

BURNLEY WOOD & HEALEY WOOD

Zone 1 Audit



On Monday 27th November, the Selective Licensing Team conducted the 1st physical external audit of the Burnley Wood with Healey Wood designation to gather visual data on the back street and yards in the area and do external audits of all rented properties and a desk top audit on certificates.

DISREPAIRS

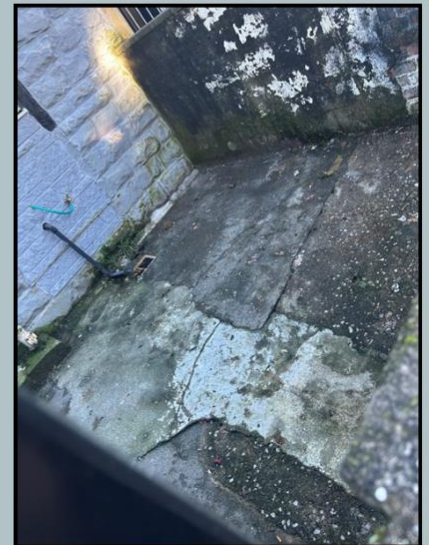
On the audit day we found **64** of the 91 privately rented properties had some sort of disrepair. The disrepairs ranged from damaged or blocked gutters to broken front doors and gates to properties needing handrails fitting. At the final follow up, **19** of these properties have disrepairs.

DIRTY BACK YARDS

13

Dirty back yards are a big issue in Burnley Wood, on audit day 13 were found across Parkinson Street and Branch Road. Landlords were contacted and by the end of the audit, 2 dirty back yards remain.

Going forward, I will be working with Streetscene to plan work to tackle the ongoing issue with dirty back yards and flytipping in Burnley Wood.



OUTSTANDING GAS SAFETY & ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION CERTIFICATES

We are confirming the correct action is being taken by any landlords or managing agents having accessing issues. Breaches will be issued to the remaining landlords using the Electrical Safety Standards Regulations 2020 and Gas breach procedures.

27th Nov

49

15th Feb

12

1 Introduction

On Monday 27th November, the Selective Licensing Team conducted the 1st physical external audit of the Burnley Wood with Healey Wood 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 – Branch Road (23 – 123 odds), Parkinson St (1- 100), Parliament St (55 - 102), Springfield Road, Kirkgate (47), Brunswick St (82 -84)



Parkinson Street and Branch Road are long streets running off Parliament Street and has easy access to the town centre and is a popular area for renting.

The average house sale prices in the area over the last 12 months;
Parkinson Street - £50,000
Branch Road - £70,000
Parliament Street - £77,000
Springfield Road - £74,000
Kirkgate – N/A

There are a total of 165 properties in this zone, 91 of which are rented and classed as 'Part-3' properties for licensing purposes (55%).

At the time of the audit:

- 72 (92%) of the Part 3 properties were already licenced.
- 8 (7%) had applied for licences but these applications are still

ongoing.

- 2 (2%) properties had formal approved relative exemptions.
- 34 (31%) were owned by Registered Social Landlords (exempt from licensing regulations).
- 8 (7%) were vacant.
- 12 (11%) properties were rented but no application has been submitted.
- 0 licenced House in Multiple Occupation
- 29 (26%) were owner occupied properties.

3 Back Streets

The backstreets of this audit area were in poor condition, specifically on the lower block of 23 – 61 Branch Road and the rear of 1 39 Parkinson Street. 3 reports were 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.

The back street area with flytipping issue is to the rear of 1 Parkinson Street. There are ongoing loitering problems in this location in which the individuals gathering are knocking bins on their sides to sit on and pulling fly-tipped settee's to this location. We are working with the police and Burnley Councils Anti-Social Behaviour team to resolve the matter. Community Protection Warning Notices have been issued in past.

4 Back Yards

On the audit day, 13 Dirty Back Yards were found with black bags and household waste being stored and 2 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. One of the remaining properties only had a settee in the yard, although unsightly, this is not causing a severe health issue. These address will be monitored going forward by ourselves and Streetscene.

Burnley Wood has the highest percentage of dirty back yards to properties out of all the current Selective Licensing designations. Following the audit, I am going to arrange a project meeting with Streetscene to tackle this issue through educating residents and making sure strict sanctions are issued where possible.

Case Study – When taking a photo of the below dirty back yard on the 27th November, the occupant of the neighbouring property came out of his property and explained to me the young resident of the property with the dirty back yard had gone through a difficult few months, following being attacked as part of a robbery and being in ill health since. He had been trying to clear the inside of his property which had become cluttered and messy which had contributed to the dirty back yard, and he didn't have a wheelie bin to store general household waste. I gave my card to the neighbour to pass onto the resident with the dirty back yard and explained we may be able to support him getting the waste cleared.

On return to the office, I spoke to the Streetscene officer for the area to see how we can help. The officer advised that they could offer a yard clearance with the waste being black bags of their lowest price of £25 instead of providing a quote which would usually be higher for this removal. They also offered a second-hand wheelie bin free of charge for the address which are normally charged at £33.50.

The resident with the dirty back yard called me that day, I explained how we could possibly help and how he should be disposing of the waste, and he was very thankful. He had paid for the yard clearance the following few days and the yard was clear. By providing the bin and educating the occupant on the correct way of disposing of household waste, hopefully we have avoided the issue occurring in the future.



5 Disrepairs

On an audit, the team externally inspect properties using the Housing Health and Safety Ratings System (HHSRS) which is a tool that the Local Authority uses to identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from deficiencies of the property.

The audit identified **64 of the Part 3 properties had some sort of disrepair** including Registered Social Landlord (RSL) properties. A lot of these properties had multiple disrepairs.

Most of these disrepairs were minor, such as slipped roof tiles and vegetation in gutters. Although we found properties with more critical disrepairs such as broken front doors, boarded windows and external walls that looked severely damp and properties with trip hazards due to no handrail on external stairs. These properties were prioritised for inspection.

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, **40 (62.5%) of the properties identified still had disrepairs**. We did allow a longer deadline due to the notifications of disrepairs being sent not long before the Christmas period and at a time when we knew tradesman were difficult to acquire. Following the re-visit, we contacted the owners and landlords of the properties again with outstanding disrepairs and to advise if they were coming across any issues completing the repairs. Some landlords did contact back advising of the date the work was booked in to be completed and some stated their property had recently become vacant and they were including the tasks as part of the renovations prior to re-letting.

On the second follow-up visit audit **19 (29.7%) 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.

Quite a few of the properties to the top end of Parkinson St had 3 or more steps coming from the rear back door into the yard. The HHSRS states that properties with 3 or more steps should have a handrail. 6 Part 3 properties without a handrail were contacted advising to rectify this with 5 completing the works. See below images of properties now with handrails.



The below property had an old wooden front door which had quite a gap at the bottom. This could've been causing excess cold to the property and unnecessary drafts. On our final follow up audit, a new UPVC front door had been fitted.



Following the initial audit, 7 properties were raised for inspection. I have managed to gain entry to 4 of these properties. 2 of which the disrepairs were minor and the managing agent has completed the works and 2 I am liaising with the owner/managing agent due to access issues following the inspection. The 3 remaining I have not been able to gain access following writing to the tenant and knocking on the door but I am in contact with the landlord/managing agents to ensure they are using the terms of the tenancy agreements to allow action and taking further action against the tenant where necessary.

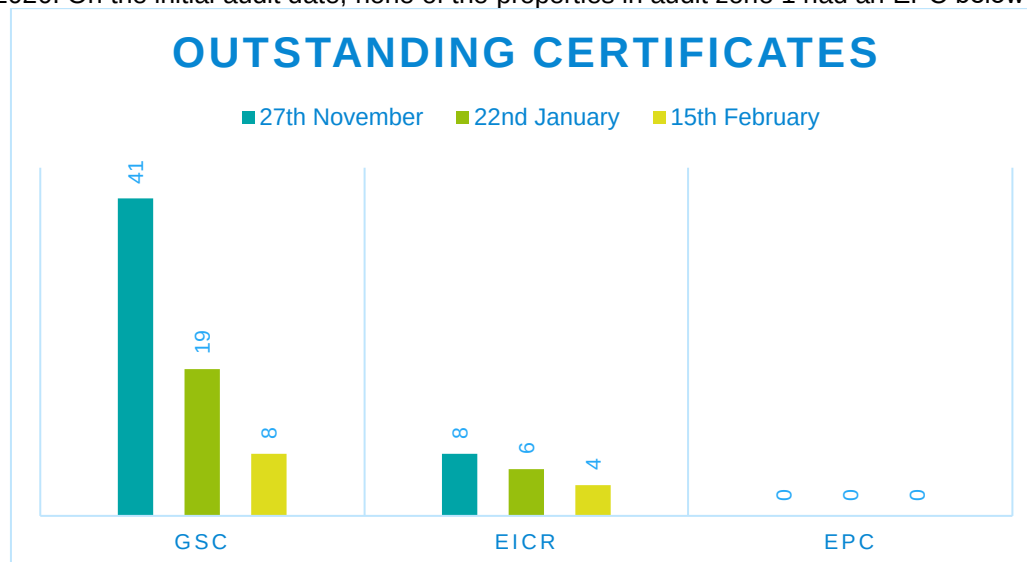
On audit day, 3 none Part 3 properties had Home Improvement Agency Letters posted. We cannot enforce owner occupiers to make improvements to their homes but these letters advised the residents of possible grants available to them for financial assistance that the council is able to offer to improve standards of housing and quality of life.

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, 41 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 weekly reminders, weekly reminders sent via our Verso system if they were licenced or had applied. To date there are 8 outstanding, 3 of these are for properties we have not yet received an application for and therefor will be prioritised for a Civil Penalty for not applying. The remaining 5 have been sent the first letter of our Gas Breach procedure, we will use this procedure to issue Penalties if not supplied within the next week.

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 8 EICR's outstanding. There are now 4 outstanding 3 of which are for properties we have not received applications for. Following the audit, we will use the Electrical Safety Standard Regulations 2020 to issue penalties to the licenced landlord that have not supplied valid EICR's.

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, none of the properties in audit zone 1 had an EPC below an 'E'.



7 Rented and not applied

There were 12 properties that were unlicenced with no applications at the start of the audit. By sending further correspondence to the owner and investigating possible managing agents we now have an application for 9 of these properties reducing the amount of no applications for this area significantly to 3.

Two of the 12 we found to be vacant, therefore no licence was required. If a completed application is not received within an appropriate time, the owners or the remaining 3 properties with no applications will be issued a civil penalty notice of up to £30,000 for failure to apply for a licence.

The owner of one of these properties has previously made an application which was closed due to not confirming all information. This property is priority for a Civil Penalty as their Gas Safety Certificate has expired and they have not supplied an in-date certificate as well as not currently being licenced.

8 Applied not yet licenced

We had 8 applications submitted for this area that had not reached the licenced stage. 4 of these applications are now completed and the properties are licenced. Throughout the time of the audit, we have received 9 applications for this area and there is now 9 applications ongoing which have not reached the licenced stage. On completion of the new application that has been submitted during the audit and the application expected in March, the zone will have the 3 unlicenced properties outstanding as mentioned above.

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.

Prior to the audit, our records showed 4 properties to be vacant. On audit day, we found one of these properties to be occupied, the owner has been contacted and we have received an application which is ongoing. We also came across one licenced property which was vacant, on investigation it has been sold and will be monitored regarding occupation.

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.

Summary Burnley Wood w/ Healey Wood Audit November 2023

	Branch Rd	Brunswick St	Kirkgate	Parkinson St	Parliament St	Springfield Rd	Totals Audit Day	Totals 22/01	Totals 15/02
Total Properties	52	3	1	98	4	7	165	165	165
Part 3	31	2	0	54	0	4	91	54	89
Licenced	24	1	0	44	0	3	70	73	75
Applied Not yet Licenced	2	0	0	6	0	0	8	7	9
Exempt RSL	10	0	0	23	0	1	34	34	34
Exempt Selective Licence	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	2
Owner Occupied	8	1	1	16	2	1	29	29	29
Vacant	1	0	0	5	2	0	8	10	10
Licenced HMO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not Applied	5	1	0	5	0	1	12	6	3
Gas Expired	13	0	0	26	0	2	41	19	8
EPC Rating below E	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EICR Not submitted	1	0	0	7	0	0	8	6	5
DBY on Audit Day	2	0	0	12	0	1	15	6	2
Smoke Breach found on Audit Day	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Wheelie Bin	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	1	0
Disrepairs	16	0	0	47	0	1	64	40	19