

Burnley Wood & Healey Wood Zone 2 Audit

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On audit day we, found **52** of the **105** privately rented properties had some sort of disrepair. The disrepairs ranged from slipped roof tiles and vegetation in gutters to broken gates and windows, external walls that looked damp and properties with trip hazards due to no handrail on external stairs.



Outstanding Certificates



We have received **71%** of certificates that were outstanding at the beginning of the audit. Breaches will be issued to the landlords with outstanding certificates using the Electrical Safety Standards Regulations 2020 and our Gas Breach Procedure.



Dirty back yards are a big issue in Burnley Wood, on audit day, 10 were found across Reed St and Dall St.

We worked with Streetscene and issued 6 Notices. At the end of the audit, 2 remain. We are continuing to work with Streetscene to tackle these issues together, getting landlords involved when penalties are issued.



1 Introduction

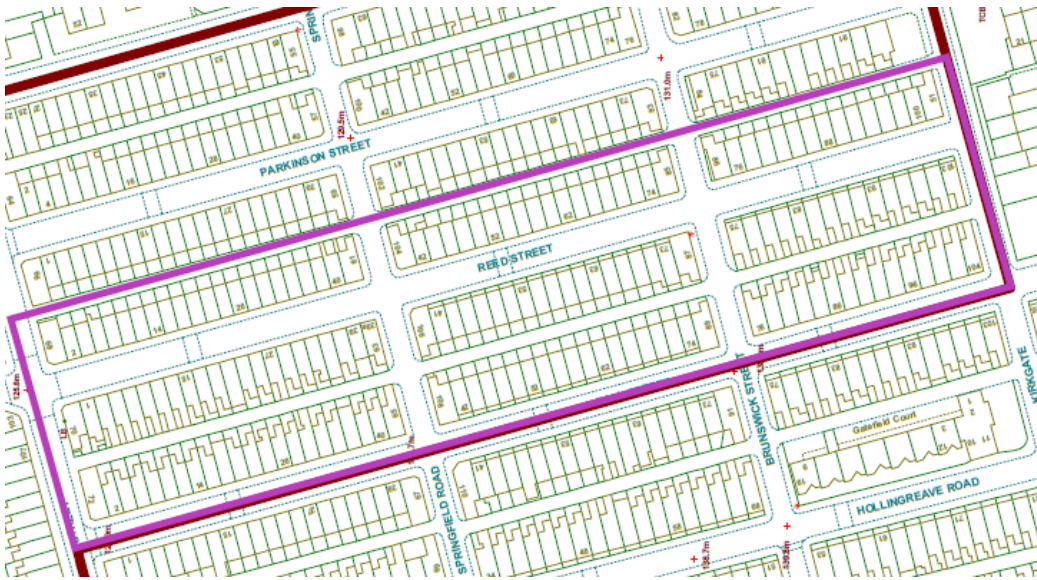
On Wednesday 8th May, the Selective Licensing Team conducted the 2nd physical external audit of the Burnley Wood with Healey Wood designation. Prior to this, a desk top audit was completed checking if the same properties are licenced and complying the conditions of the licence. Letters were sent to any non-licenced properties and those 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



Zone 2 Audit Streets include -

- Reed Street (1 – 103 odds, 2 – 100 evens)
- Dall Street (2 - 104)
- Parliament St (68 - 72)
- Springfield Road (61 – 65 odds, 104 – 108 evens)
- Kirkgate (51)
- Brunswick St (85, 87, 89, 86)

Reed Street and Dall Street 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;(Zoopla House Prices)

Parkinson Street - £50,000
Reed Street - £67,000
Dall Street – 56,000
Parliament Street - £77,000
Springfield Road - £74,000
Kirkgate – N/A

There are a total of 168 properties in this zone, 105 of which are rented and classed as 'Part-3' properties for licensing purposes (62.5%). This is quite a high percentage of Privately Rented properties to owner occupied/RSL properties when compared to the Borough which is 24.3% privately rented.

At the time of the audit:

- 80 (76%) of the Part 3 properties were already licenced.
- 11 (10.5%) had applied for licences but these applications are still ongoing.
- 23 (22%) were owned by Registered Social Landlords (exempt from licencing regulations).
- 12 (11.5%) were vacant.
- 13 (12%) properties were rented but no application has been submitted.
- 1 (1%) licenced House in Multiple Occupation
- 28 (27%) were owner occupied properties.

3 Back Streets

The backstreets of this audit area were in poor condition, specifically on the lower block of 2 - 40 Reed Street. The main concern was dog foul, every few steps along this back street there was dog waste. We believe this is being done by the dogs of the residents on the street, opening their gates and allowing their dogs to foul on the back street. We have worked closely with our Streetscene Enforcement Team who are putting posters up on the back streets and posting letters to the residents to make them aware that they can receive a Fixed Penalty if caught letting their dog foul. The enforcement team will also patrol the area more frequently and once evidence is secured of who is causing the dog fouling, penalties will be issued. There were also black bags and household items flytipped across the back streets. We made six reports to Streetscene which were cleared in the following few days.

8th May



10th July



4 Back Yards

On the audit day, 10 Dirty Back Yards were found. Some with black bags and household waste being stored and some with animal faeces.

Following the audit, the Streetscene officer for Burnley Wood issued the following -

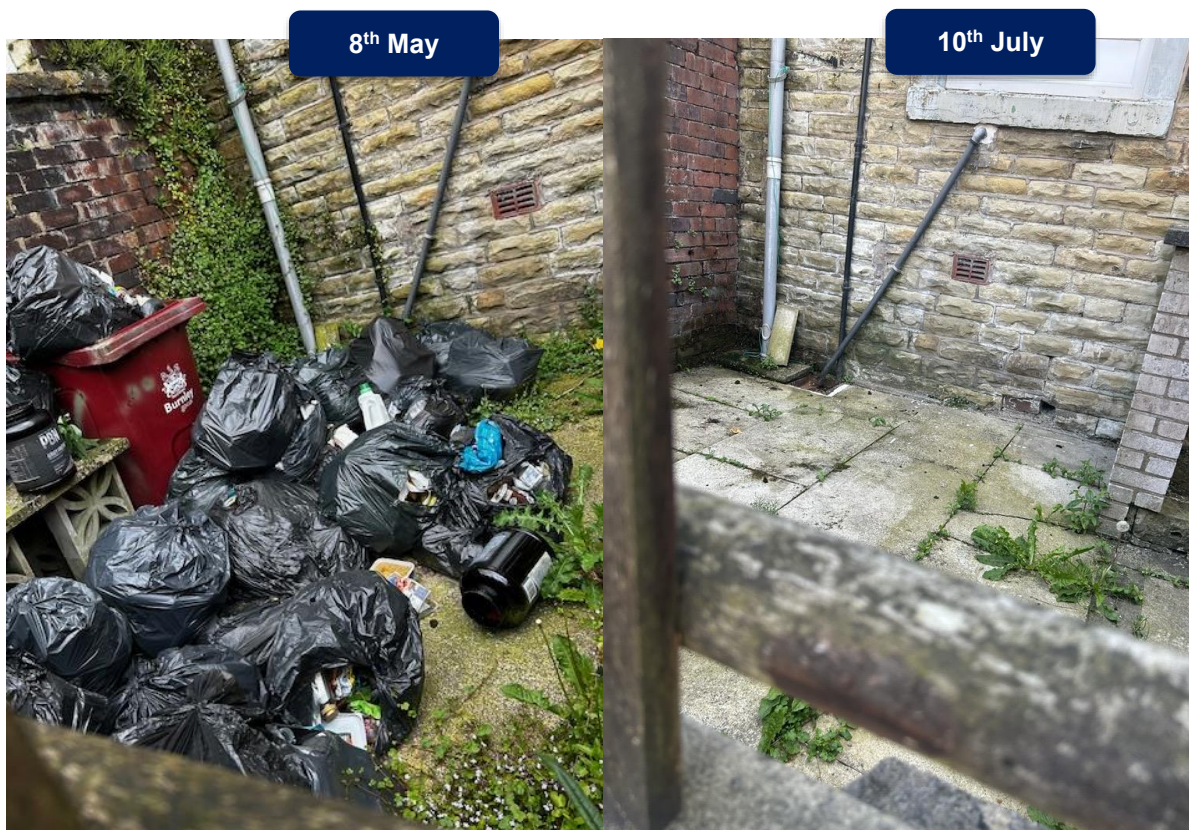
2 Section 4 notices of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949

3 Section 80 notices of the Environmental Protection Act 1990

1 Section 79 notice of Environmental Protection Act 1990

On our follow up visit, 2 of these properties still had dirty back yards. One had the same waste, one had removed some but still had a bed base in the yard and animal faeces which looks like it had been cleared but built up again. One of the remaining properties had a settee in the yard, although unsightly, this is not causing a severe health issue. These addresses will be monitored going forward by ourselves and Streetscene.

When reviewing reports from Streetscene, Burnley Wood has the highest percentage of dirty back yards to properties out of all the current Selective Licensing designations. Following the previous audit, we have been working with Streetscene to tackle these issues together, notifying landlords involved where penalties are issued against their tenants. We will be continuing this going forward to put more responsibility on the tenant, encouraging the landlord to use the terms of their tenancy agreement to support us to get the waste cleared, build tenants understanding of their responsibilities and educate all residents.



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 **52 (50%) of the Part 3 properties had some sort of disrepair**. A lot of these properties had multiple disrepairs.

Most of these disrepairs were minor, for example slipped roof tiles and vegetation in gutters. We did find properties with more critical disrepairs such as damaged gates and windows, boarded windows, external walls that looked severely damp and properties with trip hazards due to no handrail on external stairs. These properties were prioritised for a full inspection.

Following the initial audit day, all relevant owners and landlords were contacted via email, clearly listing any issues found whilst also advising them of the follow-up audit and provided them with a deadline to complete the repairs. Whilst RSLs are outside the remit of selective licensing, any RSL properties found with disrepairs were also reported to make them aware of the issues.

On our follow-up audit, **23 (22%) of the properties identified still had disrepairs**. Following this re-visit, we contacted the owners and landlords of the properties again, listing the outstanding disrepairs and to let the Council know if they were coming across any issues completing the repairs. Some landlords did respond advising of the date the work was scheduled to be completed and some stated their property had recently become vacant and they were including the repairs as part of the renovations prior to re-letting. These properties will be monitored following the audit to confirm compliance.

Quite a few of the properties to the top end of Reed St have three or more steps leading from the rear back door into the yard. The HHSRS states that properties with three or more steps should have a handrail. Six licensable properties were found without a handrail, these landlords were contacted advising them to rectify this with five completing the works. See below images of properties now with handrails.





Landlords of 15 properties have been asked to do some visual improvement work. Whilst this is not something that we can enforce, it is something that would benefit the visual appearance of the full street, and has a positive impact for the area if work such as painting can be completed.

The two properties below are managed by the same managing agent. Both looked dated and in need of the paintwork refreshing due to it peeling and being weathered.

8th May



In addition, the repair works we requested them to complete were done, along with the paintwork being refreshed. Both properties look substantially better. Demonstrating how minor improvements help make the streets look more attractive and help to regenerate the area.

10th July



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

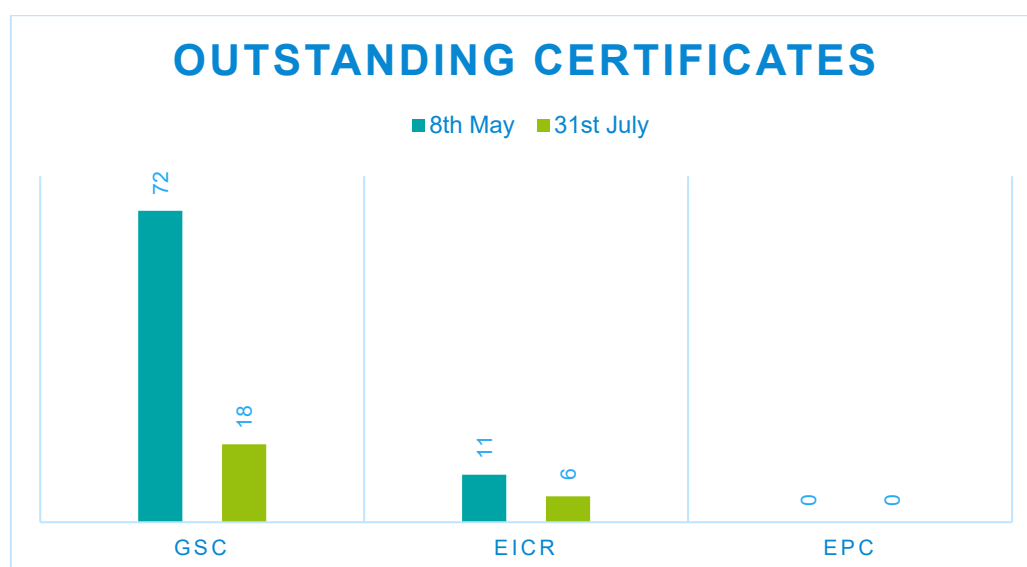
On audit day, 3 non-licensable properties had Home Improvement Agency Letters posted. We cannot enforce action against owner-occupied properties to make improvements to their homes but these letters advise the residents of possible grants available to them for financial assistance that the council is 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) in respect of the property, dated within the last twelve months. At the time of the audit, **72 GSCs** (Gas Safety Certificates) were outstanding; one related to a property where no application for a licence has been received. Reminders were sent to licence holders at the beginning of the audit and weekly reminders sent via our Verso system if they were licenced or had applied. To date there are **18 outstanding**, 4 of these are properties we have not yet received an application for and therefore will be prioritised for a Civil Penalty for not applying. The remaining 14 will be sent the first letter of our Gas Breach procedure, we will use this procedure to issue Civil Penalties if there has been a breach of the condition of the licence.

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, **11 EICR certificates** were outstanding. There remain **6 outstanding**, 4 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 civil penalties to the 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 2 had an EPC below an 'E'.



7 Rented and not applied

There were 12 properties that were unlicensed with no application for Selective Licensing submitted at the start of the audit. By sending further correspondence to the owner and investigating 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 of 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 started to make an application which was not completed due to not confirming all information. This property is priority for enforcement action as the Gas Safety Certificate has expired, they have not supplied an in-date certificate, and it is not licenced.

8 Applied not yet licenced

We had 13 applications submitted for this area that had not reached the licenced stage. 7 of these properties have now submitted complete valid applications leaving 6 properties are to complete the application process. The properties with no complete valid submitted application will be prioritised for the imposition of Civil Penalties for noncompliance with The Housing Act 2024 Part 3.

9 Vacant properties

Although we cannot enforce any disrepairs for 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 12 properties to be vacant. On audit day, we found one of these properties to be occupied and rented, 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. We will revoke the licence, and the property will be monitored regarding occupation.

We have also referred any long-term vacant properties to our Empty Homes Team to monitor going forward.

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.

Whilst the area audits deal with the external appearance of the area, the Council continues to investigate reports of Anti-Social Behaviour, working with the landlord/managing agents and residents. The Selective Licensing Team are committed to ensuring any cases of ASB are dealt with accordingly.

Summary Burnley Wood w/ Healey Wood Audit May-July 2024

	Reed St	Dall St	Brunswick St	Kirkgate	Parliament St	Springfield Rd	Totals Audit Day	Totals 24/07
Total Properties	101	52	4	1	4	6	168	168
Part 3	63	32	3	1	2	4	105	108
Licenced	50	22	2	1	2	3	80	84
Applied Not yet Licenced	6	4	1	0	0	0	11	15
Exempt RSL	17	5	1	0	0	0	23	23
Exempt Selective Licence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Owner Occupied	15	11	0	0	0	2	28	28
Vacant	9	3	0	0	0	0	12	11
Licenced HMO	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Not Applied	10	3	0	0	0	0	13	6
Gas Expired	46	19	3	0	0	4	72	18
EPC Rating below E	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EICR Not submitted	9	2	0	0	0	0	11	6
DBY on Audit Day	3	4	1	0	1	1	10	2
Smoke Breach found on Audit Day	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Wheelie Bin	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	1
Disrepairs	32	16	2	0	1	1	52	25