



## 1. Introduction

1.1. Camden Council published '[A private sector that works for everyone](#)' the new Private Rented Sector (PRS) Housing Strategy in October 2013.

1.2. A consultation was launched in September 2014 on introducing an additional licensing scheme in the whole of Camden. This was because there was evidence that a significant proportion of HMOs across the whole borough are being managed poorly and this is causing problems for tenants and other residents. The initial consultation ran for 12 weeks until December 2014.

1.3. The consultation was extended for a further ten week period (February – May 2015) for further consultation in neighbouring boroughs. The responses to the entire 22 week consultation are analysed in this document.

## 2. Top line survey summary:

**2.1 Overall:** 1400 responses, 70% in favour of the proposals, 22% not in favour and 8% not answered/ don't know.

Cohort	In favour	% of cohort	Not in favour	% of cohort	DK / NA	% of cohort	Total number	Cohort as a % of total
ALL	980	70.0%	303	21.6%	117	8.4%	1400	100%
Landlords	44	25.7%	121	70.8%	6	3.5%	171	12%
Private Tenants	322	83.2%	35	9.0%	30	7.8%	387	28%
Others	614	72.9%	147	17.5%	81	9.6%	842	60%
Tenants in HMOs	167	79.9%	22	10.5%	20	9.6%	209	15%
Out of Borough	216	84.4%	27	10.5%	16	6.3%	259	19%

**2.2 Scope:** 73% of respondents favoured a borough-wide scheme.

**2.3 Fees:** 63% felt the fees were very reasonable or quite reasonable. 28% felt they were very unreasonable or quite unreasonable.

## 3. Engagement

3.1 The online consultation on the proposals to introduce additional licensing was open from the 4<sup>th</sup> September – 28<sup>th</sup> November 2014 and then again focusing on out of borough stakeholders (landlords, tenants, residents and business) from 4<sup>th</sup> February – 5<sup>th</sup> May. In addition, a group of community researchers took residents through the survey face to face in various community settings during both parts of the survey (e.g. libraries, community centres).

3.2 Throughout the consultation period there was extensive communications and engagement work to ensure the consultation reached as wide a range of stakeholders as possible. Measures included (not exhaustive):

Phase 1:

- Working with Camden Federation of Private Tenants to reach a wide spectrum of tenants across the borough. This includes two mail outs, to CFPT members and also to areas with a high number of tenants;
- Regular links via the Camden twitter account, We are Camden and website;
- Holding a Landlords' Briefing on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2014, hosted by Rosemary Westbrook, the Director of Housing and Adult Social Care. This was attended by representatives from 7 landlords' groups<sup>1</sup> and developers;
- Working with the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme to publicise the survey;
- Coverage in the Ham&High Newspaper;
- Email to all borough councillors;
- Bus shelter posters;
- Presentation at the Landlords' Breakfast about the proposals;
- A direct email to Camden leaseholders, as many rent out their properties.
- Article in Camden's Residents' Magazine;
- Officers attended all District Management Committees to discuss the proposals;
- Internal comms including a HASC blog and Essentials news item;
- Leaflets in all libraries and sports centres;
- Letter to all known managing and letting agents;
- Working with advice agencies, London university student accommodation offices etc. to publicise the survey;
- Letter to neighbouring boroughs;
- Survey advertised at Landlords and Letting Show;
- Presentation to the London HMO landlord group.

Phase 2:

- Adverts in local papers covering areas in all neighbouring boroughs: North London Press (covering Edgware & Mill Hill Press, Hendon & Finchley Press, Barnet & Potters Bar Press, East Barnet press & Advertisers), City of London & Dockland Times, Brent & Kilburn Times, Wood & Vale, Islington Gazette, the Haringey Advertiser;
- Focused community researcher work in London School of Economics identified housing market areas which cross borough boundaries (see appendix 7);
- Presentation at the Landlord's Forum in Camden;
- Regular links via the Camden twitter account (14,000 followers), We are Camden and website (which receives 60,000 monthly visitors);
- Emails sent to local business groups in neighbouring areas;
- Emails through economic development partners;
- Emails to renters' groups in neighbouring areas;
- Emails to landlords' groups;
- Survey advertised at Landlords and Letting Show (additional to phase 1);

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<sup>1</sup> National Landlord Association, Residential Landlord Association, Southern Landlord Association, Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, Unite Student Housing, Association of Residential Lettings Agents, British Property Federation

- Emails to employees in all local boroughs from Director of Housing and Adult Social Care and at more junior levels.
- Link sent out via the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme (facebook, twitter, website);
- Link shared via twitter by national tenants' group Generation Rent and national landlords' campaigns London Property Licensing and the National Landlords' Association;
- Link shared via Facebook by UK Landlords group and Advice4Renters – a Brent private tenants' group.
- Survey promoted by Camden Federation of Private Tenants;
- Promoted at Camden PRS partners' meeting;
- Survey featured on the websites of 4 out of the 6 neighbouring boroughs - Islington, City, Barnet and Brent. Requests were also sent to feature the survey to the other neighbouring boroughs.
- Internal comms including a HASC blog and essentials news item reaching all Camden Council employees;
- Leaflets in libraries in neighbouring areas and Camden;

#### **4. Findings – summary**

4.1 There were **1400** responses, 1010 received as part of the first phase and 390 during the second phase. There were also detailed consultation responses received via email from, among others, Shelter, The Residential Landlords' Association and the British Property Federation.

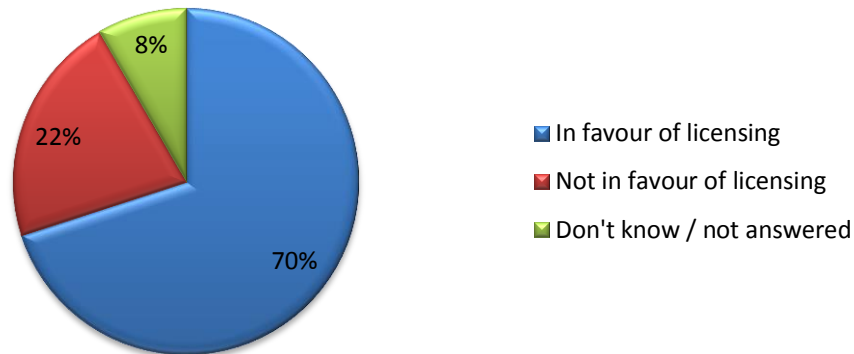
4.2 The top line response is **70% in favour of the proposals, 22% not in favour and 8% not answered/ don't know.**

The cohorts responding break down as follows:

- Landlords 171 (12%);
- Private tenants 387 (28%) (includes 209 who live in HMOs, 15% of total responses);
- Other households / organisational responses (detail in Fig 2): 842 (60%).

***Fig 1: Overall responses on the question of introducing additional licensing:***

## Additional licensing - Should Camden introduce a scheme?

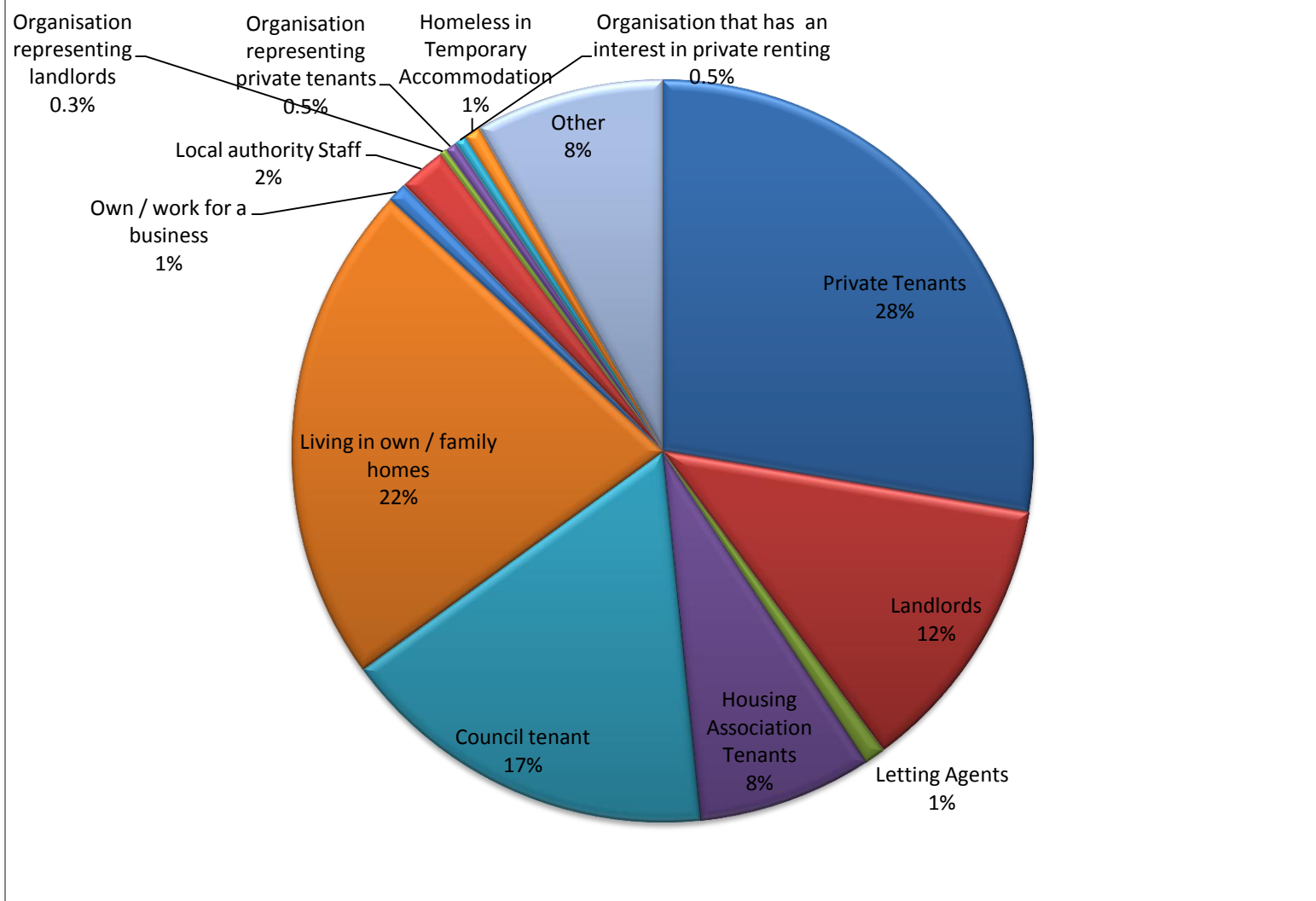


- 4.3 Of the 171 landlords, 25.7% (44) approve the proposals. 70.8% (121) are not in favour and 3.5% (6) didn't respond or weren't sure. The percentage in favour compares well with views in some other authorities – Enfield and Brighton respectively had only 3% and 14% of landlords responding positively.
- 4.4 Of the 387 private tenants, 83.2% (322) of these are in favour, 9.0% (35) not in favour and 7.8% (30) don't know / not answered. Of the 209 tenants in HMOs (a sub group of the 387), 79.9% (167) of these were in favour, 10.5% (22) not in favour and 9.6% (20) didn't respond or weren't sure.
- 4.5 Of the 842 other respondents 72.9% were in favour (614), 17.5% not in favour (147) and 9.6% don't know / not answered (81).
- 4.6 Of the 2569 respondents in neighbouring areas bordering Camden, 84.4% (216) were in favour, 10.5% (27) were not in favour and 6.3% (15) didn't respond or weren't sure.
- 4.7 On specific points arising from the questions:
- Clear majorities felt that the scheme would improve safety standards (74%), improve how HMOs are managed and maintained (70%), and improve the reputation of private renting in the borough (64%).
  - Only 47% felt the scheme would improve nuisance behaviour, noise or rubbish in the local area. 26% did not feel it would, and 24% were not sure. No evidence was found that indicates a connection between Anti-Social Behaviour and private renting in Camden.
  - More than 70% of respondents felt hostels, bedsits / rented rooms and student accommodation should be included.
  - Over 65% felt converted flats and flat shares should be included.
  - The lowest approval was 54% for inclusion of residential landlords with lodgers.
- 4.8 Other issues raised:

- The most common constructive issues raised in the free text comments were around the cost being passed on to tenants, concern that the scheme was a revenue raising exercise for the council and questions about the impact the scheme would have. There were also a large number of positive comments, including some useful case studies from current or former HMO tenants.
- A number of comments and additional written responses also highlighted the inspection standards of many new build student flats and that the licensing fee for a 700 unit block would be immense (£31,950) and not reflect the cost of any inspection.
- A number of the comments and additional written responses indicated the difficulty of licensing Section 257 HMOs (badly converted flats), where there are multiple owners, many of whom are owner occupiers.
- Comments were also received on the administrative burden of some of the specific conditions (detail in section 5.4).

*Fig 2: Responses broken down by cohort*

<b>Cohort</b>	<b>Number of respondants</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Private Tenants</b>	387	27.6%
<b>Landlords</b>	171	12.2%
<b>Letting Agents</b>	13	0.9%
<b>Housing Association Tenants</b>	106	7.6%
<b>Council tenant</b>	233	16.6%
<b>Living in own / family homes</b>	306	21.9%
<b>Own / work for a business</b>	12	0.9%
<b>Local authority Staff</b>	29	2.1%
<b>Organisation representing landlords</b>	4	0.3%
<b>Organisation representing private tenants</b>	7	0.5%
<b>Organisation that has an interest in private renting</b>	7	0.5%
<b>Homeless in Temporary Accommodation</b>	10	0.7%
<b>Other</b>	115	8.2%



## 5. Proposed changes to the scheme based on feedback

### 5.1 Section 257 HMOs

In the consultation we proposed including those s257 HMOs where 50% or more of the units are tenanted. Following the consultation, the proposal is to include only those parts of the property which come under the control of the freeholder or other person in control. For example, the common parts and those self-contained units which are let by the person in control.

Any areas that are not under their control, e.g. owner occupied leasehold flats will not be included. If none of the units are under their control then only the common parts will be licensed (i.e. stairways, landings and hallway).

### 5.2 Fees

#### 5.2.1. Section 257 HMOs

If only the common parts are licensed, then the fee will be the flat rate of £450. The proposed licence holder would only have to pay £45 per unit across both parts of the fee for those flats or studios under their control.

#### 5.2.2 Purpose Built student accommodation

It is proposed that a discount will be offered to purpose built student accommodation if meets the following conditions:

- The provider must be accredited under one of the ANUK/Unipol national codes of standards for purpose built accommodation
- Detailed architects drawings of the building must be provided at the time of application. These must accurately show the room dimensions. Also the location of elements of an automatic fire detection system, including detectors, alarms, sounders, call points, control panels. Locations of emergency lighting and fire-fighting equipment should also be indicated. An up to date fire risk assessment must be provided.
- The provider must be able to show proof of Building Regulation approval at the time of build or conversion.

The fee will be £5 per bed space, split across the administration fee (£3) and the licence fee (£2). The flat fee will stand with the same split. See Appendix 5 for more details on the fee.

### 5.3 Monitoring

The relevant legislation requires that the local authority review the operation of the licensing designation made by them. As well as measuring performance and targets, this must also measure the impact on the Private Rented Sector. A draft monitoring framework is in place.

### 5.4 Conditions

**5.4.1** It is proposed that some standard licence conditions will be removed and others amended. Conditions 16 (on informing Camden on remedial work required for gas and electrical installations), 9 (informing Camden on the details of the tenancy deposit scheme), and 22 (door security for units) will be removed. See Appendix 1 for a full list of conditions.

**5.4.2** it is proposed that conditions 19 (safety statements on furniture and electric appliances), 21 (pest infestation), 12 (responsibility for anti-social behaviour) and 25 (access for inspection) should be amended to clarify scope and responsibilities. See Appendix 1 and 6.

## 6. Question by Question Responses

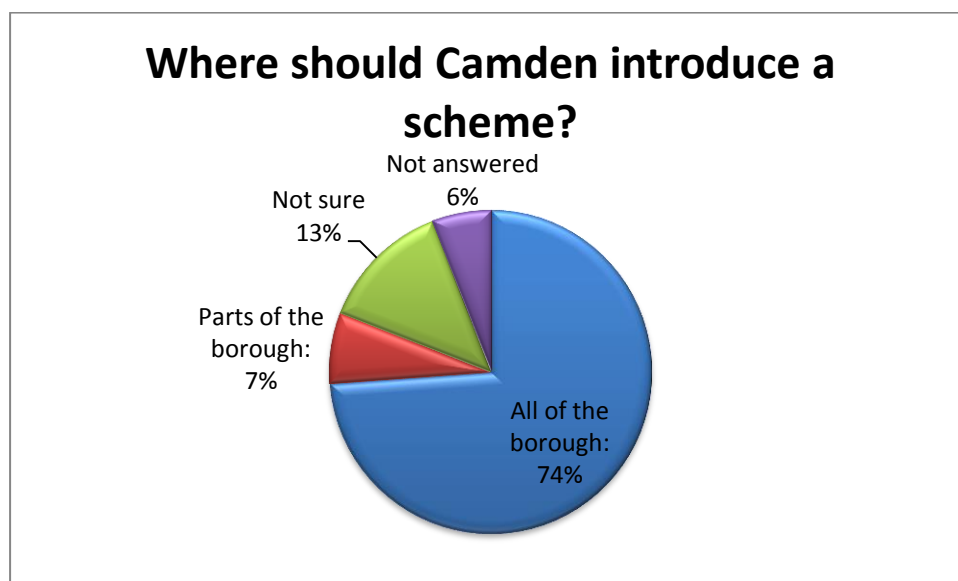
### 6.1 If the Council introduces a licensing scheme, should it cover the whole of the borough or just parts of the borough?

	All	%	Landlords	%	Private tenants	%
<b>All of the borough:</b>	<b>1034</b>	<b>73.9%</b>	67	39.2%	324	83.7%
<b>Parts of the borough:</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	32	18.7%	26	6.7%
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>13.2%</b>	45	26.3%	27	7.0%
<b>Not answered</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	27	15.8%	10	2.6%

*(NB: The free text comments for responses on 'parts of the borough' were varied. Thirteen responses stipulated where standards were worst but did not cite a particular location where that was the case. Camden Town, Kentish Town / Gospel Oak, 'South of the Euston Road' and Kings Cross where all*



mentioned twice. Two responses favoured only TFL zone 1, two only TFL zone 2 and three central or inner London. Hampstead and Highgate was mentioned once, as was Fortune Green, Regents' Park and West Hampstead. Numerous comments – 31 - cited 'no part' – indicating that as there was no specific 'no introduction of licensing' answer for this question those not in favour are split among not sure / not answered or parts of the borough.)



## 6.2 Do you think the proposed licensing scheme for HMOs will improve how HMOs are managed and maintained?

	All	%	Landlords	%	Private tenants	%
<b>Yes</b>	990	70.7%	51	29.8%	327	84.5%
<b>No</b>	240	17.1%	88	51.5%	29	7.5%
<b>Don't know</b>	146	10.4%	31	18.1%	28	7.2%
<b>Not answered</b>	24	1.7%	1	0.6%	3	0.8%

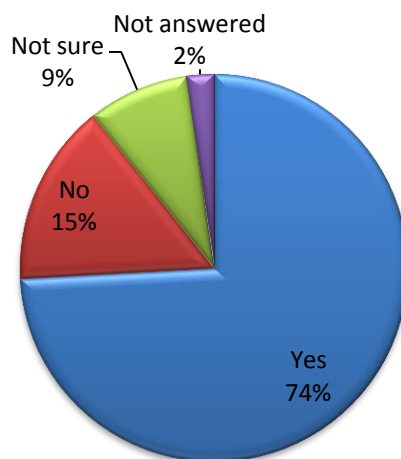
### Will the proposals improve how HMOs are managed and maintained?



### 6.3 Do you think the proposed licensing scheme for HMOs will improve safety standards, such as fire precautions?

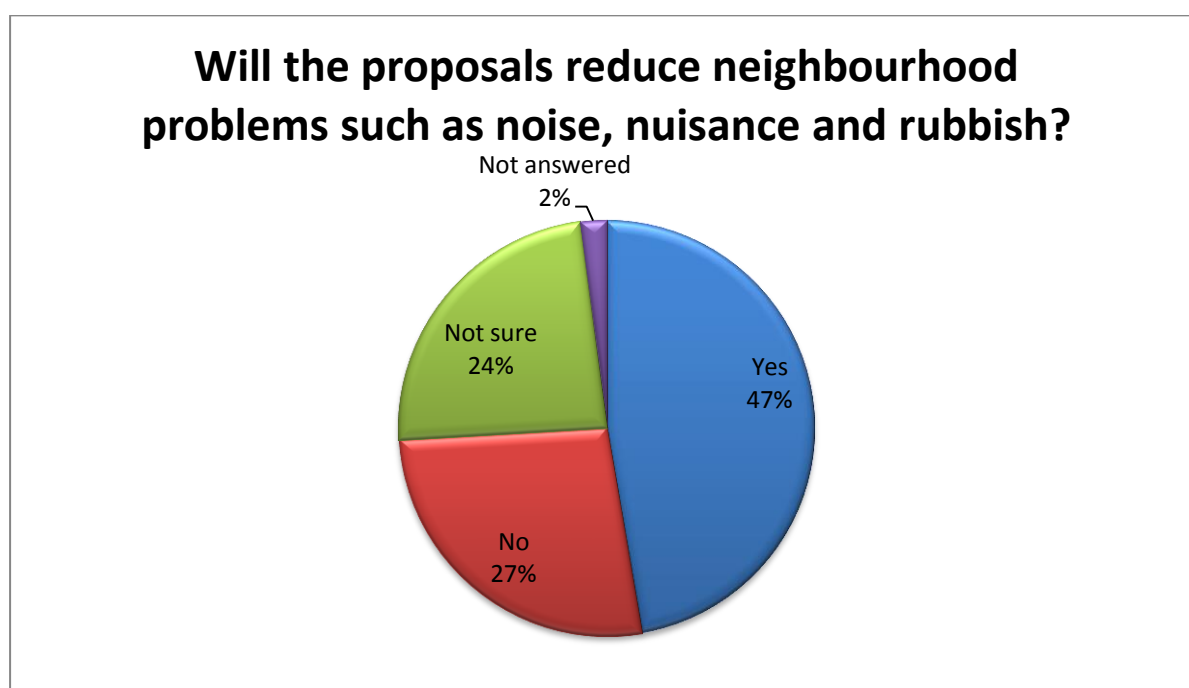
	All	%	Landlords	%	Private tenants	%
Yes	1038	74.1%	62	36.3%	332	85.8%
No	213	15.2%	82	48.0%	28	7.2%
Not sure	118	8.4%	26	15.2%	21	5.4%
Not answered	31	2.2%	1	0.6%	6	1.6%

### Will the proposals improve safety standards



**6.4 Do you think the proposed licensing scheme for HMOs will reduce neighbourhood problems such as noise, nuisance and rubbish?**

	All	%	Landlords	%	Private tenants	%
<b>Yes</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>47.3%</b>	29	17.0%	217	56.1%
<b>No</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>26.8%</b>	112	65.5%	64	16.5%
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>23.9%</b>	30	17.5%	98	25.3%
<b>Not answered</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	0	0.0%	8	2.1%

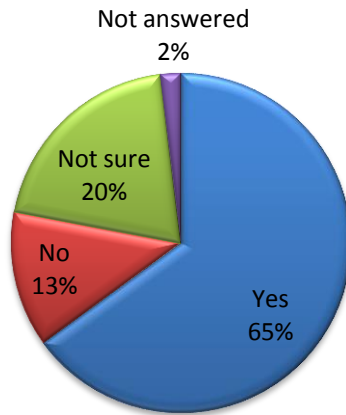


**6.5 Will the proposals improve housing standards across broader areas outside of Camden?**

*NB: This question was asked only during the second phase of the consultation, and therefore had 390 responses rather than 1400. Of the second phase of the survey, 256 out of borough responses were received, and 134 from Camden.*

	All	%	Camden	%	Out of Borough	%
<b>Yes</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>67.4%</b>	72	52.6%	191	75.5%
<b>No</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	31	22.6%	16	6.3%
<b>Not sure</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>18.7%</b>	30	21.9%	43	17.0%
<b>Not answered</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	1	0.7%	6	2.4%

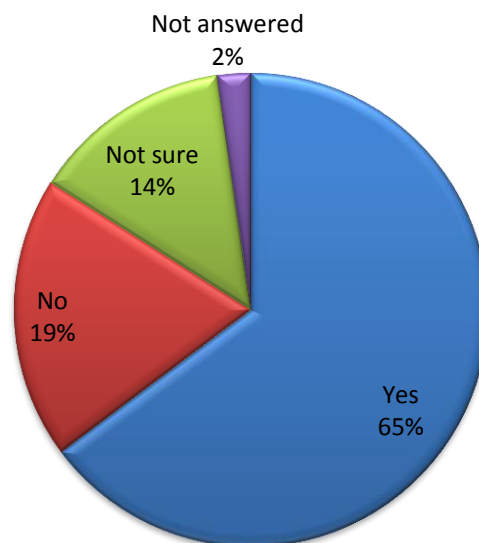
## Will the proposals improve housing standards across broader areas outside of Camden?



### 6.6 Will the proposals improve the reputation of private renting in Camden?

	All	%	Landlords	%	Private tenants	%
<b>Yes</b>	907	64.8%	41	24.0%	299	77.3%
<b>No</b>	269	19.2%	96	56.1%	37	9.6%
<b>Not sure</b>	192	13.7%	31	18.1%	46	11.9%
<b>Not answered</b>	32	2.3%	3	1.8%	5	1.3%

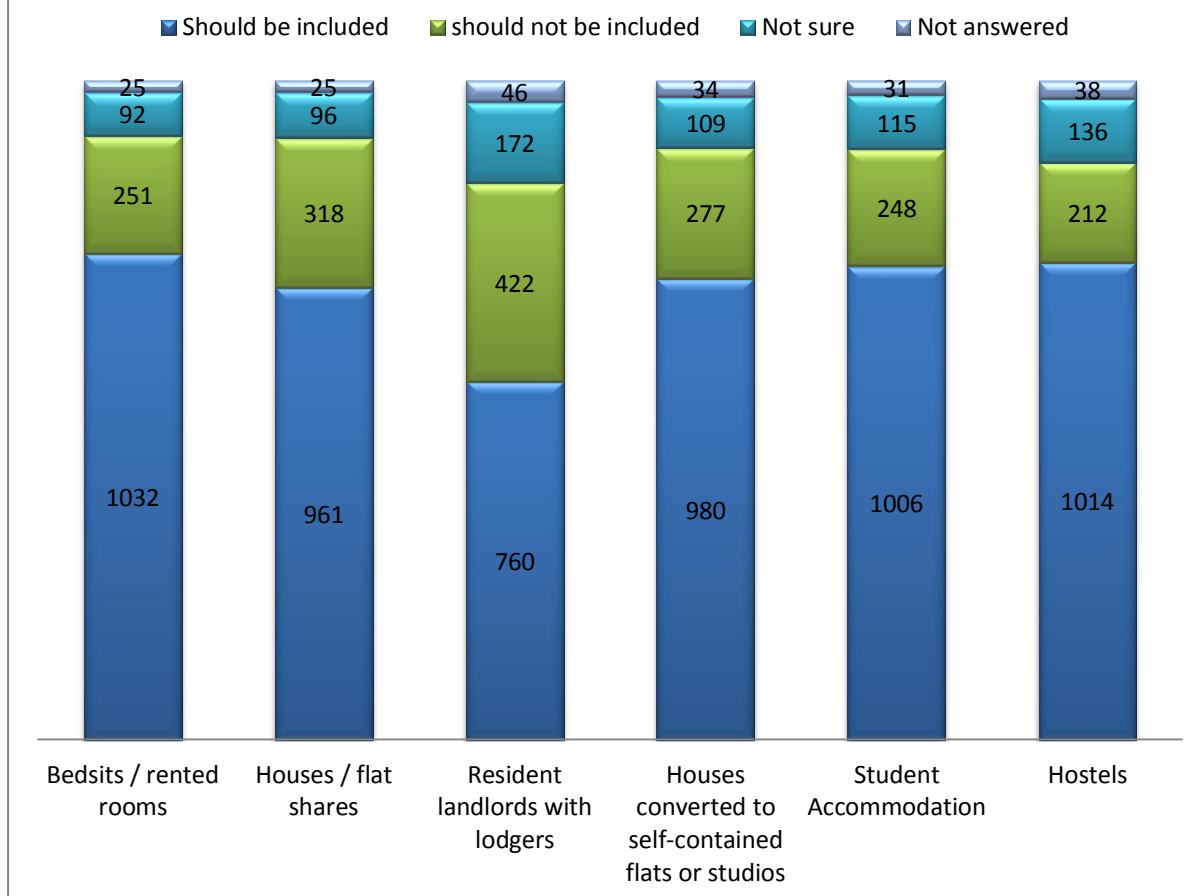
## Will the proposals improve the reputation of private renting?



### 6.7 What kinds of accommodation should be included in the scheme?

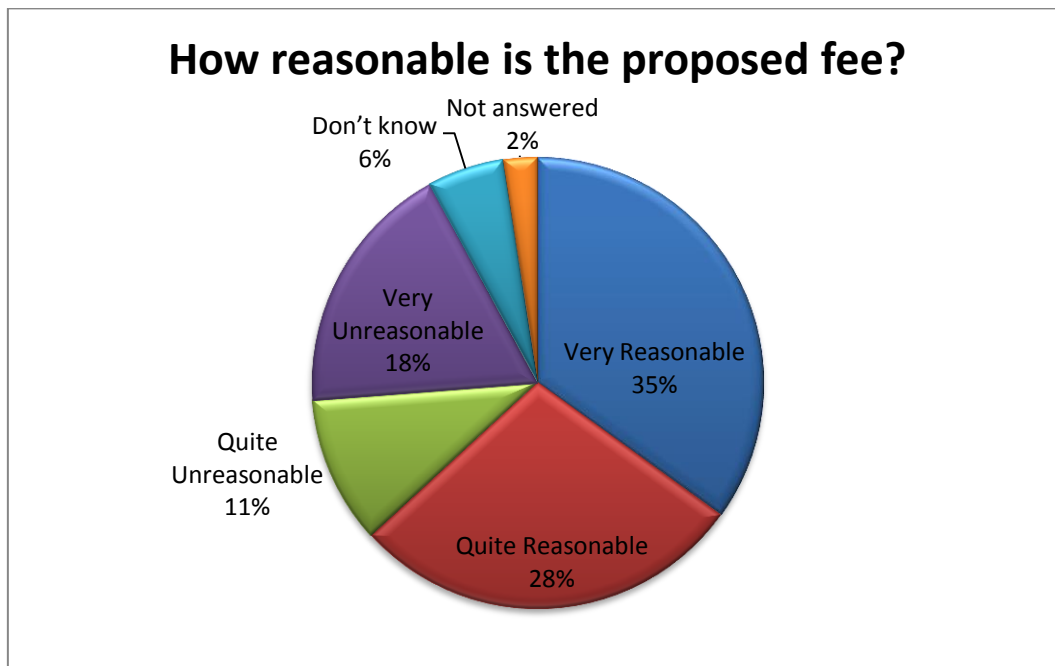
Type of accommodation	Should be included		Should not be included		Not sure		Not answered	
	Responses	%	Responses	%	Responses	%	Responses	%
Bedsits / rented rooms	1032	73.7%	251	17.9%	92	6.6%	25	1.8%
Houses / flat shares	961	68.6%	318	22.7%	96	6.9%	25	1.8%
Resident landlords with lodgers	760	54.3%	422	30.1%	172	12.3%	46	3.3%
Houses converted to self-contained flats or studios	980	70.0%	277	19.8%	109	7.8%	34	2.4%
Student Accommodation	1006	71.9%	248	17.7%	115	8.2%	31	2.2%
Hostels	1014	72.4%	212	15.1%	136	9.7%	38	2.7%

## Types of Accommodation



### 6.8 How reasonable do you think the proposed fee (starting at £450 in total for a five year licence) is?

	All	%	Landlords	%	Private tenants	%
<b>Very Reasonable</b>	489	34.9%	6	3.5%	183	47.3%
<b>Quite Reasonable</b>	396	28.3%	23	13.5%	114	29.5%
<b>Quite Unreasonable</b>	148	10.6%	35	20.5%	33	8.5%
<b>Very Unreasonable</b>	256	18.3%	104	60.8%	33	8.5%
<b>Don't know</b>	77	5.5%	1	0.6%	19	4.9%
<b>Not answered</b>	34	2.4%	2	1.2%	5	1.3%



*(NB: This data to be taken on advisement. 'Reasonableness' is a difficult word to assess. From some of the free text comments for example, it's clear that some respondents who felt the fee was too low answered 'very unreasonable' to this question, as did many who felt the fee was too high. 81% of landlords (139) felt the fee was quite or very unreasonable compared to only 29% of all other respondents. So excluding landlords, 70% (856) of respondents answered that the fee was quite or very reasonable.)*

## 7. Free Text Comments<sup>2</sup>

### 7.1 Recurring Comments

#### 7.1.1 Costs may be /will be passed to tenants: 88

These comments were made by both landlords and tenants, in some cases expressed as definitive certainty, in others as a concern where respondents were in favour of the scheme. One key element in the monitoring framework will be to ensure rent levels in HMOs are tracked to see if there is an impact higher than any overarching rent rises.

The costs have been kept as low as possible and as a result the fee is relatively low when compared to the other costs landlords incur managing their properties well. The proposed fee of £450 (in total over both elements of the fee, plus unit costs) covers a five-year period. Some landlords may use their existing rental incomes to cover the cost. For a three bed property, this would work out as £2.25 per week, or 75p per tenant. The borough average weekly rent for a three bed property is £600 per week. The costs for a similarly sized property coming under Islington's proposed licensing scheme, by way of comparison, would be £2.80 per week. Many landlords set market rental levels rather than looking at their costs and seeking to recoup them. Please also see the consideration in the LSE Report (Appendix 7) covering

<sup>2</sup> NB: many respondents made comments covering more than one of the aggregated areas. Many others provided no additional comments. Therefore the number of comments bears no relation numerically to the overall 1400 responses.

this issue. There is no evidence of increase in rent levels above standard increases in other boroughs that have introduced discretionary licensing.

### **7.1.2 Landlords should be held accountable / landlords should be more responsible / there is an unfair power balance between landlord and tenant – 77**

Comments covering these three slightly different areas have been aggregated as they cover a similar broad theme. The majority of these comments saw licensing as a useful way of helping protect tenants, but some expressed concern that the proposals did not go far enough. Some went on to comment that the PRS was in need of wider reform (see 7.1.20). Camden Council's PRS strategy is broadly in line with the view that the PRS is in need of increased regulation to protect tenants.

### **7.1.3 The proposal will improve conditions / protect tenants: 63**

Many of these comments went into detail regarding current or previous living situations for tenants in and around the borough. The primary goal of the licensing scheme is to improve conditions and this will be a key focus of the monitoring scheme.

### **7.1.4 The proposal will just raise revenue for the council: 59**

The fees cannot, by law, be used for councils to make profit, or be used towards anything other than the administration of the scheme. The exact Legal position in respect of licensing fees obtained through additional licensing has now been clarified by the recent Supreme Court judgement in R (on the application of Hemming (t/a/ Simply Pleasure Ltd and others) v. Westminster City Council [2015] UKSC 25. In his judgement, Lord Mance confirmed as lawful applications for licenses made on terms that the applicant must pay;

- i. On making the application, the costs of the authorisation procedures and formalities, and
- ii. On the application being successful, a further fee to cover the costs of the running and enforcement of the licensing scheme

This split has been reflected in the construction of the fee.

### **7.1.5 Comments seeking to ensure enforcement of the regulations is robust: 47**

Some of these comments were linking to 7.1.2 or 7.1.9 indicating concern that rogue or criminal landlords may evade the measures in the scheme. Others were more linked to 7.1.4 and expressed concern about the efficiency of the authority, the resources outlined and the willingness to take action.

Prosecuting the few rogue or criminal landlords operating in Camden will become easier through a licensing framework. A monitoring framework has been drafted to make an ongoing assessment of the impact of the scheme.



Dedicated enforcement officers will pursue those landlords that do not come forward for a licence and those that fail to comply with the licence conditions. As all properties will be inspected before the licence is issued the licensing process will ensure that properties either already meet the minimum standards, or will be improved within reasonable timescales. Properties will be risk assessed, and if there are significant hazards in the property these will be dealt with by an enforcement team to take action under part 1 of the Act (housing, health and safety rating system).

#### **7.1.6 The scheme will result in too much bureaucracy: 41**

Currently, officers are working to create efficient business processes to limit excess bureaucracy and keep costs down.

#### **7.1.7 Fee too low: 35**

Many of these comments focused on the already high rents and how respondents felt that some landlords could afford more.

In the council view, and legally, the fee is set on the basis of the cost of the administration of the scheme. The aim is actually to keep the costs low, the goal being improved standards in the HMOs.

#### **7.1.8 Non-specific comments in favour of the proposals: 34**

These for example included comments solely consisting of 'great scheme' or 'please introduce this scheme'. These are noted.

#### **7.1.9 The scheme may / will punish good landlords and rogue landlords may / will not be impacted: 33**

Responsible landlords tell us that good management of properties is the best way to prevent poor standards and conditions. A licence can be something for landlords to be proud of (see 7.1.37), acting as a stamp of approval on their properties and a signal to tenants that they are responsible and meeting minimum standards. We would encourage people to report landlords who evade licensing and take robust enforcement action against poor landlords, including prosecutions and financial penalties. The worst landlords will be forced out of the sector if they cannot make sure a good management system is put in place and meet the minimum requirements of the scheme. The goal will be for licensing to be light touch for good landlords and to focus on the bad.

#### **7.1.10 The fee too high: 27**

See 7.1.4

#### **7.1.11 Camden should work on its own stock first: 26**

These comments focused on encouraging the council to address conditions in its own stock. We have previously stated our intention to become a better

landlord ourselves alongside working with private landlords to improve standards in the private rented sector. Camden Council is the biggest landlord in the borough, responsible for some 33,000 homes. This year, we have refurbished 3,000 of those homes under our Better Homes programme, replacing and repairing kitchens, bathrooms and windows. Over the next five years, we will invest £197 million in internal and external works to over 13,000 of our homes. National figures also tell us that conditions in the private rented sector are poorer overall. In total 33% of private rented homes do not meet the Decent Homes Standard, compared to 15% of socially rented homes

#### **7.1.12 Camden should introduce rent control instead / in addition: 23**

These comments specifically advocated rent control of caps on rents. Interestingly, 16 of the 23 comments were received as part of the second stage of the survey, conducted from February to May 2015. We believe the increase may in part be because there was increased discussion of this measure in the run up to the election.

The council is not considering bringing in rent controls (and would not have the power to do so). However, we worked with London School of Economics (LSE) to produce a report on rent stabilisation looking at international evidence. We then surveyed landlords (through the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme) on their views and will be looking to develop a pilot group with those that said they were interested in the proposal.

#### **7.1.13 All properties/landlords should be licensed: 22**

According to our evidence base and the ongoing work of the Private Sector Housing Team, the worst conditions are found within HMOs.

#### **7.1.14 The scheme could / will cause a decrease in supply of PRS: 21**

Evidence from other authorities that have introduced licensing, such as Oxford, does not show large numbers of landlords leaving the market, or supply of HMOs decreasing. What it does show is standards improving, complaints about neighbourhood problems like noise, rubbish and antisocial behaviour decreasing, and the scheme receiving a positive reception from tenants, residents' groups and many responsible landlords. The rental market in Camden is thriving, with a third of all households now privately renting. Through our planning policies we already seek to protect HMOs as a cheaper source of accommodation, particularly for single young people, and will review the impact the scheme has on the market should it be introduced.

#### **7.1.15 Camden should use its existing powers: 24**

These comments encouraged the council to make full use of existing powers to address conditions and problems. However, the issues (standards and poor management within HMOs in Camden) cannot currently be addressed through our powers. While effective, the mandatory scheme does not cover all HMOs in the borough, and our evidence gathering indicates that bad conditions are not limited to HMOs covered by the mandatory scheme. The

current private sector housing service is primarily reactive i.e. complaint led. We know that many tenants are reluctant to complain about problems with their landlord or home because of the fear of eviction or rent rises. This can prevent us from targeting our limited resources at the worst properties. In addition, enforcement under the legislation that applies to property conditions (part 1 of the Housing Act 2004) can be resource intensive. Licensing will allow us to be more strategic in our approach, and will enable us to provide effective interventions in a much larger number of properties which are some of the worst in the private rented sector.

#### **7.1.16 Unclear / addressing issues beyond the scope of the scheme and broader PRS strategy: 18**

Issues raised in these comments included raising council tax instead or addressing immigration, or comments that made no substantive point (for example 'nothing').

#### **7.1.17 Tenants are being priced out (not due to licensing): 17**

The majority of these comments were in favour of licensing. Others were concerned the scheme did not go far enough. The council shares the concern about the impact of rising rents in Camden. This results in tenants putting up with poor conditions, and this one of the drivers at the heart of the conditions problem we currently have in some Camden HMOs which this scheme is designed to address, as part of a raft of strategic measures (please see our [Private Sector Housing Strategy](#)).

#### **7.1.18 The issue should be addressed nationally / across London: 17**

Some respondents were hopefully that other areas (especially surrounding boroughs) would follow suit, others felt no action should be taken unless it was on a national level. All were in favour of licensing as a concept.

Camden's Private Rented Sector Strategy includes several national 'calls for change' where Camden is campaigning to change national policy and legislation. Please see [the strategy](#) for further details.

#### **7.1.19 The council should ensure it works in partnership with landlords and tenants:19**

These comments encouraged the council to communicate with landlords and tenants, ensure the scheme (and other PRS strategy work) is fit for purpose for both groups.

The Council is committed to ensuring continued close working and communication with both groups. For example, we work in partnership with local tenants' groups, host the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme, and hold a regular landlords' forum.

#### **7.1.20 Licensing won't work on its own / licensing should be one element of a wider range of measures to reform the PRS: 15**

The council agrees – licensing is part of a suite of measures to work with the private rented sector, detailed in the Private Rented Sector Strategy (link in 7.1.18).

#### **7.1.21 The proposal will not /may not raise standards: 14**

Additional licensing creates a proactive, largely self-funding system to address conditions in all HMO properties in Camden. Compliance visits would no longer rely on tenants' complaints. A clear set of minimum standards would apply to all properties which will be easily understood by both tenants and landlords. In the survey 70% of the responses were in favour of licensing. The scheme will help the council's Private Sector Housing Team to work together with landlords to make sure that homes are safe and well managed, and enable officers to deal proactively with standards issues. We will be using robust monitoring to chart the impact of the scheme.

#### **7.1.22 The fee should be a percentage of rent charged or based on the size of the property: 17**

The fee is set on the basis of the cost of the administration of the scheme. The variable element of the fee is structured to reflect the size of the property and the number of properties, so large landlords will pay more.

#### **7.1.23 There should be some kind of payment plan (e.g. not the fee up front): 13**

The licence costs are frontloaded through inspection and administration, which is why the fee is to be paid up front. A payment plan would lead to additional costs and could cause the fee to rise. Camden will however be mindful of individual circumstances.

#### **7.1.24 Lack of clarity on what an HMO is: 13**

In addition to comments requesting additional clarity, this heading includes comments which plainly misunderstood the definition.

The legal definition of HMO (House in Multiple Occupation) is:

A house or flat occupied by three or more people who form more than one household. It includes:

- Buildings that consist of bedsit rooms where at least some of the facilities are shared (kitchen or bathroom)
- Buildings with multiple units of accommodation that all have their own exclusive facilities but which are not self-contained
- Buildings which contain a mixture of the above types of accommodation
- Shared houses
- Buildings converted into self-contained flats that don't comply with the Building Regulations 1991 and where less than two thirds of the flats are owner-occupied (these are known as section 257 HMOs)

This does not include single landlords who rent to one person. In the communications plan for engaging with landlords, tenants and residents on any scheme going forward, we will bear these comments in mind and ensure we are as clear as we can be about the definition.

#### **7.1.25 Letting agents should be licensed too/ instead: 12**

If a letting agent is the proposed licence holder or the manager of a property, then they will be covered by the licence – and will have to show they are ‘fit and proper’ and have adequate management arrangements in place.

#### **7.1.26 The evidence base is poor / more research needed: 13**

The evidence gathering exercise sought to understand conditions in HMOs and the PRS in Camden through a survey of conditions in this type of housing, and to gauge initial views on conditions. The full consultation has now received 1400 responses, with 70% being in favour, rising to 83% of private tenants in favour.

#### **7.1.27 Non-specific not in support of proposal (e.g. ‘I don’t support this’): 11**

Responses noted.

#### **7.1.27 Student accommodation should be exempt: 8**

Following the consultation and the feedback reviewed, a discount will now be offered to large scale student accommodation in certain circumstances:

- The provider must be able to show proof of Building Regulation approval contemporaneous with the build or conversion;
- The provider must be accredited under one of the ANUK/Unipol national codes of standards for purpose built accommodation;
- Detailed architects drawings of the building must be provided at the time of application. These must accurately show the room dimensions. Also the location of elements of an automatic fire detection system, including detectors, alarms, sounders, call points, control panels. Locations of emergency lighting and fire-fighting equipment should also be indicated;
- An up to date fire risk assessment must be provided.

The fee will be £5 per bed space across both parts of the fee, a reduction of £40 per unit.

#### **7.1.28 Camden should focus on other problems in the borough: 8**

A third of households in Camden live in privately rented homes. Everyone deserves a safe and decent place to call home and we can use our powers to improve standards in part of the rental market in the borough.

#### **7.1.29 Overcrowding should be addressed: 6**

The conditions include measures around permitted occupancy based on facilities and the size of rooms.

**7.1.30 Conditions are difficult to meet / there should be flexibility in the conditions: 6**

Following feedback (including these comments) many of the conditions have been clarified and some removed. Further specific points are considered below. Please see 5.4 above.

**7.1.31 Fee is the right level: 6**

Responses noted.

**7.1.32 There should be an exemption for live in landlords: 6**

Premises where a single owner lives on site and rents out a room to another person will not be part of the scheme.

**7.1.33 Licensing will help address the risk of retaliatory eviction / there is currently a risk of retaliatory eviction: 4**

In the current system, enforcement relies on tenant complaints. Through recent consultation with private tenants it is clear that retaliatory eviction occurs in Camden following complaints about conditions, and that tenants are frightened to complain for fear of repercussions, even with the recently introduced laws affording a degree of protection. Whilst some protection is afforded by provisions of the Deregulation Act it is unrealistic that all tenants in the private rented sector can benefit from this. Licensing removes the need for a complaint for conditions to be addressed

**7.1.34 What would happen if a property became an HMO at a later point / ceases to become an HMO: 4**

When the property becomes an HMO, the owner will have to apply for a licence at that point. If a property ceases to become an HMO, they will no longer require a licence. There will not be a refund process however if this occurs.

**7.1.33 Camden should build more homes instead / in addition: 4**

Under the Community Investment Programme, the Council is replacing 650 council homes and building 450 new council homes for people on the waiting list for the first time in a generation.

**7.1.34 The scheme should only be adopted if self-financing: 4**

The fee structure is designed to largely cover its own costs.

**7.1.35 Five years is too long: 3**

The statutory maximum period for an additional licensing scheme is five years and it is generally the case that local authorities issue a licence for this time. We will aim to inspect properties before a licence is granted, and relevant conditions will be attached to ensure the property meets the required standards. Works will have to be carried out within reasonable timescale and will be monitored to ensure compliance. If a property is fully compliant, further visits would not normally be carried out within the 5 year life of the licence. However, if complaints are received then these will be investigated. In exceptional cases, where we have serious concerns about the licensee, proposed management arrangements, or the condition of the property, we will consider issuing a licence for one year only. In such cases, the licence will only be renewed where there have been significant improvements.

#### **7.1.36 Reference made to a specific landlord operating in Islington: 3**

These responses, from the second phase of the survey, focused on one particular large scale landlord in Islington with whom many tenants have had problems. It is hoped the licensing will help to hold rogue landlords accountable in Camden.

#### **7.1.37 The scheme is good for landlords as it demonstrates the standard of their property: 3**

Responses noted.

#### **7.1.38 The council should focus on illegal subletting first: 3**

Where illegal subletting occurs in the private rented sector, licensing could be a useful tool in alerting landlords when it is happening. In terms of council stock, this is addressed separately.

#### **7.1.39 The scheme will protect vulnerable people: 3**

Responses noted.

#### **7.1.40 How will the scheme work for council leaseholders? 3**

Leaseholders renting out accommodation as an HMO will require a licence.

#### **7.1.41 Landlords should not be allowed to not let to Housing Benefit / DHSS tenants / discrimination occurs against HB tenants: 3**

Our focus is on encouraging and incentivising landlords to let to tenants drawn from these backgrounds. This work is done through our Private Sector Initiatives Team, including schemes like [Camden Homes](#), the social lettings agency.

#### **7.1.42 Any renewal fee should be less than the initial fee: 2**

The current fee is for a five-year licence, and the scheme will be reviewed at that point. If an additional scheme is proposed it will be consulted on again, including on the level of fees.

**7.1.43 The scheme should focus on where there are vulnerable people / where conditions are worst: 2**

According to the evidence collected, it is believed that conditions are worst in HMO properties across the borough. Many of these are homes for vulnerable individuals.

**7.1.44 Social stock (Council / Housing Association) should be licensed: 2**

Social housing is outside of the licensing regime.

**7.1.45 There could be / will be a risk of homeless due to tenants evicted because of overcrowding / while works take place: 2**

Camden residents in housing need can contact the local authority for advice and help. However, we do not anticipate a rise in eviction based on the licensing scheme. We will work closely with landlords and tenants to ensure that there is minimum disruption from works. The Council will not expect landlords to evict tenants if, for example, a room was too small to be used. We would expect tenants to be rehoused by the landlord if other options are available – and the room not to be re-let once the tenant moves out until any necessary works have been carried out.

**7.1.46 The scheme should not be extended: 2**

If the council were to consider a further designation, we would be legally required to conduct further consultation.

**7.1.47 The scheme will dissuade rogue landlords: 2**

Responses noted.

**7.1.48 What will the fee cover exactly: 2**

The fee is split into two parts, one to be paid on application and the other on receiving a licence. The initial 'application' fee would cover making the application, the costs of the authorisation procedures and formalities (including for example administration of the scheme through the IT system), and inspections. On the application being successful, a further fee to cover the costs of the running and enforcement of the licensing scheme will be levied.

**7.1.49 4 sockets in a room is too much: 2**



Environmental Health Officers on compliance visits regularly find sockets to be overloaded, in part due to the increased use of electrical equipment. This can cause electrical and fire hazards.

#### **7.1.50 Licensing should discourage holiday lets: 2**

Camden has worked with London Councils to lobby legislators to vote against the measure in the Deregulation Act, now passed, a clause of which takes away the ability of authorities through London planning law to enforce where holiday letting is occurring. The measures have been watered down, with a 90 day limit on short term letting now in place. The law changes came into place on the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015. The council will be seeking to ensure PRS properties are not being used entirely or permanently for short term letting.

#### **7.1.51 Cuts to welfare are the problem that needs addressing at the root of bad housing conditions: 2**

Response noted.

#### **7.1.52 People chose to live in improper accommodation to save money: 2**

Camden believes that everyone has the right to live in a decent home, including in private rented sector. The fact that some are having to compromise on conditions to afford to rent means that we should take more action to improve conditions, not less.

### **7.2 Individual comments not covered in 7.1 relevant to licensing:**

#### **7.2.1 Two points on ex Camden stock:**

- **Sinks are in separate rooms, contrary to the licence conditions**
- **The bedroom sizes and wiring in some ex Camden properties do not meet the licence conditions**

We take the reference to sinks to mean a wash hand basin (WHB). The provision of a WHB close to the toilet is a matter of personal hygiene and we will work with landlords to ensure this is provided.

The electrical installation within the licensed property should be safe, and it will be the responsibility of licensee to ensure this is the case.

Some local authority stock with more than one bedroom was designed for family living (with some bedrooms designed for children). If properties are occupied by a single family they will not be subject to licensing. We are aware that some bedrooms may fall below the minimum space standard and may not be suitable for occupation by adults sharing.

#### **7.2.2 Camden is merely 'bandwagon jumping' because of schemes brought into place by other authorities**

Officers have looked at the efficacy of schemes in other areas, but Camden's specific scheme is designed for the stock profile and housing conditions of our borough.

### **7.2.3 Landlords don't want to rent to students**

There are a number of landlords renting to students throughout the borough, on a large and small scale.

### **7.2.4 Keep local people involved in the process**

Through ongoing communications and engagement we aim to keep local people involved.

### **7.2.5 Should only apply to hostels and students**

The Council has evidence that problems within HMOs are much wider than these particular groups. In addition, a large proportion of hostel and student accommodation is exempt under the legislation.

### **7.2.6 Would a property accreditation scheme work better?**

Camden has administered the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme (LLAS) for 10 years. Although the scheme is the largest in the UK, only 700 Camden landlords are members. Nationally, data from Shelter shows that only 1% of landlords are members of an accreditation scheme. This is despite numerous publicity drives to increase membership. While we strongly support accreditation, and believe it will work well with licensing, it is clear other methods are needed to reach the majority of landlords. Accredited London Rental Standard landlords (this includes the LLAS scheme) will receive a discount, £95 taken off the initial £300 flat application fee.

### **7.2.7 Important to inspect before the licence is issued**

We agree, and aim to inspect before the licence is issued.

### **7.2.8 What is the definition of a 'good landlord'?**

This term is used widely to mean different things. When Camden refers to 'good landlords' in the Private Sector Housing Strategy, this means landlords who provide good quality homes and a good quality service for their tenants. In terms of licensing, there is a 'fit and proper' person test incorporated in the scheme. The fit and proper requirements are laid down in legislation and relate mainly to previous convictions and offences. Essentially we are looking to see that those responsible for operating the licence and managing the

property are of sufficient integrity and good character and they do not pose a threat to the health, safety or welfare of those occupying the property.

#### **7.2.9 Landlords with only one property should be exempt**

All private landlords owning HMO properties will be part of the scheme. For smaller landlords in particular, who are sometimes less sure of their responsibilities, licensing will give peace of mind that they are meeting appropriate standards in their accommodation.

#### **7.2.10 'I rent out three bedrooms to a mother and child with exclusive use of their bedrooms and to another person with exclusive use of her bedroom. I don't think that sort of arrangement should be licensed at all'**

Response noted. This would be included.

#### **7.2.11 The scheme involves a huge increase in properties covered**

Response noted

#### **7.2.12 All landlords should be UK based**

Landlords under the scheme based abroad will have to appoint a managing agent in the UK.

#### **7.2.13 Private tenants groups should have more power**

The Council works closely with the local private tenants groups.

#### **7.2.14 Would it be possible to wrap up licence with insurance purchase?**

Insurance will be separate.

#### **7.2.15 Highest charges should be levied on Right To Buy to discourage it**

The fee is designed to cover costs and will not be higher for Right to Buy leaseholders.

#### **7.2.16 Should the scheme be ran by an independent body (e.g. not Camden)**

According to the Housing Act 2004, the scheme has to be run by the local housing authority (in this case the London Borough of Camden).

#### **7.2.17 There should be signs outside licensed properties**

Camden does not believe this would result in an impact commensurate with the resource required.

**7.2.18 I live in an HMO currently subject to licensing and found the process unhelpful**

We appreciate the feedback on the process and would welcome more. Overall, the mandatory licensing scheme demonstrates that licensing is an effective tool in raising standards (220 properties had improvements made to meet minimum standards as part of that scheme).

**7.2.19 The landlord should provide a weekly cleaning service**

This is not within the responsibilities of landlords.

**7.2.20 The scheme will help deal with antisocial behaviour among private tenants**

Response noted.

**7.2.21 The scheme does not address antisocial behaviour among private tenants**

The prevention of antisocial behaviour forms part of the proposed licence conditions. Landlords are required to ensure there is a clause in the tenancy agreement prohibiting antisocial behaviour that causes a nuisance to other occupiers or neighbours and they should take all reasonable steps to prevent or reduce antisocial behaviour by occupiers or people visiting the property. They should also provide details of procedures to deal with antisocial behaviour when requested.

**7.2.22 No guarantees Camden will not increase the fee**

The fee is set to a level to cover the costs of the scheme and produce no surplus. We will have a review point as part of the scheme to ensure that this is the case.

**7.2.23 There should be emergency contact details for licence holders**

This condition is part of the scheme.

**7.2.24 How long does the licensee have to remedy issues raised?**

This will depend on the nature of the work needed. Most works will be given a timescale of between three and 12 months.

### **7.2.25 Better regulation at the build stage**

Our recently published Local Plan outlines our planning priorities, and attempts to ensure planning supports good quality design and development.

### **7.2.26 Increased fees for overseas landlords**

The fee is set to a level to cover the costs of the scheme and produce no surplus.

### **7.2.27 Poor conditions has a big impact on health**

Response noted.

### **7.2.28 Register of landlords should be made publicly available**

Under the 2004 Housing Act, we are required to maintain a publicly available register of licensees.

### **7.2.29 The fee will not be passed to tenants**

Response noted.

### **7.2.30 Landlords do not have the expertise to make these improvements**

Landlords have a responsibility to provide decent standard of accommodation.

### **7.2.31 The scheme will make Camden an attractive place to live**

Response noted

### **7.2.32 It is a good development to broaden the HMO definition**

Response noted

### **7.2.33 There should be more support to tenants seeking home ownership**

The key barrier for tenants seeking home ownership in Camden is cost (with average prices exceeding £700,000).

### **7.2.34 If Camden finds a problem and fail to act, could they be liable?**

Camden will be working to ensure that inspection processes and any follow up enforcement are high quality and do not leave problems unaddressed.

**7.2.35 For a house with remote unlocking, two locks on the exterior door is impractical**

This has been removed from the licence conditions following the consultation

**7.2.36 Thought should be given for maintaining the character of the area**

Response noted

**7.2.37 Any property where Housing Benefit is applied for should be inspected anyway**

Unfortunately this is not feasible.

**7.2.38 The scheme will result in good information on properties in Camden**

Response noted.

**7.2.39 London Rental Standards landlords should be heavily discounted**

We support the London Rental Standard and accreditation schemes generally, and the scheme includes a discount of £95 for London Rental Standard landlords.

**7.2.40 It would be good to include the need for policies and procedures for dealing with harassment and hate crime as this is often rife in HMOs particularly for LGBT people.**

We are hoping that close working with housing advice will assist any tenants who are victims of harassment and hate crime in HMOs. Enforcement action has previously been taken against landlords on these grounds. Additionally, the fit and proper person check will unearth any harassment or hate crime convictions.

**7.2.41 The scheme will help recover tax.**

Response noted.

**7.2.42 The scheme does not cover Property Guardians**

Housing meeting the definition of HMO would be covered – including for Property Guardians.

**7.2.43 The council website on private sector properties should be improved**

This is under review and we will have an improved website in use for the launch of the scheme if not before.

### **7.3 Comments not covered in 7.1 regarding the survey itself:**

#### **7.3.1 The survey is unwieldy**

Response noted

#### **7.3.2 What relevance do the equalities questions have? (5)**

Equality monitoring is where we ask people to provide information about their equality characteristics. We ask a series of questions to help us understand who our customers are. This helps us to ensure that we are able to meet their needs in our service delivery, and is used in our equality impact assessment (EIA) process to consider the impact on our customers during service changes or improvement.

#### **7.3.3 Please include Somali in the demographics**

We have passed on this feedback for future surveys.

#### **7.3.4 Have you consulted with leaseholders?**

We have consulted with right to buy leaseholders through a direct email, letters to those we know to be landlords and a presentation at the Leaseholders' Forum.

#### **7.3.5 Have you consulted with freeholders?**

To reach freeholders we have employed a wide range of engagement activity (see 3.2). We do not have an accessible list of freeholder contact details and so could not contact them directly as we could with Council leaseholders.

#### **7.3.6 Where is the perspective of landlords in the survey (2)**

In total, 12% of survey respondents were landlords (171 people). Their views have been considered and noted in the decision making process. Numerous engagement events (including a Landlords' Briefing with the Director of Housing and Adult Social care) were aimed specifically at them.

#### **7.3.7 Will the survey be made public?**

The survey is being published and the results circulated to all respondents where they have left usable contact details.

### **7.3.8 There is nothing in the consultation regarding the disadvantages of licensing**

The consultation reflected the findings of research rather than speculating on what might be disadvantages. The process has resulted in many views, some opposing licensing and some in support. Respondents have identified the disadvantages from their own perspective which will be reported to the Cabinet member for consideration.

## **8. Written Consultation Responses**

**8.1** In total, we received 25 additional responses via email and in hard copy relating to the consultation. Those that cover points addressed in section 7 were added to the numbers against each point. It is worth noting that three (received respectively from the British Property Federation, Unipol and iQ Student Accommodation) were received specifically highlighting the different needs of Large Scale Student Accommodation. As a result of these responses, we have amended the proposed scheme to include a discount for this sort of accommodation (a £5 unit cost split across the two parts of the fee compared to a £45 unit cost) where it meets certain criteria.

**8.2** There were some organisational responses that require a bespoke response. These are:

- Residential Landlords' Association
- Shelter

### **8.3 Shelter**

#### **8.3.1 Written Response:**

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### **Introduction**

London has the UK's largest private rental population. A quarter of Londoners now rent privately. By 2020 this is projected to be more than one in three. The largest renter populations are in Central and Inner boroughs. 80 per cent of London PRS heads of household are working, 9 per cent in part time work, 15 per cent self-employed. Around 30 per cent are in receipt of Housing Benefit. London has the highest rate of working Housing Benefit at around a third of claimants.<sup>3</sup>

Thirty per cent of London's renters are families, many of whom want to put down roots in their community, but find themselves trapped in a spiral of rent increases and unstable short term contracts. In an overheated market where the demand for homes is high, London's renters often lack the consumer bargaining power to negotiate for better conditions and good management of their homes. Conversely, landlords lack the financial incentives to improve poor conditions, and in a relatively unprofessionalised market often do not understand their rights and responsibilities.

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<sup>3</sup> Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census



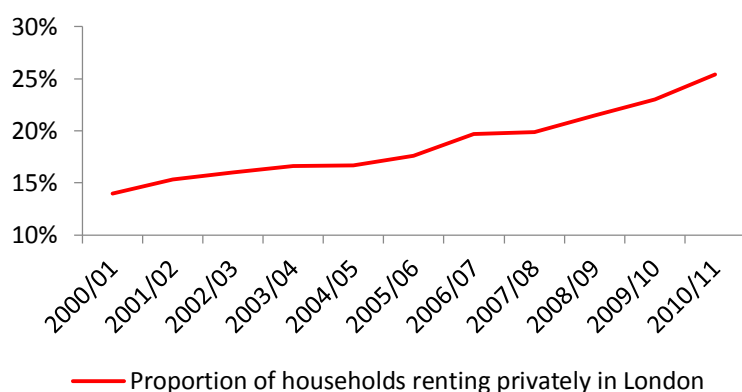
Given the dramatic expansion of the sector and the increasing interaction between local authorities and private landlords local government should take a more strategic approach to ensuring the sector is fit for purpose. This is why Shelter supports the London Borough of Camden's proposals to introduce an additional licensing scheme. Crucially, licensing helps local housing enforcement officers identify privately rented properties in their area, enabling them to develop proactive inspection and enforcement programmes. Licences often contain a higher set of standards than minimum legal requirements and can play an important role in improving the management and condition of homes in the private rented sector.

## Private renting in London: why does it matter?

### More and more renters

The number of people renting privately in the capital has grown rapidly over the last ten years. Between the 2001 and the 2011 Census, the proportion of London households renting privately increased by 62%. This compares to an 18% drop in the proportion of households buying with a mortgage and an 8% drop in the proportion of social renters.<sup>4</sup>

Growth of private renting in London (2000/01 - 2010/11)<sup>5</sup>



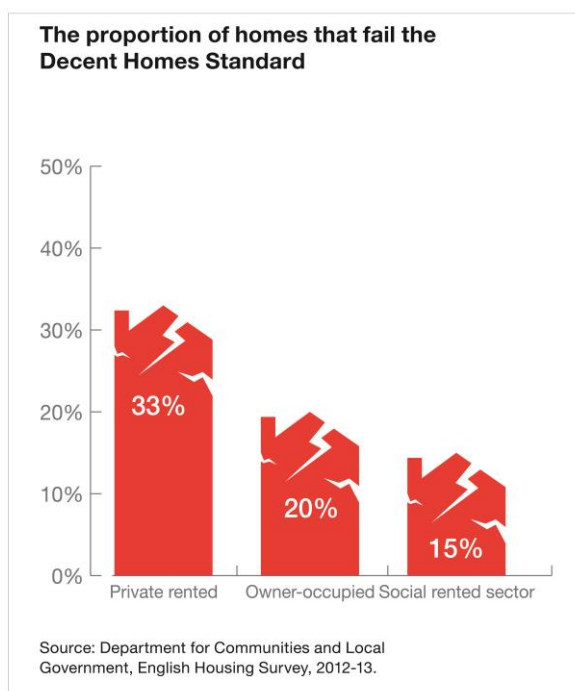
### Poor conditions

Conditions in the private rented sector are worse than in any other form of tenure. Thirty-three per cent of private rented homes fail to meet the government's Decent Homes Standard, compared to 20% of owner occupied homes and 15% in the social rented sector.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Office for National Statistics, 2011 Census

<sup>5</sup> (2000/01 – 2007/08) [S135 Survey of English Housing](#), DCLG; (2008/09 – 2010/11) [FA1121 English Housing Survey](#), DCLG

<sup>6</sup> DCLG, English Housing Survey 2012-13 Table 12: Non-decent homes by tenure, 2006 – 2012, (February 2014)



A third of private rented homes fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard.

Our research has shown that 67% of London renters have experienced at least one of the following problems in past 12 months: damp, mould, leaking roofs or windows, electrical hazards, animal infestations and gas leaks.<sup>7</sup>

The imbalance between the demand and supply of homes in privately rented homes means that market forces alone fail to ensure that homes are let in a decent condition. Renters often lack the bargaining power that they exercise as consumers of other goods and services. In most areas, renters are acutely aware that they are easily replaceable. In London, England's highest demand market, 40% of renters worried that their landlords would not keep the accommodation in good order.<sup>8</sup> Conversely, a steady supply of renters and a confidence to continue to increase rents fails to provide landlords with financial incentives to improve conditions, despite having the means to do so.

Despite high levels of poor conditions, the numbers of renters reporting problems remains relatively low. This can in part be explained by renters' lack of awareness of their rights or low expectations, which are important and relevant factors. However, Shelter has long stressed that the main barrier to renters reporting (and one that would come into play even if renters possessed both higher expectations and awareness of their rights) is the lack of protection from retaliatory eviction or other forms of retaliatory action, such as landlord harassment. This fear must be recognised as a major barrier to renters bringing forward complaints about conditions or poor practice.

Our research has shown that:<sup>9</sup>

**renters fear retaliatory eviction.** 16% of renters in London have not asked for repairs to be carried out in their home, or challenged a rent increase, because they fear eviction.

**renters do suffer retaliatory eviction.** 7% of renters in London have been evicted, served notice or threatened with eviction because they complained to their local council or their landlord about a problem in their home

There are some groups of renters in London where retaliatory eviction and the threat of it is more prevalent:<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> YouGov 2014, base 4544 private renting adults. Jointly commissioned by Shelter and British Gas.

<sup>8</sup> YouGov 2011, base: 541 private renting GB adults

<sup>9</sup> YouGov 2014, base 4544 private renting adults. Jointly commissioned by Shelter and British Gas.

<sup>10</sup> YouGov 2014, base 4544 private renting adults. Jointly commissioned by Shelter and British Gas.

- 14% for London families
- 17% for London BME households

### **Licensing of privately rented homes.**

There is very little evidence to suggest that voluntary schemes, such as accreditation are successful in improving conditions in the sector. Our YouGov survey of 1064 landlords polled found that only 5% of landlords are members of an accreditation scheme.<sup>11</sup> This figure increases to 16% for landlords surveyed who own five or more properties and to 16% of landlords who consider renting to be their fulltime or main job.<sup>12</sup> It is arguably these groups of landlords who are already the most professional.

In an overheated market landlords are confident of a steady supply of renters and regular rent increases, there are very few incentives for landlords to join voluntary accreditation schemes. Despite the fact that 71% of private renters in London would prefer to rent from an accredited landlord, where competition for homes is fierce renters are unlikely be able to choose to.<sup>13</sup>

The failure of accreditation highlights the limited scope for voluntary approaches to improve conditions throughout the sector and the need for increased regulation.

### **Shelter strongly supports the local licensing of privately rented homes**

#### **Increased data on landlords and the stock they own.**

Unless local authorities run landlord licensing schemes, they hold very little information on stock in their area and few renters make the authority aware of their whereabouts. The amount of centralised, national data on landlords and private rented homes is even more limited. This lack of information makes it even harder for under-resourced local authorities to identify homes in poor conditions and use their powers to improve stock. Data gathered through an additional licensing scheme would enable the local authority to take a more strategic approach to proactively inspecting properties.

Increased data gathered through licensing schemes can help local authorities to recuperate unpaid council tax. Following the introduction of borough-wide licensing in Newham, the council has recuperated £390,000 in unpaid council tax.<sup>14</sup>

#### **Improving conditions and management in the sector**

Licensing helps local housing standards enforcement officers identify privately rented properties in their area, enabling them to develop proactive inspection and enforcement programmes. This is especially important at a time when local authorities are facing budget cuts and environmental health teams are often under resourced.

Licences often contain a higher set of standards than minimum legal requirements. For example licence conditions often include: issuing renters with a written tenancy agreement, proof of electrical safety checks and regular property inspections.

#### **Licensing as a tool for prosecution of rogue landlords.**

By serving notices under the Housing Act 2004, and bringing prosecutions where these are not complied with, local authorities can send a strong message to all landlords that poor conditions and practices will not be tolerated. Authorities have reported to us that that prosecuting through the HHSRS is extremely cumbersome; rests on huge amounts of paperwork; and regularly allows landlords to slip through loop holes and take advantage of the appeals system. Licensing allows easier prosecution of landlords who persistently let poor standard accommodation. When complaints are received, the first response is to check whether the landlord is registered. If not, the authority can impose much larger fines for non-compliance with licensing, and then follow up the other complaints.

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<sup>11</sup> YouGov 2013, base 1,064 UK private landlords. Jointly commissioned by Shelter and British Gas.

<sup>12</sup> YouGov 2013, base 1,064 UK private landlords. Jointly commissioned by Shelter and British Gas.

<sup>13</sup> YouGov 2014, base 4544 private renting English adults. Jointly commissioned by Shelter and British Gas

<sup>14</sup> London Borough of Newham, *Property Licensing Enforcement Update*, January 2013-May 2014

In Newham, there now over 32,000 properties licensed and the council have carried out over 1,500 inspections, while taking a light touch approach to those running a professional operation. This has resulted in over 300 prosecutions and 15 of the borough's worst landlords being banned.

### **Supporting amateur and accidental landlords**

Ill-informed amateur and accidental landlords are far more numerous than rogues - and can be as dangerous for renters. Our landlord survey found that 27% of landlords asked could be described as accidental landlords, who have either inherited or couldn't sell a property, and end up letting it out.<sup>15</sup> Individual landlords who own a single investment property dominate the market. More than three-quarters (78%) of all landlords own a single rental property.<sup>16</sup> Our research shows that only 5% of landlords surveyed regard letting properties as their main or full-time job.<sup>17</sup>

Requiring contact information for private landlords in their area allows local housing authorities to offer services to improve their practice, such as regular information updates, training courses, forums and signposting to local statutory and voluntary services. Licensing, therefore, is an important tool to improve the sector, not only to deal with landlords who deliberately exploit renters, but for the large numbers of amateur and accidental landlords who are unsure of their responsibilities.

Burnley Council first introduced a selective licensing scheme in 2007, which has now been extended. Educating both landlords and tenants about how to improve standards in the sector has been an important part of licensing. It is conditional that licensed landlords attend a landlord development day. This course is run by the National Landlords Association and focuses on starting, ending, and managing a tenancy. It covers both legislation and best practice.

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### **8.3.2 Detail of response noted.**

## **8.4 Residential Landlords' Association Response (summary of key points)**

### **8.4.1 The fee structure and the projected budget is contrary to the European Services Directives and the ruling of the *Hemming (t/a Simply Pleasure) Limited v Westminster City Council* Court of Appeal case**

We have checked our proposed fee structure against legal precedents. See section 9 in the main report. In line with the recent Supreme Court judgement, the fee will be split over two parts, an initial application fee on application and a further licence fee when the licence is received. See Appendix 4.

### **8.4.2 Concern over the preliminary consultation evidence gathering (lack of budget detail, scope of previous consultation, insufficient evidence, evidence document is too long)**

The initial evidence gathering took a small scale look at views and opinions in the sector to look options for licensing. The full consultation has now taken place with 1400 responses. The street survey of HMOs (conducted by Environmental Health Officers) provides us with good quality evidence on management and physical conditions in HMOs. We provided the extensive evidence document (Appendix 3) to ensure that respondents had the information necessary to inform their views.

### **8.4.3 What will happen after the five year period?**

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<sup>15</sup> YouGov 2014, base 4544 private renting English adults. Jointly commissioned by Shelter and British Gas

<sup>16</sup> DCLG *Private Landlord Survey* (2010)

<sup>17</sup> YouGov 2013, base 1,064 UK private landlords. Jointly commissioned by Shelter and British Gas

We will have conducted assessments on the efficacy of the scheme and could either make a further designation or the scheme would cease to be in effect.

#### **8.4.4 Considerable resource (above the level of the fee) will be required to run the scheme**

We have based the fee on the projected costs of running the scheme.

#### **8.4.5 Cost will be passed to tenants**

See response to 7.1.1

#### **8.4.6 Voluntary Accreditation Schemes (including LLAS) or area management schemes would be a better alternative**

See response to 7.2.6

#### **8.4.7 What has been the outcome of the mandatory HMO licensing scheme?**

The mandatory HMO licensing scheme has acted as a pilot to demonstrate that licensing positively impacts on conditions.

Properties which have been fully processed have been brought up to the Council's standards and are compliant with conditions, in some instances landlords have been given varying timescales to comply. In some instances layout have been altered and room sizes increased. In a few cases rooms have been taken out of use and converted into other uses such as additional shared kitchens or bathrooms. Larger living spaces are considered to permit residents to lead healthier lifestyles, especially where kitchen facilities have been enhanced to allow cooking and healthy eating. New landlords will come forward as their properties become subject to mandatory licensing

#### **8.4.8 How will the scheme be monitored?**

A monitoring framework has been drafted and will continue to be refined to be in place for the launch of the scheme in December 2015.

#### **8.4.9 Concern over inclusion of s257 HMOs and impact on homeowners**

Based on this feedback, we have amended the conditions so that only those units controlled by the freeholder and the common parts would be included in the scheme, to reduce impact on home owners.

#### **8.4.10 How do the licensing proposals link in with Camden's overall housing strategy, does it form a coordinated approach with other initiatives impacting the Private Rented Sector?**

Yes. The evidence gathering process into licensing began under the 'Better Homes for Private Tenants' aim of the Private Sector Housing Strategy. Please see also the [Cabinet Report](#) 'Additional HMO Landlord Licensing'

which reviewed the progress against the first year of the strategy. Also see responses above on in pt 7 and the [Private Sector Housing Strategy](#) itself.

#### **8.4.11 Specific points on conditions (italics quoted from RLA submission directly)**

- *Condition 9 (deposit scheme) – this condition does not deal with the management of the premises and informing the tenant is already a requirement of the already over bureaucratic rent deposit schemes. Substantial penalties already exist for landlords who fail to follow the procedure and it is unreasonable to include in the licence conditions.*

On the basis of the submission, we have removed this condition. Please see Appendix 1. However, the Council will work closely with trading standards to ensure deposits are dealt with appropriately in all PRS housing.

- *Condition 11 (ASB procedures) - this is a vague requirement and we would request that an example of what would be expected be provided to the Council be posted online so landlords affected by this requirement can see what would be required.*

The condition stands, but will we ensure care is taken in communicating the requirement.

- *Condition 12 (ban on ASB in agreement) – this may be a breach of the consumer protection legislation as a probation of causing annoyance may be an unfair term.*

We have taken legal advice on this matter and do not believe it is an unfair term. On the basis of the submission, we have clarified this condition. Please see Appendix 1.

- *Condition 14 (submit gas safety) – we would question whether this is necessary as it creates unnecessary additional bureaucracy for the landlord and the Council. We would prefer the option that if requested in writing it be provided.*

Gas safety is a crucial part of the licensing scheme and the requirement is not onerous. The condition stands.

- *Condition 15 (electrical inspection submission) - we would question whether this is necessary as it creates unnecessary bureaucracy for the landlord and the Council. We would prefer the option that if requested in writing it be provided.*

Electrical safety is a crucial part of the licensing scheme and the requirement is not onerous. The condition stands.

- *Condition 16 (notify if works needed for gas or electrical works) - this creates unnecessary bureaucracy for the landlord and the Council. What would happen if works needed to be carried out urgently – failure to notify the Council immediately (out of hours) would be a breach of the licence conditions.*

On the basis of the submission, we have removed this condition. Please see Appendix 1.

- *Condition 19 (furniture safety) – what is intended to be an “appliance” in this clause and in what circumstances would this clause be used.*

On the basis of the submission, we have clarified this condition. Please see Appendix 1.

- *Condition 21 (pests) – we would question the liability of the landlord for pests which may have been introduced by the tenant and for which the landlord would have no control.*

On the basis of the submission, we have clarified this condition. Please see Appendix 1.

- *Condition 22 (security) – we strongly believe that security should be dealt with under HHSRS not as a licence condition. The use of mortice locks on room doors is of concern in bedsit accommodation as tenants frequently lock themselves out with resultant damage and disturbance.*

On the basis of the submission, we have removed this condition. Please see Appendix 1.

- *Condition 25 (access) – the landlord cannot arrange for access “to be granted” as the landlord does not have a power of entry against the wishes of the occupants within their own accommodation. They can only grant access to the parts, if any, over which they have control. This clause would mean that if a tenant refused access the landlord would breach the condition*

On the basis of the submission, we have clarified this condition. Please see Appendix 1.

- *Condition “Notes c” - (additional action to deal with hazards etc.) we do not believe that a licence should be granted without the premises inspected for BOTH licence requirements and HHSRS. Unnecessary work could be carried*

*out and the licence holder and tenants could be put to additional expense, disturbance and effort if works are dealt with on a piece meal basis. .*

Properties will be risk assessed in terms of hazards, and referred to a housing enforcement team where necessary (who will take action under part 1 of the Act). Clearly well managed properties will be free from significant hazards and therefore this should not have an impact on better landlords. The condition stands.

## **9. Landlords' Briefing Meeting 07/11/14**

### **9.1 Attendees**

Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors – Georgiana Hibbard  
Unite – Alison Hastings

Residential Landlord Association – Dave Princep

Southern Landlord Association – Peter Littlewood

Association of Residential Letting Agents – Peter Savage

National Landlord Organisation – Gavin Dick and Richard Blanco

British Property Federation – Ian Fletcher

From Camden:

- Director of Housing and Adult Social Care – Rosemary Westbrook
- Private Sector Housing Team Manager – Andrew Woolmer
- Environmental Health Officer – Janet Wade
- Senior Policy Officer – Eloise Shepherd

### **9.2 Points raised in response to a presentation of the proposals:**

**9.2.1 How does the discount for accredited landlords work? Will the service and processing for accredited landlords cost less? If not, will the General Fund subsidise the discount? (Reference made to “R (Hemming and others) v Westminster” which lays down the principle that licensing fees can be used only for the cost of the scheme, with no surplus, and cannot be used for enforcement action).**

See 8.4.1 above. The discount for accredited landlords takes into account likely compliance as a result of being accredited and so reduced costs of administration.

**9.2.2 Will Camden be outsourcing fit and proper person checks? Scotland has a cheaper process for this.**

We will investigate this further and use the most efficient (including cost) method for the checks.

**9.2.3 The scheme will punish good landlords without targeting rogue landlords**



See 7.1.9

#### **9.2.4 The scheme is too broad, not targeted enough**

The scheme will impact on smaller HMOs. We know from our evidence base that HMOs are where there are particular problems with conditions in Camden (see Appendix 3). We will be monitoring the scheme throughout its life to measure the impact it is having.

#### **9.2.5 Are there tax incentives for accreditation?**

There are not currently particular tax incentives for landlord accreditation.

#### **9.2.6 In other boroughs – 21,000 properties in Newham, only 17 landlords found not to be fit and proper**

The figure regarding 'fit and proper' landlords is only a small part of the overall picture. The current situation at Newham is that 22 landlords have been deemed not fit and proper – but that this affects 200 properties. However, nearly 1,000 other landlords have been deemed 'a cause for concern' and have been put on one year licences. These landlords are then closely monitored to assess if there is any improvement in management before another licence is granted.

#### **9.2.7 Is Camden currently using its enforcement powers? Where are the prosecutions?**

Since April 2010, 24 enforcement cases have been heard by the courts or are scheduled to be heard by the courts. This does not include a number of cases commenced and subsequently withdrawn on acceptance of defendants' costs and / or compliance with requirements. In the financial year April 2014 to March 15, 12 prosecutions were referred to legal. In the same year 96 orders, applications for orders, and notices were made, 440 PRS properties were informally improved without recourse to the courts and one property was placed under a Full Management Order. Licensing actually makes addressing conditions through enforcement, including prosecution where necessary, easier.

#### **9.2.8 Where will the budget for enforcement come from?**

A fee would be charged for a licence and this has been calculated on the basis of the anticipated scheme costs. The fee is split into two parts, one to be paid on application and the other on receiving a licence. The initial 'application' fee would cover making the application, the costs of the authorisation procedures and formalities (including for example administration of the scheme through the IT system), and inspections. On the application

being successful, a further fee to cover the costs of the running and enforcement of the licensing scheme will be levied. The main duties of licensing staff will include raising awareness of the scheme, processing licence applications, inspecting and re inspecting properties against licence conditions to determine compliance. See Appendix 4 for further detail.

### **9.2.9 Is the scheme really necessary?**

Good quality HMOs can provide a decent and affordable place for Camden residents to live. With rising rents, an increasing number of renters are having to share properties in a variety of ways, for example shared flats and houses, bedsits and small studios. However, the Council is aware that this accommodation can be badly managed causing problems for the occupants as well as those living nearby. These issues cannot be fully addressed through the current mandatory licensing scheme or by using the enforcement and regulatory measures available to the Council. See Appendix 3.

### **9.2.10 The fee structure for student accommodation seems punitive (NB this is purpose built non university owned accommodation) especially as for a lot of large blocks (700 not uncommon) they already undertake rigorous rounds of inspection. Perhaps therefore there should be a lesser fee for student accommodation.**

On the basis of this and other feedback on a similar theme, we are reducing the fee for purpose built student accommodation by nearly 90%. See Appendix 4 and 5.2.2 for more details.

### **9.2.11 On online application process:**

- **Scheme will need to provide proof of application for legality**
- **Camden will need to make sure this is available to people who don't use the internet**

Comment noted – the implementation plan will include this.

### **9.2.12 On inspection before licensing:**

- **The resources will be very high – 5-8000 properties to inspect, difficult to quantify the time this will take**
- **Will the inspectors be properly qualified?**
- **In Barking and Dagenham this didn't work – 6 month wait list**
- **Difficulties with access**
- **Publicity – how will you manage volume?**
- **Will there be a cut-off date when landlords have to have a licence (or have applied for one)**

We are aware of the logistical challenge of inspections prior to issuing a licence, however we believe doing so will make the scheme more meaningful and give landlords a security of mind about conditions in their properties. Based on the comment around access and others received, we have clarified the point in the conditions on responsibility for allowing access for fairness and have increased the period of time after the application is received before landlords will receive their licence. All inspectors will be appropriately qualified.

#### **9.2.13 Fit and proper person checks:**

- **Self-certification, further checks if there is a case to investigate further**

We will make random detailed checks on a sampling basis; otherwise it will be by self-certification. Enforcement action will be considered if the information upon which self-certification is made is incorrect.

#### **9.2.14 Compliance – minimum standards**

- **Again, where inspections are in place (ANUK/Unipol) is this necessary?**
- **Would it be better to concentrate on certain areas**

On ANUK/Unipol, see response to 9.2.10. Whilst we acknowledge the benefits of being a ANUK/Unipol member, we are aware that not all properties are inspected as part of this process. Part of the requirements for membership is that local requirements will be met. We will monitor the rate of compliance and work closely with ANUK/Unipol in cases where problems arise. The evidence base demonstrates that in Camden there are no areas with particular clusters of problematic HMOs, instead they are situated throughout the borough.

#### **9.2.15 Evidence**

- **Concern about the strength of evidence, especially with regards to properties above shops**
- **Is three sharers too few?**

The evidence regarding the properties above shops is one element of a rich evidence base, which is fully included in Appendix 3. The Council made a positive decision based on the evidence to use the statutory definition of a HMO for licensing purposes.

#### **9.2.16 How will this fit with different policies proposed by parties for implementation after the election (e.g. National Landlords Register etc.)? Powers could be repealed, or national licensing brought in.**

If the scheme goes ahead, it will cover the subsequent five year period and go live in 2015. It is unlikely any repeal of powers will operate retrospectively. The changes brought in by government in March 2015 did not impact on this

scheme and the National Landlords Register is now not relevant following the election result.

**9.2.17 How will landlords' information be held? In Newham this has led to problems for Letting Agents having their clients 'poached' and also some problems with harassment. In Thanet the information is publically available only in hard copy.**

Camden is obliged to maintain a public register of licences granted. The form in which this happens is currently under discussion. We will bear this comment in mind in these discussions.

**9.2.18 Has Camden had reference to the Regulators' Code? Make sure Camden has due regard for the financial impact on businesses, not only through the fee.**

The scheme has been drawn up with reference to this code.

**9.2.19 Is an impact assessment/EIA being carried out?**

Please see Appendix 5. In addition, we will be undertaking ongoing monitoring to ensure we are achieving the desired impact and to see where the scheme can be improved.

**9.2.20 How will this cover rent to rent?**

However a property is let out, the licensing conditions will be the same. This includes a minimum occupancy number. Licensing could be a useful tool for landlords who are victims of illegal rent to rent as inspections will alert them to rent to rent activity. See response to 7.1.38 for further detail.

**9.2.21 This may negatively impact on large scale buy to rent investors. Landlords are leaving the sector because of licensing.**

Given the high rental prices in Camden, we do not believe the cost of licensing will impact on large scale buy to rent investors. Only those developing HMO properties will be impacted.

**9.2.22 Politicians are set on this course of action and won't listen to Landlords and Letting Agents.**

Changes to the proposed scheme have been made following the consultation process.

**10. Demography of responses (online surveys and community researchers' surveys only)**

**10.1** All participants in both phases of the online survey and in the community researchers' work were asked to provide details on their equalities characteristics. The primary goal of this work was to ensure that the survey reached all communities and groups in the borough and therefore presented a representative sample. The data as collected is below, compared, where possible, with the 2011 census data for the borough of Camden. The data demonstrates a wide and representative spectrum of individuals were reached by the survey, broadly in line with Camden's demographic breakdown.

## 10.2 Gender

Gender	Male	Female	Not answered	Prefer not to say
Number	614	698	18	70
% of total	44%	49.9%	1%	5%
Census proportions	49%	51.0%	n/a	n/a

## 10.3 Age

Age group	Number	% of total	Census proportions	(NB – age groups are not directly comparable)
Under 16	1	0.1%	0-4	6.0%
16-24	112	8.0%	5-15	10.1%
25-34	315	22.5%	16-29	26.6%
35-44	292	20.9%	30-44	27.0%
45-54	226	16.1%	45-59	15.2%
55-64	153	10.9%	60-74	10.1%
65-74	114	8.1%	75-89	4.5%
75-84	49	3.5%	90+	0.5%
85+	12	0.9%		
Prefer not to say	102	7.3%		
Not answered	24	1.7%		

## 10.4 Disability

Disability status	Number	% of total	Census Proportions (NB – groups are not directly comparable)
Disability	138	9.9%	Aged 16-64: day-to-day activities limited 8.4%
No disability	1094	78.1%	A lot 4.0%
Prefer not to say	111	7.9%	A little 4.4%
Not answered	57	4.1%	Not limited 64.6%

## 10.5 Ethnicity

<b>Ethnic Group</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>% of total</b>	<b>Census Proportions</b>
<b>Any other Asian or Asian British background</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
<b>Any other Black or Black British background</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>
<b>Any other ethnic group</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>
<b>Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>
<b>Any other white background</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>19.0%</b>
<b>Arab</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
<b>Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>5.7%</b>
<b>Asian or Asian British: Chinese</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>
<b>Asian or Asian British: Indian</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>
<b>Asian or Asian British: Pakistani</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
<b>Black or Black British: African</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>7.6%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>
<b>Black or Black British: Caribbean</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
<b>Mixed / multiple ethnic group: White and Asian</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>
<b>Mixed / multiple ethnic group: White and Black African</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>
<b>Mixed / multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>
<b>White: English/ Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British</b>	<b>545</b>	<b>38.9%</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>0.10%</b>
<b>White: Irish</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>3.20%</b>

Prefer not to say	147	10.5%	n/a
Not answered	31	2.2%	n/a

## 10.6 Dependents

Do you have dependents (under 16) living with you?	Number	% of total	Census Proportions
Yes	367	26.2%	22.1%
No	899	64.2%	77.9%
Prefer not to say	96	6.9%	n/a
Not answered	38	2.7%	n/a

## 10.7 Gender identity

Is your gender identity different to the sex you were assumed to be at birth?	Number	% of total	Census Proportions
Yes	96	6.9%	no data
No	1073	76.6%	
Prefer not to say	182	13.0%	
Not answered	49	3.5%	

## 10.8 Sexuality

Sexuality	Number	% of total	Census Proportions
Bisexual	11	0.8%	no data
Gay	48	3.4%	
Heterosexual / Straight	933	66.6%	
Lesbian	14	1.0%	
Prefer not to say	347	24.8%	
Not answered	47	3.4%	

## 10.9 Religion

Religion	Number	% of total	Census Proportions
Buddhist	30	2.1%	1.3%
Christian	413	29.5%	34.0%
Hindu	19	1.4%	1.4%
Jewish	31	2.2%	4.5%
Muslim	149	10.6%	12.1%

<b>No Religion / belief</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>27.0%</b>	<b>25.5%</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>
<b>Sikh</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>
<b>Prefer not to say</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>20.0%</b>	<b>20.5%</b>
<b>Not answered</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>na/</b>