

Appendix 2(iii)

Review of Nottingham City Council's Existing Licensing Schemes

Mandatory Licensing Scheme October 2016

Introduction

This report is an update on the operational delivery of Nottingham City Council's mandatory licensing scheme which has been operational since the Housing Act 2004 became operative in 2006. Licence applications were first received in summer 2006. This review covers performance for the whole period of licensing (unless otherwise specified).

Highlight summary

- 518 properties improved
- Positive working with the majority of landlords and excellent standards in some properties
- 45 HMOs and 28 landlords prosecuted for failure to licence
- 2990 licences issued, 94 refused
- Over 2000 properties with gas and electric safety certificates and licence conditions requiring the licence holder to be pro-active in dealing with issues such as anti-social behaviour.
- 44% of landlords compliant with licence conditions at first inspection
- Increase in mandatory licensable HMOs from 1,700 to 2,000 since 1st Jan 2014 (additional licensing came into force)
- Increase from 28% to 32% of licensable / licensed HMOs receiving a housing complaint
- Improved working with key stakeholders
- Greater knowledge and expectations of tenants and those involved in the Private Rented Sector (PRS).
- Innovative working with partners utilising licensing powers to respond to rogue landlords, safeguarding, crime, exploitation etc.
- Successful burglary reduction project

Mandatory Licensing Outcomes

Table 1: Summary of mandatory licensing work 2006 to 1st October 2016:

Estimated number of mandatory licensable HMOs at 1 st Oct 2016	2000
Prosecutions for failure to licence	45 HMOs 28 landlords
Licences refused	94
Licences revoked	97
Licences varied (since records began Nov 2011)	192
Cautions issued for failure to licence or breach of licence conditions	13 HMOs / 8 landlords
HMO Licensing appeals to property tribunal	23
Properties improved	518
Organisations and partners regularly worked with	17

Commentary

Table 1 shows the significant level of activity that mandatory licensing has generated, not just in processing and granting licences, but in improving properties prosecuting, refusing, revoking and refusing licences. The Council has had a significant number of tribunal cases (including some at Upper Chamber level and currently one at the Court of Appeal), with a number of cases not being clear cut. The Council monitors and reviews its approach and its application of the legislation and guidance.

Table 2: Summary of mandatory licence compliance work to 1st October 2016

Compliance inspections (since Nov 2013)	385 *
Number compliant with licence conditions	170
% compliant at first inspection	44%
Properties improved (total since 2006)	518

*The number of compliance inspections by officers that are not dedicated compliance officers but who may have inspected the property for other reasons are not all included.

Table 2 shows 385 compliance inspections have been undertaken since November 2013. Where non-compliance is found the Council seeks to work informally with landlords, giving verbal and written advice / warnings. Where this fails and / or there are significant concerns the Council takes more formal action, usually with enforcement as a final resort. To date the Council has issued 13 formal cautions to 8 landlords / companies, for failure to licence or not complying with licence conditions. The level of compliance work to date is expected to rise over the coming 18 months due to the cyclical nature of the licensing process.

Table 2 shows that only 44% of properties were fully compliant with licence conditions at first inspection, which is a similar level for additional licensing. This is a

concern with licence holders not being proactive in managing properties. When the Council inspects, compliance levels increase and there is generally positive engagement with landlords. This is shown in the low number of formal enforcement actions the Council has to take. Some landlords welcome compliance inspections; pleased to see the Council are not just issuing licences with no further involvement with the property.

Housing complaints

The number of complaints about private rented housing received by the Safer Housing team over the period 1st Jan 2010 to 31st Dec 2015 has been compared against those for mandatory licensed / licensable HMOs. The number of complaints has been broken down into two, 3 year periods for comparison to try and identify if the licensing of HMO's show a reduction in the number of complaints received.

Table 3: Comparison of all housing complaints made to the Council and related enforcement action between Jan 2010 – Dec 2012 and Jan 2013 – Dec 2015 and relationship with mandatory licensable HMOs.

	1 st Jan 2010 – 31 st Dec 2012	1 st Jan 2013 – 31 st Dec 2015
Total number of complaints made	2869	3423
Number of complaints made against mandatory licensable / licensed HMOs	879	1148
% of complaints that were against licensed / licensable HMOs	31%	34%
Number of licensed / licensable HMOs at 31 st Dec 2015	1744	2013
Number of individual HMOs complained against	485	640
% of licensed / licensable HMOs that received complaints	28%	32%

Commentary

There is a continued increase in housing complaints received by the Council. For licensable HMOs there has been an increase from 28% to 32% receiving a complaint. The increase is disappointing as it indicates failure to manage and maintain good property conditions. Positively the increase is likely to be linked to increased awareness due to the rogue landlord campaign, our one stop shop approach for reporting poor housing, tenants having copies of licences and an increased awareness of the Council's responsibility in dealing with complaints as well as focussed work with key groups and organisations on expectations and reporting i.e. students, student unions universities, community groups and organisations visiting and having involvement with HMOs. As there has been an increase in the number of mandatory licensable properties coming into the market these properties may not have been licensed at all, or until very recently, so longer

term, as compliance is undertaken on these properties, it is expected that this figure will reduce.

Continuing to ensure licence applications are made

The Council continues to respond to complaints about poor property conditions and undertakes pro-active investigations to identify unlicensed HMOs, under the mandatory and additional licensing scheme. This includes:

- 1. Investigations and prosecutions**
- 2. Funding opportunities - Rogue landlord funding**

1. Investigations and prosecutions

The Council continues to identify mandatory licensable HMOs that are unlicensed. Since 1st January 2014 there have been 5 prosecutions against landlords for failing to apply under the mandatory licensing scheme. Until the property is investigated and occupants identified it is not possible to know whether a property falls within the mandatory or additional licensing scheme, or is licensable at all. On occasions some properties suspected of being HMOs are singly occupied. The market continues to change as does the dynamic between those properties which are licensable under the mandatory and additional licensing schemes. This will continue to be a challenge.

The Council writes to licence holders to remind them before the expiry of their licence, with the majority of landlords making a timely renewal application. Where landlords fail to renew further investigation follows, which ensures applications are made. If renewals are not made further investigation may lead to a prosecution.

2. Funding opportunities - Rogue landlord funding

The Council has been successful on 2 separate occasions in applying to CLG for support in tackling rogue landlords. This has enabled the Council to undertake proactive work in identifying unlicensed HMOs along with other poorly maintained and managed properties. Whilst these investigations sometimes reveal that the property in question is not a HMO they may reveal other significant hazards or areas of poor management which leads to other types of enforcement. This includes prosecutions for failure to licence and breaches of management regulations and failing to comply with Housing Act notices. Since 2014 such investigations have led to the following interventions in both HMO and non HMO properties:

- 591 Part 1 Housing Act 2004 and other Environmental Health related enforcement actions taken
- 238 Extra inspections / raids supported
- 11 Prosecutions
- 58 Multi- agency raids

- Improved and greater intelligence sharing with Nottinghamshire Police, Nottinghamshire Fire Authority, HMRC, Gangmasters Licensing Authority, Community Voluntary Sector and other Local Government partners.
- 84 landlords trained at dedicated events
- 34 delegates trained from New and Emerging Communities
- Enforcement Officers trained in best practice
- Improved communications and marketing

Conclusions

The Mandatory Licensing regime has contributed to improving property standards and management. There are now over 2000 properties that fall within this licensing regime, with an increase of 300 over the last 3 years. There are clear benefits that have been achieved so far through the Mandatory Licensing scheme including:

- 518 properties improved.
- Over 2000 properties with gas and electric safety certificates and licence conditions requiring the licence holder to be pro-active in dealing with issues such as anti-social behaviour.
- Improved facilities and amenity provision in properties following property specific conditions / restrictions on licences.
- A 5 year cycle of licence holders and managers having to be re-considered under the criteria in place for issuing licences to them.
- Positive working relationship with accreditation partners.
- Increased awareness of licence holders responsibility and the Council's role in intervening and ensuring compliance.

On-going challenges

- Table 2 shows only 44% of landlords are compliant at first inspection of the property. Compliance is an essential element to ensuring licence holders are proactive in managing their properties; left to their own devices, this figure could be even lower.
- Developing knowledge, understanding and a robust response to dealing with criminality in the private rented sector including serious and organised crime, modern day slavery, safeguarding issues and rogue landlords.
- Increasing awareness amongst tenants about licensing and what it means for them. The Council actively promotes licensing at relevant events, particularly amongst students, as a significant proportion of students live in mandatory licensable HMOs.
- Number of HMOs is expected to continue to fluctuate over time as this sector is a continuously changing market and there may be changes to legislation in 2017 that will increase the number of mandatory licensable HMOs.

Additional Licensing Scheme October 2016

Introduction

This report is an update and interim review of Nottingham City Council's additional licensing scheme agreed on 17th September 2013. The scheme began on 1st January 2014 and unless revoked shall run until 31st December 2018. It is a requirement within the Housing Act 2004 s60 that the housing authority must review the designation from time to time. A more detailed and up to date review will be carried out prior to the additional licensing (AL) scheme reaching the end of its lifespan and the Council making any decision on whether any further scheme is required/appropriate.

Highlight summary

- Judicial Review in March 2015, successfully defended by the Council
- At 1st October 2016, 2236 licence applications received, 1543 issued
- 30 applications still being made each month
- 72% of licences issued with extra conditions
- Only 45% of HMOs compliant at first inspection
- 124 properties improved to date (anecdotal information provides unquantifiable information on improvements made prior to application). 2900 HMOs estimated to fall within the scheme
- Decrease in number and proportion of housing complaints against licensed HMOs
- Churn of properties between additional, mandatory and family housing
- More action to support landlords, tenants and tackle rogue landlords
- Final phase will be focused on compliance, enforcement, delivery of scheme outcomes and how the positive benefits will be maintained.

Whilst the scheme came into force in January 2014, there was a legal challenge from East Midlands Property Owners (EMPO), which was not determined until March 2015. During the first 15 months of the scheme being operational, the team staffed up conservatively to manage the risk should the Council's defence have been unsuccessful.

Changes in the housing market

At the start of the scheme it was anticipated that 3202 HMOs would fall within the AL scheme. However, with an increase of 300 mandatory licensable HMOs (since January 2014), it is now anticipated that 2900 HMOs will fall within the AL scheme. This figure may continue to vary over the remaining period such is the complex and continuously changing nature of this market. There are likely changes to legislation in 2017 which will increase the number of mandatory licensable HMOs, reducing the number of additionally licensable HMOs.

Progress to date

Applications received

At 1st October 2016 2236 additional licence applications have been received. There are still an estimated 664 HMOs where no application has been made. The action the Council is taking to ensure that these properties are brought into the licensing scheme is outlined under the heading 'Ensuring licence applications are made'.

Applications processed

Table 1: Summary of licensing applications progress to 1st October 2016:

Licence applications received	2236
Licences issued	1543
Issued with extra, property specific conditions / restrictions	945
% of with extra, property specific conditions / restrictions	72%
Licences refused	96
Licences revoked	19
Licences varied	61
Appeals to property tribunals	19

As shown in Table 1 above, 72% of licensed properties have required conditions to improve the property or restrict the use of certain rooms and to ensure that the property is suitable for the number of households in it. Conditions range from prohibiting use of a small bedroom through to requiring additional electrical sockets to safely use appliances. The current focus is ensuring that pending applications are processed to allow the transition to compliance and improvement activity

Key Outcomes

- It is being found that where landlords have been required to provide gas and electrical safety significant number of applications had only done them because of the Council's requirement for licensing, with certificates issued the day before. Also, anecdotal information has been given that a positive outcome of licensing has been properties have been improved prior to application being made.
- A delay in delivery of licences issue has been due to poor quality applications with missing documentation or certificates showing faults. Focus has been given to 500 of these, delaying licences being issued, but ensuring the properties are safe.
- Approximately 1100 accredited and other landlords provided good applications

Licence compliance update

Table 2: Summary of licence compliance work to 1st October 2016

Compliance inspections	243
Number compliant with licence conditions	109
% compliant at first inspection	45%
Revisits	17 #
HMO improved through HMO Management Regulations	71
HHSRS inspections	34
HMOs improved	176

in some cases landlords send photos and other confirmation of works being completed, so a revisit is not required.

Table 2 shows 243 compliance inspections have been undertaken with less than half of the properties inspected being compliant. The level of compliance work will continue to rise as the scheme progresses.

The Council works informally and formally with licence holders and managers. Where there has been a pattern of lower level non-compliance the Council will try to engage positively with landlords. This approach has been well received and has often brought about changes to behaviour, which did not require formal action. Some landlords have welcomed compliance inspections and were pleased that the Council is not just issuing licences with no further involvement with the property.

During the remaining period of the additional licensing scheme there will be an increased move to more compliance work as the majority of licences will soon be determined. This will seek to ensure that licence holders are being proactive in managing their property and issues such as ASB. Further enforcement action may be required if licence holders are failing in their responsibilities.

Housing complaints

The number of complaints about private rented housing received by the Council since the additional licensing scheme has been in force (2 ½ years) has been compared with the 2 ½ years prior to the scheme coming into force. (Table 3)

Table 3 – Comparison of housing complaints before and after the scheme came into force.

Period	1 st July 11 – 31 st Dec 13	1 st Jan 14 – 30 th June 16
Total number of complaints	2085	2116
Number of properties complaints relate to	1843	1867
Number and % of HMOs complained against where licence application received between Jan 14 – June 16	120 7%	108 6%
Number and % of HMOs complained against that were HMOs licensed between Jan 14 – June 16	79 4%	56 3%
Number of licensed HMOs	n/a	1321
Number of applications received	n/a	2154

Overall for all 2154 HMOs that have applied for a licence under this scheme, there were 120 complaints over 2 ½ year period prior to the scheme coming into force, out of total 1843 complaints. Since the scheme has been in force there have been 108 complaints about properties where licence applications have been received out of a total 1867 complaints. Where the properties were licensed over the same period the number of complaints was lower. As can be seen from Table 3 above there is a reduction in housing complaints about licensed and licensable HMOs since the scheme has been in force. Out of the 1321 HMOs licensed under the scheme, there were 79 complaints about them in the previous 2 ½ years before the scheme was introduced, reducing down to 56 for the 2 ½ year period since the scheme was introduced.

Complaints about additionally licensed HMOs are at a lower level when compared to the period when licensing was not in force. Overall there has been a reduction in complaints about properties where applications have been received or have been licenced. There has been a drop in complaints, but it is not as big as the Council would have hoped for, indicating that, whilst the scheme is having some benefit it is still currently needed.

Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) complaints

The Council has reviewed the ASB complaints received by the Council where a house was identified using the same complaint types it used to evidence the scheme of additional licensing in 2013. It then compared these ASB complaints for the 2 ½ years since the additional licensing scheme has been in force against the 2 ½ years prior to the scheme coming into force (Table 4).

Table 4: Comparison of ASB complaints before the scheme came into force and after the scheme came into force.

	July 2011 – Dec 2013	Jan 2014 – June 2016
Total number of complaints	5562	4498
Number of properties complaints relate to	4263	3478
Number and % of HMOs complained against where HMO application received between Jan 14 – June 16	157 3.7%	158 4.5%
Number and % of HMOs complained against that were HMOs licensed between Jan 14 – June 16	94 2.2%	95 2.7%
Number of licensed HMOs	n/a	1321
Number of applications received	n/a	2154

Outcomes

Overall for all 2154 HMOs that have applied for licence, there were 157 complaints over 2 ½ year period prior to the scheme coming into force, out of a total 4263 complaints. Since the scheme has been in force there have been 158 complaints about properties where licence applications have been received out of a total 3478 complaints.

Where the properties were licensed over the same period the number of complaints was lower. Out of 1321 licensed HMOs, there were 94 complaints about those HMOs in the previous 2 ½ years before the scheme was introduced, increasing by one to 95 for the 2 ½ year period since the scheme was introduced.

ASB complaints about additionally licensable HMOs show an increase of one, (which is disappointing,) and are currently at a similar level when compared to the period when licensing was not in force. The proportion of HMO properties complained against (where licence applications were made) has shown a slight increase from 3.7% to 4.5%, less than 1%. Where the property was licensed the increase was only 0.5%.

There has not yet been a significant difference between the number of ASB complaints in the period prior to licensing coming in compared to the period since licensing has been in force. This may be down to more proactive work being undertaken in these areas and an increased awareness of licensing as a tool to respond to complaints of ASB. Not all licences have been issued and operationally that is the current focus. However, as more licences are issued there will be an increase in compliance work it is anticipated that this will be likely to result in a reduction in ASB linked to licensed HMOs. The Guidance (March 2015 p21) indicates that licensing may have to be a long term strategy and that it will not provide instant solutions. While the result are not at present showing a significant outcome in changes to ASB this is expected to change as more compliance work is undertaken and landlords are asked respond to ASB through their tenancy agreements. In this context there is a general progression towards meeting the aims of the scheme

Ensuring licence applications are made

The Council has and continues to undertake a range of activity to take all reasonable steps to ensure applications are made under the additional licensing scheme. This includes:

1. Enforcement
 - a. Desktop enforcement activity
 - b. Investigations and prosecution
2. Communication and Engagement
 - a. Linking with the universities and student unions
 - b. Use of website, social and other media
 - c. Wider partnerships (Fire, Polish, Roma and voluntary groups, Gangmasters Licensing Authority, Law Centres, Police, Councillors)
 - d. Rogue landlord funding

1. Enforcement

a. Desktop enforcement activity

Since the start of the additional licensing scheme the Council has targeted suspected unlicensed HMOs where there is information suggesting that they are licensable. To the end of June 2016, the team has undertaken:

- Investigations regarding failure to licence where the Council has commenced the desktop enforcement process with targeted interventions in 3 areas of the City.

	Meadows	Sneinton	Arboretum	Totals
Properties investigated	178	290	615	1083
Applications made / already in place	29	26	129	184
Referred for further investigation	12	27	14	53
No licence required	137	237	381	755
Cases still awaiting response			91	91

Summary of desktop enforcement work

Desktop enforcement is an initial investigation to identify unlicensed HMOs. It utilises information from sources such as Council Tax, Housing Benefit and Land Registry to identify properties that may be subject to licensing. Legal notices are served on owners, leaseholders' etc. requiring information to assist in identifying probable HMOs. In 2015-2016 desk top enforcement work generated 201 licence applications (out of 1083 properties investigated). This shows the significant level of change there has been within these areas of the City where the Council had information about properties being HMOs, but which no longer appear to be. There are 75 properties

that are being taken forward for inspection and possible enforcement, where information indicates a failure to licence. Experience for targeted action on properties where there has been failure to licence is there is likely to be poor standards of safety and management.

The Council will continue its proactive work in identifying and targeting suspected HMOs that have failed to licence under the additional licensing scheme. An outcome of AL work is that properties move between licensing types and there is some movement to family accommodation. Whilst a property may be suspected of falling within the additional licensing scheme it is not until the visit that this is identified. Investigations carried out since January 2014 as to whether properties required a licence under the AL scheme have led to the successful prosecution of 5 landlords for failing to apply under the mandatory licensing scheme which may otherwise have gone undetected.

b. Investigations and prosecutions

There have been two prosecutions for failure to licence under the additional licensing scheme, with other investigations on-going. Now in its 3rd year the level of compliance and enforcement activity against unlicensed (additional) HMOs is increasing and this is set to continue with an increased focus over the coming months on.

- over 75 properties that are known to be additionally licensable HMOs,
- prioritised inspections for properties
 - 500 where poor application and certification has been provided
 - landlords are unknown
 - that have the greatest number of licence conditions
 - that complaint or intelligence indicates poor conditions, risks to tenants including safeguarding, exploitation, impacts on neighbourhoods such as repeat noise and ASB,

The Council works well with colleagues in the Police and other partners to identify suspected unlicensed HMOs. Work continues to develop in identifying risks to tenant's safety linked to serious and organised crime, modern day slavery, vulnerable persons and safeguarding issues.

2. Communication and Engagement

a. Linking with the universities and student unions

The Council has strong engagement with both universities and student unions, attending events and looking at opportunity to link into students and those likely to be living in AL HMOs. This helps ensure the message gets across that properties may need to be licensed and where they are licensed the conditions the licence holder has to comply with.

b. Use of website, social and other media

Since AL was launched the Safer Housing and Housing Licensing and the Compliance teams have promoted their twitter and Facebook accounts. They

promote activity, housing matters and are particularly used to publicise prosecutions, along with issuing press releases. The aim is to use this to act as a deterrent to other landlords and to raise awareness with tenants of landlords' legal obligations and to try and identify other rogue landlords that are operating within the sector. The website(www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/environmental-health-and-saferhousing/private-sector-housing/) promotes the work of the Council's private sector housing work, signposting to information about licensing and to support tenants and landlords enabling the provision of good quality, well managed housing and support for dealing with matters such as ASB.

c. Wider partnerships (Notts Fire and Rescue, Polish, Roma and other community groups, Gangmasters Licensing Authority, Law Centres, Police, Councillors)

There is continued and developing dialogue with partners to ensure better sharing of intelligence and information in tackling rogue landlords and supporting vulnerable tenants. Following a complaint about overcrowding in a property, an investigation was undertaken initially by the Council, which led to joint work with the Police and two people have been charged for offences under modern day slavery legislation.

d. Rogue landlord

The Council has been successful on 2 separate occasions in applying to central Government (Communities and Local Government Department) for support in tackling rogue landlords. This funding utilising the additional licensing framework has enabled the Council to undertake proactive work in identifying unlicensed HMOs and tackling rogue landlords.

Operation Yellow Gold is a joint Council and Police operation in an area of the City with what was believed to be a high number of unlicensed HMO's, some of the poorest property conditions, health inequality, higher levels of crime and community information indicating support for a proactive approach.

The outcome was some HMOs coming into licensing and discovering that potential HMOs had moved to large family occupation. Some landlords, after receiving initial requests to improve their properties, did so proactively, improving to above the legal minimum standard. Without licensing this operation would have not been undertaken.

General: Rogue landlord funding linked with licensing

Whilst these investigations sometimes reveal that the property in question is not a HMO they may reveal other significant hazards or areas of poor management which leads to other types of enforcement. Since 2014 such investigations have led to the following interventions in both HMO and non HMO properties.

- 591 Part 1 Housing Act 2004 and other Environmental Health related enforcement actions taken
- 238 Extra inspections / raids supported
- 11 Prosecutions
- 58 Multi- agency raids

- Improved and greater intelligence sharing with Nottinghamshire Police, Nottinghamshire Fire Authority, HMRC, Gangmasters Licensing Authority, Community Voluntary Sector and other Local Government partners.
- Property improvement
- Positive relationships with landlords and tenants & landlord training
- Engagement with community and voluntary sector
- 84 landlords trained at dedicated events
- 34 delegates trained from new and emerging communities
- Enforcement Officers trained in best practice
- Improved communications and marketing

Conclusions

In summary there are some clear benefits that have been achieved so far though the additional licensing scheme:

- Over 2236 properties where safety certificates are in place.
- 72% of licences have additional conditions / restrictions which will secure improvement over the period of the scheme.
- Reduction in housing complaints against licensable properties.
- Improved facilities and amenity provision in properties following extra conditions / restrictions place on HMO licences.
- Improvement in housing conditions
- Compliance work shows the majority of landlords are not compliant at first intervention, however, when they engage with us, the Council has not (to date) had to take formal action.
- Awareness raised amongst HMO occupants by providing a copy of the licence conditions to them.
- Improved relationships with other services in the community and voluntary sector re housing

The scheme is running well with an evidenced reduction in housing complaints about licensed and licensable HMOs. There continues to be work to do in determining applications and the Council continues to review and implement plans to ensure the scheme is a success. As the scheme continues there will be increased compliance checks to ensure that licence holders are complying with their conditions and improvements are made to benefit tenants and the wider community. The scheme is designed to be for 5 years and all indications are that the whole period will be required to make sure the outcomes of the scheme, i.e. improved property conditions, management and reductions in ASB are achieved.

An on-going challenge is about changing the behaviour of licence holders, landlords and agents. As the scheme enters its 4th year in January 2017, it is anticipated that there will be continued improvements in HMOs and how they are managed because of licensing. However, it is disappointing that the Council has identified only 45% of properties being compliant at the first inspection, and to date it appears the majority of landlords only improve when the Council prompts action. This is a concern and suggests that a significant proportion of licence holders and landlords are not as proactive in managing their properties. This shows that licensing and the associated compliance work is an important tool in raising standards and management in the

private rented sector. Some landlords have welcomed the increased dialogue which the additional licensing regime and compliance inspections have brought.

A further review of Additional licensing will be carried out towards the end of the scheme so that an informed decision can be made as to its effect and future.

Key conclusions from the reviews of Mandatory and Additional licensing which support the introduction of selective licensing

- It is being found that where landlords have been required to provide gas and electrical safety certificates, a noticeable number of applications had only done them because of the Council's requirement for licensing, with certificates issued very recently. Also there is anecdotal information that a positive outcome of licensing is that properties have shown to have been improved prior to an application being made.
- Compliance rates when inspecting licensed HMOs under the mandatory and additional licensing schemes show that only 44% (mandatory) and 45% (additional) are compliant at first inspection. So, whilst licensing is leading to improvements it is clear that a significant proportion of those licensed still need pressure/persuasion to comply with their duties. It seems reasonable to conclude that left to their own devices compliance rates would be even lower. Introducing a selective licensing scheme with appropriate levels of compliance checks is an important part of improving property management.
- 72% of additionally licensed properties have required extra conditions to improve the property, restrict the use of certain rooms, and to ensure that the property is suitable for the number of households in it. This illustrates a high level of properties will be improved or made safer during the period of the scheme.