

STONEYHOLME & DANESHOUSE ZONE 6 AUDIT JULY – AUGUST 2024

Introduction

On 4th July 2024, an external audit was carried out on the properties and neighbourhood in Zone 6 of the Selective Licencing area Stoneyholme.

Prior to 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 e-mails 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).

All the other properties in area were checked against council tax and land registry records to verify ownership and occupancy.

Purpose of the Audit

- To check and validate the 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 of vacant or non-licenced properties identified via council tax records.

Target Area

Zone 5 area includes the following streets:

26-34 Belgrave Street

2- 66 Belford Street

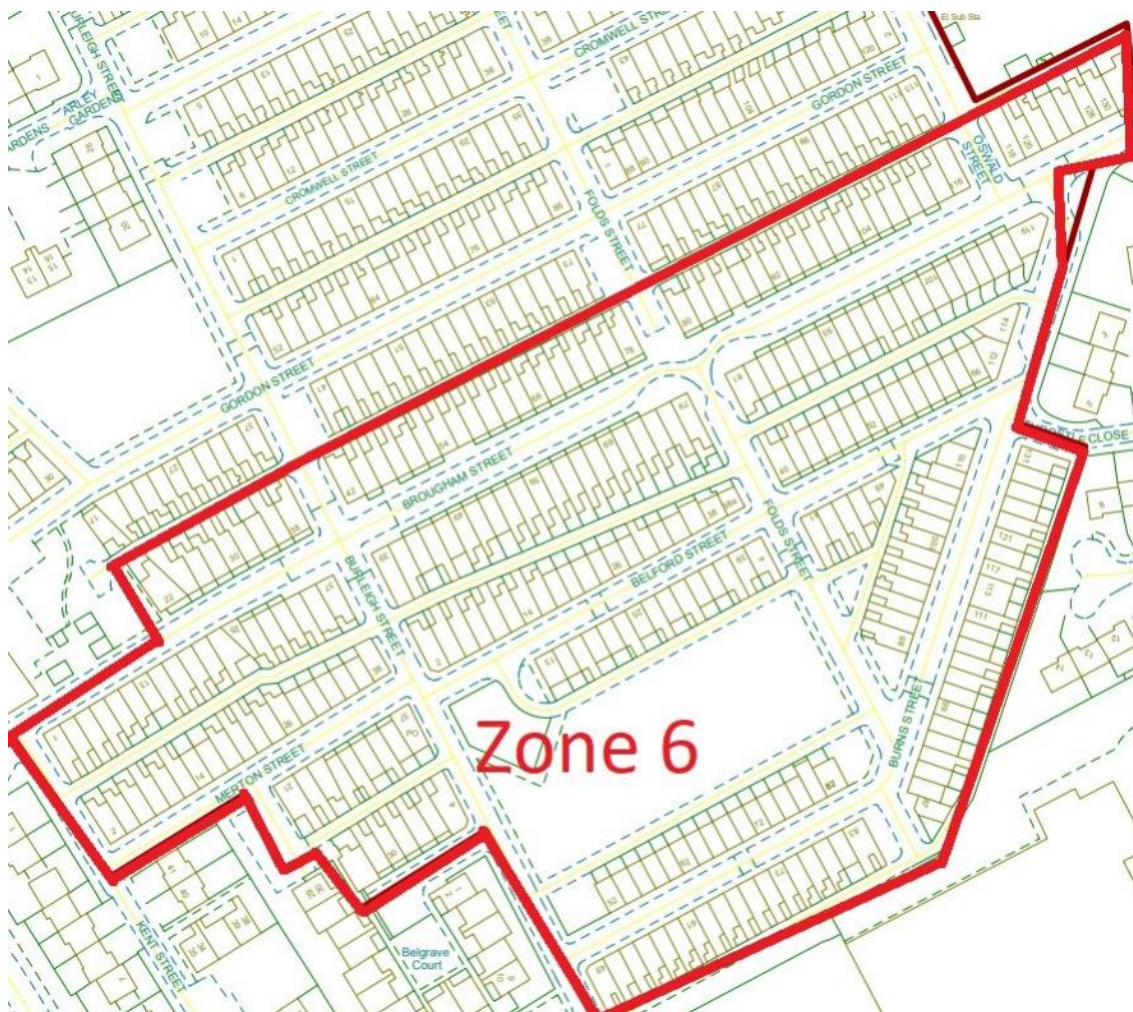
1-132 Brougham Street

4-26 Burleigh Street

49-131 Burns Street

2-37 Merton Street

Map of Zone 6



Property Summary for Zone 6

The summary table on Page 8 shows that there is a total of 243 properties in this zone – 85 of which are privately rented properties and are classified as Part 3 properties for licencing purposes. This represents 35% of the properties in this area.

As of 14th August 2024:

- 71 (86%) of the licensable properties are licensed.
- 3 (3%) of the Part 3 let properties with no applications have since applied and these are being processed.
- 17 (7%) of all properties have relative exemptions formally approved.
- 13 (5%) of all properties are owned by Registered Social Landlords who are exempt from Selective Licensing.
- 3 (2%) of all properties are vacant.
- 9 (3%) of the Part 3 properties still appear to be tenanted or occupied by family members) but no applications for licences or relative exemptions have yet been submitted.
- 134 (55%) are Owner Occupied properties.

Certifications

The Selective Licencing conditions state that a 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 the required certificates were valid when licences are granted, the audit found that was a high level of non-compliance with landlords not automatically providing new certificates to the Selective Licencing Team when the old ones expired without being prompted.

GSCs

At the time of the audit 54 (74%) of the GSCs had expired and new, in date certificates had not been provided as required under the licencing conditions. After contacting each landlord, 65 GSCs have been supplied and there are 8 still outstanding. Of the GSC'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 40 (55%) of the EICR's had not been provided or had expired. After contacting each landlord, 66 EICR's have been provided with 7 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.

Certification Type	Position – July 2024	Position – August 2024	Outstanding
Valid Gas Safety Certificates	17 (20%)	65 (89%)	8 (11%)
Valid Electrical Installation Condition report	31 (44%)	66 (90%)	7 (10%)

EPC's

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

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.

Neighbourhoods

Generally, the back streets in this audit area were in a satisfactory condition but there was some evidence of minor fly tipping on the date of the audit. 4 issues of abandoned bagged rubbish, building materials or items of furniture left on the backstreets were reported direct to Streetscene, and these were cleared by the following week.

There are a number of small public spaces in this neighbourhood. These are mainly grassed with small amounts of vegetation. Most of these areas look tired and would benefit from some minor investment to enhance the neighbourhood.

Back Yards

There were 3 properties identified with dirty/untidy back yards in the audit area.

After contacting the landlord/tenant all 3 back yards were cleared and remain clear at the time of the audit.

Disrepairs

In total there were 16 properties with a total of 23 external disrepairs identified at the outset of the audit. These disrepairs ranged from serious disrepair issues such as smashed windows and an insecure back door to one property, to gutters blocked with vegetation causing staining and possible damp issues.

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

One property (see photograph below) was in a very poor state with smashed windows and an insecure back yard. An application had been submitted but has subsequently now been refused due to poor management of the property. The owner has appointed a new managing agent, and the property has now been secured.

Follow up inspections of all reported items of disrepair were completed on 5th August 2024.

Landlords of 13 of the properties with repairs have either already completed the item(s) of reported disrepair(s) or have ordered the required works with contractors.

4 of the properties on Belford Street (see below) have already repainted the front elevations of their properties which has much improved the aesthetic appearance of the street.

There are 3 properties where the landlord has yet to respond, and these will be followed up until works are complete or escalated to The Housing Standards to complete a full inspection of the properties.

Examples of the types of identified repairs:

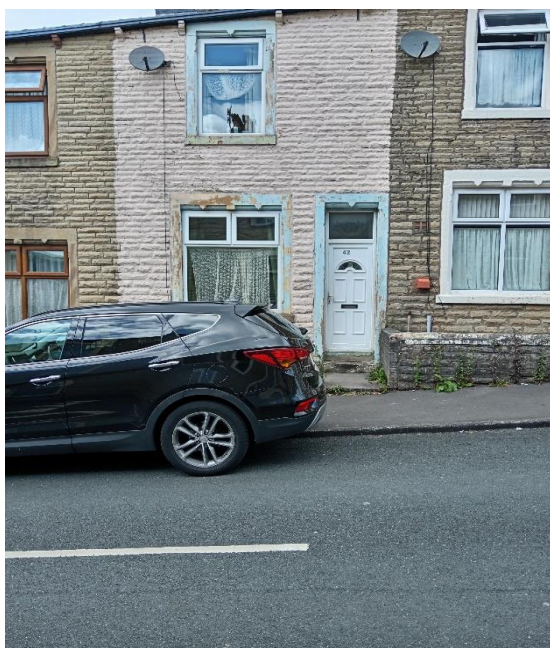
July 2024

*Front elevations of terraced houses
in need of repainting*



August 2024

Front elevations repainted



Insecure property with broken windows



All windows reglazed in 48 hours and made secure



Non licenced Properties

There are still 9 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 should have either been licensed or application for a family exemption needed to be submitted. As applications for this designated area are now closed these properties will be now prioritised for Civil Penalties or Prosecutions for non-compliance where sufficient evidence is available.

Vacant properties

There were only 4 vacant properties on the date of the audit which is 1.6% of the properties in the area. One of these properties has now been sold and occupied by the owner.

One property appears in a poor state of repair and is being monitored by the Empty Homes Team as it has been empty for more than 12 months.

There is a large former retail unit on Brougham Street that has been empty for a number of years. This appears to be insecure and is a cause for concern in the neighbourhood as youths tend to congregate in and around this unit. This is now being investigated by the Police and the Community Safety Team.

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 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 status of all the vacant properties will continue to be monitored.

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

Paul Spencer

Landlord Licencing Officer

13th August 2024

Summary Daneshouse Zone 6 - July - August 2024

	Belgrave Street	Belford Street	Brougham Street	Burleigh Street	Burns Street	Merton Street	Total July 2024	Total August 2024
Total Properties	5	48	100	5	60	25	243	243
Part 3	2	23	35	1	17	7	85	85
Licenced	1	22	28	1	13	6	71	73
Applied Not yet Licenced	1	0	2	0	2	0	5	3
Exempt RSL	0	2	2	0	7	2	13	13
Exempt Selective Licence	0	1	9	0	4	2	16	17
Owner Occupied/Businesses	3	22	58	4	31	15	133	134
Vacant	0	0	3	0	1	0	4	3
Licenced HMO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not Applied	0	1	5	0	2	1	9	9
Gas Expired - June 2024	0	18	21	0	12	3	54	8
EICR Outstanding - June 2024	0	12	16	0	9	3	40	7
EPC Rating below E	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DBY on Audit Day	0	0	2	0	1	0	3	0
Streetscene Issues	0	1	1	0	1	1	4	0
Properties with Disrepairs (Items)	0 (0)	6 (10)	3 (4)	0 (0)	6 (7)	0 (0)	16 (23)	6 (12)
Disrepairs Ordered/ Completed	0	4	3	0	4	0	N/A	11
Outstanding Disrepair (Items)	0	6	1	0	3	0	N/A	12