as well as improving their sense of safety in their home and associated positive mental wellbeing effects. This is why the evaluation measures how many **homes are made safe, reducing hazards to health**.

### **Improving neighbourhoods**

The quality of the local neighbourhood has an effect on residents' wellbeing, including private renters themselves as well as other local residents. Research has shown that problems with litter, rubbish or dumping (waste), vandalism or graffiti, scruffy gardens, neglected buildings or poor external conditions of buildings have an impact on people's wellbeing.<sup>21</sup> Experiencing or witnessing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in your local area also has emotional impacts on people, as well as impacting people's behaviour such as where they go and when. Common types of ASB include nuisance neighbours and loud music/noise.<sup>22</sup> Licensing has an effect on these issues both through the requirement for landlords to have a waste and ASB policy, through enforcing licence conditions, and through partnership working to tackle these issues.

The evidence of how neighbourhood issues impact wellbeing, as well as taking into account the mechanisms that licensing has to affect these issues, results in identifying three outcomes where licensing can improve the wellbeing of neighbours and communities around private rented homes. These are: **improving external property conditions, tackling persistent noise, and reducing problem waste**.

Improving the standard of homes through licensing has knock-on effects on the environment. Licensing can use its compliance tools to check and enforce minimum standards for energy efficiency, and therefore contributes to **reducing carbon emissions** from privately rented homes.

## Supporting and empowering renters

Licensing provides a backstop for people living in privately rented homes to ensure they are supported and empowered in their rights as renters. The responsive investigations process supports renters with resolving issues that they raise. The resources and expertise that the licensing team can bring to these situations helps **empower renters' rights**. This includes ultimately **penalising unlawful or criminal landlords** so that renters are protected.

The right of entry that licensing grants means that inspectors often get to see what is happening 'behind the door' at a property. This could include identifying homes that are overcrowded, with more people living in the property than it is set up to provide for. Inspectors can make sure that rooms that are unsuitable (e.g. too small) are not being let out, particularly in HMOs. This helps **reducing overcrowding**, supporting the quality of life of renters, as overcrowding is shown to be linked to poor mental health, poor health including spread of infectious diseases, disturbed sleep, and social effects on education and child development.<sup>23</sup>

Licensing inspectors may also identify potential wellbeing issues for people in the property. Examples include hoarding, unsuitable housing for health/care needs, or wider wellbeing concerns for adults or children. The licensing team are trained to **identify and refer safeguarding issues** to relevant partners within the Council, such as Adult and Children's Social Care teams. The identification of potential safeguarding issues contributes to protecting the long-term wellbeing of residents.

## Impacts

Impacts are the long-term, sustained changes in the wellbeing of landlords, renters, neighbours and communities, and the wider city and environment, that result from the activities and outcomes of licensing described above. Because of the long-term nature of these changes, these may occur or continue after the initial five years of the licensing scheme.

Over time, more and more landlords are becoming aware of licensing and engaging with the processes described above. It's anticipated that repeated engagement with licensing gives the opportunity for continued growth in landlord knowledge, training and best practice. On the other side of the equation, landlords who don't feel confident or who are unable to meet the requirements of licensing may exit the rental market. In extreme cases, unlawful or criminal landlords can be removed via prosecution. Over the long-term the expectation is that this is **ensuring the quality of landlords** in Nottingham.

Landlords are improving properties either in anticipation of licence conditions or as a result of inspection, and over time the number of properties will continue to improve as more and more are inspected. Although some elements may fall back into disrepair, some investments will have long-term benefits for renters. For example, energy efficiency improvements such as replacing a boiler or upgrading windows can have continuing warmth benefits for 10-20 years, if maintained well.<sup>24</sup> Therefore licensing is ensuring **safer and warmer homes for renters** during and beyond the period of the licence.

By working to improve the standards of homes and neighbourhoods, licensing is **improving local neighbourhoods and the environment**. In a city where almost a third of homes are privately rented, licensing plays a key contributing role in improving local areas and environmental outcomes.

Nottingham's vision for housing recognises that the ultimate aim of providing people with "safe, warm homes, that they can afford, in vibrant local neighbourhoods" is so that "everyone can thrive". The aim of licensing is to benefit the people living in privately rented properties. The work that is done to improve landlord standards, property standards, and neighbourhoods, and support and empower renters, is ultimately about **supporting renters to thrive**. This is achieved through positive impacts on health, mental wellbeing, sense of security and control, as well as meeting fundamental physiological and safety needs.

Through its day-to-day operational work and by working in partnership with others, licensing is **supporting the long-term vision for Nottingham** to make Nottingham a flourishing, inclusive, and sustainable city where residents thrive.<sup>25</sup> By ensuring landlord standards and ensuring homes are safe and warm for residents, this helps provide safe, affordable housing. This directly contributes to supporting healthy and safe residents, as better housing has been proven to reduce the burden on the NHS, improve mental health and support long-term public health goals. Good housing provides the foundation for renters to do better in other areas of life, such as working and studying. It also provides a space that promotes social wellbeing, both within the household and with neighbours and the local community. By working with partners to tackle causes of social friction, such as waste and ASB, licensing is helping to empower safe communities. The activities to improve local neighbourhoods and the environment help champion sustainability, in terms of improving both the local environment, and contributing to meeting the city's carbon reduction goals.

# Homes fit for the future

## Private rented licensing

Enabling renters to thrive

Supporting the long-term vision for Nottingham

### Impact of licensing

This Impact Map shows how the **activities** of licensing lead to direct **outcomes**, and long-term **impact**.

The core **activities** of licensing create a foundation of data and intelligence that supports the team in proactive and reactive management of licensed properties, as well as promoting good practice with landlords and working towards shared goals with local partners.

This leads to **outcomes** that are seen over the five-year period of the licensing scheme, demonstrating improvements in landlord standards, standards of homes and neighbourhoods, and empowering and supporting renters.

In the long-term this will have an **impact** on the quality of landlords, rented homes and neighbourhoods in Nottingham, ultimately enabling renters to thrive, and contributing to wider goals of the long-term vision for the city.



Image 3: Private rented licensing Impact Map

# CASE STUDY 3

## Working in partnership to tackle ASB

**“As the ASB team within licensing, we work across HMO licensing and Selective Licensing, overseeing and managing ASB and waste complaints that come into the licensing team, and making sure that licence holders are adhering to their licence conditions in relation to management and disposal of waste, and investigating and helping to reduce and prevent anti-social behaviour in licensed properties.”**

The ASB team within Housing licensing was set up in 2017. An ASB process was set up to ensure licence holders are taking their licence conditions seriously. As part of each licence, the licence holder is required to have a written ASB Policy. Our team implemented a process which would ensure that licence holders have this ASB policy in place and adhere to it. Furthermore, the process was designed so that enforcement action could be taken against licence holders who were failing to deal with ASB at their licensed properties. This provided real benefits during the COVID pandemic that followed, when there was a real flash-point in issues around ASB such as waste and noise in the community.

Reports of ASB come in various ways – a member of public can report it online using the Nottingham City Council’s online reporting tool; we have Neighbourhood Safety Officers who are out and about who report what they see; we can have a report that comes in from the university; or we might have a local Councillor email us and let us know about an issue.

We have a staged ASB process. At the first complaint, we write to the landlord and ask them to investigate and take appropriate action. If there’s a second complaint, we follow up to check the landlord’s ASB policy. A third stage report means that we consider further enforcement action. Formal enforcement at this stage is not necessarily taken if the licence holder has been engaging positively with the Council and has complied with legal duties. But it can be taken if it is found that the licence holder has failed to adhere to their legal duties surrounding ASB.

We work in partnership with partners including the Council’s Neighbourhood Safety Officers (NSOs), as well as others such as the Universities and Police. The NSOs or representatives from the universities will visit the property and speak to the occupants about the reports they’ve received, and have the power to take enforcement action if appropriate.

In all cases where NSOs or the university deal with a complaint of ASB at a licensed property, details of the incident are passed to our team in order to challenge the licence holder about ASB at their property.

Our team is unique as we’re the only team that has the ability to go to the licence holder and challenge them directly about their occupant’s behaviour. This, alongside interactions with Universities, Police and NSOs, provides a more holistic approach to tackling ASB. This appears to be a successful approach as according to data from the University of Nottingham from the first semester of 2024-2025, where a noise related complaint is dealt with jointly by the university, NSOs and the housing licensing team, there were no second stage complaints.

If I can deal with something at the first stage, or second stage with a phone-call, I’m happy with that. It means I’ve got a good outcome for the complainant, and it means we are taking action and licence holders now know that we are able to take action. Some of them are absolutely fantastic, but if I can change the attitude of other licence holders that don’t see it as a problem, then I know I’ve done a good job.



The impact of ASB can be quite widespread – people tell me it’s affecting their mental health, their work or sleep, or constantly walking along your street and seeing it strewn with rubbish. So, if I can change that and change people’s mindset on that, then I know I’ve done a good job.



## What changes as a result of licensing?

The following sections set out the evidence for how much change has occurred as result of licensing, drawing on the outcomes defined through stakeholder consultation – as set out in the impact map for licensing (Image 3 above). Each outcome in the impact map has an associated outcome indicator, which is used to measure the scale of change for key stakeholders. Each section includes a summary of the quantitative and qualitative evidence to support each outcome indicator, to show the material evidence that informs the SROI assessment and to provide transparency on how this is calculated.

### Improving landlord standards

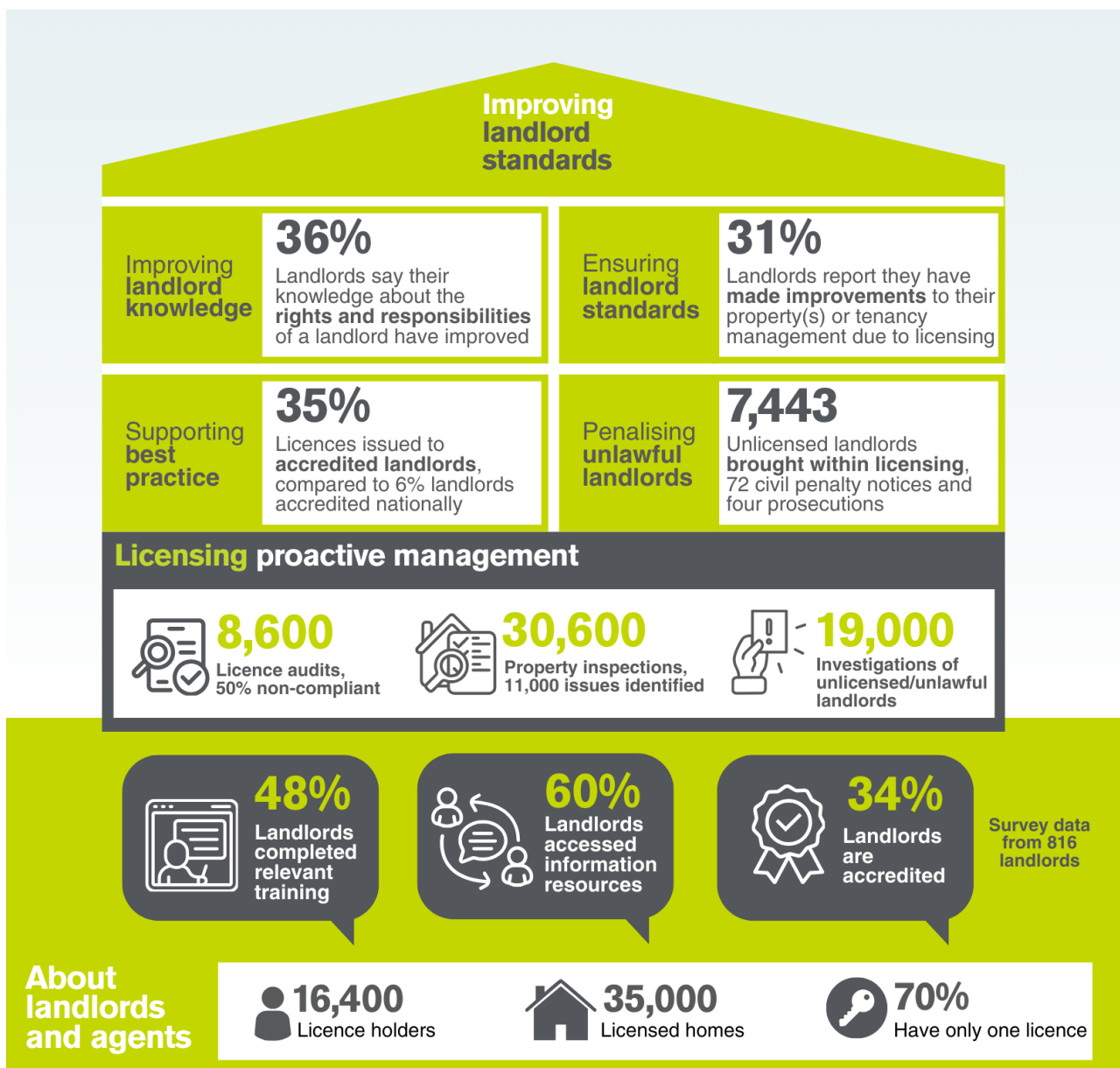


Image 4: Improving landlord standards summary

## OUTCOME INDICATOR

### Improving landlord knowledge

Feedback from landlords suggests that overall, around 20% saw an improvement in their knowledge and confidence in their abilities as a landlord as a result of training, and 39% felt their knowledge had improved since operating within licensing.

**36%**

Landlords say their knowledge about the rights and responsibilities of a landlord have moderately-significantly improved

**5,894**



More aware of overall responsibilities, so feel confident if anything were to go wrong ... and was aware of things like needing to put in CO alarms which weren't present when we first started renting.



Landlord

#### Landlord training

Landlords are required to undertake relevant training on the law and legal requirements relating to managing privately rented housing every three years. In Nottingham, accreditation partners DASH and Unipol, as well as other recognised industry training providers, provide this training through specially developed courses that meet the licensing training requirement. As well as foundation level training, both organisations offer additional specialised training, covering topics such as energy efficiency standards, assessing health and safety, tenancy management, and updates on changing national regulation such as the new Renters Rights Act. These courses are free for accredited members.

In the survey sent to all landlords, respondents self-reported that 48% had completed the relevant training in the last three years, with a further 10% planning to do so in the next 12 months. Applying this to the total number of licence holders over the evaluation period suggests that an estimated 7,860 landlords completed training over this period.

This indicates that there is a training gap, between the licence conditions that landlords agree to, and actual completion levels of the required training. Accredited landlords are much more likely to have attended training in the last 3 years, with 80% of accredited landlords reporting that they have completed training, compared to 30% of non-accredited landlords. Part of the accreditation package is free access to training.

DASH collect before and after training feedback from landlords (surveys completed by almost 2,000 landlords), which shows that landlords feel that the training improves their knowledge and confidence as a landlord. The biggest improvement is in relation to their knowledge of property licensing, which less than half (49%) of landlords felt confident about prior to training, but 96% felt knowledgeable about property licensing after the training. Another area of improvement is in landlords' knowledge about the rights and responsibilities of a landlord, which increased from 71% before the training to 99% after.

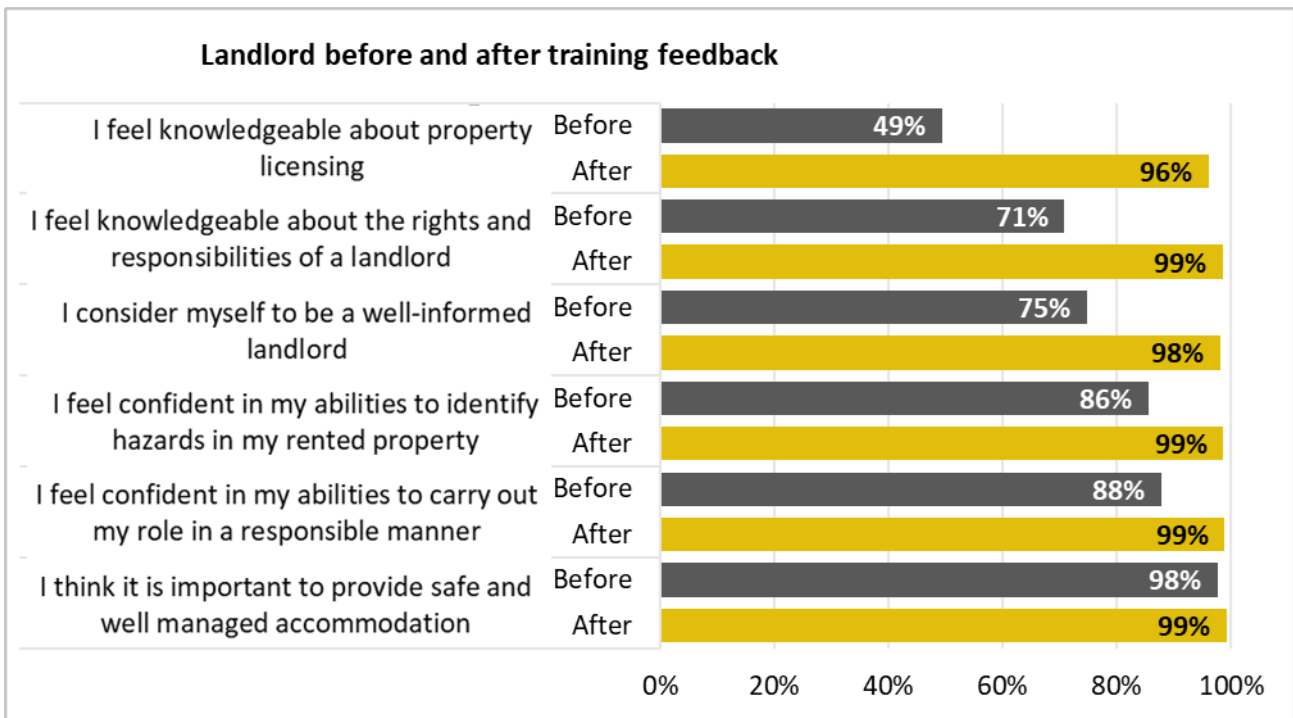


Figure 13: Landlord pre and post training feedback, DASH survey (pre survey n=3053, post survey n=1876)

#### Improving landlord knowledge and confidence

As well as via training, landlords’ knowledge of licensing and what that means for their own practice is improved through their experience of the licensing system and contact with the licensing team. The landlord survey showed that three-quarters of landlords have been a landlord/agent in Nottingham city for more than five years, indicating a level of experience in the sector. Almost two-thirds (63%) have also had a property inspection by the licensing team, and so have experienced the process of being inspected against the licence conditions.

The effects of training alongside the general exposure to licensing means that 41% of landlords surveyed said since operating within housing licensing, this had improved their knowledge of licence conditions and how to meet them (moderately – significantly improved), and 36% said it had improved their knowledge about the rights and responsibilities of a landlord.

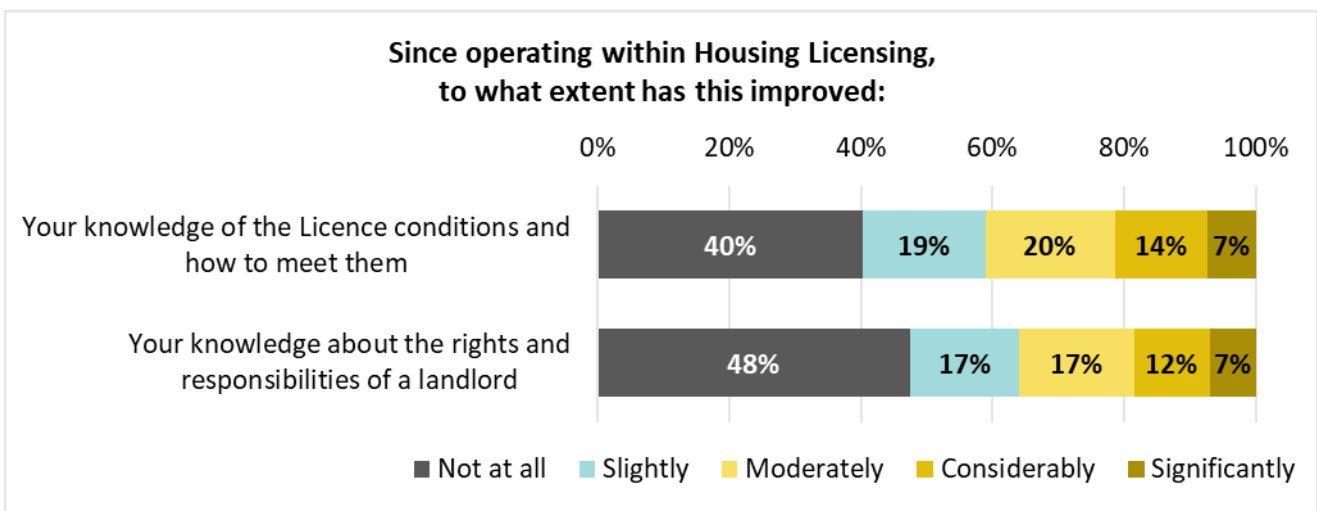


Figure 14: Landlord knowledge improvement, landlord survey (n=802)



## How has licensing changed your property standards and tenancy management approach?



“Licensing has significantly elevated our property standards and reshaped our approach to tenancy management. The introduction of mandatory licensing requirements—such as those under Selective or HMO licensing schemes—has prompted us to adopt a more proactive and systematic approach to compliance, maintenance, and tenant wellbeing... Overall, licensing has created a more professional and regulated environment that ultimately benefits both landlords and tenants by promoting safe, well-managed housing.”

“It has acted as a definitive guide to my responsibilities.”

“I attended the DASH training and intend to do more training this year. Since doing the training, I have made sure that my properties adhere to the rules and try to follow best practice. I am very conscious of security, safety, waste management, anti-social behaviour etc.”

Less than half of landlords surveyed feel that licensing hasn't improved their knowledge at all. Qualitative responses to the survey indicate that many such landlords feel that they were already meeting the regulatory standards or above and so licensing hasn't improved this.



## How has licensing changed your property standards and tenancy management approach?



“It hasn't, really, other than a general awareness of the existence of the Council's oversight of the rental standards required”

“Not made any difference at all. We already meet the standards and go above what is required legally.”

“It hasn't. I was already aware and competent”

## OUTCOME INDICATOR Ensuring landlord standards

Checks carried out by the licensing team show that around half of licences need improvements/further evidence to be compliant with licence standards, and around a third of properties that are inspected require improvements. Landlords themselves report that they have made improvements as a result of licensing.

**31%**  
**5,357**

Landlords report that they have made improvements to properties or tenancy management as a result of licensing



Licensing has helped me improve how I care for my properties. I now do regular checks to keep everything safe and in good condition. Tenants feel more involved and better informed thanks to clearer updates. I've made my management more organised and fair for everyone. It's made things smoother, safer, and more respectful overall.



Landlord

### Checking and upholding licence conditions

The aim of the proactive and reactive management functions of the licensing team is to ensure that landlords are meeting the standards set out by licence conditions. The teams have a number of ways in which they can check and ensure compliance with the licence standards. This includes desktop audits of licence documentation, internal and external inspections by licensing officers, accreditation partners and Neighbourhood Safety Officers, and direct contact and feedback from renters. Over the period January 2020 – December 2024 there were a total of just under 43,000 individual checks of whether licence standards were being met.

For HMO properties, when the landlord makes the application, the team carry out a desktop check that there is evidence that the licence conditions are being met (see case study 1). If there is evidence from the initial application that standards are not being met, or documentation is missing, the licence is issued with conditions. The team follow up with landlords to check that these conditions are then met. Over the five years from January 2020 to December 2024, the HMO team checked 5,086 licences and 51% were granted with conditions, i.e. with further checks required.

The Selective Licensing team also carry out desktop audits of licences to check that the conditions are being met. Over this period the Selective Licensing team carried out 3,627 desktop audits. In the most recent year, the recording process was improved to show the outcomes of these checks. This shows that in the most

recent year, 55% of licences checked identified areas of non-compliance, to be remedied. The most common issues identified were missing or out of date insurance documents, ASB policy, and evidence of fire safety standards.

In both of these situations, the landlord would be notified that they are not meeting the licence conditions (or don't have evidence that they are doing so) and are given time to respond to this. If there is no response, this would trigger further action such as a property inspection, or enforcement action.

The licensing process also ensures landlord standards by carrying out internal and external property inspections. Not all properties are inspected, and inspections are carried out on a risk-based approach. Where landlords are accredited, they are visited by accreditation partners to carry out inspections and work with landlords to ensure they are meeting the Nottingham Rental Standard. Over the evaluation period, the licensing team carried out 9,245 internal inspections, covering around 30% of properties with licences issued during that period. In addition, accreditation partners DASH and Unipol inspected a further 2,116 properties.

External inspections are also carried out, firstly to check on external standards (e.g. gardens, waste, external conditions such as gutters, paint/render etc), and secondly to flag properties with significant external disrepair that may be an indicator of further issues inside the property, triggering an internal inspection. These external inspections are carried out by the licensing team, and further support to inspect the outside of Selectively licensed properties has been provided by the Council's Neighbourhood Safety Officers (NSOs) since January 2022. Over the evaluation period, the licensing team carried out 12,973 external inspections, with a further 8,425 external inspections completed by NSOs. Over this period, 72% of HMO properties and 41% of Selectively licensed properties have had an external inspection.

It should be noted that the evaluation period of January 2020 – December 2024 coincides with the COVID-19 lockdowns (March 2020 – March 2021). During this period, very few internal property inspections were carried out due to social distancing rules, and the team focused on external inspections instead. For example, in during 2020-2021 there were 788 internal inspections, compared to 2022-2024 when there were 8,457 internal inspections. However, more external inspections were carried out during this period with 10,549 external inspections completed in 2020-2022.

The licensing team also contact renters directly to check with them whether they feel that licence standards are being met and to raise any issues. This is carried out by phone, with licensing officers going through a standard proforma with renters and noting any issues that need to be remedied. Over this period, 1,473 tenant verification surveys were completed.

## How are landlord standards ensured?

2020 - 2024	Activities	Outcomes
<b>Selective Licensed properties</b> 31,256 unique licenced properties	<b>3,627</b> desktop licence audits	<b>55%</b> licences checked are non-compliant
	<b>7,338</b> internal inspections	<b>16%</b> properties inspected require improvement <sup>9</sup>
	<b>1,559</b> DASH inspections	<b>11%</b> NSO external inspections referred for improvements
	<b>13,048</b> external inspections	
	<b>1,473</b> tenant verification surveys	
<b>HMO Licences</b> 4,623 unique licenced properties	<b>5,086</b> desktop licence audits	<b>51%</b> licences issued with conditions
	<b>1,907</b> internal inspections	<b>49%</b> properties inspected require improvement
	<b>557</b> Unipol inspections	
	<b>8,342</b> external (re)inspections	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42,937</b> checks	<b>4,589</b> licences updated to be compliant
		<b>4,498</b> properties improved following inspection

Table 7: Licensing activities statistics, internal performance reporting

The licensing team have a number of means to enforce landlord standards. Inspectors can identify where licence conditions are being breached (or HMO Management Regulations for HMO properties) and require improvements in line with licence conditions or management regulations. In properties where the inspection identified significant disrepair, an inspector can carry out a Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) assessment, which identifies significant hazards which landlords are required to remedy by law.

Between January 2020 and December 2024, licensing inspectors identified 781 significant hazards that required removing by law. They also identified 4,199 other hazards that needed remedying. The Selective Licensing team identified 2,595 breaches of licence conditions that were addressed. The HMO Licensing team identified 2,089 breaches of HMO Management Regulations that were addressed. In total, 11,053 individual issues were remedied in 4,498 properties.

In the landlord and agent survey, respondents were asked what improvements, if any, they had made as a result of licensing. Overall, 31% of landlords surveyed said they had made improvements as a result of licensing, and 15% said they had made considerable or significant improvements as a result of licensing. The area where most improvements were made was in relation to the safety standards in their properties.

Overall, 69% of landlords stated that they didn't need to make any improvements to their properties as a result of licensing, as standards were already being met.

<sup>9</sup> This is the lower bound for properties improved following inspection, as multiple flats included in a block licence are counted as a single inspection and property improved.

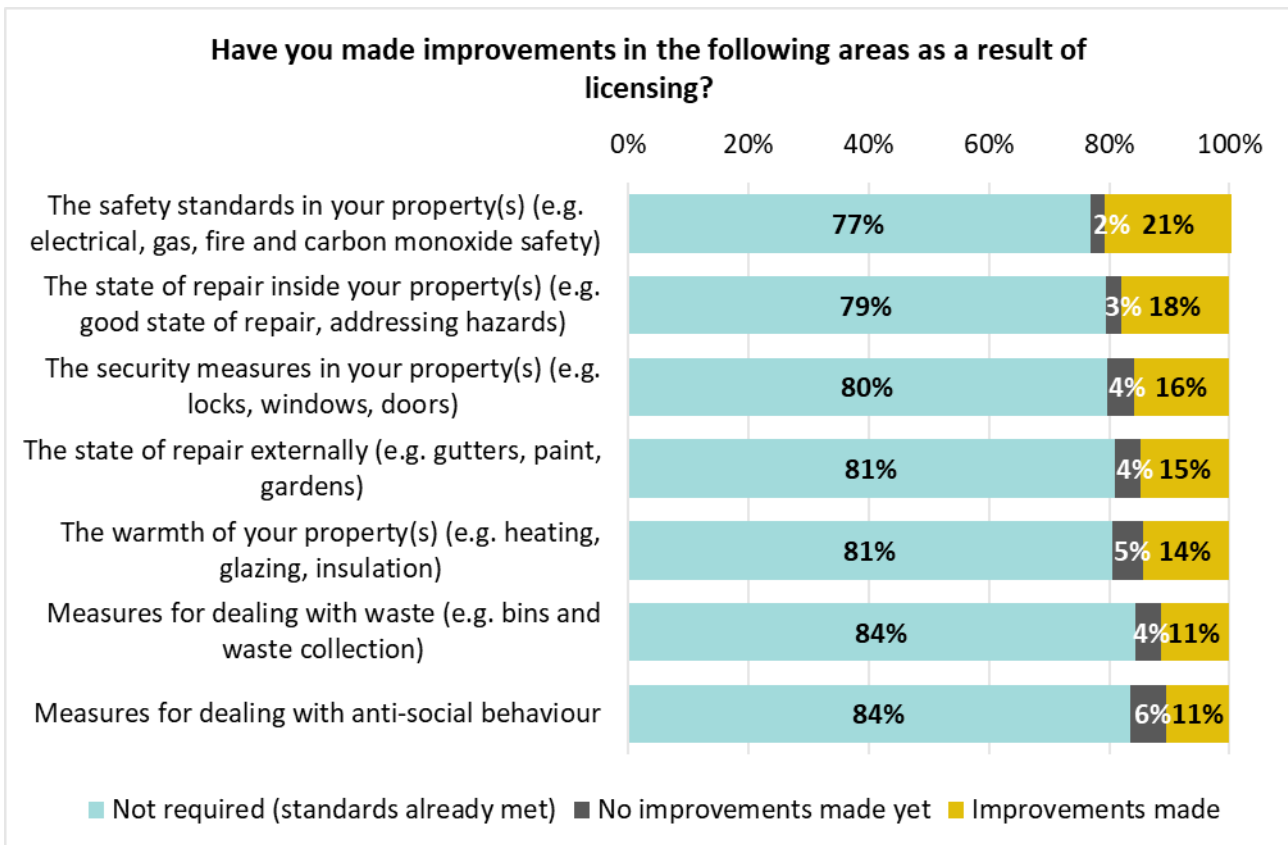


Figure 15: Landlord improvements as a result of licensing, landlord survey (n=806)

### Bringing unlicensed landlords within licensing

Licensing also helps ensure landlord standards by tracking down landlords who are currently operating without a licence where they should have a licence for their property. This brings more landlords and properties within the licensing system, subject to the checks and improvements this entails, so that more properties are meeting licence standards. Between January 2020 – December 2024, the licensing team carried out over 19,000 investigations and identified 7,443 properties being rented without a licence, where a licence was required. The majority of these were for Selective Licences, which reflects the higher number of properties across the city covered by Selective Licensing compared to HMO Licensing, and that the scheme was introduced more recently.

## CASE STUDY 4

## Working with landlords to improve knowledge and standards

**“I’m a Compliance Officer, I do inspections and speak to landlords and licensed managers – I help the licence holders if they need any guidance, and they always know that they can get back to me and I can point them in the right direction.”**

I’m pretty hot on smoke detection, fire alarms and their expiry date. Smoke detectors last 10 years and then they get less efficient after that and ultimately they need to be changed. A common problem is that the smoke detectors are often mains-wired since planning regulations changed, so if you press the button, they’ll always go off and make a noise – but they still have an expiry date, after which the actual smoke detection function isn’t as efficient.

I realised that this was going to be an issue in certain estates because of the period they were built.

First, we got this information out to all the accredited landlords, working with DASH.

But non-accredited landlords won’t know about it. So I got a list of around 70 properties in those areas, and we emailed all the licence holders to update them with all the information about each alarm having an expiry date, and give them the chance to check and change them so that they don’t become a breach of licence conditions.

We gave them 28 days to get back to us. I’ve not had one person who’s not got back to me so far, everybody’s responded. Landlords have got back to me and said thank you for letting me know these were out of date, and they’ve sent a photo of a brand new alarm. This leads to their other properties, because now they know to check those too – all throughout their portfolio, and even if it’s not in a licensed area – so that has a wider impact.

There is value in that because all the alarms are working and in good order. I’ve improved fire safety just by educating people, not incriminating them, and really it’s been quite successful. And you never know, that may just save one person at the end of the day.

The best thing for me is, if there’s an issue at a property that has been missed or not noticed, and it’s dangerous – and we spot them and get them improved – that can save a life. And it’s improving the occupant’s life – and not only that one person, if you can get that improved under licence conditions then you’ve improved the area.

“ I like the fact that occupants will say to you that they didn’t know about licensing, but they’re glad somebody’s going around and inspecting. I feel like the job I’m doing has purpose and has a positive outcome on a wider scale – I prefer to do something for the greater good than just for money, and I think you get this out of this job. ”

## OUTCOME INDICATOR

### Supporting landlords with best practice

The licensing team are able to engage landlords through the licensing process, and share information with them – with the result that 60% of landlords surveyed have accessed housing-related information resources. Licensing encourages and incentivises landlords to become accredited to the Nottingham Rental Standard quality mark, with the result that a much higher proportion of landlords in Nottingham are accredited compared to the national average.

**35%**

Licences issued to accredited landlords

**7,980**



Being a DASH landlord has helped me make one or two small improvements which I have also implemented in other properties as well as the one I own in Nottingham... the link to DASH and the higher standards for their accreditation are what has helped me improve.



Landlord

#### Landlord engagement and communications

The licensing team aim to raise awareness of licence standards and best practice in the sector. One of the benefits of the licensing process is that the team hold a database of all licensed landlords and their contact details. This enables the team to contact and engage with landlords.

The licensing team send out a regular newsletter to landlords, with updates, information and guidance. Around 5,000 landlords have signed up to receive the newsletter. In the landlord survey, 39% of landlords stated that they read the NCC landlord newsletter. The licensing team, together with accreditation partners, also hold bi-annual webinars for landlords, under the banner of the Nottingham Rental Standard. The webinars are attended by around 100 landlords. Over the last 5 years, 15% of landlords surveyed said they had attended a Nottingham Rental Standard webinar.

Overall, 60% of landlords surveyed had accessed housing-related information resources over the last five years, with the most commonly used resources being the NCC landlord newsletter, national or regional landlord groups (such as the National Residential Landlords Association<sup>26</sup> or EMPO<sup>27</sup>), and the Nottingham Rental Standard webinars.

# CASE STUDY 5

## Supporting landlords and renters with Tenancy Matters

**“The Tenancy Matters team aim to uphold lawful practice in the private sector for the benefit of tenants and landlords. We take on case work to help de-escalate disputes, prevent illegal eviction and prevent homelessness.”**

The Tenancy Matters service has extensive knowledge of housing law and regulation, that means we can give accurate advice for the benefit both landlords and tenants. We provide this advice quickly, usually within 48 hours, so that landlords and tenants feel they have someone to turn to on a timely basis.

Our experience and advice covers a wide range of subject areas – such as the eviction process, landlord and tenant behaviours, ending tenancies early, rent increases, deposits and landlord access.

We aim to de-escalate conflict where possible, often encountering situations where landlords and tenants need to be drawn into negotiation, in the absence of the legal solution available for the landlord, such as a Section 21 notice. We explain the likely legal options and outcomes available to both parties involved, to try and present a better way, and thereby achieve a win-win.

We work with both landlords and tenants to prevent illegal evictions. When speaking with landlords we caution against behaviours that could be seen as harassment under

the Protection from Eviction Act and promote the proper legal process.

Where tenants need support, we work closely with the Police on cases, but where it proves necessary, we can investigate and potentially prosecute.

We also work closely with other partners who work with tenants. It's difficult to directly engage private tenants as a coherent group, so it's crucial to work with and provide casework support to other agencies who may have contact. We also provide training and casework support to our licensing and Safer Housing teams, NCC's housing and homelessness services, as well as the Police and Citizens' Advice.

Over the last five years we've worked on around 1,500 cases directly, as well as providing support to colleagues on their casework. Over that time period 69% of cases have been tenant enquiries, 22% are landlord enquiries, and 8% are a combination. We record whether the case benefits the landlord, and around 50% cases have a landlord benefit.

For example, we were able to intervene in a case where the relationship between the landlord's agent and the tenant was at risk of breaking down completely, with the potential of it escalating to the Property Ombudsman. A tenant contacted the team alleging that the landlord's agent had been letting themselves into the property, and that complaints about this had been made previously. The tenant was concerned because the agent didn't seem to feel that the tenant needed to be at home when the property was entered.

It became clear that both the landlord and the tenant misunderstood the legislation regarding landlord and agent access to 'current' tenancies. We advised of the requirements, to both parties, so that it was understood that there needed to be 24 hours written Notice, but that there was no legal requirement for the tenant to be present – just a reasonable expectation in law that the agent would exercise their power reasonably. The intervention de-escalated the conflict and made both parties aware of their rights and responsibilities.

“ I want to say a big thank you to [the Tenancy Intervention Officer] and the [Tenancy Matters] team. I was really supported as a Nottingham landlord and I really appreciated [her] help. I am very grateful to her for setting up a plan to resolve my issue. Thank you once again, I am genuinely grateful for your kindness. **Landlord feedback**

We had a dispute over the early end of our tenancy agreement with our landlord. Our landlord... refused to answer our emails and phone calls. I was very happy and surprised that the Tenancy Matters team responded to our request within one day. The Tenancy Intervention Officer quickly reached out to our landlord for enquiries and helped us negotiate our legal matters. I'm so grateful for [her] professional support over legal matters. Despite my poor oral English, I appreciate her patience in explaining my legal rights and responsibilities. **Tenant feedback**

## Landlord accreditation

Landlord standards are also ensured and raised through the accreditation process to the Nottingham Rental Standard quality mark. Licensing encourages and incentivises accreditation, through awareness raising and a financial incentive, as accredited landlords have a lower licence fee for each property they own. The fee structure for licensing and for accreditation means that landlords will always save more in lower licensing fees than they pay in accreditation costs. The savings increase significantly, the more properties a landlord has.

As a result, a higher proportion of landlords are accredited to a quality mark in Nottingham compared to national averages. For licences issued between January 2020 – December 2024, 33% of Selective licences were to accredited landlords (DASH), and 45% of HMO Licences were to accredited landlords (Unipol). In comparison, a national survey of private landlords found that only 6% reported current or previous membership of a landlord accreditation scheme.<sup>28</sup>

Being a member of an accredited body means that landlords get access to free training, information and resources. Landlords are kept updated about changes in the sector and the requirements they need to meet. Landlords' properties can also be visited by an inspector from the accreditation body, who help identify improvements needed to meet the Nottingham Rental Standard, and give advice and guidance.

Landlord feedback shows that as a result of operating within housing licensing, a third of landlords (33%) feel that this has moderately – significantly improved their awareness of best practice in managing and letting properties for private rent.

Around half of landlords felt that licensing hasn't improved their best practice, with qualitative feedback suggesting that these landlords feel they are already meeting best practice standards.

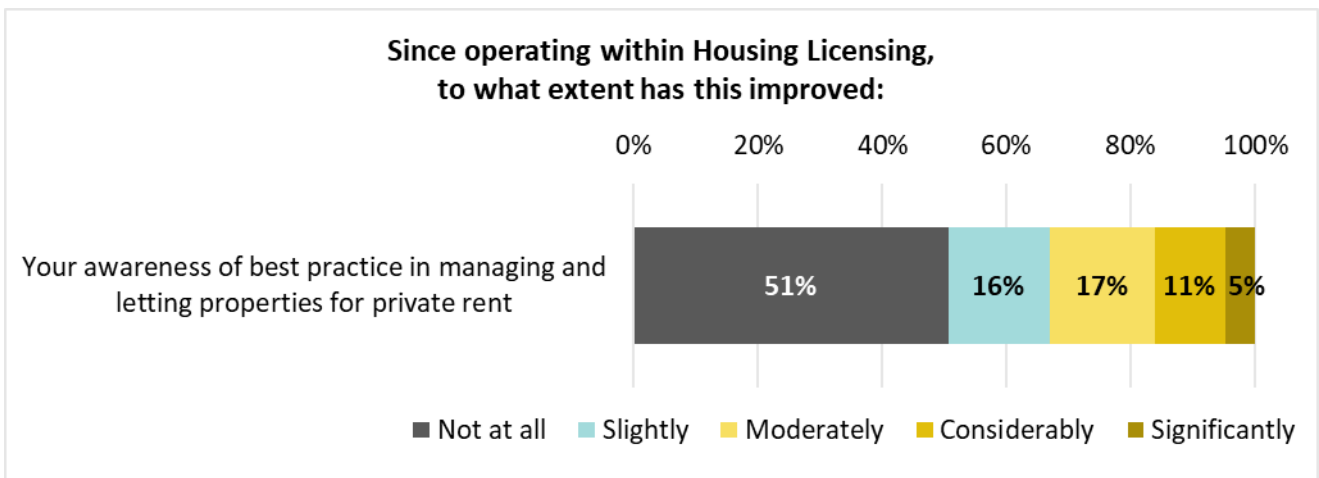


Figure 16: Landlord improvement in best practice, landlord survey (n=800)



## Nottingham Rental Standard – Accreditation partners impact statement



“The Nottingham Rental Standard recognises that the best way to improve property standards and management in the Private Rented Sector is to work with landlords and property managers, by providing high quality and free training, resources and advice to accredited members.

The partnership working between Unipol, DASH and Nottingham City Council has demonstrated a strong demand and take-up of sector briefings, webinars, conferences and workshops, which have been well-attended. Members of the Nottingham Rental Standard are uniquely well-informed and supported with upcoming challenges/changes in the Nottingham and national housing sector; particularly around the Renters Rights Act and Housing Licensing.

Nottingham City Council’s support of the Nottingham Rental Standard – both in terms of engagement and the offer of incentives – is key to its continued success. Whilst lower licence fees are often the ‘gateway’ for new applicants to schemes, the majority will maintain membership once engaged, having benefitted from the schemes’ training, free property advice and expertise. The NRS’s robust inspection system ensures that property standards amongst accredited members are verified consistently, allowing the local authority to focus resources in areas of the PRS that require additional enforcement and focus. Many landlords comment that the property inspection gives them peace of mind in an ever-changing market.

Renters benefit from the ability to select a landlord that has voluntarily agreed to meet a set of housing standards and managerial practices and are accountable to a code of conduct whilst they are accredited. If things go wrong, both DASH and Unipol offer access to a robust complaints system which will seek to provide a resolution where possible and can offer advice and mediation services.”

Matt Alison, Unipol Code Administrator; Linda Cobb, Principal Manager DASH

## OUTCOME INDICATOR

### Penalising unlawful/criminal landlords

The licensing team have specific resource to track down unlicensed landlords. Through these investigations, landlords are either brought within licensing (raising the standard of landlord) or penalised for failing to comply with housing regulation.

**7,443**

Unlicensed properties brought within licensing

**£364,365**

Financial penalties for failure to licence



We would strongly support identifying non-licensed and rogue landlords - still far too many non-licensed properties.



Landlord

#### Penalising unlawful/criminal landlords

The licensing team has specific resource dedicated to tracking down unlicensed landlords. They use data and intelligence from within licensing (e.g. looking at where licences have expired and not been renewed) as well as data from the wider Council (such as Council Tax data and identifying inconsistent or unmatching data that suggests the property is being privately let). They carry out investigations to check whether a property falls within a licensing scheme, and whether there are any valid exemptions. Over the last five years, the team have carried out 19,163 investigations.

Where a property is found to require a licence, the team contact the landlord to inform them of this. In many cases, the landlord then makes the application for a licence. Over this period, 7,443 properties were found where a licence was needed.

When the landlord does not respond or engage in any way, then the team can pursue enforcement action to penalise landlords for operating without a licence. Over the last five years, for the offence of 'failure to licence' under the relevant law for individual or HMO properties, the team have issued 81 Final Written Warnings and 72 Civil Penalty Notices, with total fines of £364,356. The team have also pursued prosecution in four cases, covering 12 properties.

Enforcement action is also taken as a last resort against landlords who have a licence, but refuse to engage or comply with issues raised that show they are breaching licence conditions or HMO Management Regulations. Over the last five years, the team have issued 5 written warnings, 17 Civil Penalty Notices and three prosecutions.

## CASE STUDY 6

# Removing unlawful landlords from the rental market

**“The Proactive Enforcement team is a vital service focused on tackling all unlicensed properties across Nottingham. The team uses a range of tools available to identify these properties combining both community engagement and data driven intelligence supported by dedicated business analysts. This approach enables us to identify unlicensed properties, including those linked to criminal activity. We proactively engage with landlords and letting agents to ensure compliance while taking enforcement action where necessary.”**

Our first step is to identify unlicensed landlords. We use a range of data – such as where licences have expired and not been renewed, or where Council Tax data shows inconsistent or unmatching information which can indicate the property is being privately let. We also follow up on complaints from residents, and referrals from partners such as the Police, Fire Service, DWP and the Modern Day Slavery team.

When we identify a property that should have a licence, we write to the owner – around 40% reply immediately and subsequently apply for a licence.

If there is no response, then we write again with a warning, and legally require information to be provided about the way in which the property is occupied. To support this, we collect further evidence to show why the landlord is operating outside of housing regulation or law. Enforcement action is considered which could result in further action being taken. This can range from issuing a Civil Penalty Notice, which carries a financial penalty for failure to licence, prosecution or banning orders.

We can also pursue a Rent Repayment Order – if rent has been paid by Housing Benefit for a property that isn’t licensed, this can be claimed back from the landlord. This can also in some cases apply to rent the resident has paid, and we support renters on how to make this application.

It’s satisfying when properties become licensed and improved as a result of our investigations. For example, one investigation led us to find a rental Agency that was managing around 700 properties, of which very few were licensed. Since working with this Agency, now almost all their properties are properly licensed and regulated.

The team have also been able to undertake robust enforcement action on several non-compliant portfolio holders. This has a positive high profile impact as they have left the private rented market. Some properties were in a poor state of repair and have been bought and have been improved by a good, accredited landlord and have since been brought up to a high standard.

One individual landlord had failed to apply for licences under both Selective and Additional Licence schemes. Visits carried out as part of the investigations into failure to licence also identified poor standards in many properties, which were addressed with enforcement action, including improvement notices – resulting in works being carried out and emergency remedial works. The team prosecuted the landlord and their property manager for 12 offences. This was successful as the magistrates court, receiving a sentencing cost of £20,000. Following the prosecution, the landlord has sold their property portfolio, many of which have returned into the private rented sector and are managed by accredited landlords.

In a small number of significant cases, we have pursued legal challenges to the highest level – for example to the Court of Appeal – in order to provide clarity for future decisions. This reinforces the work we do – not only for us, but for councils across the country.

“ The team plays a crucial role in identifying and addressing criminal offences relating to housing law, carrying out enforcement action where appropriate, improving housing standards and protecting vulnerable individuals by ensuring they live in safe accommodation. ”

## Administrative burden of licensing

To reflect the views expressed by landlords, an additional negative outcome was added to the impact assessment. This is the negative effect of additional administrative burden, which 11% of landlords indicated was an issue for them.

### **OUTCOME** Increased administrative burden on **INDICATOR** landlords

Around two-thirds of landlords indicated that they felt that they already meet licensing standards. Around half of landlords are directly involved in letting and managing their properties.

**11%**

Landlords stated licensing was an increased administrative burden

**1,901**



It has not changed my property standards and tenancy management approach. It is just yet another administrative burden with a significant cost.



Landlord

## Improving standards of homes

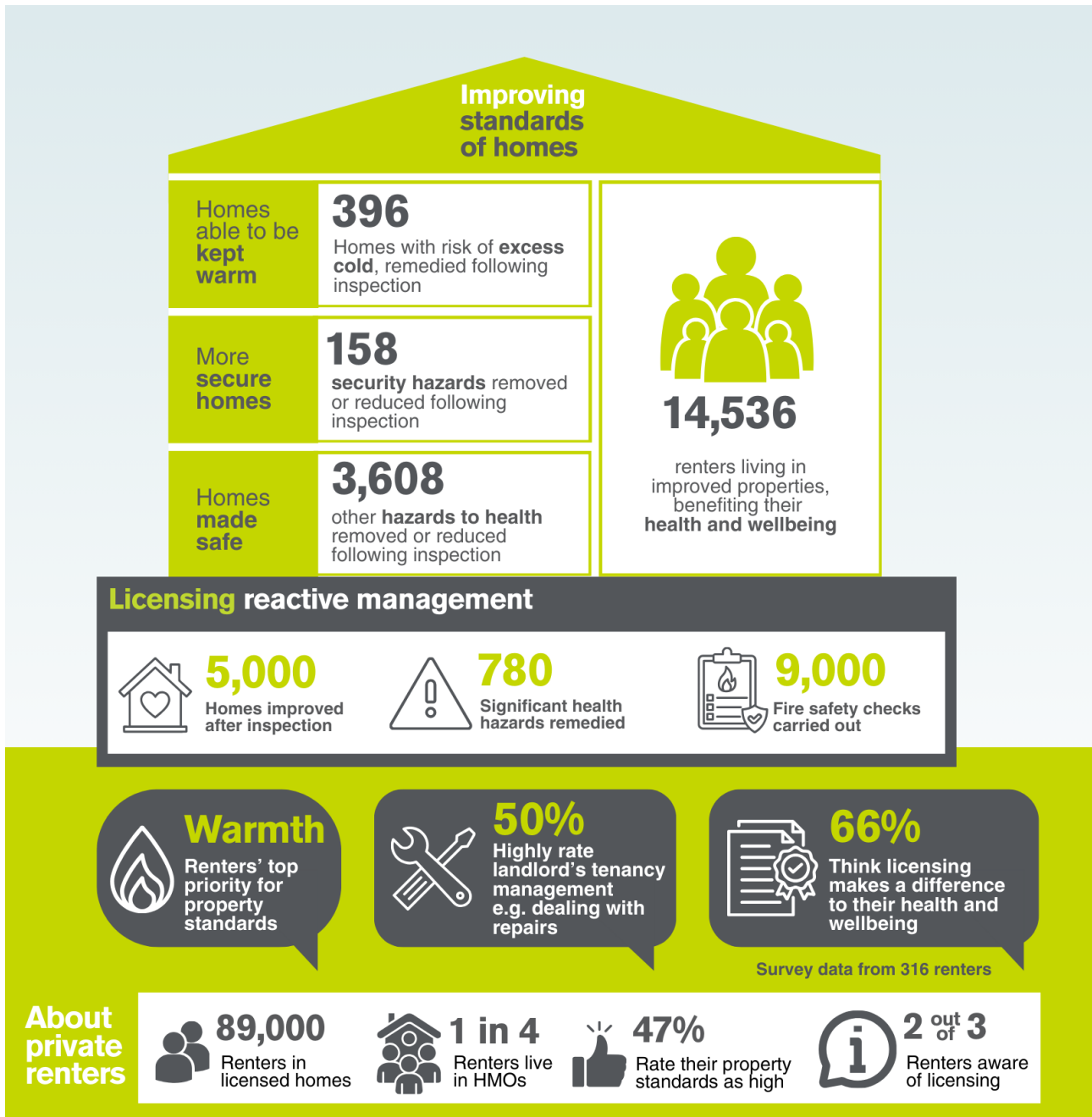


Image 5: Improving standards of homes summary

## OUTCOME INDICATOR Homes able to be kept warm

Warmth is a top priority for renters. Records from inspections show that excess cold is one of the most highly identified hazards, with licensing officers identifying 396 homes at risk of excess cold that landlords were required to remedy. Evidence from landlords suggests that improvements to the warmth of properties are made more widely as a result of licensing, with 14% of landlords reporting making improvements – affecting an estimated 4,900 properties. Licensed properties are more likely to have a valid Energy Performance Certificate, and more likely to have higher energy efficiency rating than properties outside of licensing.

**14%**

Landlords made improvements to the warmth of their property(s)

**396**

Cases of excess cold removed or reduced following inspection



The licensing officer] visited, I talked through my heating issues - I've been dealing with landlord agent for over two years without resolution. He contacted the landlord directly for me, the issue was resolved within a few weeks.



Renter

### Home able to be kept warm

Warmth of the home is the top priority for renters, according to the renter survey. Exposure to excess cold in a home can negatively impact on health, particularly when temperatures fall below minimum thresholds (e.g. 16°C) for relatively long periods. Being exposed to excess cold has the highest cost to the NHS and society, out of all the hazards to health from poor housing.<sup>29</sup> When homes are inspected, properties must have adequate insulation, appropriate heating, adequate ventilation without heat loss/draughts, and properly fitting windows and doors.<sup>30</sup>

Inspection officers check properties for signs that they can be kept adequately warm, and also for problems associated with cold homes, such as damp and mould. Risk of excess cold is the most highly identified hazard, according to inspections data. During the evaluation period, inspections identified 281 properties with significant risk of excess cold for the occupant, and a further 115 with some risk of excess cold.

The landlord survey again indicates that more properties are being improved by landlords, in addition to those picked up via inspection. Landlords report that 14% have made improvements to the warmth of their property(s) (e.g. heating, glazing, insulation), with 8% stating that they have made considerable or significant improvements to the warmth of their properties. Applying this to licensing data from the evaluation period (14,108 individual licence holders, with an average of 2.5 properties each) suggests that landlords made improvements to the warmth of an estimated 4,900 properties over this period.

Whilst warmth of the home is the top priority for renters, landlords are more likely to make improvements in other areas such as safety standards, general state of repair internally and externally, and security. This suggests a potential mismatch between the priorities of renters and landlords when it comes to making improvements to the property.

### Energy efficiency of licensed properties

Further evidence of the effects of licensing on the warmth of the homes can be seen in data on the energy efficiency of licensed properties, compared with privately rented properties that are outside of the licensing scheme. Since 2018, by law properties that are privately rented have to meet minimum energy efficiency standards, and are required to have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC), with a minimum energy efficiency standard of EPC Band E.<sup>31</sup> As part of the licence application process, landlords are required to provide an in-date EPC certificate, which is checked by the team.

Although EPCs are required by law for privately rented properties, the licensing process provides resources to check that this legal requirement is being met. Government data on EPC records for Nottingham shows that, at the evaluation baseline of January 2020, 41% of privately rented properties that are outside of the licensing designation (i.e. non-licensed) did not have a linked EPC assessment, increasing to 45% by December 2024. In contrast, a lower proportion of licensed properties did not have an EPC assessment at baseline (30%) and this reduced further to 21% without EPC assessment by 2024.

The EPC data also shows an increase in the proportion of licensed properties with the highest energy efficiency levels (Bands A to C) over the period, compared to static levels amongst properties outside of licensing.

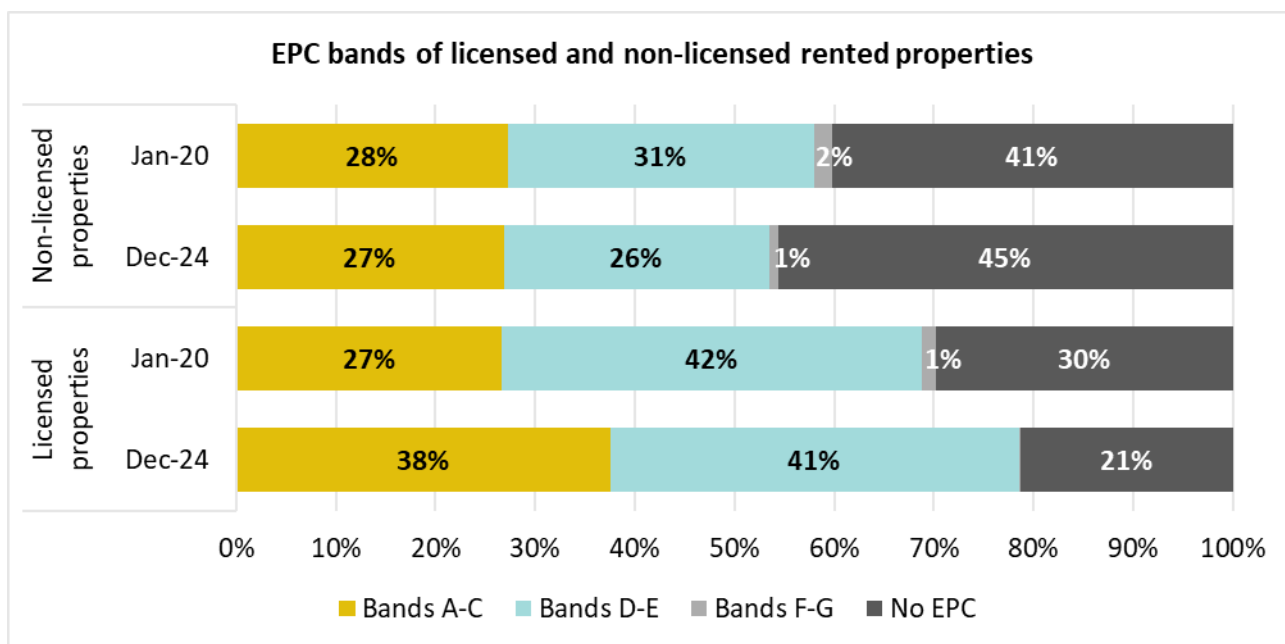


Figure 17: Energy efficiency of licensed and non-licensed properties, 2020 - 2024

## CASE STUDY 7

## Homes made warm, removing hazards to health

**“I’m a Compliance Officer within the Selective Licensing team, which involves carrying out inspections of licensed properties. It’s a lot of conversations with landlords – it starts with notifying them of the issues and educating them around the requirements, and then asking them to take the necessary action to remedy the issues, and if necessary, taking enforcement action.”**

Last autumn I inspected a property that was a two-storey terrace built in the 1940s, which was only a two-bedroom property, and a family of five living there – mum, dad and three boys. The three boys were living in the front bedroom. It felt quite crowded and cramped, with three teenage boys. There was a considerable amount of damp and mould in the property as well – the smell of damp was quite evident as soon as I came in.

It was in every room. In the living room it was around the windows and behind the sofa, and a bit crawling up the walls. It was worse in the bedrooms, most of all in the front bedroom with the three boys sleeping in. I was quite shocked how bad it was – it looked like someone had taken a pepper grinder and really heavily coated the wall. At the head of the bunk bed it was just black for a couple of feet up the wall, and then more mould on the walls and ceiling.

During the inspection I also found that there was no fire detection – which is an immediate safety concern.

I emailed the landlord to say that they needed to put the fire detection in ASAP, but I got no response.

I contacted the tenant, and they said that the landlord had been in touch after the inspection and let them know they needed to find somewhere else to live, so they were at risk of being evicted. Because he was not engaging with us to deal with any of the issues we’d drawn his attention to, we served an Improvement Notice – this means that the landlord is not able to legally evict tenants for six months, to prevent retaliatory evictions when a tenant complains of poor conditions.

I was in contact with the tenants throughout, telling them that the eviction notices weren’t valid. The tenants had been there for a long time, as were waiting for a Council house. The woman living in the property had mobility issues, so she spent a lot of time in bed, exposed to the mould. They had raised the issue with the landlord, but communication with the landlord wasn’t great and he hadn’t responded. They were not keen on kicking up too much of a fuss, so there wasn’t a lot they could do. I later issued a Civil Penalty Notice for the breach of licence conditions due to lack of fire detection.

The Improvement Notice meant that the work has now been done to improve the property. I reinspected the property three months later, and it was in great condition. They’ve done a really good job treating the mould, and the walls were looking in good condition. There was no sign of a leak, it was just caused by so many people living in the property and lack of ventilation – so the antifungal cleaning agent had been effective.

They’d put the worktops and cupboard doors in the kitchen that I’d asked for, and fitted smoke alarms that were mains-wired and interlinked, which is the gold standard for that kind of property.

They’d addressed all the issues, and the tenants were quite happy with the works that have been done. The stress and unpleasantness of having to live with the smell and sight of the mould had been removed, as well as the worry about the effect of it on their health.

“That’s what I really like about the job. You can see immediately the benefits that people are getting from it. I get to see that change there and then – and hearing from the renters themselves or seeing it, I know that’s going to make sure that person’s not going to get sick because of the damp and mould.”

CASE  
STUDY

7

Homes made warm, removing hazards to  
health

Before



After



## **OUTCOME** Homes made safe, reducing hazards to **INDICATOR** health

The state of repair inside their home is a top priority for renters. Licensing inspectors identified specific hazards to health as result of property conditions in 17% of properties inspected. The most commonly identified hazards that are identified by inspectors and then remedied by landlords are fire safety, falls, damp and mould, and excess cold.

**21%** Landlords made improvements to the safety standards of their property(s)

**3,608** Hazards<sup>r</sup> removed or reduced following inspection



When I was looking for this [rental property], I just wanted to make sure I found one that was well maintained, no mould – because I had a really bad problem, so I think I've actually developed an allergy to mould now because of where I was living before. Where I am now, it's nice, it's clean, it's tidy. There's no mould. It's well maintained. It's very important that people have somewhere to live where they feel safe and comfortable and just have peace.

Renter



### **Homes made safe, reducing hazards to health**

Renters highly prioritise the state of repair inside their home. A poor state of repair inside a home can lead to a number of hazards to health for the person living there: from the direct physical impacts on health from hazards like damp and mould and other indoor pollutants; to psychological effects of space, security, light and noise in the home; risks of infections from hygiene, sanitation and water supply; risks of accidents such as falls, electrics and fire safety; and risks of collisions, cuts and strains.<sup>32</sup>

Evidence of the landlord's processes for maintaining property standards and documentary evidence of safety standards is required as part of the licence application. Licence audits for a sample of Selectively Licensed properties in 2024/25 indicate that 58% of landlords provided evidence that they were complying with the requirement for dealing with repairs and maintenance, but only 37% evidenced compliance with carrying out regular inspections.

In terms of property standards, this data indicates that landlords were least likely to have evidence of compliance with fire safety (67% fire safety documents were non-compliant), followed by gas safety (58% non-compliant) and electrical safety (42% non-compliant).

<sup>r</sup> This total excludes the hazards relating to excess cold, entry by intruders and crowding and space, which are counted in other outcome indicators (to avoid double-counting)

Inspections data over the entire evaluation period (Jan 2020 – Dec 2024) shows that 4,199 specific hazards to health were identified and remedied in 1,581 properties (17% of properties inspected internally). The most highly identified hazard to health is fire safety, with inspectors identifying 935 properties with fire safety risks that were remedied. This is followed by falls on stairs (581 hazards), and damp and mould (502 hazards).

Of these hazards identified, 781 were significant hazards to health, with the most common risk being exposure to excess cold (281 properties).

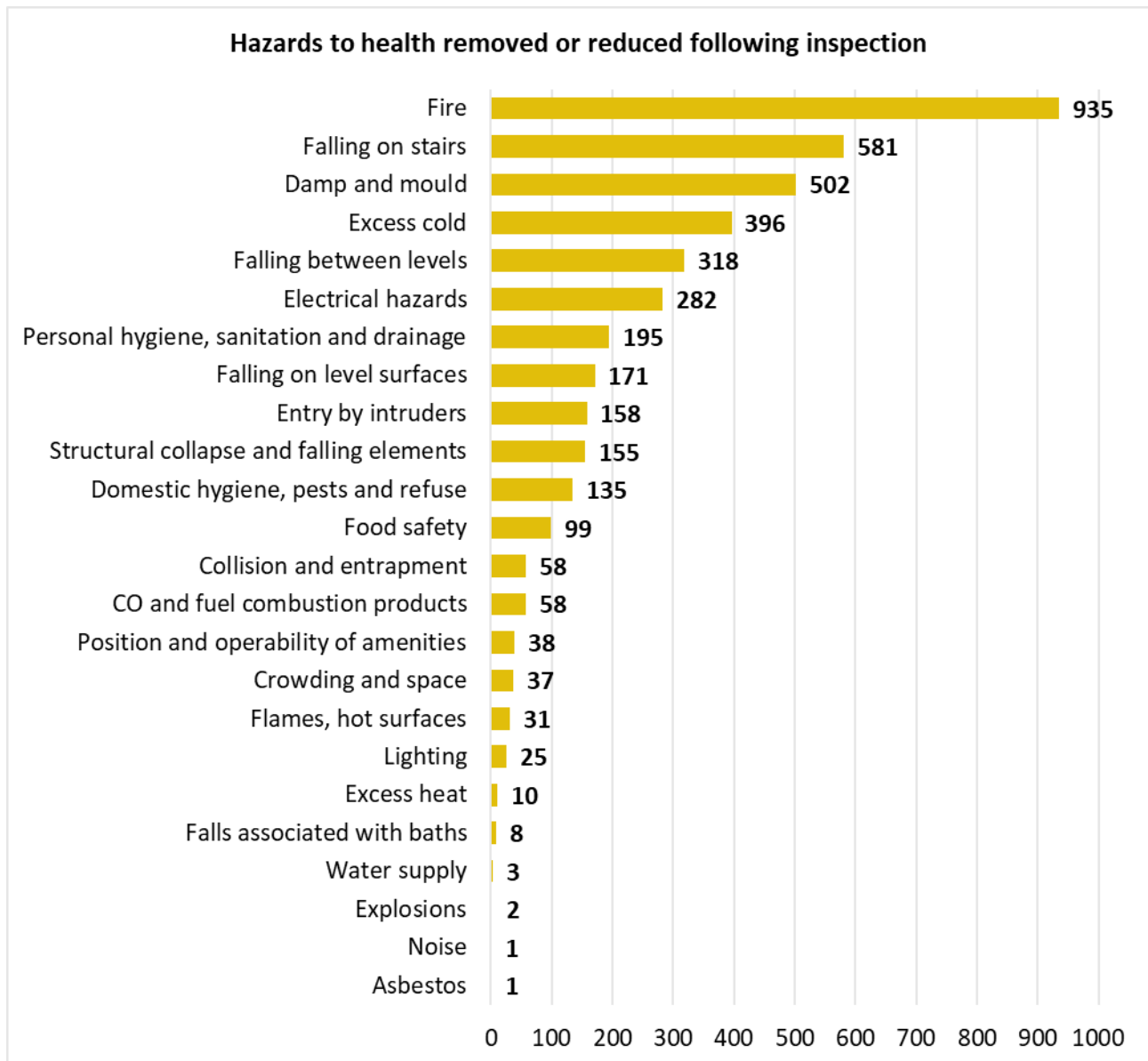


Figure 18: Hazards removed or reduced following inspection, internal performance management data

**OUTCOME  
INDICATOR**

**Healthy and safe residents**

Licensing inspectors identified a total of 781 significant hazards to health during property inspections, which were remedied. As well as benefiting the renter themselves, this reduces the burden on the NHS as a result of treatment costs resulting from accidents, injuries or illness resulting from home hazards.

**88%**

Renters feel that dealing with repairs promptly is most important to them

**781**

Significant hazards to health removed or reduced following inspection



It is estimated that it is costing the NHS some £1.4bn per year to treat those people who are affected by poor housing.

BRE, The Cost of Poor Housing<sup>33</sup>



## CASE STUDY 8

## Homes made safe, reducing hazards to health

**“I’m a Regulatory Compliance Officer with the HMO Licensing team, carrying out compliance inspections in HMOs to identify any health and safety concerns, and to ensure that the landlords and their managing agents are adhering to legislation relating to HMOs. My work revolves around the more complex cases that potentially could involve Tribunals and prosecutions, and where the Council has a duty to act to remove or reduce a hazard within an HMO to a satisfactory level.”**

I attended a property for a routine compliance inspection and during the inspection found some defects that were significant hazards to the health and safety of the occupants, due to potential structural collapse and falling elements. The most significant defect was in relation to several cracks found along the floor in the entrance hall, which had a cellar directly below. In the cellar I found that the steel beams that support the ceiling had corroded. The gas and electric meters were also located in the cellar, which increased the potential severity of harm, because if the ceiling collapsed the gas and electric meters could have potentially caused a fire or even an explosion.

Another significant defect was the disrepair to an archway along a section of the ceiling in the living room, which had significant cracks and was sagging in the middle. The fact that this defect was in the living room increased the likelihood of harm because if the archway collapsed, somebody could well be in this room at the time. There were also some cracks on the exterior of the property and hairline cracks in some of the bedrooms.

After the inspection I had a case discussion with a manager to look at what I’d found, and we decided to contact the landlord and managing agent for the property and request that they get a structural engineer to visit the property and do a full assessment to determine the structural condition of the property.

The structural engineer’s report said that the property was in poor structural condition, and they recommended that works were carried out immediately to rectify the issue. They recommended a temporary fix because the property was occupied with five students at the time. I got in touch with the landlord the same day that I received the structural engineers’ report and told him that he needed to follow the temporary measure recommendations. Within 24 hours of me raising this with the landlord, he had some Acrow Props installed in the property, to support the archway on the ceiling in the living room, and to support the ceiling in the cellar.

I served an Improvement Notice on the landlord, which made it a legal requirement for him to carry out the work specified by the Council, which included all the recommendations from the structural engineer.

About three months later I went back to the property for a follow-up inspection, and the landlord had completed all the work that was listed in the Improvement Notice. There had been some other less urgent defects identified during the initial inspection, like a self-closer on a fire door had been removed by one of the tenants, one of the cupboards in the kitchen was missing a door, and the décor looked tired and needed some work. The landlord was very good and was quick to act when prompted. All the works were fully completed, and I was satisfied with the outcome.

“ I enjoy getting to see a property after the remedial works have been carried out. There’s a sense of satisfaction in knowing that you’re able to step in and help, particularly if there are vulnerable people in the property. ”

CASE  
STUDY

8

Homes made safe, reducing hazards to  
health

Before



After



## OUTCOME INDICATOR Providing safe homes

Fire safety is a significant issue that is picked up through the licensing process, through safety document audits and inspections, as well as joint working with Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service. Fire hazards are the top category of hazards identified by inspectors.

**9,412**

Licensed properties/buildings inspected for fire safety

**40**

Estimated reduction in accidental fires from improved fire safety



The estimated total economic and social cost of fire in England, in year ending March 2020, was £12.0 billion... average unit cost of £78,000 per fire attended.

Home Office, Economic and Social Cost of Fire<sup>34</sup>



In a Memorandum of Understanding between Nottingham city partners, NCC Licensing takes the lead responsibility for checking fire safety standards in licensed properties. Each inspection includes a fire safety check, including adequate smoke/fire detection, fire extinguishing equipment and fire safety escape routes. The Licensing teams carried out 9,245 internal inspections (7,338 in Selectively Licensed properties, 1,907 in HMO licensed properties).

Fire hazards are the top category of hazard identified by inspectors (see [Figure 18](#) above). Over the evaluation period, inspectors have identified 935 fire safety hazards which landlords are required to remedy.

NCC Licensing have undertaken specific work in partnership with Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) to address fire safety in tall blocks of residential flats. Over the evaluation period, the Joint Audit and Inspection Team (JAIT – see case study 9) carried out 167 inspections of tall buildings. This resulted in issuing 146 notices, the majority of which will have required or suggested improvement be made to the buildings. The majority of landlords respond to the notices, and formal notices were only required from NCC in seven cases, and from NFRS in nine cases.

Fire safety is a lower priority for renters compared to other property standards, such as warmth and state of repair, with 28% of renters putting fire safety as one of their top three priorities for their rented home.

A report by the National Fire Chiefs Council estimated that every home fire safety check reduced the number of accidental fires by 0.00422 (i.e. every 237 home safety checks reduces one fire).<sup>35</sup> The Licensing teams carried out 9,245 internal inspections, and in addition the JAIT team inspected 167 buildings. It is therefore estimated that these inspections will have resulted in 40 fewer domestic fires across Nottingham.

# CASE STUDY 9

## Improving fire safety in tall residential buildings

The tragedy at Grenfell tower brought to national attention the issue of fire safety in tall buildings, and in Nottingham sparked the creation of a joint programme of action between Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) and Nottingham City Council. The Joint Audit and Inspection (JAIT team) brings together Fire Safety Officers and NCC licensing officers, to target high-risk residential buildings - tall buildings and those with lots of residents - to inspect and ensure buildings are made safe.

JAIT have inspected 167 buildings over the last five years, and the current joint action programme will focus on a further 120 high-risk buildings over the next two years. The team carry out joint inspections, meaning that they can check for fire safety issues and ensure the wider licence conditions are met, such as internal standards inside individual flats. Working together makes best use of the resources and legislative powers of the two organisations and reduces the number of inspections for landlords and building owners/managers.

The JAIT programme focuses on buildings with unsafe cladding and other fire safety defects and seeks improvements using the powers of the Housing Act 2004, including Housing Licensing, and Fire Safety law to make sure the appropriate remedial action is undertaken to improve building safety. In many cases, using licence conditions around fire safety can produce quicker resolutions than using regulatory powers.

Helen leads the JAIT team from within NCC Licensing:

“With fire safety, we’re looking at the chance of a fire breaking out, but also the chance of an uncontrollable spread of that fire. We carry out joint inspections with NFRS and determine the fire safety issues in each building based on what we have seen, what’s lacking, what deficiencies there are. We’ll usually serve an informal letter before action if it’s the first time we’ve been involved, then move on to more formal enforcement if no progress is made.

Sometimes the larger remedial works such as cladding replacement can take a long time to complete, as they require planning permission, funding applications and the actual building works. Other substantial issues like lack of fire doors, or failed compartmentation (measures to stop fires spreading between dwellings), or faults in fire detection or alarms can present significant risks to occupants.

Using licensing conditions we can often get these issues resolved more quickly, which makes the building safer sooner.

Due to the size of these buildings and their occupancy levels, the number of people that are affected can be substantial – so every time you make something safer, you know it’s not just one occupant but many people that we’re making safer. If there were to be a fire, it could end in tragedy – but we’ve made interventions that have reduced the risk of that happening.”

The lead for the JAIT team from the NFRS says:

“JAIT is a powerful example of how effective partnership working delivers real and lasting benefits for community safety. By bringing together fire protection, housing and regulatory expertise, the team provides a joined-up approach to assessing risk and compliance, ensuring that buildings are safer for residents, the wider public and responding firefighters. Through the dual application of the Housing Act 2004 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, JAIT offers a comprehensive and consistent assessment of building standards, fire precautions and management arrangements.”

“ This integrated approach avoids duplication, strengthens enforcement where required, and supports duty holders in achieving sustainable compliance. Most importantly, it enables us to identify and reduce risk earlier, protect vulnerable occupants, and improve firefighter safety by ensuring buildings are better understood and safer to operate in.”

Jonathan Holford, Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service



## OUTCOME INDICATOR

### More secure homes

Records from inspections show that licensing officers identified 158 security hazards, and required improvements that reduced or removed the risk of entry by intruders in those properties. Evidence from landlords suggests that security improvements are made more widely as a result of licensing, with 16% of landlords reporting making security improvements – affecting an estimated 5,600 properties.

**16%**

Landlords made improvements to the security of their property(s)

**158**

Security hazards removed or reduced following inspection



Making sure that the building is secure and safe is the top priority.



Renter

#### More secure homes

Housing law states that homes need to be secure, recognising that the risk of entry by intruders has negative effects on people's wellbeing, both through anticipatory worry and fear of being burgled, as well as the negative emotional impact following a burglary. Licensing inspectors look for adequate security measures, such as external security lighting, secure locks on windows and doors, spy holes/chains on entrance doors, and in the case of flats and HMOs, entry controls and whole-building security.

Licensing officers inspect properties for adequate security measures, and require improvement to be made if security is inadequate. The most significant security hazards are required to be remedied straight away. Between January 2020 and December 2024, inspectors found 24 properties with significant risk of entry by intruders, and a further 132 properties with some risk of entry by intruders. Inspection data for Selective Licensed properties indicate that around 5% of improvements made to properties following inspections were in relation to security.

The landlord survey indicates that landlords are making improvements to the security of their properties as a result of the wider process of being licensed. Landlords report that 16% have made improvements to the security measures in their property(s) (e.g. locks, windows, doors) as a result of licensing, with 8% making considerable or significant improvements (see [Figure 15](#)). Applying this to licensing data from the evaluation period (14,108 individual licence holders, with an average of 2.5 properties each) suggests that landlords made security improvements to an estimated 5,600 properties over this period.

Almost three-quarters (72%) of renters feel that licensing makes a moderate-significant difference in how safe and secure they feel.

## **OUTCOME** Homes improved, improving renters' health **INDICATOR** and wellbeing

Dealing with repairs promptly is a top priority for renters. Through inspections, properties where improvements are needed are identified and improved by landlords. This has an impact on the overall health and wellbeing of the renter, with two-thirds of renters feel that licensing makes a moderate to significant difference to their health and wellbeing.

**66%** Renters feel that licensing makes a moderate to significant difference to their health and wellbeing

**4,500** Properties improved following inspection



Before, they did come and do six-monthly checks and I did report back all the faults and they sent the report to the landlady, and she just didn't do anything. I felt like I was beating my head against a brick wall.

Where I am now, it's nice, it's clean, it's safe, it's well maintained. They're responsive and any repairs or issues you've got, they get done. I can't fault them. I'm left to just live my life and feel comfortable.

Renter



### **Homes improved, improving renters' health and wellbeing**

Dealing with repairs promptly is the top priority for renters, in terms of tenancy management standards (Figure 10), with 88% choosing this as a priority. Most renters feel that their property meets expected property standards, but a fifth (21%) feel that this is not the case (Figure 9). The state of repair, as well as landlords' responsiveness to dealing with repairs promptly, are highly important to renters and have an effect on their overall health and wellbeing. Two-thirds of renters feel that having licence conditions make a moderate-significant difference to their health and wellbeing.

As well as specific hazards to health, inspectors also identify general improvements needed to properties. These improvements are recorded as general improvements required to meet either Selective Licence conditions or HMO Management Regulations, but the data recording does not include the detail of what type of improvements were made. In addition to the 1,581 properties where specific hazards to health were removed or reduced, general improvements were made to a further 2,917 properties. A total of 4,500 properties were improved following inspections.

More generally, landlords themselves report that 21% have made improvements to the safety standards of their properties (e.g. electrical, gas, fire and carbon monoxide safety), which would mean that an estimated 7,400 properties have had safety improvements. Landlords also report that 18% have made improvements to the state of repair inside their properties (e.g. good state of repair, addressing hazards), affecting an estimated 6,350 properties.

## Improving neighbourhoods



Image 6: Improving neighbourhoods summary

## OUTCOME INDICATOR

### Improving external property standards

Around 15-20% of properties require improvements to the external condition of the property or garden following an inspection. Evidence from partners and licensing officers suggests that external conditions of properties have been improved over time, as the worst properties are remedied and landlords became more aware of the requirements of licensing in relation to external property standards.

**15%**

Landlords made improvements to the state of repair externally of their property(s)

**3,371**

Improvements made to external property conditions and gardens following inspection



Also the outside space was really important for us. We have kids and just having a space that they can escape to outside and play was really important to us as well.



Renter

#### Improving external property standards

Inspection data from Selective Licensed properties indicates that 17% of properties inspected by NCC licensing officers required improvements to the external condition of the property. Data from external inspections of licensed properties by Neighbourhood Safety Officers shows that 15% of properties were rated as 'bad' for external building condition. This indicates that 1,733 Selective Licensed properties were improved externally.

HMO licensed properties specifically record improvements made to external conditions. This shows that 1,638 HMO properties were improved, in relation to external condition of the building or the garden (around 20% of HMO properties that had external inspection).

Unipol also carries out an annual survey of its members' gardens (student houses), to check conditions meet the criteria set out in the Unipol code for Nottingham, checking that hedges, steps/handrails, boundary walls and fences, paths and paved areas are all in good repair. The survey shows a consistent year-on-year increase the proportion of student properties meeting these garden conditions, increasing from 64% of garden inspections being compliant in 2021, to 90% compliance in 2024.

Landlords report that 15% have made improvements to the state of repair externally (e.g. gutters, paint, gardens), affecting an estimated 5,300 properties.

## CASE STUDY

# 10

## Improving external property standards

**“I’m a Compliance Officer with the HMO Licensing team, and my main role is to do external compliance on HMOs across the city – looking at the exterior of the property, and seeing if there is any damage, safety concerns or hazards and notifying the licence holders to give them a chance to rectify them. I have a list of licensed properties that haven’t been inspected yet, and then I go out on area walks and look at specific streets.”**

When this external inspection work was first rolled out, the most common issue was untidy property exteriors – overflowing bins, rubbish at the front of the property. There was a significant volume of work, because we were just focusing on external inspections so we could cover the whole street.

Then we would write to all the landlords, and it got the word out to other landlords, because landlords within HMO Licensing speak to each other. So they could see that we were out and being visible, and in a few extreme cases where the landlord didn’t cooperate with us, they were issued with a Civil Penalty Notice.

We were making tenants aware as well, because sometimes it’s hard for a landlord to control what a tenant does. We engaged with landlords to give them advice – like giving leaflets from the City Council about bin days and what goes in which bins. Just the little things that people may not pay attention to, but making them aware of it can go a long, long way.

Then landlords started to act on these issues and they were swept away. That meant we could deal with wider issues.

For example, one property the side entrance gate was wide open – it was damaged and the panels were rotting away and the lock wasn’t operating. This poses a risk of entry by intruders – you could see that if someone wanted to burgle the property it was easy access to the back, and easier for someone to do this without being noticed by neighbours, passers-by etc.

So we made the landlord aware that this isn’t safe for occupants and something needs to be done about it. The landlord put in a new side gate that was fully functioning – that deters anyone from trying to gain access to the back of the house.

In another case, there was a steep set of stairs from the street up to the entrance of the property. This needed a handrail to aid people coming in and out of the property. Something so small might not seem like a big issue for some people, but to another person that’s not fit and able, it helps them to access the property. Or if someone tripped or fell, they need the handrail there to grab onto so they can minimise the injury to themselves.

I wrote to the licence holder to make them aware of their responsibility, and highlighted the relevant legislation. The landlord was very responsive, and as soon as I sent my first letter, he got back to me and the work was done quickly. So it was brushing up on the licence holder’s knowledge, making them aware of their responsibilities under HMO Licensing, and they accepted the issue and actioned it quickly.



What I enjoy most is when the landlords or the occupants, or people we’re trying to collaborate with, work with us and come to a resolution on the issues we’ve raised. That gives me more satisfaction than issuing enforcement action. We are there to enforce rules, but I get satisfaction more out of collaborating, working informally rather than formally going down the enforcement route.



CASE  
STUDY

10

Improving external property  
standards

Before



After



## OUTCOME INDICATOR Reducing problem waste

Licensing has made specific changes over this period to strengthen their powers to tackle problem waste and enforce this through partnership working. All licensed properties now have to have a Waste Management Plan, and licensing officers work with NSOs and Waste crews to tackle problem areas. Inspection data shows an improvement in the number of properties with problem waste over this time, and complaints about waste have also reduced over time.

**-45%** Decrease in waste complaints over the last 3 years

**1,073** Improvements made to individual properties regarding waste

“ One of the most effective examples of a partnership approach to tackling waste issues has been in areas of the city with large off-campus student populations. Collaborative efforts, particularly focused on educating residents about waste management, have led to noticeable improvements in how waste is presented in these neighbourhoods. Joint communications have been developed and delivered to reinforce these messages. While a degree of enforcement remains necessary, the emphasis on early intervention highlights opportunities to influence behaviour positively before enforcement becomes required.

Neighbourhood Safety team manager

”

### Reducing problem waste

Tackling problem waste is an issue that Licensing has made targeted changes in order to see improvements in this area. Problem waste is more common in HMO properties (75% of waste complaints relate to HMO properties), and is often more of an issue at certain times of year, such as the end of the summer term when many student leases end. NCC Licensing has worked in partnership with NCC's Waste department, NSOs and the universities in order to address this issue (see case study 11).

Licence conditions have also been strengthened to increase licensing's powers to tackle waste. In 2022 the licence conditions were updated for both Selective and HMO Licences, to include the requirement that each licensed property must have a written Waste Management Plan. In the plan, landlords have to show how they will manage waste at the properties, including ensuring all waste provision is adequate for the number of people in the property, inspecting at the start, during and end of tenancy, and providing tenants with up-to-date information on waste collection and recycling.

Audit data from 2024-25 for Selective licences shows that 59% of licences did not include a compliant Waste Management Plan, and so licence holders were contacted to rectify this.

External inspections carried out by NSOs on Selective properties demonstrate an improvement over time in the number of properties with waste issues. In the first year of inspections (2022), issues were noted with waste or bins in 4% of properties – by 2024, inspections identified waste/bins issues in only 0.5% of properties. Data from all properties inspected by licensing officers shows that waste was identified as an issue in 5% of Selective licensed properties that were inspected since 2024. Similarly for HMO properties, 6% of properties that had external inspections identified waste as an issue that was then resolved.

As well as proactive management of waste, licensing officers also reactively manage complaints made about waste in licensed properties.

Reporting was updated in 2022 to capture specific complaints about waste (separate from general ASB), and over the following three years there were 824 complaints about waste. Waste complaints are more prevalent in HMO properties, with 75% of waste complaints relating to HMO properties.

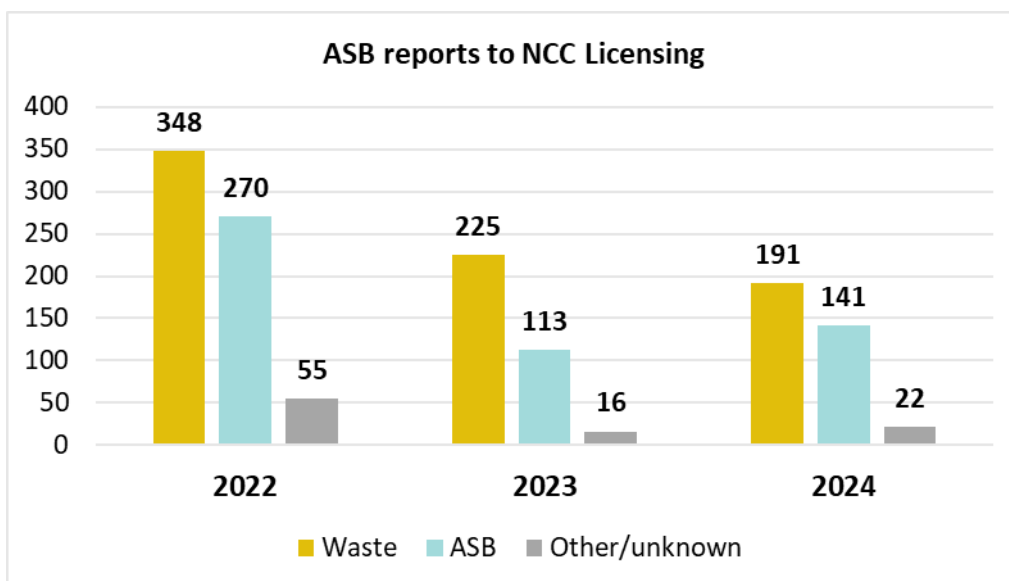


Figure 19: ASB complaints data (2022-2024), internal performance management data

Of these complaints, 84% are then resolved that the first stage intervention, i.e. after writing to the licence holder, with no further complaints in the following 12 months. Complaints about waste have reduced over the reporting period, from 348 in 2022 to 191 in 2024 – a 45% reduction over three years.

Landlords themselves also report that they have made improvements to measures for dealing with waste at their properties – 11% of landlords state that they have made improvements as a result of licensing. This suggests that improvements in managing waste have been made at an estimated 3,900 properties.

CASE  
STUDY

11

Working in partnership to reduce  
problem waste

Before



After



## CASE STUDY 11 Working in partnership to reduce problem waste

The ASB team within NCC Licensing work closely with NCC's Waste department and Neighbourhood Safety Officers (NSOs) on the streets, to identify and tackle problem waste issues. The partners share data on waste hotspots, and NCC Licensing has resourced two additional waste advisors to work in problem areas. NCC has strengthened its tools to tackle problem waste in rented properties, bringing together the City's Waste Management Policy and licence condition that each property must have a Waste Management Plan, so that both residents and landlords can be held to account for dealing with waste appropriately.

The Regulatory Compliance Officer for ASB in the **licensing team** explains:

"Waste is an ongoing issue that we are working to tackle. For example, for the student areas the amount of waste that comes from student properties at the end of the academic year has been a massive problem.

We have developed an end-of-year Waste Action Plan, bringing together the Neighbourhood Safety Officers, the University and NCC's Cleansing team – we are all assigned tasks to help reduce waste from student properties at the end of the student year. Our role is to communicate with Licence holders earlier in the summer to remind them to put plans in place, and their obligation as a Licence holder.

We've had examples of roads with several large HMOs where there was a lot of waste left at the end of term, which the NSOs had reported. We were able to write to the licence holders and enforce the licence conditions, and within a short space of time the landlords had responded and the area was made tidy."

NCC's **Waste Reduction and Recycling** Manager says:

"We know where there are hotspots, using analysis from our Waste crew reports. We share this with the Licensing team, and the additional Waste Advisors give us extra resource for tackling these issues.

We've updated Nottingham city's Waste Management Policy, which now specifically refers to the responsibilities of licence holders to manage waste appropriately. This gives the Licensing team the powers to enforce licence conditions on waste.

Student areas are often a problem. Students come from different areas of the country, so are used to different coloured bins. Sometimes landlords and renters aren't clear about who is responsible for bins and waste. Our refuse crews report when bins are damaged, recycling is contaminated, or side waste is being left on the street.

The Waste Advisors target these areas, and together with NSOs and Licensing officers are able to work together to approach both the residents and the licence holders."

The **Neighbourhood Safety Officers** find:

"Dealing with problem waste helps with the 'broken windows' effect – when some landlords disregard the appearance of the garden or waste, this can creep across the area, leading to increased complaints and more resource needed to tackle the issue.

We are most effective when we are able to work with the ASB team within Licensing, as we problem solve together. Having the licence means we know who to contact and can take enforcement action more quickly. In areas without licensing, it's much harder to tackle.

We have robust plans in place at certain times of year, such as increasing patrols around the end of student terms. Someone from the Licensing team also comes out and we do walk-arounds together.

The cleanliness in student areas is now much more noticeable. Working together reactively to deal with problems quickly and effectively, as well as proactively to prevent problems occurring has worked brilliantly."

“ Without Licensing and the requirement to have a Waste Management Plan, there would be less ownership of waste issues, and we wouldn't have the data on who the licence holder is, to hold accountable.

NCC Waste Reduction and Recycling Manager



## OUTCOME INDICATOR

### Tackling persistent noise and other ASB

Complaints about ASB (including noise) are most prevalent in HMO properties. NCC Licensing has worked closely with NSOs and the Universities to tackle the issue from both sides, contacting both landlords and residents about the issue. Most complaints are resolved at the first stage, with no further complaints over the next 12 months. ASB complaints have decreased over the reporting period.

**84%**

ASB complaints resolved at first stage – no further reports in the following 12 months

**919**

Complaints about ASB (including noise) addressed



NCC and the universities are proactive in tackling disruptive student behaviour. Close partnership working is already making a difference in the prevention of, and response to, incidents and the universities invest significant resources in tackling disruption.



Nottingham Student Living Strategy<sup>36</sup>

#### Tackling persistent noise

The NCC licensing team respond to complaints about noise, working with NSOs and University representatives to tackle the issue with both the landlord and the residents. Noise complaints are more common at HMO properties (two-thirds of complaints about ASB (excluding waste) were in relation to HMO licensed properties).

Since reporting for ASB was introduced in 2022, there have been 919 complaints about ASB (excluding waste). Although the reporting does not specifically capture whether the ASB relates to noise or other types of ASB, licensing officers report that noise is one of the most common ASB issues that they deal with. ASB complaints have reduced over time, from 270 in 2022 to 141 in 2024, a 48% decrease (see [Figure 19](#) above).

Over this period, 84% of ASB complaints have been resolved at the first stage – this means that there were no further complaints relating to that property within 12 months. The proportion of ASB complaints resolved at the first stage has increased from 83% in 2022 to 88% in 2024.

Landlords themselves also report that they have made improvements to measures for dealing with anti-social behaviour – 11% of landlords state that they have made improvements as a result of licensing. This suggests that improvements in managing ASB have been made at an estimated 3,900 properties.

**OUTCOME  
INDICATOR**

**Empowering safe communities**

Licensing represents an additional tool and resource to reduce ASB, by working directly with the landlord. By having an ASB team within the Licensing team who respond directly to complaints of ASB, this reduces the burden on other partners such as the Police and Community Safety Team.

**48%**

Decrease in ASB complaints over the last 3 years

**784**

Complaints about ASB (including noise) resolved at first intervention



Licensing is a real help from a multi-faceted approach... Because licence conditions are in place, we often find the response is a lot quicker.



Neighbourhood Safety Officer

## CASE STUDY

# 12

## Working in partnership to tackle persistent noise and ASB

The ASB team within NCC Licensing work closely with Neighbourhood Safety Officers (NSOs) and representatives from both universities, to resolve issues with noise as quickly as possible. The partners address the issue from both sides, contacting both the landlord and the residents to raise and address the complaints. This partnership has been effective at tackling the issue at first intervention, and reducing the number of complaints over time.

The Regulatory Compliance Officer for ASB in the licensing team explains:

“We work in partnership with the Neighbourhood Safety Officers (NSOs), as well the universities and Police. Where there is a complaint of ASB made to the Council, the NSOs will visit the reported property and speak to the occupants about the reports they’ve received and have the power to take enforcement action if appropriate. If complaints are made directly to the university then representatives from both universities may attend the reported property and give suitable words of advice. If these visits take place on ward walks then an ASB Compliance Officer from the NCC Licensing Team as well as an NSO will support on these visits. As part of this I would let the occupants know that we’ll also be contacting their landlord.

Our team is unique as we’re the only team that has the ability to go to the licence holder and challenge them directly about their occupant’s behaviour. This, alongside interactions with universities, Police and NSOs, provides a more holistic approach to tackling ASB.”

The Community Engagement team at University of Nottingham says:

“We work with students living out in the community in Nottingham, engaging with students to advise and support them, and also manage any issues that arise.

We aim to work in partnership, with NSOs, Police and NCC Licensing as working together has more of an impact when attempting to change behaviours. NSOs and the University can work with students and take enforcement action if necessary, whilst Licensing holds the landlord accountable.

We’ve had some examples of where we’ve had ongoing issues with a particular property having regular parties, and noise complaints. Once our investigation process has completed, Licensing can then step in to hold the landlords to account so that we have clear and consistent behaviour expectations from all sides.”

The Neighbourhood Safety Officers find:

“In student areas with high concentration of HMOs, we tend to see issues from waste, to noise and other anti-social behaviour. Now we directly link into NCC licensing regarding any noise incidents that come to us, and they also raise any complaints they’ve received with us.

Licensing is a real help from a multi-faceted approach – we talk to residents, and Licensing raise it with landlords so that there’s more pressure on residents to abide by their tenancy conditions. Because licence conditions are in place, we often find the response is a lot quicker.”

“ Without Licensing there would be a void in tackling issues around ASB and noise, particularly the most difficult cases. Universities can use our powers around student behaviour to escalate to a certain level, but having the Licensing team step in and hold landlords accountable is really valuable. ”

University of Nottingham Community Engagement team

## OUTCOME INDICATOR

### Championing sustainability

Modelled data from EPC certificates indicates that carbon emissions (per m<sup>2</sup>) are higher in licensed compared to non-licensed properties, but the reduction in average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions over the period is bigger for the licensed property group, compared to the non-licensed group.

**38%**

Licensed properties have EPC rating A-C

**0.43**

Fewer tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> emitted per year, on average per licensed property



Nottingham's current housing stock poses a key challenge to tackle in our approach to sustainable carbon neutrality. Moving forward, significant improvements must be made to Nottingham's housing stock, which will require a sustained level of household retrofits.



Nottingham Carbon Neutral 2028 Charter<sup>37</sup>

### Reducing carbon emissions

Making homes warmer by improving energy efficiency not only benefits the renter, but also has environmental benefits by reducing carbon emissions. Evidence above in relation to warmer homes shows how licensed properties are more likely to have a valid EPC, and information from that EPC shows that the proportion of licensed properties with the highest energy efficiency ratings (Bands A-C) has increased over the evaluation period (see [Figure 17](#) above).

However, this remains lower than the national average for private rented homes in England, with 48% of privately rented homes in Bands A-C nationally. The estimated cost to bring a private rented property up to at least Band C is £6,864 for a privately rented home.<sup>38</sup>

The EPC certificate also contains estimated (modelled) CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for the property, based on a survey of property features (e.g. insulation, glazing, age of property) and size. This gives some indication of changes in carbon emissions over the period, but should be noted that these are modelled, rather than actual, figures.

EPC data indicates that at the baseline in January 2020, carbon emissions per metre squared of floor area<sup>5</sup> were higher for licensed properties than non-licensed properties. EPC data from the end of the reporting period (December 2024) shows that average carbon emissions for properties with an EPC are lower across all types of properties, with the biggest relative reduction per m<sup>2</sup> for licensed properties, particularly Selective

<sup>5</sup> EPC data shows that HMO properties have considerably larger floor area than Selective licensed or non-licensed properties, so data per metre squared is used for more accurate comparison.

licensed properties. However, because HMO properties are bigger, HMO licensed properties show the biggest change in average carbon emissions per property. Carbon emissions per m<sup>2</sup> remain higher in licensed compared to non-licensed properties, but the difference between the groups has reduced over this reporting time.

The modelled EPC data indicates that the average CO<sub>2</sub> per property per year is 0.42 tonnes less than the average in 2020 per Selectively licensed property, and 0.49 tonnes per year less per HMO licensed property.

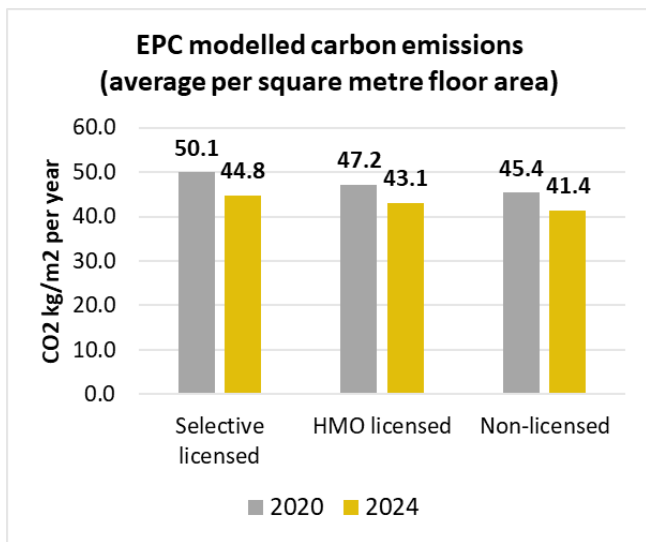


Figure 20: Modelled EPC carbon emissions per m<sup>2</sup>

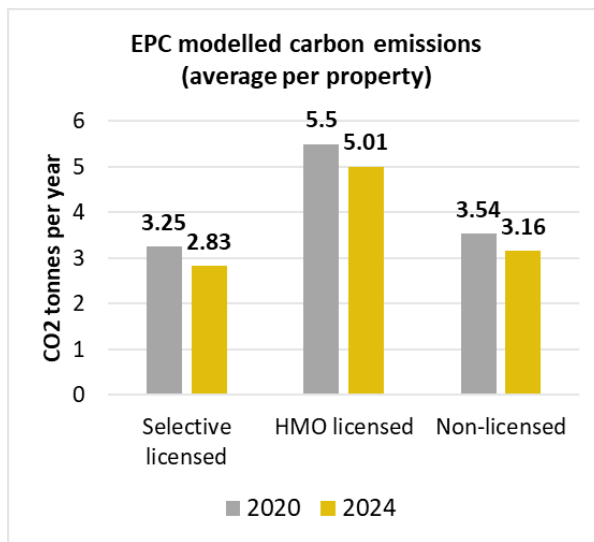


Figure 21: Modelled EPC carbon emissions per property

With caution, these figures can be used to estimate an overall reduction in carbon emissions over the period. Applying the average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per property from EPC data in 2024 to the total number of licensed properties at that point (19,177 Selective licensed properties, 3,949 HMO licensed properties) suggests that licensed properties collectively emitted 74,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> per year in 2024. Applying the profile of average CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from 2020 to these properties would suggest that they were emitting 84,000 tonnes at the baseline. Therefore an indicative figure is that properties licensed at the end of 2024 are emitting 10,000 fewer tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> per year than at baseline.

## Supporting and empowering renters

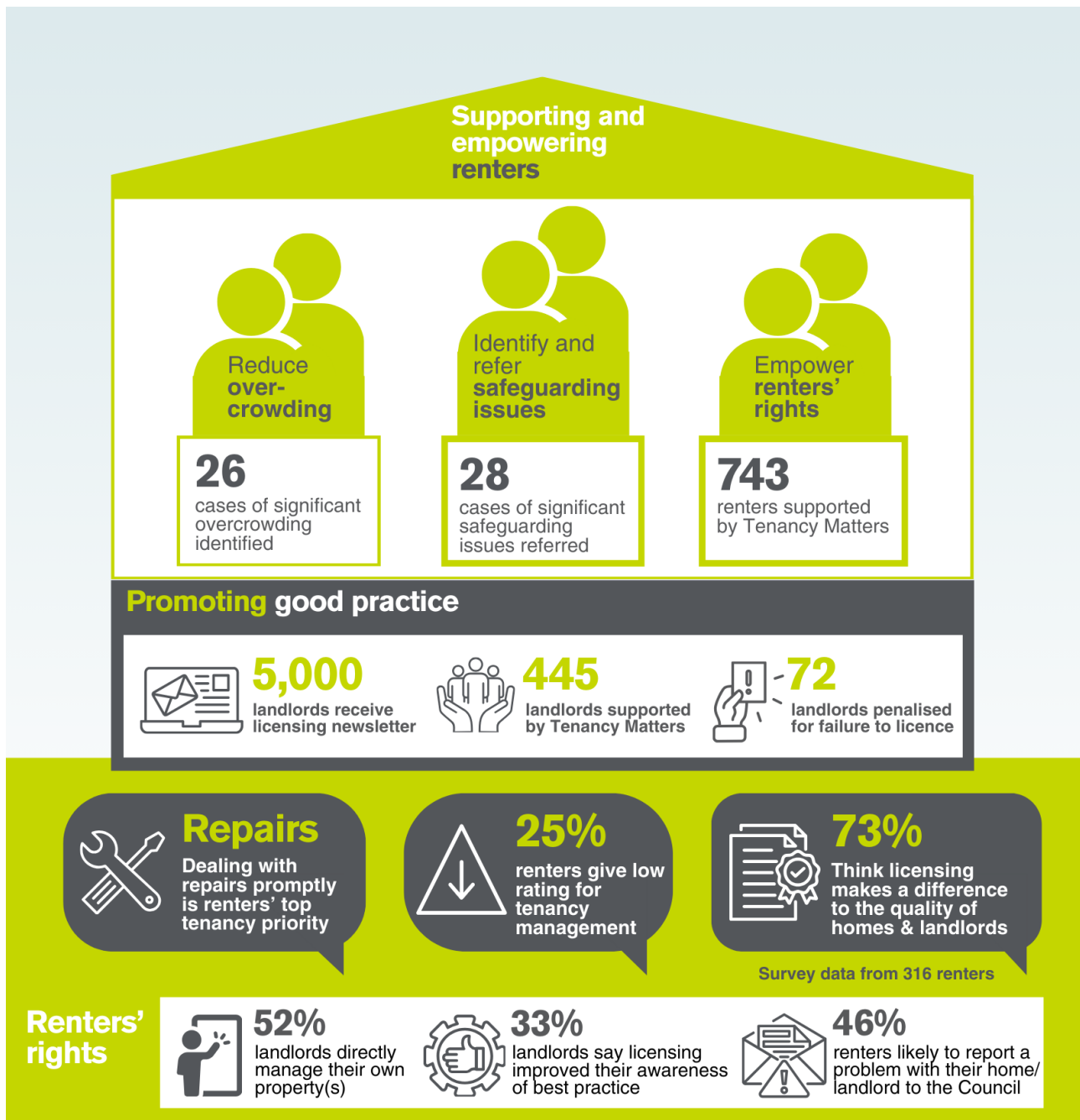


Image 7: Supporting and empowering renters summary

## **OUTCOME** Identifying and referring safeguarding **INDICATOR** issues

Licensing officers are trained to identify signs of safeguarding issues, vulnerabilities and abuse, exploitation or Modern-Day Slavery, and signs of radicalisation. Through the powers of entry under the Housing Act, licensing officers are able to see ‘behind the door’ and share evidence with relevant agencies to help improve the long-term wellbeing of residents. This includes both official referrals and working in partnership with others to resolve issues identified during inspections or licensing visits.

**9,245** Internal property inspections ‘behind the door’

**28** Safeguarding referrals made by the team



I believe there can be a slight misconception that licensing is just about licence conditions, as there’s a lot more that goes into the information sharing between teams when it comes to recognition of safeguarding concerns, spotting indicators of radicalisation, all forms of abuse and vulnerabilities, all the way through to knowing which teams to go to for exploitation or Modern Slavery concerns.



Proactive Enforcement officer, NCC Licensing

### **Identifying and referring safeguarding issues**

NCC’s licensing officers have a power of entry under the Housing Act, which means that the licensing team in some cases see evidence of wider issues where residents are experiencing or at risk of harm. Licensing works in partnership with a range of teams across the Council and other public agencies to share safeguarding concerns, including Adult and Children’s Social Care, Slavery Exploitation Team, immigration, Nottingham Fire and Rescue. The Licensing team undertake Prevent training, to identify people susceptible to radicalisation. Team training and support from experienced team members means that licensing officers can collate suitable evidence to support referrals and agencies looking to intervene on behalf of the resident.

Formal referrals are recorded, and between 2020 – 2024 there were 28 safeguarding referrals made by the team. The majority of referrals were to Adult and Children’s Social Care. However, licensing officers may also work informally or through licensing powers to improve situations for residents (see case study 13).

## CASE STUDY 13 Going ‘behind the door’ to identify and refer safeguarding issues

**“I’m a Regulatory Compliance Officer within the licensing team. I believe there can be a slight misconception that licensing is just about licence conditions, as there’s a lot more that goes into the information sharing between teams when it comes to recognition of safeguarding concerns, spotting indicators of radicalisation, all forms of abuse and vulnerabilities, all the way through to knowing which teams to go to for exploitation or Modern Slavery concerns. Within the team, we all discuss, share, collaborate and encourage each other so we’re all constantly learning from each other and our experiences.”**

For example, during a routine HMO compliance inspection I met a vulnerable lady with limited mobility and a language barrier. Going into the property I noticed that there were quite a few hazards relating to significant hoarding. There were potential fire risks with large items obstructing a protected escape route, and a live extension cable leading into the bathroom, with a kettle and microwave plugged in close to the bath and shower.

This was due to a lack of understanding, with a vulnerable tenant who didn’t understand the safety issues, and the landlord stated that they were not aware that this was happening. So, it made our visit even more important for us to be there and see that, otherwise this might have gone unnoticed for a prolonged period with the potential of significant injury or fatality.

I had to make several referrals. It was a good success – the referral went to the Hoarding Panel and Adult Safeguarding for them to respond to, the Fire Service went to do a welfare check, and the landlord was very proactive and got involved to remove the hazards.

During another inspection I discovered that there was a family of three living in one bedroom of the HMO, the youngest being a child under five years old. The mother of the child was expecting another baby in the next few months. The Licence conditions for this HMO stipulated one person per room, so to see that there were three people within that room raised a few concerns, as well as other issues such as a considerable amount of damp and mould in their washroom where they all washed as a family.

I got all the information I could from the family and permission from them to make a referral. There was lots of collaboration with their support worker and other agencies. The landlord was quite eager to work with us to ensure they were compliant with their licence conditions. The landlord had the damp and mould fixed within a fortnight. Shortly after, the family managed to move to a more suitable accommodation for them that would meet their needs.

In another case, information was shared with us by other stakeholders, about an unlicensed HMO above a commercial premises - there were reports of people sleeping on mattresses and working in the premises below, and concerns regarding Modern-Day Slavery or exploitation and immigration. Other stakeholders were keen to make enquiries relating to their own investigations and were keen to assist us with our evidence gathering.

With entry powers under the Housing Act, we were able to obtain a warrant to enter the premises. There was no fire detection in the entire building upstairs and the escape routes were not clear or secure. We served an emergency prohibition order to inform them of the works needed to rectify the issue, thus making it safely habitable for the occupants. These were rectified in a matter of days. All the services were able to work in tandem with each other in order to make it a safer place.



While we do deal with licensing – for example, that window doesn’t lock or there’s damp and mould – because we’re out on the ground, we get to see every type of living situation and it’s important for us to be able to pick up on things that might end up resolving situations and making it a safer place for everybody. Licensing isn’t just about issuing the licences; it is there for us to help with wider issues too. When you are in this line of work and you make a difference, even to one family, that is job satisfaction.



## OUTCOME INDICATOR

### Empowering renters' rights

The Tenancy Matters team provide formal support for renters in relation to housing and tenancy law. Licensing officers also make sure that the way that they approach cases protects and supports renters. Informing and updating landlords on tenancy rights also helps ensure best practice.

**33%**

Landlords say their awareness of best practice in managing and letting properties for private rent has improved

**743**

Renters supported by Tenancy Matters



The partnership working between Unipol, DASH and Nottingham City Council has demonstrated a strong demand and take-up of sector briefings, webinars, conferences and workshops, which have been well-attended. Members of the Nottingham Rental Standard are uniquely well-informed and supported with upcoming challenges/changes in the Nottingham and national housing sector; particularly around the Renters Rights Act and Housing Licensing.



Dash and Unipol partner statement

#### Empowering renter's rights

Formal support is available to renters via the Tenancy Matters team (see case study 5), who are able to support and advise on issues relating to housing and tenancy law. Over the five years of the evaluation period the team worked on over 1,500 cases, as well as providing support and training to other teams in housing and tenancy matters. 68% of these cases related to licensed properties, and 77% of cases are in response to tenant enquiries.

The most common issues requiring advice and support are in relation to evictions, landlord behaviour or access, tenancy agreements, rent increases or rental deposits.

As well as formal case management through Tenancy Matters, licensing officers also support renters through property inspections and casework. For example, licensing officers have been made aware by renters when landlord have threatened eviction following an inspection that raises the need for repairs to be made. In these cases, the licensing officer can serve an Improvement Notice, which requires the works to be done and that the tenant cannot be evicted within 6 months.

Licensing also works with landlords to make them aware of renters' rights, including upcoming changes in legislation that will significantly change the law in this area. Recent webinars for the Nottingham Rental Standard have focused on updates and information about the Renters' Rights Act, which came into force in

October 2025 (further powers coming in May 2026). Half of landlords have completed relevant training on the law and legal requirements relating to managing privately rented housing in the last three years, and 15% have attended Nottingham Rental Standard webinars. As a result, a third of landlords feel their awareness of best practice in managing and letting properties for private rent has improved as a result of licensing.

## OUTCOME INDICATOR Reducing overcrowding

The licensing team check that the number of people living in a property is compliant with licence conditions, and that there is adequate space and amenities for everyone living there. Licensing officers investigate concerns or complaints about overcrowding, and in cases where there is significant risk of harm, require changes to be made by the landlord. Licensing also works with NCC's Planning department to ensure certain communities don't become overcrowded, by checking HMO conversions have required planning permission.

**7%** Privately rented homes in Nottingham are overcrowded

**26** Cases of significant overcrowding addressed

“ In terms of mental health impacts, living in non-decent, cold or overcrowded housing and in unaffordable housing has been associated with increased stress and a reduction in a sense of empowerment and control over one's life and with depression and anxiety. Children living in overcrowded homes are more likely to be stressed, anxious and depressed, have poorer physical health, attain less well at school and have a greater risk of behavioural problems than those in uncrowded. ”

Institute of Health Equity<sup>39</sup>

## Reducing overcrowding

Licensing inspection offers check that there are the right number of people living in a property given its size and number of bedrooms, and adequate amenities for the number of people living there. Census data shows that 7% of privately rented homes in Nottingham are overcrowded. Individuals (e.g. concerned members of the public, councillors, other Council officers) can also raise concerns about overcrowding via the Safer Housing team. Over this period, the Safer Housing team received 142 complaints about overcrowding relating to licensed properties.

A search of case notes indicates that licensing officers investigated 90 cases of overcrowding over the evaluation period. The most serious cases would be raised as a significant hazard, which occurred in 26 cases. These serious cases must be resolved by the landlord under housing law.

The licensing team also work in partnership with NCC's Planning department, to implement legislation around conversion of properties to HMOs. The aim is to prevent certain communities from becoming overcrowded with multiple-household properties. With the growth of the two universities in Nottingham, the City Council took the step to introduce an Article 4 directive for the whole city in 2012. This means that landlords have to obtain planning permission before converting a family home to an HMO. The purpose of introducing Article 4 across the city was to manage the rapid growth of HMOs and maintain balanced communities. Certain areas – especially those popular with students – were seeing a surge in shared housing. This led to concerns about noise, waste, parking issues, and clashes between student lifestyles and long-term residents. The Council also wanted to ensure that enough homes remained available for families, rather than being converted into shared rentals. By limiting new HMOs, the Council aimed to foster more stable, mixed communities rather than streets dominated by transient tenants.

Over the evaluation period, the licensing team consulted the Planning team on 354 licence applications that did not appear to have the correct planning permissions for HMO use. Of those, just over a third (126) were granted short licences to ensure that they either went on to obtain planning permission or cease using the property as an HMO. A further 3 licences were refused for lack of planning permission, usually where they already had a previous short licence, and 3 more withdrew their applications to rent the properties after being made aware of the planning issues.

## CASE STUDY

# 14

## Working with Planning to prevent overcrowding and maintain balanced communities

With the growth of the two universities in Nottingham, the City Council took the step to introduce an Article 4 directive for the whole city in 2012. This means that landlords have to obtain planning permission before converting a family home to an HMO. The purpose of introducing Article 4 across the city was to manage the rapid growth of HMOs and maintain balanced communities.

HMO Licensing compliance officers explain how Licensing plays a role in achieving these aims for the city:

“As part of the Licence application process, we do checks with the planning department, to see either if there’s any planning concerns, or if it’s a brand new HMO Licence application, to make sure that it has the relevant planning permission for use as an HMO. We don’t enforce planning law, but we work collaboratively with the planning team, and what they say affects our licence decision.

As an example, in one case I did the relevant planning checks on a new HMO Licence application, and I got a response to say that the property did not have planning permission for HMO use, only for a family dwelling. When this is the case, we tend to grant a Licence for 12 months, that allows the Licence holder or landlord to contact planning or submit a planning application, or wind down the use of the property as an HMO.

In another case, a property had been converted from an office block, and had planning permission to convert into self-contained flats. However the landlord had converted it into a shared house, which meant they could have more rooms in it. This meant that they’d breached the planning permission they had. In applying for the HMO Licence, this flagged that the property had been converted into an HMO instead of flats.

The licence holder contested the decision to only grant a 12 month licence, and this case then went to First Tier Tribunal, which upheld our approach to only issue a 12 month licence. This case has tested and approved our approach to working with the planning team to prevent the spread of unregulated HMOs.

Now we have both relevant national case law, and local case law as well. Before licensing started doing these checks, landlords could carry on and the planning team would never know about it. So we’ve made Article 4 more effective.

Without Article 4, HMOs would pop up everywhere people wanted them, especially in certain areas of the city which are already very heavily dominated by student HMOs. The aim is not to stop more HMOs being created, but to protect family housing. We see that in areas where there is a high density of HMOs, this does come with more noise issues, waste issues – and especially at the end of term when students move out and leave items to be disposed of outside the property. So uncontrolled HMOs can be a very quick way to drag down an area.

This means that landlords can’t go under the radar. And when landlords do try and go under the radar, there’s mechanisms for us to effectively limit their ability to operate as an HMO, because if they don’t get the relevant permission from planning, then in a year’s time when the licence expires, if they apply again we will refuse the application.

“ My perspective is that having a regulator to make sure standards are met makes a difference, and if you take away regulation, standards will slip. If Licensing didn’t exist, properties would be less safe, less nice to live in, and the communities that host them would be suffering the consequences of that. ”

# What is the impact of licensing?

## Assessing the impact of licensing

The previous sections have measured the scale of change created by licensing, by assigning relevant outcome indicators to each outcome defined in the licensing impact map. The following section sets out how these measures of change are used to calculate the overall impact of licensing – by assigning a **monetary value** to each outcome, and putting in place assumptions to ensure that we don't overclaim value that would have happened anyway (**deadweight**), accounting for outcomes that are moved rather than resolved (**displacement**), accounting for changes that are caused by other stakeholders (**attribution**), or that will reduce over time (**drop-off**).

### Monetary valuations

The aim of the SROI is to assess the social benefit of licensing compared to the cost of delivery, and so each outcome is assigned a financial proxy i.e. a way of expressing the benefit of that outcome in monetary terms. Financial proxies are means of expressing the value of that outcome for the stakeholder that it affects.

For some outcomes, there may be a financial value that comes from an established market for that good. For example, there is an established market for learning and knowledge, in the form of courses or qualifications that landlords can pay for in order to improve their knowledge.

Other outcomes do not have an established market price, but clearly have value to the stakeholder. For example, renters are clear that they place a high value on the standard of their home (such as warmth and the state of repair), because of the impact that has on their health and wellbeing. Different techniques are needed to understand the value of these non-market goods. These techniques are recognised by the Government as ways of valuing important costs and benefits to society.<sup>40</sup> This report draws on established sources of such non-market valuations, which draw on best-practice approaches to valuation such as wellbeing valuation, willingness to pay and revealed preference.<sup>41</sup>

### Deadweight

Deadweight refers to the portion of observed outcomes that would have happened without the intervention. It is essentially an estimate of what would have occurred in the counterfactual scenario – that is, if the licensing had not taken place. Adjusting for deadweight avoids overclaiming impact by ensuring the analysis does not attribute benefits to licensing that would have arisen anyway. Deadweight is estimated using information from stakeholder (landlord and renter) surveys, or other local or national surveys or benchmarks.

### Displacement

Displacement measures whether the positive outcomes experienced by participants come at the expense of negative effects elsewhere. This might be due to the intervention moving the outcome elsewhere (e.g. outside of the area of intervention), or due to outcomes being achieved for one group at the expense of another group.

In the case of licensing, there are physical boundaries which apply to the licensing schemes. While Mandatory HMO licensing is compulsory and nationwide, both Additional HMO licensing and Selective Licensing are implemented at a local level, and apply within targeted wards within the city.<sup>†</sup> There is therefore a possibility that landlords could choose to sell properties in areas where discretionary local

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<sup>†</sup> See Technical Appendix document for licensing designation maps

licensing applies, and buy homes for rent in other areas without Additional or Selective licensing e.g. outside of Nottingham city boundaries. In our landlord survey, an analysis of qualitative responses on the changes that result from licensing, 4% of landlords mentioned that they were in the process of, or considering, reducing their portfolio of properties within licensed areas and replacing with stock elsewhere. This figure is therefore applied across all outcomes as a measure of estimated displacement.

### **Attribution**

Attribution considers how much of the observed outcomes can genuinely be credited to the intervention itself, as opposed to other activities or influences in the lives of stakeholders. Most social outcomes are influenced by multiple actors, and that is particularly the case when the intervention works closely with other partners to achieve the outcome. For example, licensing works in partnership with other Council departments, accreditation partners, etc. Outcomes may also be affected by other influences in stakeholders' lives e.g. household circumstances, other support services, wider rental market conditions. Attribution analysis estimates the share of impact directly caused by the focal intervention, i.e. the activities and interventions of licensing itself, and discounts the portion attributable to others.

In considering attribution, this SROI calculation takes into consideration where the activity has been delivered in partnership, and attributes a proportion of the outcome to these partners. It also uses evidence directly from stakeholders, for example in the renter survey where renters were asked to what extent they felt licensing has an impact on, for example, the quality of homes, landlords and the local area, and the impact on their health and wellbeing. The results from these survey questions are also used to inform attribution levels.

### **Duration and drop-off**

Duration refers to how long an outcome lasts, and SROI typically projects that outcomes will continue into the future, after the initial intervention. Related to this is drop-off, the rate at which an outcome diminishes over time. Not all benefits persist indefinitely, so future outcomes are adjusted downward each year by a drop-off percentage and then discounted back to present value.<sup>4</sup> This approach ensures that the SROI reflects the sustained impact of outcomes over time rather than treating long-term effects as if they were instantaneous.

As a licence remains in place for five years, this is used as the standard expected duration of an outcome as a result of licensing. Some outcomes may last longer than this – for example, a new boiler may provide increased warmth for more than five years. However, as circumstances may change over that time (e.g. the property could be sold and no longer private rented, or the boiler could break), we have taken a conservative approach to assume a maximum duration of outcomes of up to five years. In some cases, the duration is only assumed to occur during the intervention period. For example, addressing ASB has an instant effect, but tenancy turnover and other changing factors mean that we can't assume that this will persist in the long-term.

In order not to overclaim, the SROI analysis also assumes that outcomes may drop off in the years following an intervention. For example, the effects of property improvements as a result of a licensing inspection may have full impact in the first year after the intervention, but may reduce over time e.g. due to wear and tear, change in ownership etc. This SROI analysis assumes a uniform drop-off over time, reducing over the maximum five year duration so that by the end of this period, the outcome has reduced to zero (i.e. 20% drop off each year following the intervention).

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<sup>4</sup> SROI typically assumes that outcomes that occur in the future are discounted at HM Treasury's discount rate of 3.5%.

In the SROI, the total impact is therefore calculated by multiplying the amount of change for each outcome, by the per unit financial proxy, and then removing the proportion of the outcome that is deadweight, displaced, attributed to others, or drops off over time.

### Ensuring quality of landlords

Wider evidence supports the importance of landlord quality on ensuring that a rented house becomes a home for renters, and the importance of this to renters' health and wellbeing. A review of academic research<sup>42</sup> highlights that landlord and letting agent behaviour can make a real difference to making a house a home, through the condition of the property, tenancy conditions and landlord-tenant relationships. The evidence review concludes that in lightly regulated markets there is little incentive for landlords to invest in their properties, with many viewing it as an asset rather than someone's home. However, the review suggests that a mix of regulation, education and sharing good practice can motivate landlords to enable tenants to make a home in the private rented sector.

The evidence collected through this SROI assessment shows that the tools, resources and activities of licensing work together to bring landlords requiring a licence under the regulatory standards and licence conditions, to raise all landlords to at least the minimum required standards of licensing – whilst incentivising and encouraging landlords to go above and beyond this and meet industry best practice standards. Therefore, licensing ensures the quality of landlords by:

- **Improving landlord knowledge:** 36% of landlords say their knowledge about the rights and responsibilities of a landlord have moderately-significantly improved as a result of licensing
- **Ensuring landlord standards:** 31% of landlords report that they have made improvements to properties or tenancy management as a result of licensing
- **Supporting best practice:** 35% of licences issued to Accredited landlords, compared to 6% landlords accredited nationally
- **Penalising unlawful/criminal landlords:** 7,443 unlicensed landlords were brought within licensing, and licensing issued civil penalties to the value of £364,365 for non-compliance, as well as pursuing four prosecutions of unlawful landlords

The requirements to apply for a licence and evidence meeting licensing standards does place an additional administrative burden on landlords. Landlord feedback indicated that 11% of landlords felt that this affected their property standards and tenancy management approach.

## IMPACT

## Ensuring quality of landlords

Outcome:	Improving landlord knowledge	
Quantity of change	5894	Landlords report improved knowledge about the rights and responsibilities of a landlord as a result of licensing
Financial proxy	£60	Cost of DASH Foundation Landlord Development course
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	22%	Landlords in England who are members of a national landlord organisation
Attribution to others	0%	Survey question asks 'as a result of licensing'
<b>Total impact:<sup>v</sup></b>	<b>£844,540</b>	

Just over a third of landlords reported an improvement in their knowledge. The equivalent market value of achieving this improvement in knowledge is to pay for a course, such as DASH's Foundation Landlord Development course, which costs £60.<sup>43</sup> This improved knowledge is expected to continue to benefit landlords over the five years of the licence, with the standard assumption of even drop-off per year (20%), for example due to changes in regulation or market conditions over this time. Without licensing (deadweight), landlords may gain this knowledge through memberships of other landlord organisations that share learning and good practice. The survey of private landlords in England shows that 22% of landlords nationally are members of the NRLA, a national landlord group.<sup>44</sup> As the survey question specifies that this is 'as a result of licensing', this change is fully attributed to licensing (no attribution to others).

## IMPACT

## Ensuring quality of landlords

Outcome:	Ensuring landlord standards	
Quantity of change	5357	Landlords report making improvements to properties or tenancy management as a result of licensing
Financial proxy	£88	Additional licence cost per year for non-compliance
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	22%	Landlords in England who are members of a national landlord organisation
Attribution to others	0%	Survey question asks 'as a result of licensing'
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£1,125,454</b>	

<sup>v</sup> Total impact is the Total Present Value of the outcome i.e. total value over the duration of the outcome, with future value discounted at 3.5%.

Just under a third of landlords report that they have made improvement to one or more areas relating to licence conditions as a result of licensing. Licensing fees include an implicit cost of raising landlord standards to meet licence conditions, in the form of a ‘non-compliant’ fee for landlords who are consistently not meeting licence conditions. The non-compliant fee is £346 more per Selective Licence and £858 per HMO Licence<sup>w</sup>, representing the additional costs of ensuring landlord standards are met. The weighted average cost per year is £88. This outcome is expected to last the duration of the licence, with standard drop-off assumptions. As per the outcome above, without licensing (deadweight), landlords may ensure their standards through memberships of other landlord organisations that share learning and good practice (22% of landlords nationally are members of the NRLA). As the survey question specifies that this is ‘as a result of licensing’, this change is fully attributed to licensing (no attribution to others).

<b>IMPACT</b>		<b>Ensuring quality of landlords</b>
<b>Outcome:</b>	<b>Supporting landlords with best practice</b>	
Quantity of change	7980	Licences issued to accredited landlords meeting the Nottingham Rental Standard
Financial proxy	£185	Average accreditation fee paid by landlords
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	6%	Landlords in England who are accredited to a quality standard
Attribution to others	50%	Shared attribution with accreditation partners
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£2,126,713</b>	

Just over a third of licences are issued to landlords who are accredited to the Nottingham Rental Standard. The market price for the value of accreditation to landlords is represented by accreditation fees. The average fee that landlords in Nottingham pay for accreditation (which varies by accreditation provider and number of properties owned) is £185. This outcome is expected to last the duration of the licence, with standard drop-off assumptions. Without licensing (deadweight), landlords may choose to become accredited to a quality mark – the English private landlord survey indicates that only 6% of landlords do so nationally. Attribution is shared equally between licensing, which promotes and incentivises accreditation, and accreditation partners, who implement the accreditation scheme.

<sup>w</sup> 2023 Licence fee structure for standard and non-compliant licence fees

## IMPACT

## Ensuring quality of landlords

Outcome:	Penalising unlawful/criminal landlords	
Quantity of change	7443	Unlicensed landlords brought within licensing
	72	Landlords penalised for breaking licence conditions/housing law
Financial proxy	£939	Average licence fee paid by landlords to become licensed
	£5,060	Average fine paid following CPN/prosecutions
Duration	1 year	Outcome lasts for the period of activity
Deadweight	33%	Percentage of local authorities pursuing housing law prosecutions nationally
Attribution to others	0%	All activities attributed to licensing team
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£6,711,990</b>	

There are two elements to penalising unlawful/criminal landlords that contribute to ensuring the quality of landlords. The first is ensuring landlords who require a licence do so, bringing unlicensed landlords within the licensing system. The licensing proactive enforcement team tracked down 7,443 landlords who were operating without a licence, who then became licensed. This ensures a level playing field for all landlords. This has a market value of the additional licence fees that are raised through bringing unlicensed landlords within licensing, which is an average of £939. Without licensing, this outcome wouldn't be achieved, so the deadweight is zero for this element.

The second element is penalising landlords who break licence conditions or housing law. The licensing team pursued 72 civil penalties or prosecutions over this period, with an average financial penalty of £5,060. Licensing provides the resources to proactively carry out these activities, with evidence indicating that nationally, 67% of local authorities do not prosecute landlords for failing landlord standards,<sup>45</sup> i.e. suggesting that without licensing (deadweight) only a third of unlawful landlords would be penalised.

Both outcomes (licensing unlicensed landlords and penalising unlawful landlords) occur once during the period of activity, and are not forecasted over a longer duration so as to not double-count this activity. These outcomes are attributed entirely to the resources and activities of the licensing team.

## IMPACT

## Ensuring quality of landlords

Outcome:	Additional administrative burden for landlords	
Quantity of change	1901	Landlords reporting licensing creates an additional administrative burden
Financial proxy	-£86	Cost of an additional day of admin assistant role
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	0%	Outcome wouldn't occur in the absence of licensing
Attribution to others	0%	Full attribution to licensing
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>-£501,925</b>	

11% of landlords stated that licensing had affected their practice by adding an additional administrative burden. The additional administrative burden is estimated to be an additional day per year, which is costed at the hourly wage rate of an administrative assistant role (£11.50 per hour).<sup>46</sup> The outcome is expected to last the five years of the licence, though dropping off in future years following the initial application process. This outcome wouldn't occur if licensing wasn't in place (i.e. no deadweight) and is fully attributable to licensing.

### Safer and warmer homes for renters

There is a well-established evidence base of the importance of housing quality on people's health and wellbeing. The evidence shows that poor housing has a negative impact on people's health and knock-on costs to society. Research by the BRE<sup>47</sup> showed that poor housing is costing the NHS £1.4bn per year in treatment costs alone. In addition, there are wider societal costs such as ongoing care, loss of economic potential, and mental health costs of suffering and trauma. Including these societal costs, then the full costs of poor housing is £18.5bn per year. The BRE methodology allows for a breakdown of these costs to the NHS and to society for each type of significant housing hazard that is identified.<sup>48</sup>

The evidence collected through this SROI assessment shows that private rented homes are being made safer and warmer as a result of licensing inspection activities that identify issues with the condition of the property, which are then improved by landlords.

Licensing helps achieve safe and warmer homes for renters by:

- **Homes able to be kept warm:** 281 properties with significant risk of excess cold have been improved following inspections
- **Homes made safe, reducing hazards to health:** 450 other significant hazards to health were improved following inspections
- **More secure homes:** 158 homes with risk of entry by intruders (24 with significant risk) were improved following inspections

## IMPACT

## Safer and warmer homes for renters

Outcome:	Homes able to be kept warm	
Quantity of change	281	Significant excess cold hazards improved following inspection
Financial proxy	£20,982	Cost to society per property with significant risk of excess cold
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	14%	Landlords stated they made improvements to warmth of their property(s)
Attribution to others	34%	Renters who felt that licensing made no/slight difference to health and wellbeing
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£10,245,642</b>	

Inspectors identified 281 properties where there was a significant risk of harm from excess cold, which landlords then improved. The cost to society from excess cold is £20,982 per property.<sup>49</sup> Of all the categories of hazards to health, excess cold has the highest cost to the NHS and to society, reflecting the serious impact that cold housing can have on people. Improvements to the warmth of the home are expected to continue over the five years of the licence, with the standard assumption of even drop-off per year (20%), for example due to decreasing efficiency of heating installations or wear and tear. These outcomes were as a result of licensing inspections, but 14% of landlords state that they've made improvements to the warmth of their property(s) anyway (deadweight). Levels of attribution of outcomes relating to renters' health and wellbeing are taken from the renter survey, which indicates that whilst two-thirds of renters feel that licensing does have an impact on their health and wellbeing, 34% feel that it makes no or only a slight difference.

## IMPACT

## Safer and warmer homes for renters

Outcome:	Homes made safe, reducing hazards to health	
Quantity of change	450	Significant hazards improved following inspection
Financial proxy	£1,909	Average cost to society per property with significant risk of various hazards
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	21%	Landlords stated they made improvements to safety standards of their property(s)
Attribution to others	34%	Renters felt that licensing made no/slight difference to health and wellbeing
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£1,371,450</b>	

Inspectors identified 450 properties where there was a significant risk of harm from various hazards, which landlords then improved. This included a range of hazards, such as fire, falls on stairs or between levels, electrical hazards and damp and mould<sup>x</sup>. The cost to society of each of these hazards varies from £2,832 for fire, to £544 for carbon monoxide.<sup>50</sup> The weighted average cost of the types of hazards identified by inspectors is £1,909. Improvements to the safety of the home are expected to continue over the five years of the licence, with the standard assumption of even drop-off per year (20%), for example due to wear and tear. These outcomes were as a result of licensing inspections, but 21% of landlords state that they've made improvements to the safety standards of their property(s) anyway (deadweight). As above, 34% renters place no/little attribution to licensing on their health and wellbeing.

<b>IMPACT</b>		<b>Safer and warmer homes for renters</b>
<b>Outcome:</b>	<b>More secure homes</b>	
Quantity of change	24	Properties with significant risk of entry by intruders improved following inspection
Financial proxy	£1,501	Cost to society per property with significant risk of entry by intruders
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	16%	Landlords stated they made improvements to security of their property(s)
Attribution to others	34%	Renters felt that licensing made no/slight difference to health and wellbeing
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£66,703</b>	

Inspectors identified 158 properties where there was a risk of harm from entry by intruders, of which 24 were at significant risk. The cost to society from entry by intruders is £1,501 per property. Improvements to the security of the home are expected to continue over the five years of the licence, with the standard assumption of even drop-off per year (20%), for example due to wear and tear. These outcomes were as a result of licensing inspections, but 16% of landlords state that they've made improvements to the security of their property(s) anyway (deadweight). As above, 34% renters place no/little attribution to licensing on their health and wellbeing.

<sup>x</sup> This excludes hazards counted in other outcome indicators e.g. excess cold, entry by intruders and overcrowding.

## Enabling renters to thrive

Enabling renters to thrive is a longer-term impact, which builds on the medium-term impacts of licensing on ensuring the quality of landlords, safer and warmer homes for renters, and reinforced by outcomes that support and empower renters.

Wider research highlights that there are a number of factors that affect the wellbeing of people living in private rented homes and the conditions that enable them to thrive. The context of the rental market and tenancy stability are important factors, with affordability pressures and tenure insecurity and instability shown to negatively affect people's psychological distress and sleep in the short-term, potentially leading to long-term worse mental health.<sup>51</sup> The aim of the Renters' Rights Act is to give private renters greater security and stability.<sup>52</sup> Licensing plays a role in helping inform landlords about these upcoming changes, and what changes in practice are needed to support the intended benefits of this housing law reform for the benefit of renters.

Research evidence also points towards the combined effect of housing quality and the ability to get repairs done as important, interconnected factors in affecting renters' wellbeing. As discussed in earlier sections, there are clear links to the negative direct health effects and also mental health and wellbeing effects from poor quality housing. A compounding factor is the experience of control, autonomy and power dynamics between renters and their landlord/agent.<sup>53</sup> The survey of renters for this evaluation supports the wider evidence of the importance to renters of landlords dealing with repairs promptly and being able to contact/communicate with the landlord. There is evidence of a clear wellbeing improvement that people experience when their home is improved to a good standard. Research combining national data on property standards and people's self-reported wellbeing shows that resolving problems with the condition of dwellings has a significant effect on directly improving people's life satisfaction, as well as indirectly improving people's wellbeing through positive health effects.<sup>54</sup> The biggest wellbeing improvement is when people are satisfied with how the landlord maintains and repairs the home generally, and there are also wellbeing effects from resolving specific repair issues within the home.

As well as supporting best practice, licensing also provides a backstop for some renters when they have struggled to find a resolution of issues with their home/tenancy directly with the landlord or agent. Licensing works to support and empower renters, by supporting renters where it is clear that licensing standards are not being met. In a smaller number of cases, licensing inspections reveal situations that are negatively impacting renters, and can make referrals to support the renters' wellbeing in the long term. The evidence gathered for this impact assessment shows that licensing enables renters to thrive by:

- **Homes improved, improving renters' health and wellbeing:** 4,500 homes were improved following inspection, affecting an average of 2 people per Selectively Licensed property and 5 people in each HMO property
- **Empowering renters' rights:** Tenancy Matters provided formal housing and tenancy support to 743 renters
- **Identifying and referring safeguarding issues:** Licensing inspectors made 28 formal safeguarding referrals, as well as wider partnership working with support agencies
- **Reducing overcrowding:** Licensing responded to 142 complaints of overcrowding and identified 26 cases where there were significant overcrowding issues

## IMPACT

## Enabling renters to thrive

Outcome:	Homes improved, improving renters' health and wellbeing	
Quantity of change	14,536	Renters living in properties improved as a result of licensing inspections
Financial proxy	£3,815	Total wellbeing impact per person of resolution of problems with conditions of dwellings
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	30%	Landlords stated they made any improvements their property(s)
Attribution to others	34%	Renters felt that licensing made no/slight difference to health and wellbeing
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£78,437,734</b>	

Overall, inspectors identified 4,500 properties where property standards weren't meeting licence conditions, which landlords then improved. On average, this affects an estimated 2 people living in each Selectively Licensed property, and an average of 5 people living in each HMO property. Because this valuation is per person experiencing the outcome, the total figure amounts to 14,536 people who are positively affected by improvements to property conditions as a result of licensing inspections. The direct wellbeing impact on each person affected by resolution of problems with the condition of their dwelling is £2,928, with a further indirect impact via the improvement to their health of £886 per person. The total wellbeing impact of improved property conditions is £3,815 per person.<sup>55</sup> Improvements to the condition of the home are expected to continue over the five years of the licence, with the standard assumption of even drop-off per year (20%), for example due to wear and tear. These outcomes were as a result of licensing inspections, but 30% of landlords state that they've made an improvement to their property(s) anyway (deadweight). As above, 34% renters place no/little attribution to licensing on their health and wellbeing.

## IMPACT

## Enabling renters to thrive

Outcome:	Empowering renters' rights	
Quantity of change	743	Renters supported by Tenancy Matters with housing or tenancy issues
Financial proxy	£259	Unit cost of housing advice given
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	12%	People receiving housing advice through other source
Attribution to others	0%	Full attribution to licence-funded Tenancy Matters support
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£518,460</b>	

The Tenancy Matters team provided formal housing and tenancy support to 743 renters, around issues such as evictions, landlord behaviour or access, tenancy agreements, rent increases or rental deposits. The Unit Cost Database developed by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority is a nationally recognised source of fiscal, economic and social valuations for cost-benefit analysis, recognised as best practice by HM Treasury.<sup>56</sup> The Unit Cost Database identifies that the cost of delivering housing advice is £259 per session.<sup>57</sup> Resolving tenancy issues is expected to last over the five years following the intervention, with the standard assumption of drop-off per year (for example due to potential tenancy or landlord turnover). Without Tenancy Matters (deadweight), renters may seek housing advice from other sources – for example, Citizens Advice reports that 12% of their cases related to housing.<sup>58</sup> As this outcome is directly related to licence-funded activities, this is fully attributed to Tenancy Matters.

<b>IMPACT    Enabling renters to thrive</b>		
<b>Outcome:</b>	<b>Identifying and referring safeguarding issues</b>	
Quantity of change	28	Formal referrals to safeguarding teams
Financial proxy	£17,561	Mental wellbeing gain valuation
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	2%	Proportion of households in Nottingham with working-age adults receiving long-term Adult Social Care
Attribution to others	80%	Much of the attribution for the benefit of the safeguarding referral would fall to partners (e.g. Adult Social Care)
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£295,058</b>	

Licensing inspectors are trained to identify safeguarding issues and share good practice in making effective referrals to the relevant support agencies. The licensing team made 28 formal referrals to safeguarding, such as Adult Social Care, over this period. There is currently no available valuation for a safeguarding referral, so wider sources of mental wellbeing valuations were used. The wellbeing valuation for raising mental wellbeing from being very low to just above the ‘low’ range is £17,561.<sup>59</sup> This is therefore used as a proxy for the potential value of a safeguarding referral, as a result of the individual being supported to improve their wellbeing through access to suitable support. The impact of this referral is expected to last over the five years following the intervention, with the standard assumption of drop-off per year. Without licensing (deadweight), vulnerable individuals may have been referred to safeguarding teams in Nottingham through other means. Local data indicates that 2,400 working age adults were in receipt of long-term support, which is approximately 2% of Nottingham households.<sup>60</sup> Whilst licensing officers are attributable for identifying the safeguarding issue and bringing it to the attention of the relevant agencies, much of the attribution from improved wellbeing from a safeguarding referral would fall to partner agencies such as Adult Social Care.

## IMPACT Enabling renters to thrive

Outcome:	Reducing overcrowding	
Quantity of change	26	Properties where significant risk of overcrowding removed or reduced
Financial proxy	£2,662	Cost to society per property with significant risk of overcrowding
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	0%	Change in proportion of private rented households in Nottingham that are overcrowded
Attribution to others	34%	Renters felt that licensing made no/slight difference to health and wellbeing
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£139,852</b>	

Licensing officers respond to complaints of overcrowding or issues identified during inspection. There were 26 properties with significant risk of overcrowding where the risk was removed or reduced following licensing interventions. The cost to society from overcrowding is £2,662 per property.<sup>61</sup> The benefits of reduced overcrowding are expected to continue over the five years of the licence, with the standard assumption of even drop-off per year (20%), for example due to tenancy turnover. Levels of overcrowding in Nottingham are measured through the Census, which showed that in 2021 just over 7% of privately rented homes were overcrowded.<sup>62</sup> This has changed very little since the 2011 Census, suggesting that there is little change in overcrowding in the absence of licensing (deadweight). The same approach to attribution is taken as per other outcomes relating to renters' health and wellbeing, using the results of the renter survey that indicates that 34% of renters feel that licensing makes no or only a slight difference to their overall health and wellbeing.

### Improving local neighbourhoods and environment

UK evidence consistently indicates place matters for wellbeing, including both the social relationships between members of the community and the physical elements of the local neighbourhood and environment.<sup>63</sup> Evidence shows that ASB-related neighbourhood incivilities – especially noise, rubbish/litter, and visible disorder (such as poorly maintained surroundings) – are associated with lower life satisfaction and poorer mental wellbeing,<sup>64</sup> largely because they reduce neighbourhood satisfaction and perceived safety, increase stress and anxiety, disrupt sleep (for noise), and can lead to avoidance behaviours that weaken everyday social connection and use of local space.<sup>65</sup>

The evidence collected through this SROI assessment shows that partnership work with Community Safety, Universities and NCC Waste teams has improved local neighbourhoods and environments where there are high levels of privately rented properties. Licensing improves local neighbourhoods and the environment by:

- **Improving external property standards:** 3,371 properties with poor external property conditions have been improved following inspections
- **Reducing problem waste:** 1,073 properties with waste issues, according to inspections or complaints, have been addressed
- **Tackling persistent noise and other ASB:** 919 complaints of noise and other ASB have been resolved following licensing intervention

# IMPACT Improving local neighbourhoods and environment

Outcome:		Improving external property standards
Quantity of change	6,742	Local residents experiencing improved external property conditions
Financial proxy	£557	Total wellbeing impact per person of resolution of problems with scruffiness
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	15%	Landlords stated they made improvements to external of their property(s)
Attribution to others	40%	Renters felt that licensing made no/slight difference to the quality of the local neighbourhood
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£5,863,511</b>	

Licensing officers and Neighbourhood Safety Officers identified 3,371 properties where external conditions weren't meeting licence conditions, which landlords then improved. As this outcome is measuring the impact on local residents, we make the conservative assumption that a minimum of two neighbours will benefit from the improved standard of the privately rented property on their street. Because this valuation is per person experiencing the outcome, the total figure amounts to 6,742 local residents who are positively affected by improvements to external property conditions as a result of licensing inspections. The wellbeing impact of 'resolution of problems of scruffiness' is £557 per person.<sup>66</sup> Improvements to the external condition of the property are expected to continue over the five years of the licence, with the standard assumption of even drop-off per year (20%), for example due to wear and tear. These outcomes were as a result of licensing inspections, but 15% of landlords state that they've made an improvement to the external of their property(s) anyway (deadweight). According to the renter survey, 40% renters felt that licensing made no/slight difference to the quality of the local neighbourhood, and so this proportion is deducted from attribution.

## IMPACT Improving local neighbourhoods and environment

Outcome:	Reducing problem waste	
Quantity of change	2,146	Local residents experiencing reduced problem waste
Financial proxy	£924	Wellbeing value for resolution of problems with local streets
Duration	1 year	Outcome lasts for the period of activity
Deadweight	11%	Landlords stated they made improvements to their waste policy
Attribution to others	50%	Attribution shared with partners e.g. universities, NSOs, NCC waste team
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£847,097</b>	

Issues with problem waste were identified by licensing officers or Neighbourhood Safety Officers carrying out external inspections, as well as complaints of waste to the licensing team from local residents. Waste issues were identified in 1,073 properties, which were followed up by the licensing team to ensure the issue is resolved. As per the previous outcome, as this outcome is measuring the impact on local residents, we make the conservative assumption that a minimum of two neighbours will benefit from reduced problem waste on their street. Because this valuation is per person experiencing the outcome, the total figure amounts to 2,146 local residents who are positively affected by reducing problem waste as a result of licensing inspections. The wellbeing value from resolution of problems with local streets is £924 per person.<sup>67</sup> Improvements to waste issues is only anticipated to last during the period of activity (i.e. the year following initial inspection) due to turnover of renters and likelihood of this type of problem reoccurring. These outcomes were as a result of licensing inspections, but 11% of landlords state that they've made an improvement to their waste policy (deadweight). Due to the contribution of other partners, such as university teams, Neighbourhood Safety Officers and NCC waste teams, attribution is shared equally between partners and licensing.

# IMPACT Improving local neighbourhoods and environment

Outcome:	Tackling persistent noise and other ASB	
Quantity of change	1,568	Local residents experiencing reduced problem noise or ASB
Financial proxy	£1,510	Wellbeing valuation for no problem noise
Duration	1 year	Outcome lasts for the period of activity
Deadweight	4%	Proportion of landlords nationally who ended tenancies because tenant engaged in ASB
Attribution to others	50%	Attribution shared with partners e.g. universities, NSOs
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£1,091,027</b>	

There were 919 complaints of noise or other ASB relating to licensed properties over the evaluation period. Waste issues were identified in 1,073 properties, which were followed up by the licensing team to ensure the issue is resolved. As per the previous outcome, as this outcome is measuring the impact on local residents, we make the conservative assumption that a minimum of two neighbours will benefit from tackling noise and ASB on their street. Because this valuation is per person experiencing the outcome, the total figure amounts to 1,568 local residents who are positively affected by tackling noise and ASB as a result of the intervention of the licensing ASB team. The wellbeing valuation for not having an issue with problem noise is £1,510 (updated for inflation).<sup>68</sup> Improvements to noise and ASB issues is only anticipated to last during the period of activity (i.e. the year following initial inspection) due to turnover of renters and likelihood of this type of problem reoccurring. Without licensing (deadweight), landlords could use tenancy conditions to manage ASB – a national survey of private landlords indicates that 4% dealt with ASB by ending tenancies in the last two years.<sup>69</sup> Due to the contribution of other partners, such as university teams and Neighbourhood Safety Officers, attribution is shared equally between partners and licensing.

## Supporting the long-term vision for Nottingham

Licensing is supporting the long-term vision for Nottingham to make Nottingham a flourishing, inclusive, and sustainable city where residents thrive. The licensing impact map (Image 3) shows how the outcomes achieved through licensing contribute to a number of the city's core missions and priorities. Through the positive outcomes for landlords and renters achieved as a result of licensing, licensing is also having positive a knock-on effect on other stakeholders within the city partnership who are working towards shared goals.

Through the medium-term impact of licensing in ensuring quality of landlords, safer and warmer homes for renters, improving local neighbourhoods and enabling renters to thrive, licensing contributes to a number of priorities for the city and positively impacts stakeholders in the city partnership:

- **Empowering safe communities:** Working in partnership with Community Safety and others, licensing has responded to 1,568 complaints of ASB, reducing the burden on the Police
- **Providing safe housing:** Licensing has worked to reduce the risk of domestic fires through inspections and joint work with Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service, reducing the risk of fire in 9,412 properties and thereby reducing the potential social and economic costs of domestic fires

- **Healthy and safe residents:** Licensing inspectors identified a total of 781 significant hazards to the health of renters, which were removed or reduced by landlords. Reducing health hazards in homes saves the treatment costs for the NHS that would arise from resulting accidents or illness.
- **Championing sustainability:** Licensing enforces minimum energy efficiency standards for privately rented housing, contributing to raising the energy efficiency of privately rented homes and contributing to the city's carbon reduction goals.

## IMPACT Supporting the long-term vision for Nottingham

Outcome:	Empowering safe communities	
Quantity of change	784	ASB complaints about licensed properties, resolved at first intervention
Financial proxy	£904	Avoided cost to Police and local authority per ASB incident
Duration	1 year	Outcome lasts for the period of activity
Deadweight	4%	Proportion of landlords nationally who ended tenancies because tenant engaged in ASB
Attribution to others	50%	Shared attribution with partners such as Neighbourhood Safety Officers
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£326,586</b>	

The licensing team received 919 complaints of ASB, of which 88% were resolved at first intervention by the licensing team – a total of 784 ASB complaints that were resolved by the licensing ASB team. The unit cost to the Police and local authority per ASB incident is £904, which is avoided as a result of licensing intervention.<sup>70</sup> The benefit to the Police occurs immediately following the intervention, but cannot be guaranteed to continue into future years. As per previous outcomes relating to ASB, the alternative without licensing would be for landlords to end tenancies as a result of ASB, which occurred nationally in 4% of cases. Due to the close partnership working with other agencies such as Neighbourhood Safety Officers and universities, attribution for this outcome is shared equally between licensing and other partners.

## IMPACT Supporting the long-term vision for Nottingham

Outcome:	Providing safe housing	
Quantity of change	40	Incidents of domestic fires estimated avoided
Financial proxy	£36,972	Avoided social and economic costs per domestic fire
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	21%	Landlords made improvements to the safety standards of their property(s)
Attribution to others	20%	Shared attribution with fire Service for inspection of tall buildings
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£2,841,371</b>	

The licensing team carried out internal inspections in 9,245 properties, which includes a fire safety check, and the JAiT team carried out a further 167 inspections of tall buildings – giving a total of 9,412 fire safety checks carried out in licensed properties. Evidence of the effectiveness of home safety checks in reducing the incidence of fires suggests that these inspections would reduce the number of fires by 40. The total fiscal, social and economic cost of a domestic fire is £36,972<sup>71</sup> which is avoided as a result of licensing inspections. The benefit of fire safety inspections is expected to continue for the five years following the intervention, with standard assumptions of drop-off (for example due to wear and tear on fire safety equipment). Attribution is partially shared with Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service, who jointly inspect tall buildings. The inspections of HMOs and smaller licensed properties is the responsibility of the licensing team.

## IMPACT Supporting the long-term vision for Nottingham

Outcome:		Healthy and safe residents
Quantity of change	781	Significant hazards to health removed or reduced following licensing inspection
Financial proxy	£640	Weighted average treatment cost to the NHS as a result of hazards in the home
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	21%	Landlords made improvements to the safety standards of their property(s)
Attribution to others	34%	Renters felt that licensing made no/slight difference to health and wellbeing
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£798,146</b>	

Licensing inspectors identified a total of 781 significant hazards to the health of renters, which were removed or reduced by landlords. The weighted average treatment cost to the NHS from the types of hazards identified and reduced by licensing inspectors is £640 (ranging from £1,206 in treatment costs of excess cold to £135 for overcrowding). The benefit from removing hazards in the home is expected to last five years following intervention, with standard assumptions of drop-off (e.g. due to wear and tear on property). These outcomes were as a result of licensing inspections, but 21% of landlords state that they've made improvements to the safety standards of their property(s) anyway (deadweight). Levels of attribution of outcomes relating to renters' health and wellbeing are taken from the renter survey, which indicates that whilst two-thirds of renters feel that licensing does have an impact on their health and wellbeing, 34% feel that it makes no or only a slight difference.

## IMPACT Supporting the long-term vision for Nottingham

Outcome:	Championing sustainability	
Quantity of change	9989	Estimated reduction in tonnes of CO2 emissions from licensed properties
Financial proxy	£306	Price per tonne carbon
Duration	5 years	Duration of licence
Deadweight	41%	Proportion of privately rented properties in England that are EPC C or above
Attribution to others	72%	Landlords nationally are aware and understand that rented properties must be EPC E or above
<b>Total impact:</b>	<b>£1,545,956</b>	

Using EPC data from licensed properties allows a cautious estimation of reduction in carbon emissions over the evaluation period, based on the profile of EPC ratings for licensed properties and modelled carbon emissions for each EPC rating. An improvement in the average EPC rating (and associated reduction in carbon emissions) between 2020 and 2024 suggests a potential reduction of 9,989 tonnes of carbon across licensed properties over this period. The unit price of carbon per tonne is the value that the Government recommends as the monetary value that society places on a tonne of carbon dioxide.<sup>72</sup> The energy efficiency improvements are expected to last at least five years following intervention, with standard assumptions of drop-off (e.g. due to decreasing efficiency of heating/insulation measures). In the absence of licensing, overall nationally 41% of privately rented properties are EPC C above already. Landlords may already be responding to national housing law and making improvements to energy efficiency, with 72% of landlords nationally stating that they are aware and understand that rented properties must be EPC E or above.<sup>73</sup>

## Social Return on Investment of licensing

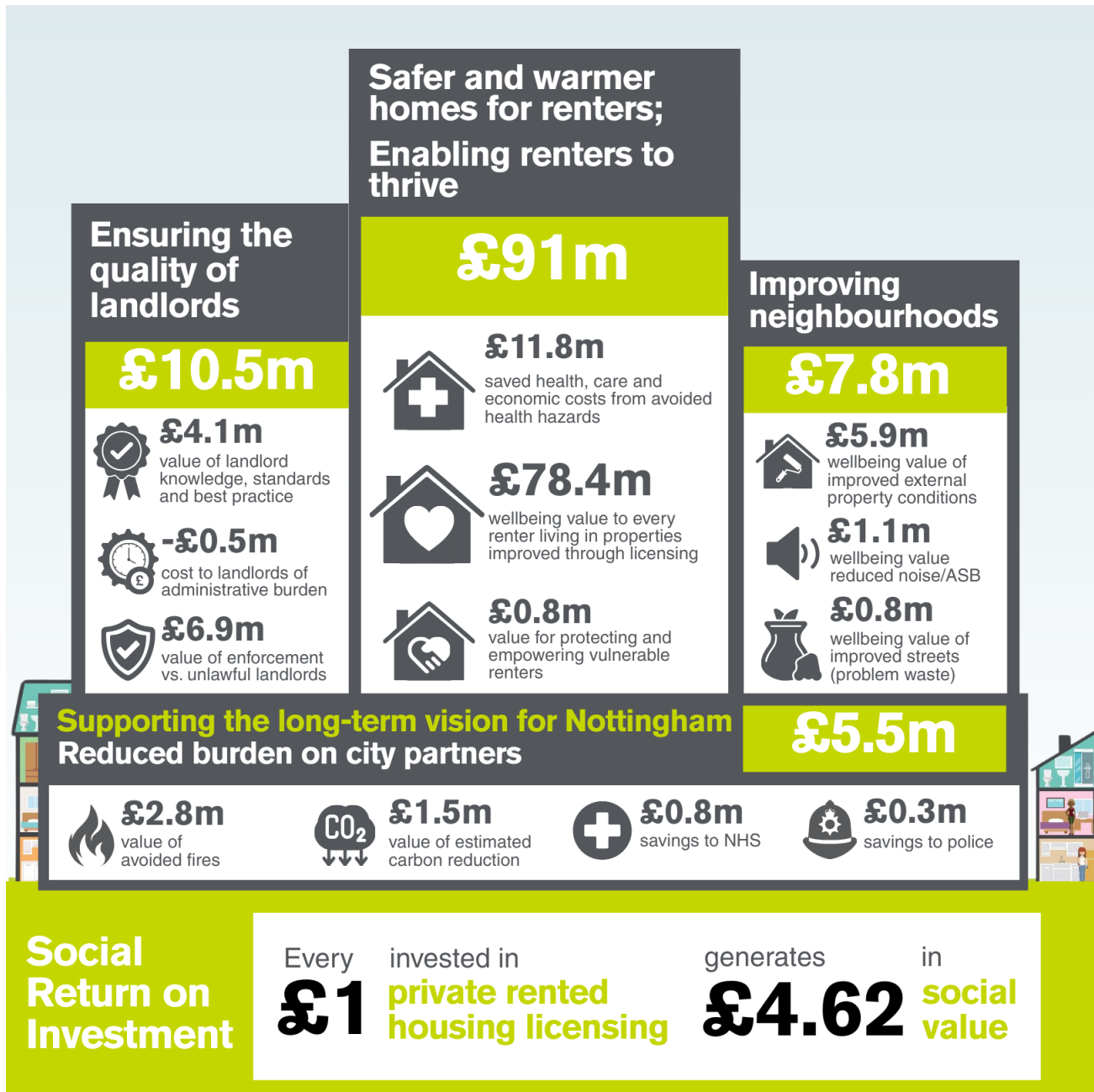


Image 8: Impact of licensing (SROI) summary

The SROI ratio compares the costs of delivering licensing with the value (impact) that it creates. The SROI ratio for licensing is as follows:

$$\text{SROI ratio} = \frac{\text{Total Present Value of Impact}}{\text{Cost of licensing}} = \frac{\pounds 114,929,694}{\pounds 24,886,695} = \pounds 4.62$$

The SROI ratio tells us that:

Every **£1** invested in private rented housing licensing creates **£4.62** in value of the benefits generated.

**The biggest value of licensing is to renters, from safe and warm homes and enabling renters to thrive. Together, these impacts create £91m in social value,** a result of activities carried out over the last five years, and their continued impact over the duration of the licence. The value of benefits to renters makes up 79% of the overall impact. This is in line with the aim of licensing, which is to ‘drive up standards and protect tenants across the city’.

The outcome for improved health and wellbeing for renters as a result of homes improved is makes a significant contribution to the total value. This is because this outcome has the highest quantity of change, because of its impact on every person living in properties that have been improved following inspection. Sensitivity analysis<sup>y</sup> was carried out to test the assumptions regarding this outcome, and concluded that the valuation for this outcome is reasonable, conservative assumptions are applied so as to not overclaim, and the outcome is closely linked to the activities of the licensing team (properties improved following inspections), and so is justified.

**The impact of licensing in ensuring the quality of landlords is valued at £10.5m.** Of this value, £3.6m is value to licensed landlords themselves, as a result of improved knowledge, standards and best practice, whilst taking into account the cost of increased administrative burden of licensing. The majority of this impact is as a result of licensing creating a level playing field for all landlords, with £6.9m value from bringing unlicensed landlords within licensing and penalising unlawful/criminal landlords. This reflects landlords’ views in the survey and wider consultation, in which landlords emphasised the importance of licensing applying to all landlords, including those who try to evade licensing.

**The impact of licensing on improving local neighbourhoods and environment is valued at £7.8m.** This is as a result of improved wellbeing for neighbours from the improved appearance of neighbourhoods and reducing the negative wellbeing effects of waste and ASB. This is a conservative measure of the impact on improving local neighbourhoods, as it measures only the available data on individual improvements made at property level. Qualitative evidence gathered through the evaluation suggests wider impacts through concerted partnership interventions in problem hot-spots, as well as the general effect of raising expectations on waste standards through strengthened approaches to waste.

**The impact of licensing on other city partners in supporting the long-term vision for Nottingham is valued at £5.5m.** Licensing reduces the burden on the NHS, Police, Fire and Rescue and contributes to the goals of Carbon Neutral 2028.

<sup>y</sup> Details of the sensitivity analysis carried out can be found in the technical appendix.



Stakeholder	Outcome	Quantity of change	Duration	Financial proxy	Deadweight	Attribution to others	Displacement	Drop-off	Total impact (PV)	
Number in group	Indicator									
Renters 89,000	<b>Safer and warmer homes for renters</b>									
	<b>Homes able to be kept warm</b>	281	5 years	£20,982	14%	34%	4%	20%	£10,245,642	
	Inspection data: Significant excess cold hazards removed/reduced									
	<b>Homes made safe, reducing hazards to health</b>	781	5 years	£1,909	21%	34%	4%	20%	£1,371,450	
	Inspection data: Other significant hazards removed or reduced									
	<b>More secure homes</b>	24	5 years	£1,501	16%	34%	4%	20%	£66,703	
	Inspection data: Significant hazard from entry by intruders removed or reduced									
	<b>Enabling renters to thrive</b>									
	<b>Homes improved, improving renters' health and wellbeing</b>	14,356	5 years	£3,815	30%	34%	4%	20%	£78,437,734	
Inspection data: Number of renters benefiting from properties improved following inspection										
<b>Identifying and referring safeguarding issues</b>	28	5 years	£17,561	2%	80%	4%	20%	£295,057		
Licensing data: Referrals to safeguarding partners										
<b>Empowering renters' rights</b>	743	5 years	£259	12%	0%	4%	20%	£518,460		
Tenancy Matters data: Number of renters supported with housing/tenancy support										
<b>Reducing overcrowding</b>	26	5 years	£2,662	0%	34%	4%	20%	£139,852		
Inspection data: Significant overcrowding hazards reduced or removed										

Stakeholder	Outcome	Quantity of change	Duration	Financial proxy	Deadweight	Attribution to others	Displacement	Drop-off	Total impact (PV)
Number in group	Indicator								
Neighbours and communities 8,000	<b>Improving local neighbourhoods and environment</b>								
	<b>Improving external property standards</b> Inspection data: External property conditions improved following inspection	6,742	5 years	£557	15%	40%	4%	20%	£5,863,511
	<b>Reducing problem waste</b> Inspection and complaints data: Number of residents benefiting from waste issues improved following investigation	2,146	1 year	£924	11%	50%	4%	20%	£847,097
	<b>Tackling persistent noise and other ASB</b> Complaints data: Number of neighbours benefitting from ASB complaints resolved after first intervention	1,568	1 year	£1,510	4%	50%	4%	20%	£1,091,027
City partnership Police	<b>Supporting the long-term vision for Nottingham</b>								
	<b>Empowering safe communities</b> Complaints data: Reduced case burden on Police/ local authority from dealing with ASB complaints on first intervention	784	1 year	£904	4%	50%	4%	20%	£326,586
Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service	<b>Providing safe housing</b> Inspection data: Reduced number of fires due to fire safety checks carried out	40	5 years	£36,972	21%	20%	4%	20%	£2,841,371
NHS	<b>Healthy and safe residents</b> Inspection data: Significant hazards removed and reduced	781	5 years	£640	21%	34%	4%	20%	£798,146
Carbon Neutral 2028	<b>Championing sustainability</b> EPC data: Estimated reduced carbon emissions from improved energy efficiency of licensed properties	9,989	5 years	£306	41%	72%	4%	20%	£1,545,956

# Maximising future impact of licensing

## What makes the biggest difference?

The SROI analysis highlights that licensing generates the biggest social impact through safer and warmer homes for renters, that enable renters to thrive. These outcomes are linked to inspection activities carried out by the licensing team – demonstrating that property inspections are licensing’s most powerful tool when it comes to identifying poor property standards, and improving renters’ wellbeing by ensuring they are remedied.

It is important to recognise that many privately rented properties are in a good state of repair. Two-thirds of landlords state that their properties don’t require improvements as the licensing standards are already being met. This is largely supported by evidence from renters, almost half of whom feel that their property standards are very good. However, a fifth of renters rate their property standards as poor. It is these renters that would benefit the most from having property standards improved. The key to maximising the impact of licensing is therefore not just increasing the number of inspections, but using a risk-based approach, informed by intelligence and insight, to aim to target the poorest condition properties.

At an individual person level, the highest value outcomes are avoided fires and reduced excess cold. Whilst warmth is a top priority for renters, fire safety is lower down renters’ priorities for property standards – potentially due to the lower risk of occurrence, despite the high cost should a fire occur. Fire safety is a fundamental part of any licensing inspection, due to the severity of risk should a fire occur, and should remain so due to the social and economic benefits this generates.

The high valuation of addressing excess cold reflects renters’ priorities for warmth, recognising the wide range of physical, mental and social impacts of living in a cold home. However, the warmth of a home depends on a range of factors, including property standards (working heating, insulation, double-glazing etc), but also the cost of heating and occupants’ heating behaviour (e.g. rationing due to costs, or inefficient use of heating systems and controls). Improving the warmth of a property can also be costly, particularly in older housing stock. The landlord survey indicates that this is one of the areas that landlords are least likely to have made considerable or significant improvements to. Despite some of the difficulties and complexities around this issue, it should be recognised that improving warmth in privately rented homes has a potential significant social impact.

Another area of significant impact is tracking down unlicensed landlords and bringing them within licensing. It is important to landlords that everyone in the market is treated equally, and that those trying to evade licensing should be tracked down. There is also wider evidence to suggest a correlation between failure to licence and unsatisfactory management and property conditions.<sup>74</sup> Therefore the work of the proactive enforcement team in this area is important in maximising the benefits of licensing.

Improving external property standards also has relatively high value. The issue of poor external property standards, including gardens, bins and waste, is compounded in areas where there are a concentration of privately rented properties. The evidence suggests that there has been an improvement in the appearance of privately rented neighbourhoods, through partnership working to address issues and raise standards and expectations.

## What have we learned?

The social impact assessment and SROI calculation have shown that licensing makes an overall positive social impact, and the biggest impact comes through identifying and working with a proportion of landlords and properties that are not meeting licence conditions, to bring them up to that standard. Amongst the representative sample of landlords that completed the survey for this impact evaluation, around 1 in 3 landlords recognised that licensing has improved some aspect of their practice (e.g. through improved knowledge, property standards or management practice). Licensing compliance checks show that around half of licence applications need further evidence or improvements to meet licence standards, and around a fifth of properties inspected need improvements. Even though not all licensed landlords and properties need improving, the impact assessment shows that the overall benefit of licensing is positive just from addressing those that do.

The social impact of licensing would be maximised by improved targeting of properties and landlords failing to meet licence standards. The licensing team aim to take a targeted approach, using various indicators to create a risk-based approach to inspections. These include clear flags such as complaints, but also other indicators such as first-time licence, desk-based evidence of licence conditions not being met, or poor external conditions. **Continuing to review the data held by the team will help to update and refine this risk-based approach to inspection.** For example, the newly updated Indices of Multiple Deprivation<sup>75</sup> could be used to target rented properties in some of the most deprived areas of the city, with the aim of reaching those most at risk of deprivation.

Licensing has less direct contact with renters, even though they are the main beneficiary. This is reflected in the SROI, with 'empowering renters' rights' having a relatively low overall contribution to the total value. The renter survey indicates that around a third of renters are aware of what licensing is, whilst a third are not at all aware. Around half of renters would consider reporting an issue with their home/landlord to the Council. The majority of renters do feel that licensing makes a positive difference to them. **There is the potential for licensing to optimise engagement opportunities with residents, particularly focusing on those who may be more vulnerable or living in properties that are not meeting licence conditions.** This would require a clear route for renters to contact the Council, and for licensing queries to be directed to the appropriate team members to ensure that renters are responded to directly. Partners may be aware of other awareness-raising opportunities with target groups e.g. student engagement events, community drop-in information sessions.

Ensuring rented properties can be kept warm is a priority area of impact. The role and mechanisms that licensing has to improve warmth is therefore an area to explore in order to maximise the future impact of licensing. This could be through enforcing licence conditions, as well as information and best practice sharing with landlords. The licence condition sets out the need for the property to be able to be kept 'reasonably warm', but it can sometimes be difficult to determine the cause – for example, if renters are rationing heating due to fuel costs. **Licensing inspectors need clear guidance and training in terms of what the licence condition for 'reasonable warmth' means for licence standards and inspections.**

Licensing can also have an important role in raising awareness of the government's proposed increase in Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) in the private rented sector,<sup>76</sup> and emerging funding mechanisms to support this. For example, licensing can raise awareness of the latest proposals and what this means for landlords through its regular newsletter and webinars, encourage landlord to reappraise their properties against new Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) metrics, and provide signposting towards grants and loans via the emerging Warm Homes Plan.<sup>77</sup> This could be supported by strengthened partnership working with local partners such as those in the Nottingham Fuel Poverty Strategy Group.<sup>78</sup> **Closer partnership working between licensing and fuel poverty/energy efficiency partners would help maximise the impact of forthcoming energy efficiency legislation via licensing.**

Engaging landlords to improve knowledge, share information and best practice has been identified as a route to improve impact. The requirement for landlords to complete regular relevant training is one of the conditions of licensing that landlords sign up to – however, the landlord survey indicates that less than half of landlords have completed this training within the last three years. Relevant training is available through local accreditation partners and others endorsed by the Licensing team as meeting relevant standards, and is relatively low-cost or free to accredited landlords. The evidence highlighted by this evaluation shows a **need for some focused compliance activity to identify whether landlords are meeting the licence condition of completing relevant training.**

The aim of licensing is to provide a standard that applies to all licensed landlords and privately rented properties, to create a ‘level playing field’ across the privately rented market within Nottingham. As the insight from this evaluation shows, many landlords feel that they are already meeting this standard. Accreditation to the Nottingham Rental Standard provides a recognised route for landlords to achieve a quality mark that indicates their good practice status. This quality mark also recognises that accredited landlords place a lower burden of compliance activity on the licensing team, which is recognised through the lower licence fee that accredited landlords pay. The insight from this evaluation also shows that accredited landlords are more likely to complete the relevant training (as it is free to accredited landlords), and completing the training is strongly linked to improved knowledge, confidence and best practice of landlords. Although over two-thirds of landlords state that they already meet licence standards, only one third are accredited. **This gap could be a focus for accreditation activity, targeting landlords who are meeting expected standards but not yet accredited, bring them the financial benefit of lower licence fees and wider benefit of improved practice.**

Partnership working is an important element of achieving licensing outcomes, and wider outcomes for the city. Partners that licensing works most closely with are highly supportive, and see first-hand the benefits that working together with licensing can bring. The most successful partnership working is often based on shared approaches to case work, to which a fundamental element is data sharing. Data sharing agreements should be reviewed/put in place where there are clear benefits to joint working and achieving shared outcomes. Some local partners that have less interaction and awareness of licensing are less sure about the benefits, and there is **potential to strengthen these partnerships through further engagement at both a strategic and front-line level.**

Measuring outcomes is vital for understanding impact, and requires good outcome-led data to provide regular and reliable information on changes in outcomes. This evaluation has helped identify core outcomes and associated data indicators. **Ongoing monitoring and reporting of outcomes would benefit from developing a set of outcome Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and building regular data collection, collation and reporting into performance processes.**

In relation to this, the outcomes-led approach also highlights that the impact of property improvements on the renter depends on the type and severity of issues identified in a property. For example, the valuations of the health and social costs of hazards recognise that there is a difference in value for the individual between a significant improvement in the warmth of a property (valued at £23,285 for addressing excess cold), compared to an improvement in food safety/hygiene (valued at £919). In order to improve future assessments of impact, licensing inspection data needs to reflect this. Currently, the data is focused on the route taken to achieve property improvements (e.g. non-compliance with HHSRS, licence conditions or Management Regulations), rather than the outcome achieved as a result of improvements. **A review of data collection should focus on systematically collecting consistent data on the severity of the issue identified and an outcomes-centred classification of improvements made following inspection (e.g. warmth, state of repair, security etc).**

The evaluation process also benefited greatly from the insight gained from directly surveying renters and landlords, in understanding the two most important stakeholders' perspectives and priorities. **Continued regular surveying of landlords and renters will help further improve licensing insight, and help to track and monitor future changes in outcomes and impact.**

The evidence on some of the long-term impact of licensing is more complex, with difficulties in isolating the impact of licensing from other changes in context happening across the city at the same time. However, this is valuable to explore nonetheless, to be aware of change in long-term impacts relevant to licensing. For example, **changes in crime and ASB in licensed areas should be tracked, to monitor long-term changes in comparison with appropriate control groups/areas.** This type of analysis has been carried out in partnership with the Nottingham Crime and Drugs partnership previously, and should be considered as part of licensing renewal processes in the future. Similarly, **better understanding of long-term trends in energy efficiency, property standards and non-decency levels, could be achieved through more detailed exploration of cross-checking licensing data with other strategic data for the city** (with appropriate control groups).

Learning and recommended actions		
Learning points	Recommended actions	
<b>Maximising the impact of licensing</b>	Licensing has biggest direct impact through identifying landlords/properties not meeting licence conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue to review and refine risk-based approach to audits and inspections, using latest data and advancements in data insight such as AI</li> <li>2. Review opportunities for raising awareness of licensing directly with renters, particularly those who may be most vulnerable/ in properties not meeting licence conditions. Ensure processes are in place to adequately direct and respond to renters.</li> </ol>
	Keeping a home reasonably warm is a top priority for renters and has considerable social value	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Review the licence conditions, inspection standards and officer training around 'warmth' to ensure maximum impact is being achieved through licensing</li> </ol>
	Landlord training is linked to improved knowledge and awareness of best practice. Accredited landlords are more likely to complete training, which is free to members, as well as resulting in lower licence fees.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Further compliance checks on the completion of relevant landlord training as part of licence conditions</li> <li>5. Accreditation should be further promoted as a means of accessing free training and lower licence fees</li> </ol>

	Learning points	Recommended actions
<b>Strengthening partnership working</b>	Partnership working is effective in achieving shared outcomes, particularly when there is a strong link both at strategic and front-line level, supported by data sharing	<p>6. Strengthen links with fuel poverty/energy efficiency partners to support landlords to improve the warmth of their properties and meet proposed improvements to energy efficiency of privately rented homes</p> <p>7. Review the need for data sharing agreements with key partners to ensure efficient joint working</p> <p>8. Review engagement with other partners with common goals, to strengthen partnership working at strategic and operational level</p>
<b>Improving impact measurement and ongoing learning</b>	Measuring impact relies on good outcomes data, reliably and consistently collected, collated and reported	<p>9. Develop a set of licensing outcome KPIs to continue to track and report the social impact of licensing</p> <p>10. Refine data collection to include severity of issue and type of property improvements made following inspection</p> <p>11. Consider continuing rolling/regular direct surveying with landlords and renters</p>
	Tracking long-term changes is important in understanding the impact of licensing	12. Establish methodologies for cross referencing licensing data with other strategic city data, to measure long-term impacts (such as crime, ASB, overall property standards) at meaningful intervals (e.g. licence renewal)

Table 8: Learning points and recommended actions

## Conclusion

This evaluation has assessed the social impact of privately rented housing licensing in Nottingham over the five-year period January 2020 to December 2024, using the Social Return on Investment (SROI) methodology. It set out to move beyond a narrow assessment of regulatory compliance or financial cost, and instead examine how licensing contributes to wellbeing: for renters, for landlords, for neighbourhoods, and for the wider city partnership. The findings provide robust evidence that licensing is not only a regulatory tool, but contributes to the wellbeing of people living in Nottingham and the long-term goals for the city.

The headline from the SROI clearly demonstrates that licensing generates more in social value than it costs to deliver. Over the evaluation period, licensing generated £115 million in social value against delivery costs of £24.9 million, equating to £4.62 of social value for every £1 invested. The largest share of this value was realised by renters, through safer and warmer homes, that enable them to thrive. However, measurable value was also created for landlords, neighbourhoods, and other public services in Nottingham. This demonstrates that licensing, when properly resourced and implemented, produces benefits that substantially exceed its financial cost.

The evidence shows that licensing is effective in raising minimum standards across a large and diverse private rented sector. Through proactive management of licensing (inspections, audits, and enforcement) the Council has improved thousands of properties and brought over 7,000 previously unlicensed landlords into compliance. The scale of activity – over 33,000 licences issued, more than 30,000 inspections, and nearly

4,500 properties improved – illustrates both the reach of the scheme and the depth of intervention. This has directly reduced hazards in homes, addressed excess cold, improved fire safety and security, and supported better property management.

This has a tangible impact on renters. Warmth and state of repair were identified as their highest priorities, and licensing activity directly addressed both. Two-thirds of renters reported that licensing makes a moderate to significant difference to their health and wellbeing. The SROI modelling attributes £91 million of value to improvements in housing conditions and the associated wellbeing effects. Importantly, this reflects not only physical improvements, but reduced anxiety, greater security, and increased confidence that standards are being monitored and enforced.

Licensing also strengthens neighbourhoods. By improving external property standards, addressing waste management issues, and working in partnership to tackle anti-social behaviour, licensing contributes to improved community wellbeing and reduced strain on local services. The valuation of £7.8 million for neighbourhood-level impacts reflects the wider spillover effects of improved housing quality and management. This is particularly significant in areas with high concentrations of private renting, where housing conditions and management practices can shape the experience of the wider community.

A key learning point from the evaluation is the importance of partnership working. The effectiveness of licensing is amplified by collaboration with Neighbourhood Safety Officers, Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service, Police, universities, waste services and other Council departments. Licensing provides intelligence and lawful access ‘behind the door’, which enables earlier identification of safeguarding issues, overcrowding, and risks that may otherwise remain hidden. This demonstrates that licensing is most effective when embedded within a wider city strategy for safe, healthy and sustainable communities.

The evaluation also provides important insight into landlord experience. While two-thirds of landlords report that they were already meeting minimum standards, around one in three indicate that licensing has significantly improved their knowledge or practices. Accreditation levels in Nottingham are substantially higher than national averages, suggesting that licensing, combined with incentives and engagement, encourages landlords to achieve a higher quality mark for their properties and management practices. The SROI calculation identifies £3.6 million of value accruing directly to landlords through improved knowledge, better management, and the creation of a more level playing field.

At the same time, it is important to recognise the concerns raised by some landlords. Some perceive licensing primarily as a financial and administrative burden. Around a quarter expressed dissatisfaction with costs, and some questioned whether the worst landlords are adequately captured. These findings highlight a tension within licensing, that the social impact assessment seeks to address. The wider activities of licensing may not be visible to individual landlords, whose experience may be limited to their individual interactions with licensing – which leads them to focus on the administrative and financial burden to them. The social impact assessment provides a wider picture of the range of activities, outcomes and impact that licensing delivers at scale, across a broad range of privately rented properties, landlords and communities. The impact assessment process has highlighted the need for licensing to balance its focus on regulatory robustness, with clear communication of its wider purpose and impact. Continued emphasis on engagement and information sharing, training, and visible action against landlords who seek to evade licensing are important aspects of maintaining landlords’ confidence in licensing.

Several broader lessons emerge for the future. First, the value generated is closely linked to the comprehensive coverage of the scheme and the resources dedicated to compliance and enforcement. Without the resources to staff and enforce licensing, the social impact would be limited. Second, inspection and intelligence functions are particularly powerful levers for change. Direct property inspections drive measurable improvements in safety and quality. Third, licensing works best as part of an integrated system, where regulatory powers are complemented by engagement, partnership, and support.

The SROI model has applied conservative assumptions, to not overclaim impact. The ongoing impact of outcomes is limited to five years, even though there is potential for longer-term impact in some cases. The outcomes indicators are based only on the direct activities of the licensing team, despite evidence of a wider uplift in the quality and management of privately rented properties as a result of the licensing scheme being in place. Other deductions are applied to avoid over-claiming, using insight from key stakeholders to set the model assumptions. Even with these conservative assumptions, the social return is positive. However, as with any evaluation of social outcomes and impact, there is complexity involved in isolating the impact of one intervention in the context of wider social changes. Ongoing monitoring and refinement of data collection – particularly around outcomes-centred assessment of property improvements, and further direct feedback from renters and the outcomes they experience – would strengthen future assessments.

In strategic terms, the findings indicate that licensing contributes directly to Nottingham’s housing vision: safe, warm homes in thriving neighbourhoods. It also contributes indirectly to wider goals around public health, crime reduction, and carbon reduction. For policymakers and councillors, the evidence supports the continuation and refinement of licensing as a cost-effective intervention in the private rented sector. For landlords and other stakeholders in the private rented sector, the report demonstrates that licensing is not solely a regulatory function, but a framework that raises standards, enhances good practice, and improves the overall quality and reputation of the private rented sector.

Ultimately, this evaluation shows that privately rented housing licensing in Nottingham is generating measurable and substantial social value. It is improving property conditions, protecting renters, supporting landlords in their responsibilities, improving neighbourhoods, and reducing pressures on public services. The challenge for the next phase is to build on these foundations: to maintain enforcement credibility, deepen landlord engagement, enhance data and partnership working, and ensure that the benefits of licensing continue to outweigh its costs. If these lessons are applied, licensing can remain a central tool in enabling renters—and the city as a whole—to thrive.

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