

The Social Impact of Private Rented Housing Licensing in Nottingham

Full Social Return on Investment report 2026

Foreword by Councillor Jay Hayes Executive Member for Housing and Planning



A safe, secure, and affordable home is the foundation on which people build their lives. It underpins health, wellbeing, education, employment, and community life. For almost a third of Nottingham's residents, that home is in the private rented sector.

This report marks an important moment for Nottingham, and for housing policy more widely. It is the first time in England that the social impact of private rented housing licensing has been measured using a Social Return on Investment approach. In doing so, it moves the debate beyond whether licensing works, to what difference it truly makes.

The findings are striking. Over five years, housing licensing in Nottingham generated nearly £115 million in social value, improving lives, strengthening neighbourhoods, and reducing pressure on vital public services. Every £1 invested delivered £4.62 in value back to the city. These figures represent warmer homes, safer buildings, fewer hazards, and greater peace of mind for thousands of residents.

This report also provides important insight for landlords. Many already strive to do the right thing, and the evidence shows that licensing supports these efforts through clearer standards, better guidance, access to training and accreditation, and greater confidence that poor practice is identified and addressed.

Licensing in Nottingham combines enforcement with engagement and works best in partnership with landlords, renters, emergency services, universities, and community organisations. Inspections and intelligence allow risks to be identified early, safeguarding concerns to be addressed, and problems to be resolved before they escalate.

Nottingham is proud to be leading the way with a report that is already informing national discussions. Ultimately, this evaluation shows that housing licensing is not just a regulatory tool, but a long-term investment in people, communities, and the future of our city.