

Selective Licensing

Gannow Audit 4 (Zone 5)

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Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Target Area	3
3	Back Streets.....	4
4	Back Yards.....	4
5	Disrepairs	5
6	Certification	7
7	Rented and not applied.....	8
8	Applied not yet licenced	8
9	Vacant properties.....	8
10	Follow Up	8

1 Introduction

On Thursday 25th May, the Selective Licensing Team conducted the 4th physical external audit of the Gannow designation. Prior to this, a desk top audit was completed checking the same properties are licenced and complying with conditions. Letters were sent to any non-licenced properties and licenced properties with any expired documentation such as Gas Safety Certificates and Electrical Installation Condition Reports.

Purpose of the audit:

The purpose of the external audits was to collect visual data including:

- State of the back streets (fly tipping etc).
- State of back yards of rented properties (correct waste disposal bins, cleanliness, and secure gates/walls).
- Visible defects /external house defects on rented properties.
- Internal inspection where there was evidence of disrepair, dissatisfaction or a check of smoke/carbon monoxide alarms was evident.
- Occupancy checks on vacant or non-licenced rented properties were identified from council tax records.
- Desktop checks were also made of Gas Safety Records, Electrical Installation Condition Reports and Energy Performance Ratings of the licenced properties

2 Target Area

Audit 4 Streets include – Adamson St, Wordsworth St, Gannow Lane (67 – 136), Dickson St, Woodbine Rd (14-60 evens) and Wren St (1-25).

These streets surround the Gannow Community Centre and has easy access to town and the M65 motorway, it is becoming an increasingly popular area for renting and HMO properties.

The average house sale prices in the area over the last 12 months;

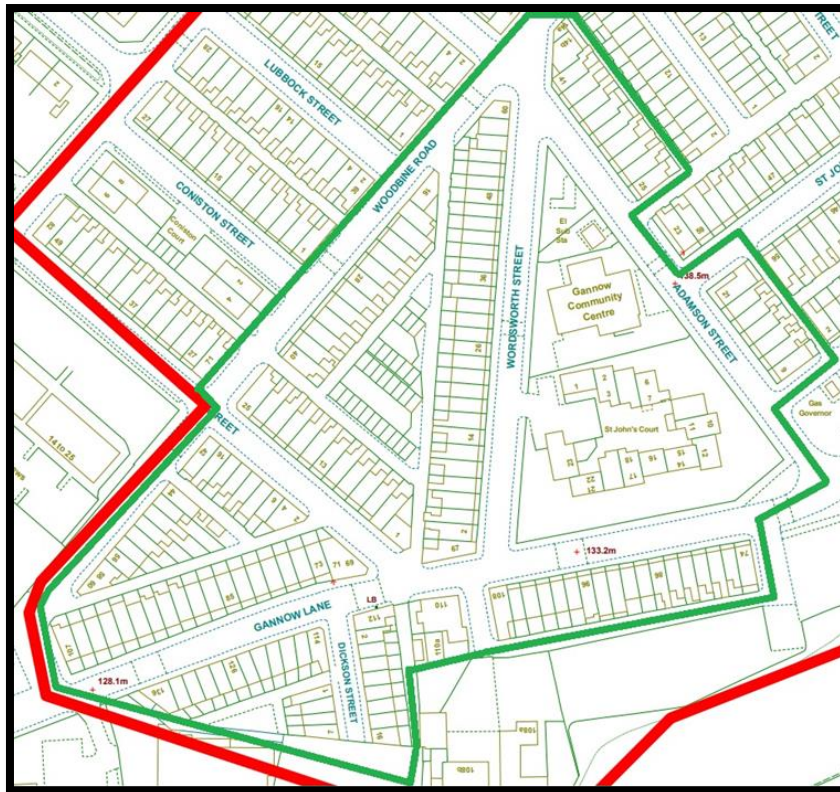
Adamson Street - £54,000

Gannow Lane - £48,000

Wordsworth Street - £50,000

Dickson Street - £50,000

Wren Street - £57,000



There are a total of 158 properties in this zone, 90 of which are rented and classed as 'Part-3' properties for licensing purposes (57%).

At the time of the audit:

- 83 (92%) of the Part 3 properties were already licenced.
- 4 (4.4%) had applied for licences but these applications are still ongoing.
- 2 (2.2%) properties had formal approved relative exemptions.
- 12 (8%) were owned by Registered Social Landlords (exempt from licencing regulations).
- 9 (10%) were vacant.
- 2 (2.2%) properties were rented but no application has been submitted.
- 0 licenced House in Multiple Occupation
- 43 (43%) were owner occupied properties.

3 Back Streets

The backstreets of this audit area were in a satisfactory condition. Most areas were clear with 2 reports being made to the councils Streetscene department which were cleared in the following few days. The main area with issues on the back street was the rear of Woodbine Road around the garages.

4 Back Yards

On the audit day, 11 Dirty Back Yards were found with black bags and household waste being stored and 1 yard with animal faeces. On our first follow up visit, 4 of these properties still had dirty back yards. The occupants and/or landlords were contacted again and on our second follow up 2 of these properties had dirty back yards. The property with the animal faeces had been cleared; the address will be monitored going forward by ourselves and Streetscene.

The below property had waste stored on the roof of the single storey extension. The landlord was notified of this, along with other disrepairs. On our first follow up the waste had been fully removed and other maintenance completed.



5 Disrepairs

In total, there were **64 disrepairs found across all properties** including Registered Social Landlord (RSL) properties.

Most of these disrepairs were minor, such as slipped roof tiles, vegetation in gutters and overgrown yards. Following the initial audit day, relevant owners and landlords were contacted via email, clearly listing any issues whilst also advising them of the follow-up audit and a deadline to complete the repairs. Whilst RSLs are outside the remit of selective licensing, any properties with disrepairs that belonged to RSL's were also contacted accordingly to make them aware of the issues.

On our first follow-up audit, **32 (50%) of these disrepairs were outstanding**. Following the re-visit, we then contacted the owners and landlords of the properties with outstanding disrepairs.

On the second follow-up visit audit **20 (31.25%) disrepairs were outstanding**. Some landlords/agents contacted us advising of delays in the disrepairs being dealt with due to access issues and waiting on sale completions. These properties will be monitored after the audit to confirm compliance.

One of the more urgent disrepairs included the property below, it had a lean-to shelter at the rear of the property which did not look structurally sound and was potentially hazardous to the occupant. We also could not tell if the door leading into the property was a secure back door. We requested that the lean-to structure be removed. Once the landlord had completed this work, we could see that the back door is a secure uPVC door.

16th May



4th July



The below property had a large bush growing in the front yard which was encroaching onto the neighbouring property and starting to block the door, we requested this to be cut back.

16th May



4th July



The below structure being used as a gate was unsuitable and did not function, making the yard easily accessible. The property has now been fitted with an appropriate gate to prevent unauthorised access and deter potential intruders. Also, putting waste bins out is now easier for the occupant. There are still some disrepairs outstanding at this property such as the vegetation on the roof and in gutters, but we are in contact with the managing agent who has ensured us the works will be complete.

16th May



26th July

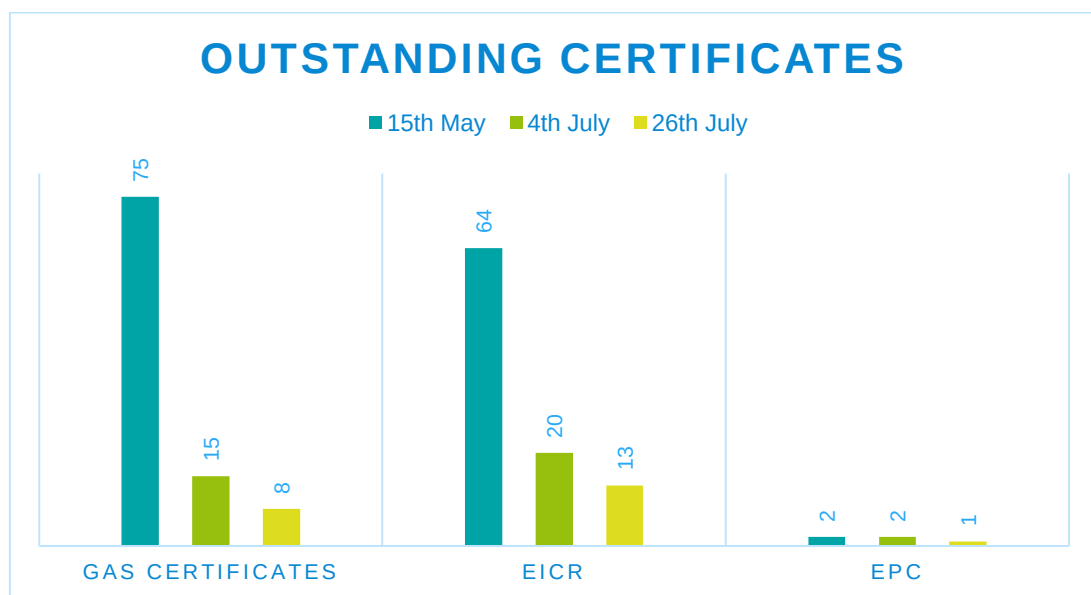


6 Certification

Selective Licensing Conditions state that the Licence Holder must produce to the authority a valid Gas Safety Certificate (GSC) obtained in respect of the Property within the last twelve months and an in date Electrical Condition Installation Report (EICR) since July 2020. Also, we must see that the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is in date and the rating is an E or above.

These documents must be provided by the licence holder for the licence to be granted and they are responsible for providing them to us again once expired.

At the time of the audit, 75 GSCs (Gas Safety Certificate) had expired and a new, in date certificate had not been supplied; to date there are **8 outstanding**. 64 applicants needed to provide an EICR which is down to **13 outstanding** and there were 2 expired EPC's; **1 is outstanding**. The proactive work during the audit ensured the amount of outstanding documentation was significantly reduced as shown in the graph below. All outstanding documentation will continue to be requested until we are at 100% compliance and those outstanding will be prioritised for future enforcement action.



7 Rented and not applied

There were 2 properties that were unlicensed with no applications at the start of the audit. By sending further correspondence to the owner and managing agents we now have an application for 1 of the properties which is currently being reviewed. We have also been in contact with the owner of the second property that has previously had the licence refused; he is taking the relevant steps to make sure the licence application is completed sufficiently and has advised an application will be submitted early August. If the application is not received within an appropriate time frame, the owner will be issued a civil penalty notice of up to £30,000 for failure to apply for a licence.

8 Applied not yet licenced

We had 4 applications submitted for this area that had not reached the licenced stage, throughout the time of the audit, all of these have been completed and now licenced. On completion of the new application that has been submitted during the audit and the application expected early August, the zone will be at 100% compliance for licensable properties.

9 Vacant properties

Although we cannot enforce any disrepairs to be dealt with on vacant properties, we still contacted owners where necessary to advise them of anything hazardous or in major disrepair.

On audit day, we found one property open to access; the owner and manager was emailed with no response. This was followed up again but soon after we became aware that people were accessing the property and causing Anti-Social Behaviour. We are currently working with the Empty Homes Team to enforce the property to be boarded to stop access, if this is not done by the week commencing 7th August a Community Protection Warning Notice will be issued.

10 Follow Up

Selective Licensing will continue to monitor the area along with Streetscene and Housing Standards Officers to make sure standards are met. Any properties which have not yet complied will be prioritised for full inspection and enforcement action.

	Adamson Street	Dickson Street	Gannow Lane	Wren Street	Woodbine Road	Wordsworth Street	Totals	04/07/2023	26/07/2023
Total Properties	17	12	56	20	23	30	158	158	158
Part 3	7	9	32	11	15	16	90	90	90
Licenced	6	9	30	10	13	15	83	87	87
Applied Not yet Licenced	1	0	1	1	1	0	4	0	1
Exempt RSL	0	2	8	0	2	0	12	12	12
Exempt Selective Licence	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	2	2
Owner Occupied	10	0	12	5	5	11	43	43	43
Vacant	0	1	1	4	1	2	9	10	10
Licenced HMO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not Applied	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	1
Gas Expired	6	8	30	7	13	11	75	10	8
EPC Rating below E	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EICR Not submitted	5	5	26	7	12	9	64	16	13
DBY (Dirty Back Yards) on Audit Day	1	2	3	2	2	1	11	4	2
Smoke Breach found on Audit Day	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Wheelie Bin	0	0	1	4	2	0	7	3	3
Disrepairs	2	10	19	13	12	8	64	32	20
Checks	17	12	56	20	23	30	158	158	158