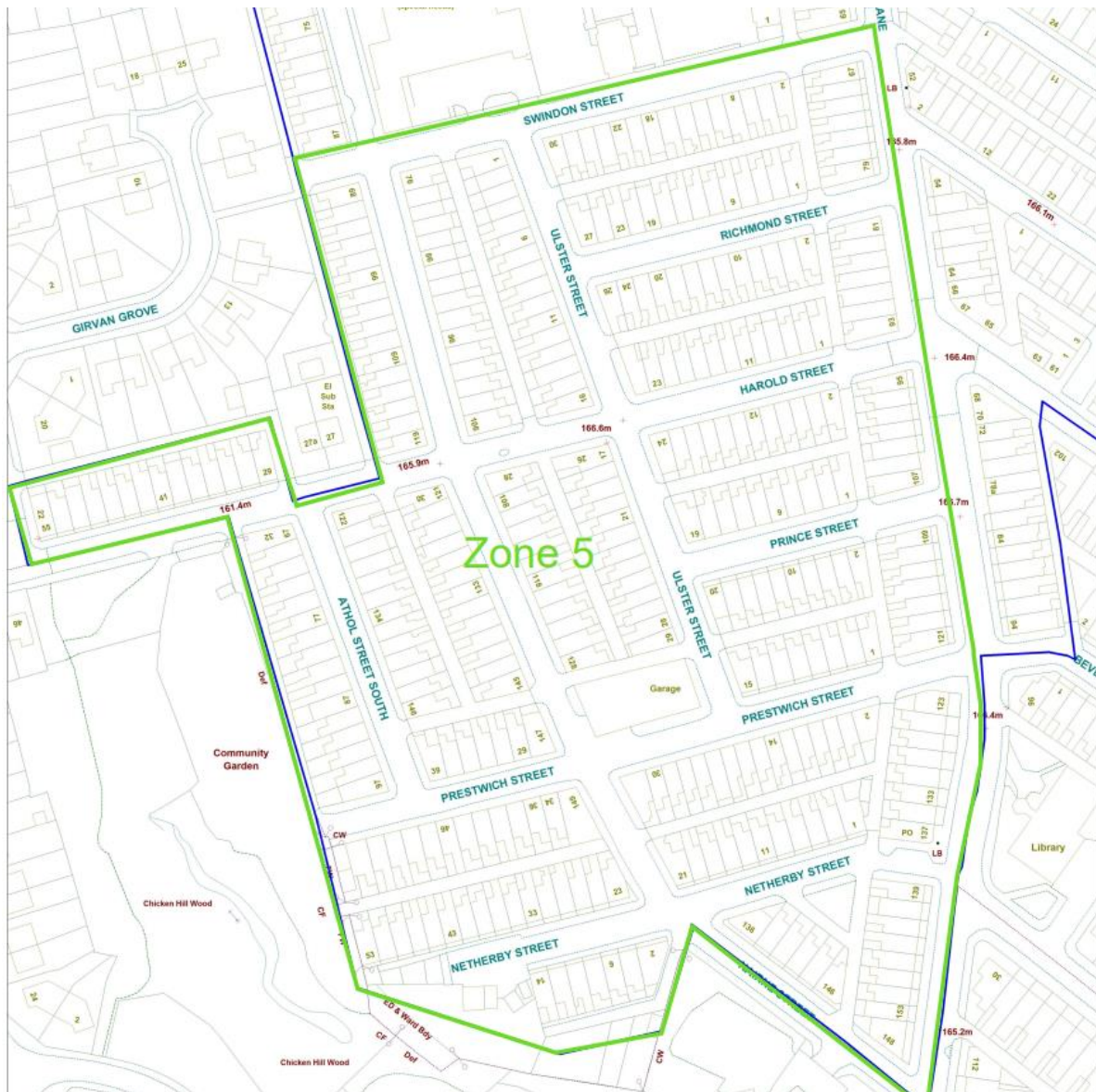


Trinity Zone 5 Audit

Undertaken 26th February 2024

Target Area

The Trinity Zone 5 audit area comprised of the areas surrounding the upper part of Nairne St, including the upper parts of Coal Clough Lane, Athol Street South, Harold St, Netherby St, Prestwich St, Prince St, Richmond St, Swindon St and Ulster St. The map below depicts the area that was covered in the audit.



The remit of the audit was to conduct visual checks of all private rented properties within Zone 4 of the Trinity Selective licensing designation. This was to ensure that all properties were free from defects and in general good condition.

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

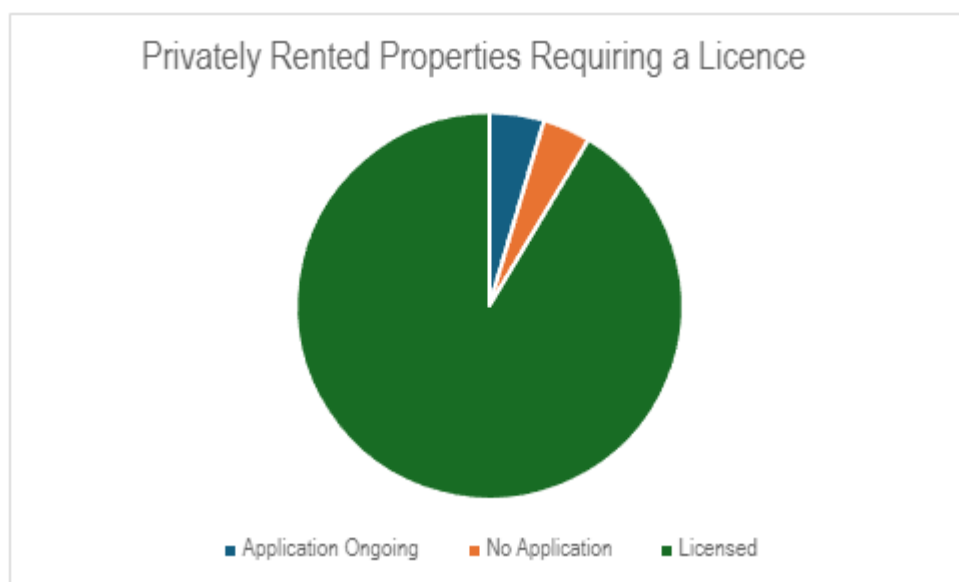
- State of the back streets (fly tipping etc).

- 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 necessary.
- Occupancy checks on vacant or non-licensed rented properties were identified from council tax records.
- Desktop checks were also made of Gas Safety Certificates (GSC), Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) and Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) of the licensed properties.

Composition

The area has a total of 347 properties. Of the 347 properties, 175 of them have been identified as privately rented and therefore require a licence. Of these 175 licensable properties, 160 are licensed, 8 applications are ongoing, and 7 properties have not submitted an application where one is required. The unlicensed properties will be pursued through sending application reminders and where owners are not willing to engage, these landlords will be prioritised for civil penalty or prosecution.

144 of the properties are owner occupied, 5 have had exemptions approved by the Council, 14 are vacant, 6 are Registered Social Landlords and 3 are business premises.



Dirty Back Yards

18 properties were identified as having a dirty back yard. This included general waste in bin bags, dog fouling, furniture and building waste. These were reported to the landlord and on some occasions passed on to Streetscene too.

Follow Up:

On our follow up visit of the area on 4th April 2024, only 2 of the 18 properties that had been identified as having dirty back yards had been cleared. The Council may consider looking at taking action for breaches of licence conditions in relation to this.

Wheelie Bins

In total, only 1 property was found to have no bins or the correct bin facilities. This was reported to the landlord for them to arrange for the correct bins to be provided. It is a condition of the landlord's Licence that they provide waste disposal equipment at the start of the tenancy. Where no evidence can be provided by the landlord that they have issued waste disposal equipment, the selective licence team can act against the landlord for a breach of the conditions of their licence and can result in a Civil Penalty.

Follow up:

On our follow up visit to the area on 4th April 2024, we confirmed that the Property now had the correct bins provided.

Fly-tipping

The back streets on the day of the audit were generally tidy. There was an issue with fly-tipping around some of the back streets and 4 reports were made via the Love Clean Streets app on the day of the audit.

Follow Up:

Of the 4 reports that were made on the Love Clean Streets app, we were notified that these had been cleared a couple of days later. When we revisited the area on the 4th April 2024, these same areas had been targeted again by fly-tippers. This shows that some of these back streets are problematic for environmental crime. This has been passed on to Streetscene for them to investigate.





Disrepairs

Property Conditions are checked against the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS). It 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 in properties. Tackling the hazards will make housing healthier and safer to live in.

The HHSRS identifies 29 potential hazards within properties. To check against all the hazards requires a full internal and external inspection of the properties. As the remit of this audit was a visual external inspection of the properties, it rules out any suggestion that all hazards could be identified from it. However, the visual inspection information together with the Gas Safety Certificates (GSC), Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICR) and Energy Performance Certificates (EPC) data is a good indicator to identify properties that potentially may have disrepairs.

Of the 175 privately rented properties, a total of 70 showed signs of external disrepair – 40% of properties. The main issues identified related to gutters in disrepair, slipped roof slates, missing pointing and inadequate back gates.

Landlords of 4 properties have been asked to do some maintenance and visual improvement work. This is not something that we can enforce but is something that would benefit the visual appearance of the full street if work such as painting could be done. Selective Licensing is only one of many tools used to assist in the regeneration of the area. Whilst this is not something we can enforce through Licensing we can look at management arrangements in relation to regular inspections and dealing with disrepair.

Full HHSRS inspections are required at 2 properties and another internal property check has been conducted.

Follow Up:

A follow up of the audit was completed on 4th April 2024.

It was found that only 15 out of the 70 properties had their repairs dealt with (21%). None of the 4 properties where the issues identified were just aesthetic had been resolved.

We will look at those which have failed to engage and resolve repairs and see whether it is appropriate to take action through the GLAS (Good Landlord and Agent Scheme) accreditation scheme, licensing conditions or referring on to our Housing Standards team.

Gas Safety Certificates (GSC)

All rented properties require an annual Gas Safety Check (GSC). Landlords operating within the Selective Licence areas are required under the conditions of their licence to submit an annual gas Safety certificate to the Selective Licence team. Failure to provide an annual GSC certificate is a breach of their licence condition and can result in a civil penalty.

Of the 175 licensed or in the process of being licensed properties, at the beginning of the audit 117 of them had failed to provide up to date gas safety certificates. The Council chased these up with reminder e-mails. If they fail to provide the certificates, civil penalty or prosecution action will be taken for a breach of licensing conditions.

Follow Up: A further push with telephone calls, follow up e-mails to managing agents and landlords has resulted in 15 gas certificates now outstanding. We will now be progressing legal action where necessary for a breach of conditions of those other properties if they continue to fail to provide or do not engage with the Selective Licensing team.

Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs)

Recent legislation brought in by the Government, Electrical Safety Standards Regulations 2020 requires all landlords to have a 5 yearly inspection of the electrical circuits in their rented properties. The legislation came into effect after the current Trinity Selective Licensing designation began. Although now all Selective Licence applicants are required to submit a 'satisfactory' EICR for their property, it was not a requirement at the beginning of the designation.

All properties within the audit area were sent tasks through their online application requesting them to send the EICR in. Of the 175 properties where a licensing application has been submitted, there were 77 outstanding EICRS. After this first step, we adopt a more formal approach to requesting the EICRs. This starts with a 7-day letter, then a 28-day remedial notice and if after that an EICR is still not provided, a Civil Penalty will be served.

Follow Up: After making telephone calls to landlords and additional e-mails to both landlords and managing agents, there are 12 EICRs that remain outstanding. The Council will be taking the necessary next steps which may ultimately result in a Civil Penalty.

Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)

All rented properties must have an EPC rating of at least an 'E.' Where properties have a lower rating, landlords are expected to improve the property in order to raise its EPC rating. All licensable properties within the audit area had an EPC of an 'E' or above.

	26 th February 2024	24 th April 2024
Total Properties	347	347
Part 3	175	175
Licensed	158	160
Application Ongoing	2	8
Refused	0	0
No Application	15	7
Exemption Approved	2	5
RSL	6	6
Owner Occupied	144	144
Vacant	14	14
Business Premises	3	3
Gas Expired	117	15
EICR Expired/Not Provided	77	12
EPC not complete/below an E	0	0
No Wheelie Bin	1	0
Disrepairs	70	55
DBY on Audit Day	18	16