

Introduction

In November 2024, an external audit was carried out on the properties and neighbourhood in Zone 3 of the Selective Licencing area of Burnley Wood and a follow up external audit of identified issues was carried out in January 2025.

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

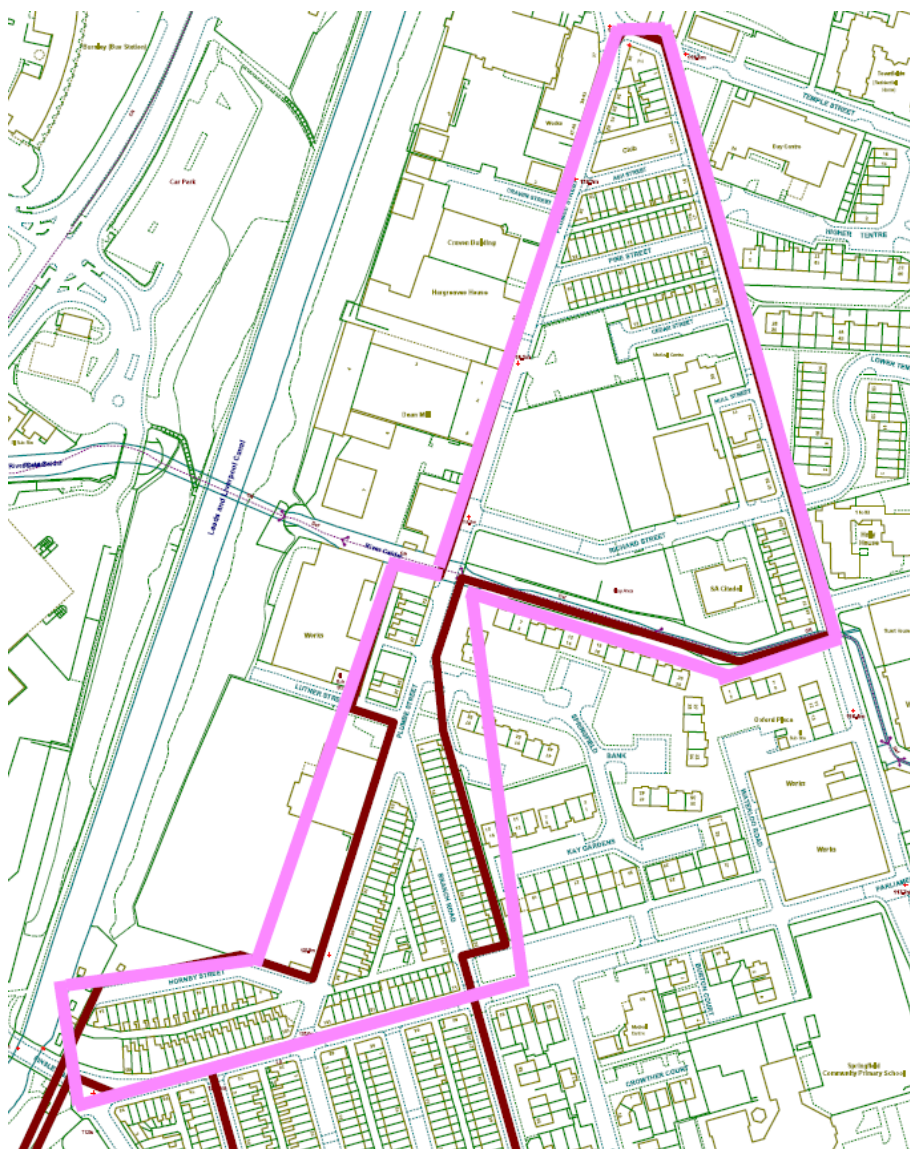
- To check and validate the status of compliance with licence conditions with current and valid GSC's, EICR's & EPC's.
- To check the physical state of the back streets for the likes of environmental crime, fly tipping etc.
- To check the condition of the back yards to rented properties for the likes of waste disposal/ bin issues, cleanliness, and security (state of back gates/walls etc).
- To identify visible defects to the external condition 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 and to either update our records or to pursue applications for properties that are rented without a valid licence.

Target Area

Zone 3 area includes the following streets:

<i>Ash Street</i>
<i>1-21, 4-50 Branch Road</i>
<i>Cedar Street</i>
<i>Hornby Street</i>
<i>Oxford Road</i>
<i>71-139 Parliament Street</i>
<i>Pine Street</i>
<i>79-97, 24-96 Plumbe Street</i>

Map of Zone 3



Property Summary for Zone 3

The summary table on Page 6 shows that there is a total of 164 properties in this zone – 96 of which are privately rented properties and are classified as Part 3 properties for licensing purposes. This represents 59% of the properties in this area.

At the end of the audit in January 2025:

- 70 (72%) of the licensable properties are licensed.
- 4 (4%) of the Part 3 let properties have applied and this is being processed.
- 11 (8%) of all properties have formally approved relative exemptions.
- 11 (7%) of all properties are owned by Registered Social Landlords who are exempt from Selective Licensing.
- 10 (6%) of all properties are vacant.
- 36 (22%) are Owner Occupied properties.
- There is 1 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 Gas Safety Certificate (GSC) every 12 months and an Electrical Condition Inspection Report (EICR) every 5 years. In addition, they also need to ensure that there is a current Energy Performance Report (EPC) in date and with an Energy Efficiency rating of an E or above.

Whilst the required certificates were valid when licences were granted, the audit found that were a number of certificates that had either not been provided by landlords/ managing agents or new certificates had not been commissioned without the intervention of the Selective Licencing Team requesting updated copies

GSC's

At the time of the audit, 48 Gas Safety Certificates (GSCs), representing 50% of the total, had expired, and updated certificates had not been provided as required under the licensing conditions. Following contact with each landlord, the number of outstanding valid GSCs has been reduced to 13 (13%). These remaining certificates are currently in the process of being provided by the respective landlords.

EICRs

At the time of the audit, 8 Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs), representing 8% of the total, had either not been provided or had expired. By January 2025, this number had been reduced to 2 outstanding EICRs (2%).

EPC's

All of the EPCs were at a rating of E and above therefore meeting the current energy performance requirement in order to rent out any property.

Summary

Certification Type	Position – November 2024	Outstanding
Expired GSR's	48	13
Expired EICR's	8	2
EPC's E or below	0	0

Back Yards

There were 5 properties identified with dirty/untidy back yards in the audit area. These issues were raised with the landlords/owners, and **the** 4 rented properties have been cleared but there remains 1 property which has a significant amount of building waste in the back yard. This property is in the process of a private sale.



Fly-Tipping

Fly-tipping on the backstreets is mainly caused by the residents living on those streets. It is selfish behaviour which the Council is working hard to eliminate. The Council provides various ways for residents to dispose of both bulky and small items. Leaving items on the backstreet is not one of those options.



Selective Licensing and Streetscene will continue to monitor this area and the wider area with a view to taking action against the perpetrators.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Although no major ASB cases relating to private rented properties were picked up on audit day. The Council recognises that neighborhoods such as the Burnley Wood area do suffer from youth-related anti-social behaviour.

The Community Safety team works to tackle issues that have an adverse impact on residents' quality of life. This includes crime and anti-social behaviour.

Anti-Social Behaviour and Nuisance will not be tolerated. The Council aims to

provide residents with information on actions that can be taken to address these issues.

Burnley Community Safety Partnership represents statutory and voluntary agencies working together to identify solutions to improve quality of life and access to local services.

Disrepairs

On the 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 58 (60%) 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 and external walls that looked severely damp. 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, 52 (53%) 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.

Non licenced Properties

There are 6 properties in this area that remain unlicensed without applications submitted. Some of the owners have been in contact to ask for support with the application process, the remaining will be prioritised for Civil Penalty action.

Vacant properties

There were 10 vacant properties on the date of the audit which represents 16% of the properties in the area. 5 of these properties are long term empty properties.

2 properties were identified as being potentially problematic long-term vacant properties and were referred to the Empty Homes Team who have opened these up as active cases since.

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. There were no external repairs identified that warranted escalation to the Housing Standards Team.

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

	Ash St	Branch Rd	Cedar St	Hornby St	Oxford Road	Parliament St	Pine St	Plumbe St	Totals Audit Day	Totals Jan 25'
Total Properties	11	32	8	15	26	19	23	30	164	164
Part 3	5	15	6	6	13	19	19	13	96	97
Licenced	3	14	4	5	10	3	18	12	69	70
Applied Not yet Licenced	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	5	4
Exempt RSL	0	4	0	1	3	0	1	1	10	10
Exempt Selective Licence	0	1	0	2	6	0	0	2	11	11
Owner Occupied	4	11	2	6	0	2	1	10	36	36
Vacant	1	1	0	1	1	0	2	4	10	10
Licenced HMO	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
Not Applied	2	0	1	0	4	0	0	0	7	6
Gas Expired	4	10	4	3	7	4	11	5	48	13
EPC Rating below E	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EICR Not submitted	1	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	8	2
DBY on Audit Day	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	5	?
Smoke Breach found on Audit Day	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No Wheelie Bin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Properties with disrepairs	3	11	2	1	8	10	17	6	58	52
Amount of Disrepairs	6	24	4	1	13	1	30	13	92	86