

Introduction

On 7th October 2024, an external audit was carried out on the properties and neighbourhood in Zone 3 of the Selective Licencing area of Leyland Road and a follow up external audit of identified issues was carried out on 21st November 2024.

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's), electrical installation condition reports (EICR's) 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 3 area includes the following streets:

2-16 Adlington Street

1-13 Brown Square

1- 45 Forest Street

2-29 Godley Street

6-54 Hart Street

2-20 Hawk Street

2-77 Lindsay Street

2-62 Talbot Street

Map of Zone 3



Property Summary for Zone 3

The summary table on Page 7 shows that there is a total of 199 properties in this zone – 113 of which are privately rented properties and are classified as Part 3 properties for licencing purposes. This represents 56% of the properties in this area.

As of 22nd November 2024:

- 105 (93%) of the licensable properties are licensed.
- 4 (4%) of the Part 3 let properties have applied and these are being processed.
- 4 (4%) of the Part 3 properties appear to be rented but they remain unlicensed.
- 6 (3%) of all properties have relative exemptions formally approved.

- 15 (8%) of all properties are owned by Registered Social Landlords who are exempt from Selective Licensing.
- 5 (2%) of all properties are vacant.
- 59 (29%) are Owner Occupied properties.
- There are no known Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's) in the defined area.

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 or managing agents 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, 64 (56%) of the GSCs had expired and new, in date certificates had not been provided as required under the licencing conditions. After contacting each landlord, 58 outstanding GSCs have since been supplied and there are now 6 outstanding.

EICRs

At the time of the audit only 4 (4%) of the EICR's had not been provided or had expired. In November, only 1 EICR is outstanding.

Summary

Certification Type	Position – October 2024	Position – November 2024	Outstanding
Valid Gas Safety Certificates	64 (64%)	94 (94%)	6 (6%)
Valid Electrical Installation Condition report	97 (96%)	97 (96%)	1 (1%)

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

On the date of the audit on 7th October 2024 there was evidence of numerous incidents of fly tipping on both the backstreets and areas of open land. 7 issues of abandoned bagged and unbagged rubbish, building materials and items of furniture were reported to Streetscene and these were either cleared or investigated.

After the audit, Burnley Council served 3, Section 80 Environmental Protection Notices requiring owners/occupiers to clear items that had been fly tipped. In addition, the Council also removed two trailers which had accumulated waste that were being used to store waste for a business purpose.

There are a few small public spaces in this neighbourhood. These are mainly grassed with small amounts of vegetation. Recent work to tidy up the shrubbery and hedges around the playground behind Adlington Street in October 2024 has improved this facility for the community.

Back Yards

There were 5 properties identified with dirty/untidy back yards in the audit area. Letters were sent to 4 addresses which had dirty back yards. At the time of the follow up audit only 1 back yard had not been fully cleared and this was a property that has recently changed ownership and appears to be refurbished.

Disrepairs

In total there were 42 properties with external disrepairs identified at the outset of the audit. Most of these properties with disrepairs had more than one item of disrepair to deal with. These disrepairs included items such as smashed windows & gutters blocked with vegetation causing staining and possible damp issues. A significant proportion of the rented properties required partial or full external painting. Whilst painting properties is not a specific licensing condition, many of these properties were unsightly and if repainted this would make a marked improvement to the external appearance of this neighbourhood.

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

Follow up inspections of all reported items of disrepair were completed on 21st November 2021.

Given that the audit was conducted in Quarter 3, 2024/25 when the weather was inclement and sometimes difficult to complete external property repairs/painting 17 landlords had completed all the requested items of disrepair/improvements (including the stonework to 6 properties being repainted). The remaining 25 landlords will be requested to inform the Council on when they will complete the identified disrepairs, and these will be followed up in Quarter 4.

Examples of the types of identified repairs:

October 2024

Front elevation requiring repainting



November 2024

Front elevation repainted



Dangerous yard wall



Yard wall demolished and rebuilt



New gate required



New gate fitted



Non licenced Properties

There are still 6 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.

Vacant properties

There were only 5 vacant properties on the date of the audit which is 2.5% of the properties in the area. One of these properties is a long-term vacant property which is subject to an estate dispute. We identified that this was open to access, but the property has now been secured after the audit intervention.

Other property issues

The audit identified an unlicensed property that the Police had raided and was being used to farm illegal drugs. We will monitor what the owner intends to do with this property.

An owner-occupied property with an extensive partially built extension which appeared to be poorly constructed was referred to Building Control to inspect and possibly action.

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

22nd November 2024

	Adlington Street	Hart Street	Hawk Street	Lindsay Street	Forest Street	Godley Street	Talbot Street	Brown Square	Totals 7th October 2024	Totals 22 nd November 2024
Total Properties	8	24	9	68	24	27	32	7	199	199
Part 3	5	12	7	34	16	7	26	6	113	113
Licenced	5	10	7	29	16	6	24	4	101	105
Applied Not yet Licenced	0	2	0	3	0	0	1	0	6	4
Not Applied	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	4	4
Exempt RSL	1	5	0	4	2	1	2	0	15	15
Exempt Selective Licence - Family	0	1	1	1	0	2	1	0	6	6
Owner Occupied/Businesses	1	4	1	25	5	15	6	1	58	59
Vacant	1	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	5	5
Licenced HMO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gas Expired	1	8	3	25	8	5	12	2	64	6
EPC Rating below E	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EICR Outstanding	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	4	1
DBY on Audit Day	0	0	1	0	1	0	3	0	5	1
Missing bin	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Disrepairs October 2024	3	7	3	13	12	3	10	0	42	
Disrepairs November 2024	2	5	0	7	7	1	3	0		25