

Pine St Audit

6th November 2023

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Our team were noticing the poor condition of the Pine Street area when conducting visits and started to receive an increase in flytipping and waste complaints. Due to this we conducted a mini audit on the 19th September 2023. We inspected each part-3 property for disrepair, dirty back yards and desktop checks on Gas Safety Records, Electrical Installation Condition Reports and Energy Performance Ratings of the rented properties.

Vacant Properties

On initial review of the properties we found that 7 were vacant, 2 of these are now occupied, 3 are being dealt with by our Empty Homes Team and 2 are awaiting new tenants to occupy them. 2 of these properties had severe Dirty Back Yards which are now clear as shown in the images below.

Outstanding Gas Safety Certificates and Electrical Installation Reports

19TH SEPT

8

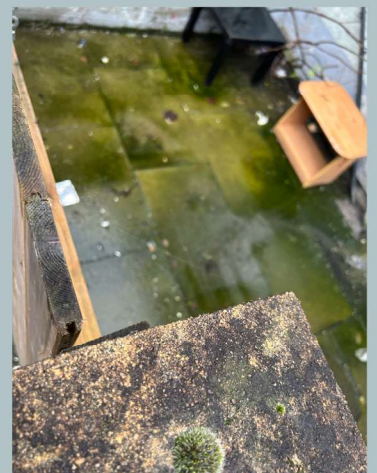
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DISREPAIRS

On the first audit date there were **14** disrepairs found not including DBY's. These included mainly vegetation in gutters and slipped roof tiles.

At present, there are **4** disrepairs outstanding, we will continue to pursue the responsible party until complete.



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1 Introduction

When completing inspections in the Burnley Wood area, we noticed the condition of the Pine St area was poor. We could see externally a lot of dirty back yards and disrepairs and severe fly tipping on the back street. We spoke to a resident from the next street who explained that they were having a big rat issue on the back street due to the yards. It was also noticeable that some of the properties may be vacant. On review of this, a decision was made to conduct a 'mini' audit on Pine St to officially inspect the street not only visually but to confirm our records are correct regarding occupancy and do desktop checks on Gas Safety Records, Electrical Installation Condition Reports and Energy Performance Ratings of the licenced properties.

2 Target Area

We conducted the initial audit on the 19th of September 2023, targeting Pine Street only, numbers 1-25 and 2-30.

Pine Street is in the Burnley Wood with Healey Wood designation. It is close to the town centre. We see a high turnover of tenants for the privately rented properties.



There are a total of 28 properties in this zone, 19 of which are rented and classed as 'Part-3' properties for licensing purposes (68%).

At the time of the audit:

- 15 (79%) of the Part 3 properties were already licenced.
- 3 (16%) had applied for licences but these applications are still ongoing.

- 0 (0%) properties had formal approved relative exemptions.
- 1 (3.6%) were owned by Registered Social Landlords (exempt from licencing regulations).
- 6 (21%) were vacant.
- 1 (5.3%) property was rented but no application has been submitted.
- 0 licenced House in Multiple Occupation
- 2 (7.1%) were owner occupied properties.

3 Back Streets

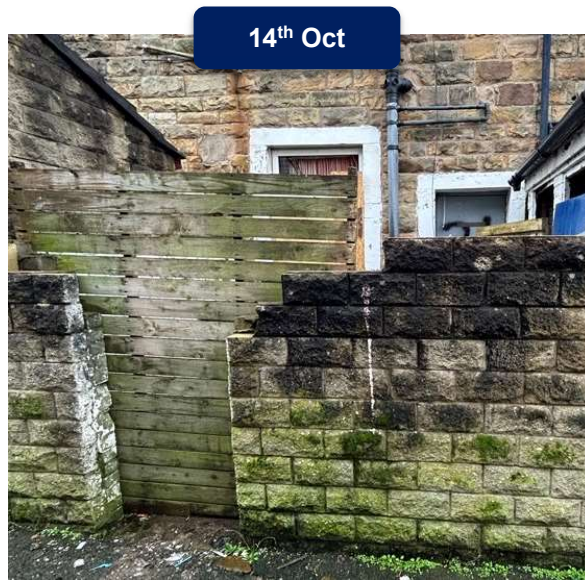
The backstreets of this audit area were in a very poor condition. Household waste was building up and dog faeces was a big issue. There were a few properties with waste building up outside the back gates. These issues were reported to Streetscene via the Love Clean Streets App at the time and cleared the following few days. There is one property which we believe a lot of the waste to be coming from, the Streetscenes investigations team are monitoring this, no direct evidence has been found yet but if any is found going forward, a Fixed Penalty Notice will be issued.

4 Back Yards

On the audit day, 4 Dirty Back Yards were found with black bags and household waste being stored. 2 of these dirty back yards were severe as you can see from the images below. On our first follow up visit, 2 of these properties still had dirty back yards. The occupants and/or landlords were contacted again and on our second follow up 1 dirty back yard remained. The 2 addresses with the severe waste will be monitored going forward. One of these is a long-term vacant property which we are working with our Empty Homes Officer.

The below property is one of the vacant properties on Pine St. With the property being unoccupied it is not licensable but as you can see the waste building up in the yard could be one of the factors causing the rodent issue and was attracting more waste to be dumped due to the lack of gate. We contacted the owner following the initial audit and he cleared the yard by the deadline given. There was also a large fence panel secured to the wall covering the access to the yard. Although this is not a secure gate and not the best visually, it is not causing a fire risk as the property is vacant and no one has access to the yard.





Below you can see another severe dirty back yard. Again, the Managing Agent was contacted following our initial audit date and confirmed the waste was left following a tenant vacating. The waste was removed within a few days followed by an email confirming it had been completed.



5 Disrepairs

Our team check the properties externally for any disrepair using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). HHSRS is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified at a property.

In total, there were **14 disrepairs found across all properties** including the empty properties.

Most of these disrepairs were minor, such as slipped roof tiles, vegetation in gutters. 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.

On our first follow-up audit, **6 (43%) of these disrepairs were outstanding**. Following the re-visit, we contacted the owners and landlords of the properties with outstanding disrepairs.

On the second follow-up visit audit **4 (29%) 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.

The image below shows a door which had a wooden board over a panel, it had been this way for quite some time. We asked the responsible party to replace the door, but they confirmed the door was still in working order and will be fixing the broken panel. The repair was completed by the final follow-up date and the door will be painted shortly.



A common disrepair was also damaged coping stones on yard walls, with the stones either being loose or missing. As you can see from the image below, this wall had a large coping stone missing and damage to the bricks underneath. This over time could cause further issues to the yard wall such as bricks falling and the wall becoming unstable. We contacted the landlord/managing agent advising of this and the repair was completed by the final follow-up date.





6 Certification

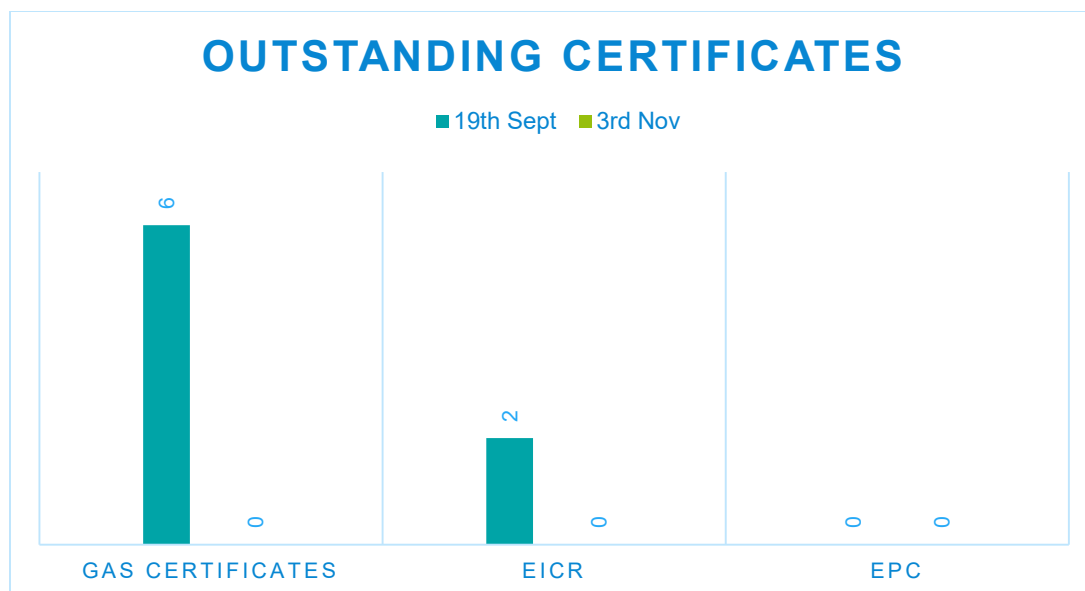
Gas Safety Certificates (GSC) - Selective Licensing Conditions state that the Licence Holder must produce to the authority a valid Gas Safety Certificate (GSC) obtained in respect of the property, dated within the last twelve months.

At the time of the audit, **6 GSCs** (Gas Safety Certificates) were outstanding; one of these being for the outstanding application. Reminders were sent to licence holders at the beginning of the audit and to date there are **0 outstanding**.

Electrical Condition Installation Report (EICR) New regulations in 2020 require landlords to have the electrical installations in their properties inspected and tested by a person who is qualified and competent, at an interval of at least every 5 years. On the initial audit date, one licence holder needed to provide a new EICR and we needed one for the outstanding application so initially we had **2 EICR's outstanding**. We have now received both and there are **0 EICR's outstanding**.

Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) In April 2018 the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards came into force which required all properties being let in England and Wales to have an in date, minimum EPC rating of 'E' or above from 1st April 2020. On the initial audit date, all part-3 properties had an EPC of 'E' or above.

The proactive work during the audit ensured all outstanding documentation was received so Pine Street is at 100% compliance for Gas Safety Certification, Electrical Installation Condition Reports and EPC's as shown in graph below.



7 Rented and not applied

1 property was a part-3 rented property with no applications at the start of the audit. On the initial audit day, we managed to speak to the tenant of the property without a licence and they advised who their landlord was and completed a Tenants Form for us. This form provides us the legal proof that the property is occupied and must be licenced when we do not hold a tenancy agreement. By sending further correspondence to the owner and managing agents we now have an application for this property which is currently going through our Fit & Proper process. We are now at **100% applied** for Pine Street.

8 Applied not yet licenced

We had 3 applications submitted for this area that had not reached the licenced stage, throughout the time of the audit, 2 of these have been completed and are now licenced. On completion of the one remaining and the new application that has been submitted during the audit, Pine Street will be at 100% Licenced for current part-3 properties.

9 Vacant properties

Something which initiated this audit to be conducted was the possible number of empty properties. When reviewing this before the initial audit date, we found 7 properties on Pine St to be vacant. We spoke to our Empty Homes Officer before the audit to clarify which properties they had open cases for and what they understood was happening to them. Our Empty Homes Team only investigate address' that are classed as long term vacants (over 2 years) but can get involved if a property is causing a nuisance to residents.

Property A – Referred to the Empty Homes Team, they have sent relevant letters to the owner with no response. Possibly looking at Power of Entry which may lead to a Council Compulsory Purchase Order

Property B – Property vacant between tenancies, now occupied.

Property C – Vacant following a Closure Order, property now actively up for sale and being monitored by the Empty Homes Team.

Property D – This is with the Empty Homes Team. The owner has a plan to renovate a few empty properties including this one but will take a few months. The Empty Homes Team is keeping up to date with the owner.

Property E – Vacant awaiting new tenant.

Property F – Vacant whilst being refurbished before finding new tenant.

Property G – Now occupied.

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. As you can see from the information above, the severe dirty back yards and broken gate issues were regarding the vacant properties, these will be monitored going forward and the owners will be communicated with on any issues.

10 Follow Up

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

Summary Pine St Audit September 2023

	19/09/2023	23/10/2023	03/11/2023
Total Properties	28	28	28
Part 3	19	19	19
Licenced	15	17	17
Applied Not yet Licenced	2	2	2
Exempt RSL	1	1	1
Exempt Selective Licence	0	0	0
Owner Occupied	2	2	2
Vacant	6	6	6
Licenced HMO	0	0	0
Not Applied	0	0	0
Gas Expired	6	0	0
EPC Rating below E	0	0	0
EICR Not submitted	2	1	0
DBY on Audit Day	4	1	1
Smoke Breach found on Audit Day	0	0	0
No Wheelie Bin	1	1	1
Disrepairs	14	6	4
Checks			