

STONEYHOLME & DANESHUSE ZONE 4 AUDIT AUGUST 2023

Introduction

On 1st August members of the Selective Licensing Team carried out an external audit of the properties and neighbourhood in Zone 4 of the Selective Licensing area in Stoneyholme. In advance of the external checks a desk top audit was completed checking the status of all licenced properties in the area and their compliance with all their licence conditions. Reminder letters were sent to all landlords where they had not submitted current and valid gas safety certificates (GSC), electrical installation condition reports (EICR) or expired energy performance certificates (EPC's).

Purpose of the Audit

- To check and validate the current status of compliance with licence conditions with current and valid GSC's, EICR's & EPC's.
- To check the physical state of the back streets for the likes of environmental crime, fly tipping etc.
- To check the condition of the back yards to rented properties for the likes of waste disposal bin issues, cleanliness, and security (state of back gates/walls etc).
- To identify visible external defects to rented properties.
- To carry out internal inspections where there were concerns about disrepairs, tenant dissatisfaction or a check on compliance with Smoke Alarm/Carbon monoxide regulations.
- Occupancy checks on vacant or non-licenced properties identified via council tax records.

Target Area

Zone 4 area includes the following streets:

Canning Street Nos 59-63

Castle Street Nos 1-29

Clive Street Nos 5-70

Cromwell Street Nos 1-70

Folds Street Nos 1&4

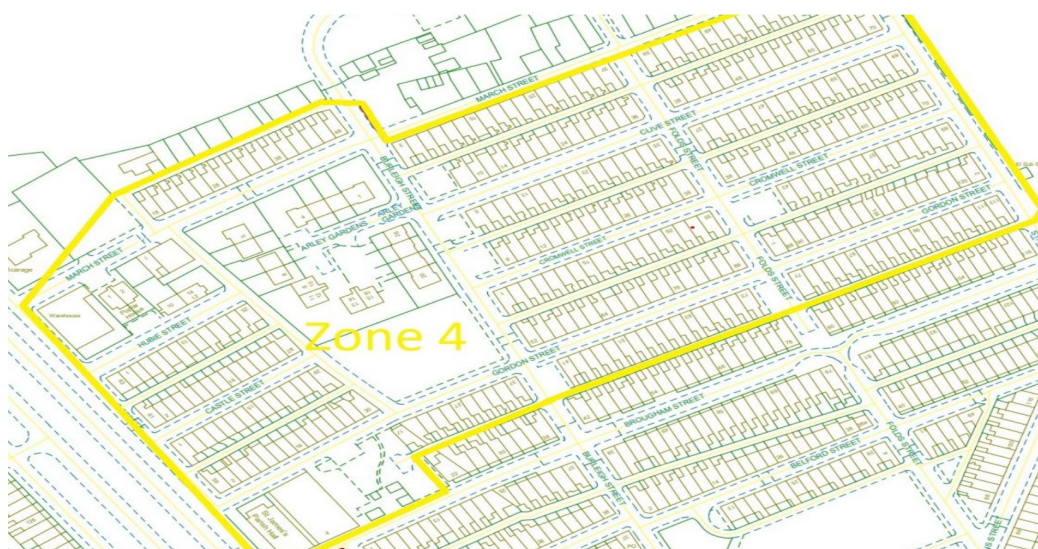
Gordon Street Nos 1 - 120

Hubie Street Nos 11/13 & 21

March Street Nos 1 1-71

Oswald Street No 2

Map of Zone 4



The summary table on Page 7 shows that there is a total of 305 properties in this zone -78 of which are privately rented properties and are classified as Part 3 properties for licencing purposes. This represents 26% of the properties in this area.

At the end of the audit:

- 66 (85%) of the licensable properties were already licensed.
- 4 (5.5%) of the Part 3 let properties with no applications have since applied and these are being processed.
- 19 (6.2%) of all properties had relative exemptions formally approved.
- 22 (7.2%) properties were owned by Registered Social Landlords who are exempt from Selective Licensing.
- 6 (1.9%) properties were vacant.
- 7 (%) of the properties still appear to be tenanted or occupied by family members) but no applications for licences or relative exemptions have yet been submitted in October 2023.
- 182 (60%) were Owner Occupied properties.

There are some notable observations about the private rented housing stock in this area:

- No landlord who has a licence uses a local managing agent to manage their property(ies) and they all manage the properties themselves.
- The majority of the landlords only have small portfolios of one or two properties and most live in the same Neighbourhood/Street.
- The number of properties let to family members is very high (6.2% of the total stock in the zone). This compares to 3.6% for Stoneyholme & Daneshouse designation and 1.9% for all properties in the 6 Selective Licencing areas.

Certifications

The Selective Licencing conditions state that the Licence Holder must produce to the authority a valid GSC every 12 months and an EICR every 5 years. In addition, they also need to ensure that there is a current EPC in date and with an Energy Efficiency rating of an E or above.

Whilst all these certificates were valid when the licences were granted, there was a high level of non-compliance with providing new certificates when the old ones expired.

GSCs

At the time of the audit 53 (82%) of the GSCs had expired and new, in date certificates had not been provided as required under the licencing conditions. After contacting each landlord, 47 have now supplied new GSCs and there are 6 still outstanding. Of the GSR's submitted the vast majority were dated after the date of request indicating that the management of arranging an annual inspection is not robust and these landlords only arranged for the required tests when prompted by the local authority.

EICRs

At the time of the audit 38 (57%) of the EICR's had not been provided or had expired. After contacting each landlord, 33 new EICR's have been provided with only 5 outstanding. Again, it is suggested that it was only due to the proactive action during the audit that ensured the required certification was completed and verified.

EPC's

All the EPCs were at a rating of E and above.

Certification Type	Position on 1 st August 2023	Position on 26 th October 2023	Outstanding
Gas Safety Record	12 (18%)	59 (91%)	6 (9%)
Electrical Installation Condition report	27 (58%)	60 (92%)	5 (8%)

All the remaining compliance certificates will continue to be requested until either 100% compliance is achieved, or non-complaint landlords will be prioritised for the service of Civil Penalties and the revocation of their licences.

Back Streets

Generally, the back streets in this audit area were in a satisfactory condition with minor evidence of fly tipping or vandalism on the date on the audit. Only two issues were reported to Streetscene, and these were cleared the following week.

Back Yards

There were two properties identified with dirty/untidy back yards in the audit area. One has since been cleared but one remains where the tenant has erected a lean-to structure that is both dangerous and unsightly. The landlord is in the process of treating this as a breach of the tenancy agreement as the tenant has erected this without permission.



Example of a poor back yard

Disrepairs

In total there were 29 external disrepairs identified at the outset of the audit. These disrepairs ranged from serious disrepair issues such as severe cracks to external surfaces to gutters blocked with debris. These have been categorized into the following categories:

Disrepair categories

Category	August 2023	October 2023
Red - Serious	8	2
Amber – Recommended	18	12
Green - Minor	3	2

All these items were photographed and e-mailed to the landlords to action and report back when the works have been completed.

Whilst most of the serious repairs have been completed some of the minor ones such as the condition of the external paintwork or minor gutter issues are still outstanding. Follow up visits have taken place throughout September and October to

check for compliance but there remains a number of repairs that still need actioning. Such matters are not enforceable though Selective Licencing conditions so if any serious issues remain these will be passed to the Housing Standards Team to action.

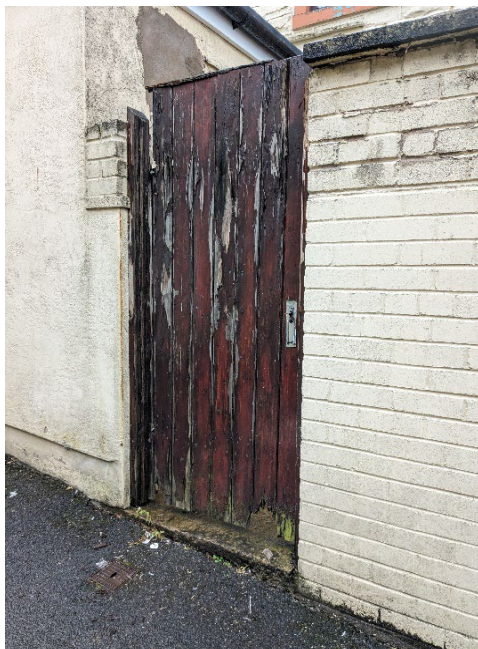
The properties below had a very poor back yard gates which were unsightly, dangerous and insecure. After notifying the landlords, new gates have been fitted.



August 2023



October 2023



August 2023



October 2023

Rented and not applied

There are still 7 properties in this area that remain unlicensed with no applications submitted. Despite endeavours to track down the owners and visiting the properties to speak to the tenants to obtain more information, these properties need to either be licensed or an exemption application be submitted. These properties are to be prioritised for further legal action during the final year of the designation for this area.

4 of the properties that had no applications have since submitted applications and these will be processed until they are either approved or rejected and actioned.

Vacant properties

There were only 6 vacant properties on the date of the audit which is less than 2% of the properties in the area.

Two of the vacant properties on Clive Street appear to be in the process of full refurbishment so we will check whether these are rented out in the future or are to be owner occupied properties.

The status of the remaining properties will continue to be monitored.

Follow Up Action

The list of properties that are licenced but with outstanding certificates will be monitored until 100% compliance is met, or Civil Penalties and revocation of the licences will be actioned.

The properties with outstanding repairs will be checked and pursued again for completion. Any serious outstanding items will be escalated to the Housing Standards Team.

The properties with no applications will be prioritised for the imposition of Civil Penalties for noncompliance with The Housing Act 2024 Part 3.

Paul Spencer

Project Assistant

9th November 2023

Summary Daneshouse 4 Audit August to October 2023

	Canning Street	Castle Street	Clive Street	Cromwell Street	Folds Street	Gordon Street	Hubie Street	March Street	Oswald Street	Total August 2023	Total October 2023
Total Properties	3	28	58	61	2	88	13	51	1	305	305
Part 3	2	5	12	21	0	23	1	13	1	78	78
Licenced	2	3	11	17	0	21	1	10	1	66	66
Applied Not yet Licenced	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Exempt RSL	0	9	1	2	0	4	4	2	0	22	22
Exempt Licences – Family Members	0	1	5	3	0	4	2	4	0	19	19
Owner Occupied/Business Premises	1	13	37	35	2	56	6	31	0	181	182
Vacant	0	1	2	1	0	1	0	1	0	6	6
Not Applied	0	1	2	3	0	2	0	3	0	11	7
Gas Outstanding 1/8/23	2	4	10	17	0	12	0	8	0	53	6
EICR Outstanding 1/8/23	1	2	8	13	0	8	0	6	0	38	5
EPC Rating below E	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DBY on Audit Day	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Streetscene Issues on Audit Day	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Refuse Bin Issues on Audit Day	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disrepairs Items on Audit Day Green	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	2
Disrepair Items on Audit Day -Amber	0	0	4	6	0	4	0	4	0	18	12
Disrepairs Items on Audit Day Red	1	0	3	2	0	2	0	0	0	8	2
Property Number Checks	3	28	58	61	2	88	13	51	1	305	305