

Additional HMO Licensing Scheme 3 Proposal Consultation Report

Purpose

To share findings of the Additional Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing consultation.

Background

Nottingham City Council launched a 12-week public consultation to propose the introduction of a new Additional HMO Licensing Scheme for private rented properties.

Launching on Wednesday March 1 and ending on Wednesday May 24, 2023 the consultation sought views from the residents of Nottingham and landlords/agents of privately rented HMO properties within the City.

Methodology

- An online survey promoted through various channels including @MyNottingham, @NottmRenters and various local community social media pages utilising organic advertising inviting respondents to give their thoughts on a new Additional HMO Licensing Scheme for private rented HMO properties
- A number of in-person events across the city and online engagement events
- A letter to Leaders and Chief Executive Officers of neighbouring authorities requesting their views and completion of the online survey
- An email to strategic partners such as universities, fire and police requesting their views and completion of the consultation survey
- An email to organisations who might be affected by or give advice to those affected by the consultation such as The Law Society / Citizens Advice Bureau
- Publicised via landlord email to all subscribed licensees monthly
- Emailed to all current licensees from licensing database
- All responses have been consolidated and subject to thematic analysis

Participation and survey responses

The survey received a total of 322 responses. 20 consultees participated in person and at online events.

Proposals

Nottingham City Council put forward a proposal to introduce a new Additional Licensing scheme for private rented HMO properties. Privately rented HMO housing has grown considerably within Nottingham and is an important part of providing a range of housing in the city, so it is important that the properties:

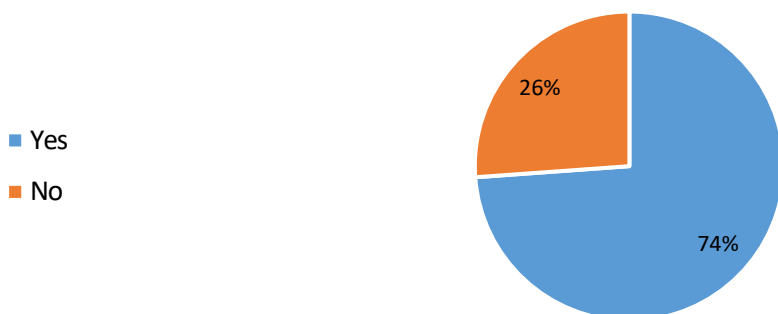
- Are of a good standard
- Are well managed

An Additional HMO Licensing scheme would help to:

- Improve property conditions
- Improve the quality of our neighbourhoods, to support safe, inclusive and cohesive communities.

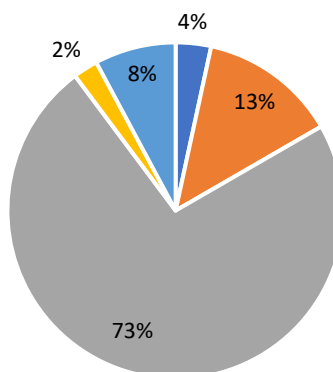
Survey questions

Are you a resident of the City of Nottingham?



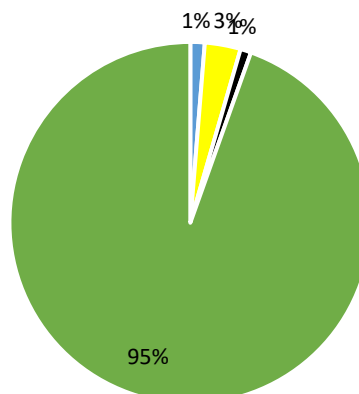
What is your residential status?

- A tenant living in an additional HMO licensed property
- A tenant living in any other private rented accommodation
- A homeowner
- A social housing tenant
- Other



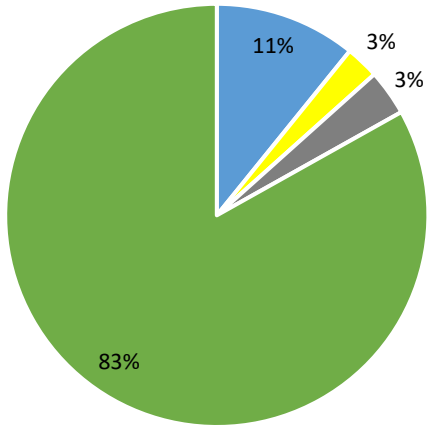
Are you a student studying in Nottingham?

- Yes, I study at Nottingham Trent University
- Yes, I study at the University of Nottingham
- Yes, studying elsewhere
- No



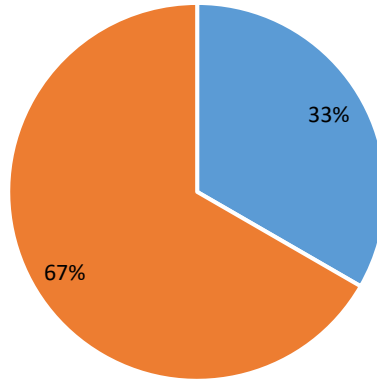
Are you responding on behalf of a business, service or group?

- A member of the community who lives or operates a business or provides services within the City of Nottingham
- A representative of a community or voluntary organisation operating within the City of Nottingham
- A representative of an association or group operating within the City of Nottingham
- No



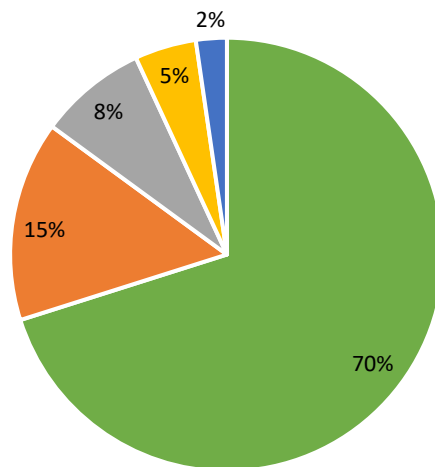
Are you a landlord letting properties within the city boundary?

- Yes
- No

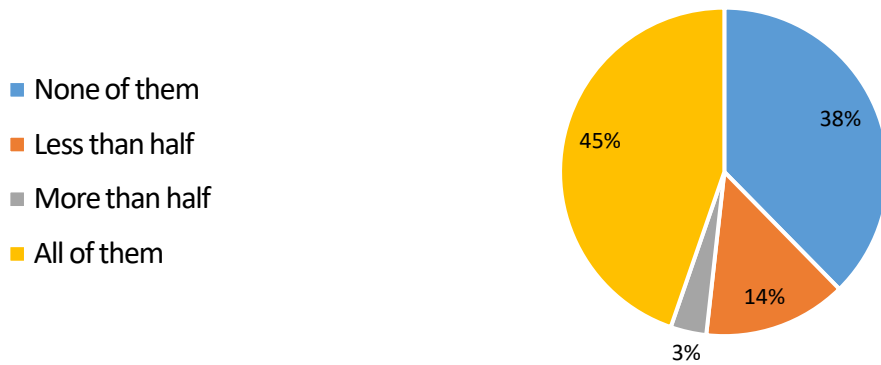


Please tell us how many properties you own

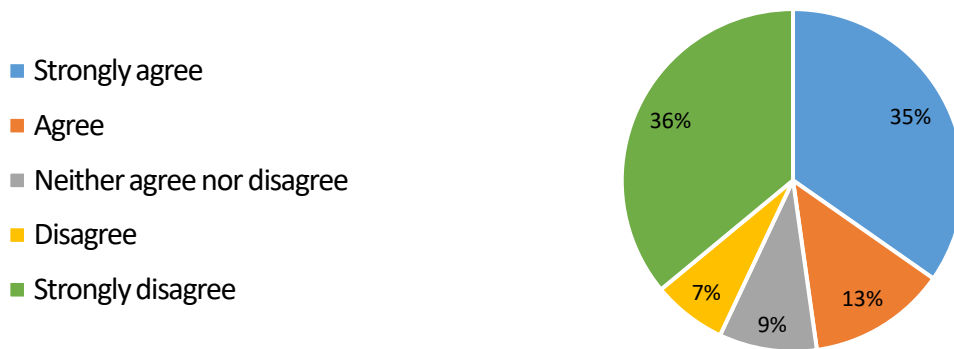
- 1-2
- 3-5
- 6-10
- 11-20
- More than 20



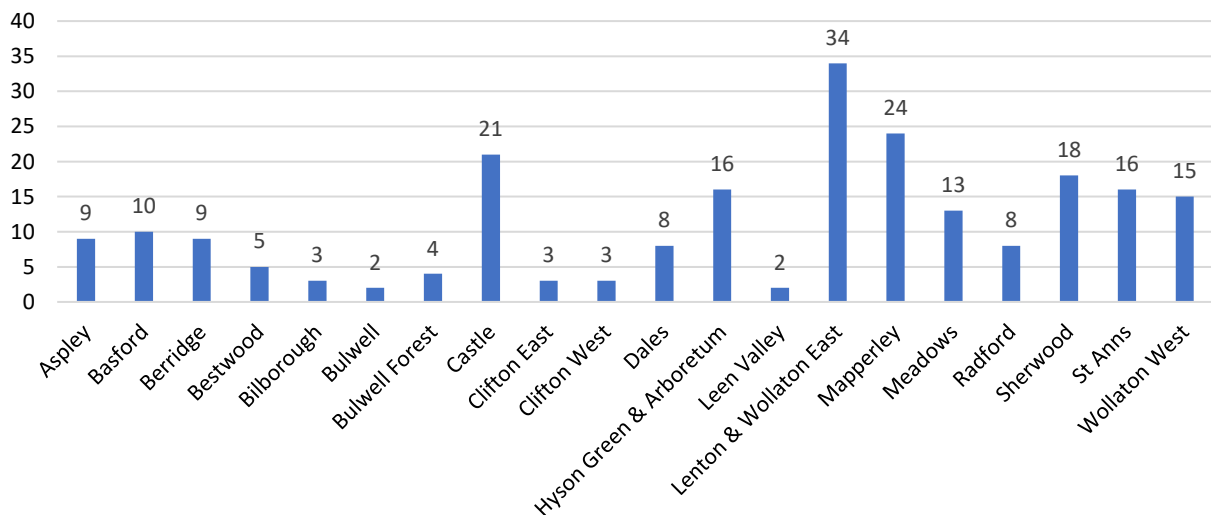
How many of your properties are currently additional HMO licensed



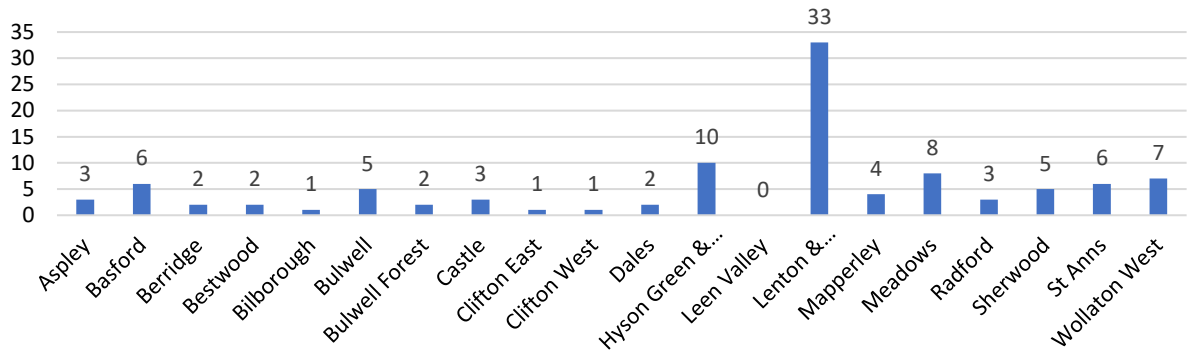
Evidence supports a scheme of additional HMO licensing which covers the whole city. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal?



If you live in Nottingham, please tell us which ward you live in

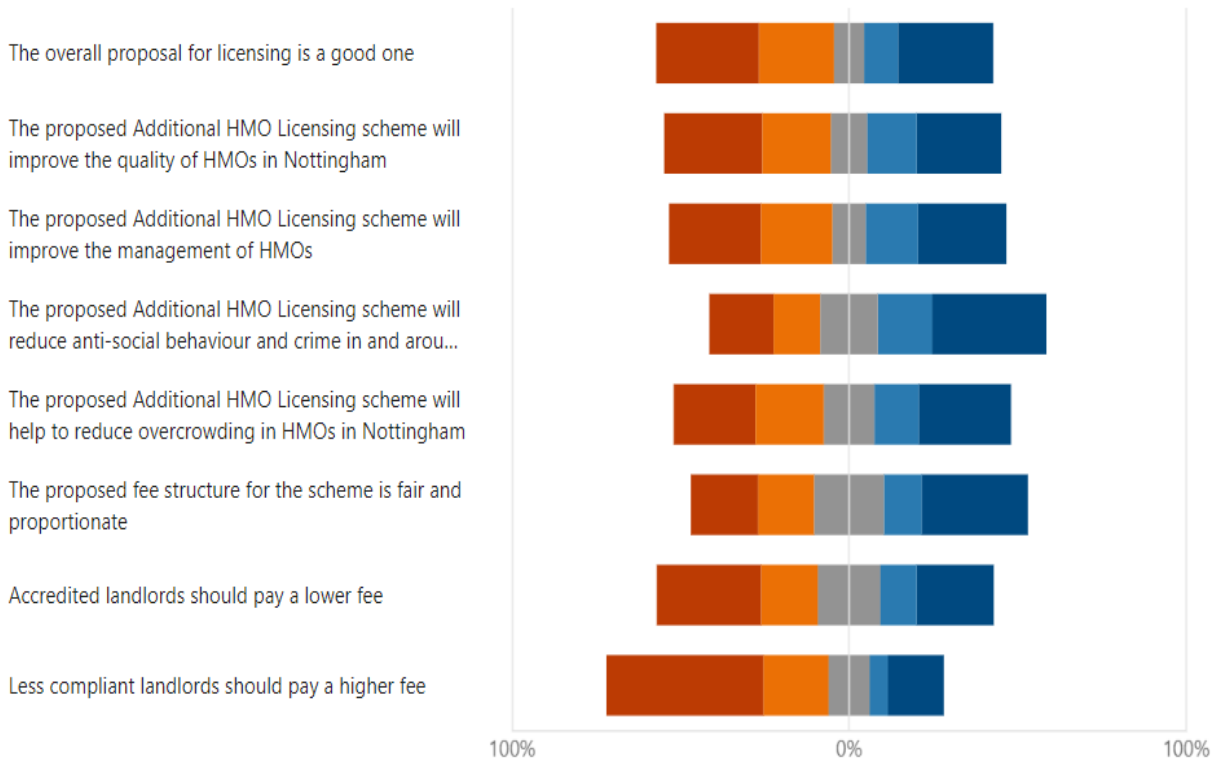


If you are a private landlord please let us know where the properties you own or manage are in Nottingham



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree



Summary of key consultation data as shown in the tables above:

72 % of respondents were Nottingham residents.

73% of respondents were homeowners.

4% of respondents were tenants living in additional HMO properties.

13% of respondents were tenants living in any other private rented accommodation.

2% of respondents were tenants in living in social housing.

5% of respondents were students.

83% of respondents were responding as individuals.

11% of respondents were responding as a member of the community who operates a business or service within the city

3% as the representative of a community or voluntary organisation operating within city

3% as the representative of an association or group operating within the city

33% of respondents were landlords letting properties within the city boundary 67% were not

The majority of landlords (70%) owned 1-2 properties with 5% owning 11-20 and 2% owning more than 20

45% of landlords who responded currently have all their properties licensed by Additional HMO Licensing

3% with more than half licensed, 14% with less than half licensed and 38% with none licensed (this could mean the properties are outside of the current designation or exempt)

The highest number of landlord consultation responses came from landlords letting properties in Lenton and Wollaton East and Hyson Green and Arboretum.

The highest numbers of consultation responses came from citizens living in Lenton and Wollaton East, Mapperley, Castle and Sherwood.

In response to the question: Evidence supports a scheme of additional HMO licensing which covers the whole city. To what Extent do you agree or disagree with the proposal:

35% of respondents strongly agree, 13% of respondents agree totalling 48% in favour of the proposed designation. 36% strongly disagree and 7% disagree totalling 43% against the proposed designation with 9% responding neither agree nor disagree.

Views on the proposed area:

There were over 70 comments from the 322 respondents in support of the proposed whole city designation which can be put into these two categories:

- Will maintain high standards citywide
- Will avoid confusion and be easier to manage

“Extending the area to the whole city makes sense. If the area only covers part of the city some tenants have less protection than others.”

There were a small number of comments referring to the awful living conditions that either the consultee themselves or friends have had to live in whilst living in a HMO in Nottingham.

A substantial number of residents may have misunderstood this question as there were several responses complaining about HMOs/students near them and complaining that they don't think HMOs should be converted in their area or on a citywide scale.

8 of 322 respondents questioned the integrity of the evidence for the scheme mostly questioning why the evidence wasn't made public.

Comments about licence fees and conditions:

The general consensus from landlords was that the proposed fees are too high, citing schemes which other Councils operate with lower fees.

“The theory is good, but the price is far too high compared to other councils with the same scheme and this will push up rents that are already too high”

Another common concern which came from both tenants and landlords was that the cost of licensing will be passed on to the tenant, leading to an increase in rent prices.

6 of 322 respondents mentioned that a significant number of landlords are selling up, in part due to this scheme, resulting in less options for rented accommodation.

A few respondents queried the need for a “less-compliant fee”, suggesting that if a Landlord is not compliant, they should not have a licence and ultimately not be able to let a property.

Comments on the proposal as a whole:

Most respondents used this text box to reiterate previous comments which have already been covered above however, there were around 10 comments asking for more to be done to find and prosecute ‘rogue landlords’ as they will try and avoid the scheme. One respondent suggested fining them significantly to reduce the cost for good landlords.

“You are relying on landlords to come forward. The more compliant landlords will do so, but the less compliant landlords will not. If you rely on tenants to complain, a lot will not do so as they are scared of being evicted.”

N.B. Please see Appendix 4 Thematic Responses (Nottingham City Council Executive Board September 2023) for the Council's responses to consultees.